

Ahmed Yasawi Studies in Uzbekistan

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1. Introduction

During the Soviet period, Ahmed Yasawi's personality and literary legacy were criticized and scorned by the regime in Turkic Republics, and for a long time, Ahmed Yasawi's works were not allowed to be examined scientifically. In the 1970s, a few studies which aimed at an objective assessment of Ahmed Yasawi's extensive contributions on the national culture, language and the history of Sufi literature were also harshly criticized.¹ Yet, Uzbek people have never forgotten the blessed name and wise words of this great person. Despite many obstacles, Uzbek scholars did their best to study and disseminate Ahmed Yasawi's literary legacy.

In recent years, the interest in the scientific and literary heritage of the great ancestors, as well as the studies on reading, learning, examining, and presenting their works to the public have been increasing. In particular, the life, works and thoughts of Hodja Ahmed Yasawi, who has a high station in the spirituality, culture, and literature of the Turks, are extensively researched and studied.

Like many representatives of religious-mystical literature who lived in Turkestan, Ahmed Yasawi's life and works were subjectively approached both by Tsarist Russia, and especially the Soviet Union, and he was criticized as a "reactionary (harmful) poet." Despite this, even during the Soviet period, a number of studies were carried out by some scholars in Uzbekistan about the life and literary legacy of Ahmed Yasawi.² This paper examines the studies on Ahmet

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¹ E. Rustemov. "Ahmed Yesevî Hikmetlerinde Tarih ve Hayat Sedası" [The Sound of History and Life in the Wisdoms of Ahmed Yasawi]. *Uzbek Language and Literature* 4-5, (1972): 21-25, 22-28.

² A. Sadi, "Yesevî kimdir?" [Who is Yasawi?], *Inkilap* 2 (1922). A. Fitrat, "Ahmed Yesevî", *Journal of Education and Teaching* no. 6,7,8 (1927). A. Fitrat "Yesevî Mektebi Şoirleri Hakıda Tekşirişlar" [Reviews of Ahmed Yasawi School Poets], *Journal of*

Yasawi in Uzbekistan since the Soviet period, especially those of Abdurrauf Fitrat and put forward their scientific contribution to the field. After a detailed description of these studies in the following section, the scientific contributions of these studies are evaluated in the conclusion.

2. Abdurrauf Fitrat and Yasawi Studies

The famous Uzbek academician Prof. Dr. Abdurrauf Fitrat published his articles titled “Ahmed Yasawi” and “Research on Yasawi School Poets” in 1927-28.³ In these articles, Fitrat criticizes some of the studies published until then. Indeed, upon closer examination, those writings do not have the capacity to fully explain the nature of Yasawi’s *hikmah* (wisdom) and their historical contributions.

While referring to his contribution to the status of Turkish language, the author writes that *Divan-e Hikmah* and the works of Suleyman Bakirgan had an impact on the works such as *Bahtiyarnāme*, and *Tadhkirat-ul-Awliyā*, written in the first half of the 15th century.⁴

Fitrat ranks Ahmed Yasawi as one of the mystics of the ascetic level, but not among “superior mystics” such as Mansour Hallaj and Mirza Abdulkadir Bīdil. As evidence, he points to the metaphorical poems by poets such as Bīdil and Hindī in the form of *shathiyya*, of the execution of Hallaj, and alleges that such ecstatic expressions are not found in Ahmed Yasawi, that “unlike Sufis, he refused *tawil* (interpretation), but accepted what is in Islam as it is.” The reason Fitrat reached this conclusion may be that he was compelled to come to terms with the Soviet ideology.

Education and Teaching, no. 5-6, 1928. These two articles have also been published in the form of a book. See “Yesevī Kim Edi?” [Who was Yasawi?]. *Makaleler ve hikmetlerden Parçalar* [Excerpts from articles and wisdoms]. Prepared by. B. Dostqorayev, (Tashkent: 1994). It was also included in the selected works of Fitrat: A. Fitrat, *Tanlangan Asarlar*, Vol.II. İlmī Asarlar, Prepared by H. Boltaboyev, (Tashkent: 2000). İ. Muminov, *Mirzo Bedilning Falsafiy Görüşleri* [Mirza Bedil’s Philosophical Opinions], (Tashkent: Fan. 1958), 102. E. Rustamov, “Ahmad Yassavi Hikmatlarida Tarih va Hayot Sadosi” [The Sound of History and Life in the Wisdoms of Ahmed Yasawi], *Journal of Uzbek Language and Literature* 4-5, (1972): 21-25, 22-28. İ. Hakkul, “Navoiy Aziz Bilgan”, *Youth Journal* 4 (1988):67-72. N. Komilov, “Ahmed Yasawi”, *Gulhan Journal* 11, (1990):27-28. O. Usmon, “Vahdat Şarobin İçdim”, *Journal of Communication* 6 (1991).

³ These two articles have also been published as books. See *Makaleler ve Hikmetlerden Parçalar* and Fitrat. *Seçme Eserler* (Selected Works).

⁴ Fitrat “Yesevī Kim İdi?”, 5-6.

It appears from the ideas and conclusions in his articles that Fitrat had close familiarity with the Yasawism's reference books, such as those by Imam Sighnāqi, Hazinī and Ālim Sheikh (Siddīki).

Fitrat's observations on the historical development and expansion process of the Yasawī order are also noteworthy. To him, because it was not foreign to the old Turkish customs, Yasawism spread rapidly among the immigrant Turks. Although not successful for a while in the sectarian struggle during the period of Timurid rule, the Yasawis regained their position during the Shaybanid period. In fact, as a result of the Naqshbandi sheikh Mahdum-i A'zam accepting the *cehri zikr* (public dhikr), Yasawism virtually won a victory in Central Asia.

While talking about the literary value of wisdoms, Fitrat attributed the highest degree to Yasawī's knowledge and literary value, and, noted that Yasawī was superior to ordinary minstrels, that he visited the famous scientific centers of his time such as Khorasan, Iraq and Damascus, and that he was proficient at the sciences and literary rules that were held in high regard at the time.⁵

Fitrat, in his article titled "Ahmed Yasawi" and in his book titled "*Literary Principles*", described Ahmet Yasawi as a poet coming from among the public who shared the people's troubles, and wrote in commoners' language. In the chapter on syllable meter of his book on literary rules, along with folk proverbs and songs, he gave the following couplet of Ahmed Yasawi as an example:

*Sözüm qattıg, tilim aççıg, özüm zalim,
Ğarib canım sarf aylayın, yoqdur malım.*

Translation:

My word is harsh, my tongue is bitter, my self is cruel,
Let me give (this) poor life, I don't have any property.

Indeed, Ahmed Yasawi expressed the people's troubles with the public style and with a fluent language. Scholars engaged in Ahmed Yasawi's life and poems also emphasized that the wisdoms were

⁵ In his books on language and literature, Fitrat also mentioned Ahmed Yasawi from time to time and gave some pieces from the wisdoms. See. A. Fitrat, *Sarf*, 1927, 5-9. A. Fitrat, *Aruz Hakkında* [About Aruz], (Tashkent, 1997), 21-22; Fitrat A., *Edebiyat Kaideleri* [Literary Rules], (Tashkent, 1995), 13-105. *Özbek Edebiyatı Numuneleri* [Excerpts from Uzbek Literature], Compiled by A. Fitrat, (Tashkent, 1928), 97-104.

written in public language and style.⁶ The importance of writing the wisdoms in public language was stated even in the Great State Encyclopedia published in Moscow during the Soviet period, with examples from the wisdoms.⁷ In short, Yasawi's wisdoms' historical significance also comes from the fact that they were written in folk style. Because having been written in folk language and in a fluent style was one of the reasons that expanded the wisdoms' sphere of influence.

While considering the contributions of Yasawi's wisdoms in the development of the Turkish language, Fitrat especially emphasized that the wisdoms, the literary products of the 5th-6th century (HA), are of great importance for our literature and history, since they were written only a century after *Kutadgu Bilig* and in the same period as *Atabetü'l Hakayik*. To him, the value of the wisdoms can only be understood through considering the scarcity of Turkish works written in this period.

Fitrat noted that the copies of *Divan-e Hikmah* survived until the 20th century were not old and could not be examined as reliable texts. Although this argument is valid in one respect, the absence of the manuscripts of the *Divan-e Hikmah* belonging to the period of Ahmed Yasawi is not a sufficient cause for examination of wisdoms to be terminated according to the scholars of the later period.⁸ This

⁶ F. Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar* [The First Sufis in Turkish Literature], (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1991), 148. A. K. Borovkov, "Opredelenie Yazıkıa Hikmetov Ahmada Yesevî" *Sovetskoye Vostokovedenie* no. 5, (1948). Ahmed Yasawi, *Divan-ı Hikmet'ten Seçmeler* [Selections from Divan-e Hikmah], Prepared by: Eraslan K., (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2000), 36-39. İ. Muminov, *Seçme Eserler* [Selected Works], Vol.1. (Tashkent, 1969), 37-39; E. Rustemov, "Ahmed Yesevî Hikmetlerinde Tarih ve Hayat Sedası" [The Sound of History and Life in the Wisdoms of Ahmed Yasawi] *Uzbek Language and Literature*, no.14 (1972): 25-26; Ahmed Yesevî, *Hikmetler*, [Wisdoms] Prepared by: İbrahim Hakkul, (Tashkent, 1991), 12-13 B. Kasimov, "Hikmetler Şiir" [Wisdoms Poetry] *Uzbekistan Literature and Art*, no.29, (1993). U. Toyçiev, "Ahmed Yesevi ve Özbek Şiir Şekli" [Ahmed Yasawi and the Form of Uzbek Poetry], *Uzbek Language and Literature*, no. 2, (1999): 18b; H. Hamidi, "Ahmed Yesevî", *Ishanch Newspaper*, 2004. E. Ochilov, "Har Ne Kilsang, Oşik Kılğil" *Ishanch Newspaper*, 2004. A. Hayitmetov, "Özbek Edebiyatı'nda Halkçılık ve Halkçıl Uslub Hakıda" [About Folklore and Folk Style in Uzbek Literature] *Uzbek Language and Literature*, no. 1, (1993): 13-14. N. Kamilov, *Tasavvuf veya Kâmil İnsan Ahlakı* [Sufism or Perfect Human Ethics], (Tashkent: 1996).

⁷ *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*, Vol.2. s.v. "Ahmed Yasawi." p. 1372, Moscow: 1970.

⁸ Ahmed Yasawi, *Hikmetler* [Wisdoms], Prepared by: İ. Hakkul, (Tashkent, 1991); İ. Hakkul, "Oldingdan Okkan Suvning Kadri..." *Uzbekistan Literature and Art*, 2004; E. Achilav, "Har Ne Kilsang Oşik Kılğil..." *Manuscript Catalogue of Hodja Ahmed Yasawi Wisdom at the Biruni Oriental Institute of the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences*, Turkestan, 2006.

is because the meter of the wisdoms has not changed, and the old main idea and thought have been preserved in their original form even though there might have been a change in the language and expression of the text.⁹ Ahmed Yasawi's views, beliefs and the rules of the Yasawi order constitute the basis of wisdoms in *Divan-e Hikmah*, regardless of who copied the texts. It is a historical fact that with the passage of time, more and more known wisdoms have changed in terms of meaning, metaphor, and language, and have been enriched with different additions. But these wisdoms gathered under the name of *Divan-e Hikmah* have not lost anything from the main ideas and essence they were meant to convey and preserved in itself all the characteristics of Yasawism.¹⁰ Thus, today's studies to research and publish the wisdoms that were copied under the pseudonym Ahmed Yasawi should be associated with the name of Ahmed Yasawi. Because wisdoms is one of the pearls of world literature as well as Turkish literature and is an inseparable part of it.

Apparently, Fitrat first started his research by studying the literary heritage of Ahmed Yasawi in detail, but due to the ideological pressures and pursuits of that period, he had to analyze Yasawi's works in line with the purposes of the Soviet order, more precisely, "according to the Marxist understanding."¹¹

Fitrat's second article titled "Research in the Line of Yasawi School Poets" also has a special place in Yasawi studies. In this article, the scholar stated that the Yasawi school, which is among the last movements of Central Asian Turkish literature, covers a very influential and prominent place and noted that this school developed and continued as dervish literature among Turkic peoples for centuries. In the opinion of Fitrat, three literary schools have operated in the history of Uzbek classical literature, the first of which is Ahmed Yasawi, the second Ali-Shir Nava'i and the third Emir Omer Han. The most important difference of the Yasawi school from the other schools is being a "dervish literature."

⁹ M. Shayhzade, *Works*, Vol. 5 (Tashkent: 1973), 207. N. Mallaev, *Özbek Edebiyatı Tarihi* [History of Uzbek Literature]. (Tashkent, 1976), 154; K. Eraslan, *Seçmeler* [Selections], 41; I. C. Hakkulov, *Özbek Tasavvuf Şiirinin Gelişimi ve Terakkiyatı*. [Development and Progress of Uzbek Sufi Poetry]. Associate Professor Thesis, 1995, 83-86.

¹⁰ K. Eraslan, *Divan-ı Hikmet'ten Seçmeler* [Selections from Divan-e Hikmah], 37.

¹¹ A. Fitrat, *Seçme Eserler* [Selected Works], Vol. 2., 180 (10th Footnote).

In his first article, Fitrat reports relatively general ideas about the poets of the Yasawi school; in his later analysis, he focuses more on their life and works. He enumerates the names of Yasawi followers, especially based on primary sources such as *Reshehāt Ayn-ul Hayat*, *Lemehāt min Nefehātü'l-Kuds*, and *Semerätü'l-Meşâyih*. Fitrat states, "It should not be wrong to accept that the Yasawis raised many poets in Central Asia" and adds that their life and works are not yet fully known and studied. Indeed, with some exceptions, the poets of the Yasawi school and their literary legacy are subjects that have not been studied until now. In this context, Fitrat's research is a guide for the researchers who came after him. Because, in this article, the scholar presented reliable information based on sources about the followers of the Yasawi order such as Hakim Ata Soleyman Bakırghani, Kemal Shayh Ikani, Shams Ozgendi, Kul Ubeydi, Shayh Hudaydad and Hubbi Haje.

On the other hand, Fitrat wrote somewhere about the Yasawi followers that "Today, their works are not present". However, today's studies show that examples from the works of many followers of the Yasawi school are available in Uzbekistan libraries as well as in the world's book treasures. In the compilations of *Divan-e Hikmah*, poems of dozens of followers were included along with the wisdoms of Ahmed Yasawi. In various compilations and publications, it is possible to come across many religious-didactic anecdotes, stories, epics, *jangnamehs*, *wafatnamehs* and *mirajnamehs* written in verse by the followers of Yasawi school.

In the "Yasawi's Influence" section of his first article, Fitrat particularly emphasizes that among the mystics and poets of the Turkish world, there is no one else as influential as Ahmed Yasawi, and that writing poetry in his style continues after Yasawi as a tradition among Turkish Sufi poets. In this context, the fact that Fitrat states in this article that even famous poets such as Mahtumkulu and Nesimi were influenced by Yasawi's wisdoms is of particular importance in terms of revealing Yasawi's place in the literature of Turkic peoples.

Indeed, as Fitrat stated, writing poetry in the style of Yasawi wisdoms became a tradition in Turkestan literature after Yasawi and took the form of a literary school. However, studies show that Yasawi's world of ideas has a strong influence not only on the religious-mystical literature of Tatar, Turkmen, Azerbaijani and

Ottoman Turks, but also on the moral, civil and spiritual life of the Turkic nations in general.

Literary scholars (Alim Sherefeddinov, Sattu Huseyin) drew attention to the following facts about the language, expression, and form features of the wisdoms of Yasawi and his followers in the book titled *Uzbek Literature*:

“The striking feature in the works of Yasawi and Bakirgani is that the language and expression are simple, fluent, clear and close to folk literature in terms of form. This has caused these works to be widespread and widely read until the last centuries...”¹²

İbrahim Muminov also explained the social importance of *Divan-e Hikmah* and said:

“Wisdom is a valuable heirloom of Uzbek [i.e. Chagatai - N.H.] literature and its author is a well-known person who knows Islam, Kalam thought, Sufism, the lifestyle of farmers, those dealing with animal husbandry, artisans and the social order of that period. Since Yasawi’s level was wide and deep, he wrote this idealistic work for the first time in Uzbek [in Turkish - N.H.]. Ahmed Yasawi, as a representative of Mysticism in Transoxiana, fully declared the principles of Sufism in his book *Hikmah*.”¹³

Although the academician was unfairly criticized for this article, he gave a necessary message and fulfilled an important duty.

3. Other Studies

In the 1970s, the interest in the subject of Yasawi was re-awakened. In 1972, the late Prof. Dr. Ergesh Rustemov tried to objectively re-evaluate Ahmed Yasawi’s place in the history of literature in his article titled “Voice of History and Life in Ahmed Yasawi’s Wisdoms.”¹⁴

However, all efforts to correctly assess the services of *Sultanu’l arifin* (Sultan of the wise) in the history of national civilization, language and literature were harshly criticized by the representatives of Soviet ideology and were accused of being “against objective

¹² A. Şerefiddinov, Hüseyin S. *Özbek Edebiyatı/15 yıl İçinde Özbek Sovyet Edebiyatı*, [Uzbek Literature/Uzbek Soviet Literature in 15 Years] (Tashkent: 1939), 14.

¹³ Muminov, *Seçme Eserler* [Selected Works], 36-41.

¹⁴ Rüstemov, “Ahmed Yesevî Hikmetlerinde Tarih ve Hayat Sedası” [The Sound of History and Life in the Wisdoms of Ahmed Yasawi].

truth.”¹⁵ Despite this, Yasawi studies continued abroad, especially in Turkey, and finally, in the 90s, a new era began in Yasawi research. In particular, the independence of the Turkic republics led to the beginning of a new and free period in Yasawi studies.

First of all, articles about Ahmed Yasawi were published in various newspapers and magazines.¹⁶ Afterwards, *Divan-e Hikmah* was made accessible to the readers in the form of a book.¹⁷ The declaration of 1993 as the “Ahmed Yasawi Year” strengthened the interest in the life of the great mystic, his literary and educational activities, and the services of his followers in Uzbekistan. Many books and articles

¹⁵ Adabiyatshinoslik Fanining Partiyeviyiligi va Goyeviyiligi Uçun, *Uzbek Tili va Adabiyoti* 3. (1973):5; Mallaev H.M. *Uzbek Adabiyoti Tarihi [History of Uzbek Literature]*, Vol. 1 (XVII Asrğaça) (Tashkent: 1976), 158-159; Karimov G. *Qisqacha Uzbek Adabiyoti Tarihi [Short History of Uzbek Literature]*, (Tashkent: 1978), 48-50, 65-71.

¹⁶ A. Bazarov ve T. Karayev, “Hikmetler Külliyyatından” [From the Collection of Wisdoms], *Şark Yıldızı*, no. 1, (1992):3-19. Ne’matov Q., “Ahmad Yesevi Hayotiga Oid Ba’zi Sanalar” [Some Dates About the Life of Ahmed Yasawi], *Uzbek Tili va Adabiyoti*, no.2. (1992):3-6. Mirholdor Ugli M., *Hodja Ahmad Yasawi: Şacarai Saodat, Karomatlari, Hikmatlari*. (Chimkent: 1992). Nasafiy, *Hoca Ahmad Yesevi*. (Tashkent: 1993). “Yesevi Kim Edi?” in *Maqolalar va Hikmatlardan Parçalar*, prep. B. Dosyqoraev (Tashkent: 1994); Cabborov N., *Hoca Ahmad Yesevi Turkiy Tasavvufning Porloq Quyoşi* (Tashkent: 1994). İslom Elnazar, *İlm, Mu’ciza va Ahmad Yesevi*. (Tashkent: 1997). Naşrga Tayyorlovçi N.Hasan. “Türkiye’de Yesevilik Araştırmaları” [“Yasawi Research in Turkey”], *Literature and Art*, 1999. Hasan N., *Ahmad Mahmud Haziniy (Hayoti va İcodi)* (Tashkent: Fan, 2001). Hakkul İ., *Ahmad Yesevi*. (Tashkent: 2001). Siyoev S., *Yesevining Songi Safari*. (Tashkent: 2002). İslomiy Q., *Sulton ul-orifin Hoca Ahmad Yesevi*. (Tashkent: 2005). İbodiyeva A., “Ahmad Yesevi Ruhini Yod Etib”, *Til va Adabiyot Ta’limi*, no. 5-6 (1993). Mahkamov Y., “Ahmad Yesevi Hikmatlarini Oquvçilarga Etkazig”, *Halq Ta’limi*, no.8-9 - (1993). Nurmurodov Y., “Yesevi Hikmatlari Vamberi Tarcimasida”, *Uzbek Tili va Adabiyoti* 5, (1993):31-33. Muminov A., “Yessaviye: İldiz va Manbalar”, *Fan va Turmuş*, no. 9-10. (1993): 18-21. Muminov A., “Camdarbekov Z., Yessaviye Ta’limoti Vucudga Kelgan Muhit Haqida Yengi Muhim Manba” *Şarqshinoslik* 5, (1994): 82-88. Nosirov O., “Ahmad Yesevining Diniy-ahloqiy Görüşleri”, in *Uzbekistonda İctimoiy-Falsafiy Fikirlar Tarihidan*, (Tashkent: 1995). Tuyçiev U., “Ahmad Yesevi va Uzbek Şe’r Tuzilişi”, *Uzbek Tili va Adabiyoti* 2 (1999). Toşmurodova Q., “Yesevi va Ma’naviy-ahloqiy Tarbiye” *Guliston*, no. 3 (1999). Ne’matova C., “Yesevining Adolat Goyelari”, *Hayot va Qonun*, no.9. (2000):12-14. Cabborov N., “Devoni Hikmat” Turkiyazabov Adabiyotning Şoh Asari”, *İmom Buhoriy Saboqlari*, no. 2 (2000). Hayitmatov A., “Hakim Ota Dostonlari” *Tafakkur*, no. 2; (2003). Rasulov A., “Ahmad Yesevi Abadiyeti”, *Yoşlik*, no. 4 (2003). Hasan N. “XVI As Uzbek Adabiyotida Yesevi An’analari” *Uzbek Tili va Adabiyoti*, no.2. (2004):26-34; Abdullaev A., “Devoni Hikmat”da Yessaviye Tariqati Goyelari” *Uzbek Tili va Adabiyoti*, no.6. (2005).

¹⁷ Ahmet Yesevi, *Hikmetler [Wisdoms]* Prepared by. İbr. Hakkul. (Tashkent), 1991). Hoca Ahmet Yesevi. *Divan-ı Hikmet. [Hodja Ahmad Yasawi. Divan-e Hikmah]*. Prepared by. R. Abdushukurov (Tashkent: Literature and Art Publications, 1992). Hoca Ahmet Yesevi, *Divan-ı Hikmet. [Divan-e Hikmah]* Prepared by. İ. Hakkul, N.Hasan (Tashkent, 2006).

about Ahmed Yasawi's personality, order and wisdom have been published in the Uzbek press,¹⁸ and scientific studies have been conducted.¹⁹ In 2004, Ahmed Yasawi's newly found wisdoms were published.²⁰ The catalogues of the manuscripts of *Divan-e Hikmah*,²¹ and a proceedings book about Ahmed Yasawi and his followers were published.²² In the last twenty-five years, many articles and researches about Ahmed Yasawi's life, works, order and followers

¹⁸ N. Kamilov. "Ahmed Yesevî" *Gulhan* 11 (1990). A. Osman. "Vahdet Şarabın İçtim..." *Miilakat*, no.6 (1991): 51-57. Q. Ne'matov, "Ahmad Yesevi Hayotiga Oid Ba'zi Sanalar" [Some Dates About the Life of Ahmed Yasawi] *Uzbek Language and Literature*, no. 2 (1992): 3-6. A. Muminov, Z. Candarbekov, *Ahmed Yesevî Nesep-namesi [Ahmed Yasawi's Genealogy]*. Turkestan, 1992. A. Aliyev, "Dilimiz Danişmendi," [Danishmend of Our Language] *Uzbek Literature and Art* 43-44, (1993). B. Kasimov, "Hikmetler Şe'riyatı" [Wisdoms Poetry] *Uzbek Literature and Art*, no. 29 (1993). *Yesevi kim edi? [Who was Ahmed Yasawi?]* Prepared by. Dr. B. Dostkarayev (Tashkent, 1994) N. Cabbarov, *Hoca Ahmed Yesevî - Tasavvuf Asmanının Parlak Yıldızı [Hodja Ahmed Yasawi - The Bright Star of Sufism]* (Tashkent, 1994). B. Babadjanov. "Yasaviya i Nakshbandiya v Maverannahre: iz istorii vzaimootnosheniy (Seredina XV-XVI vv)" *Yesevi Ta'limi*, (1996): 75-96. "Ahmed Yesevi Ecdatlarının Şeceresi: Ahmed Yesevi ve Emir Timur" [Chronicle of Ahmed Yasawi's Ancestors: Ahmed Yasawi and Emir Timur]. Prepared by. R. Abduşukurov. (Tashkent, 1996). Elnazar İslam: *İlim, Mucize ve Ahmed Yesevi. [Science, Miracle and Ahmed Yasawi]* (Tashkent, 1997). E. Kerimov. *Yasaviya i Hodjağan-Nakshbandiyya: istoriya deystvitelnaya i vimeshlennaya.* (Tashkent, 2000). İ. Hakkul *Ahmed Yesevî [Ahmed Yasawi]*, (Tashkent, 2001). "Türkiye'de Yesevilik Çalışmaları" [Yasawi Studies in Turkey]. Prepared by N. Hasan. (Tashkent, 1999). N.Cabbarov, "Divan-e Hikmah Masterpiece of Turkish Literature" *Imam Bukhara Lessons*, no.2, (2000): 132-133. "Hoca Ahmed Yesevî: Hayatı, Eserleri ve Gelenekleri" [*Hodja Ahmed Yasawi: Life, Works and Traditions*], Prepared by. İ. Hakkul, N. Hasan, A. Bektaş (Tashkent, 2001). S. Siyayev. *Yesevinin Son Seferi. [Yasawi's Last Journey]* (Tashkent, 2002). P. Kadırov. *Dil ve El [Language and Hand]* (Tashkent, 2005).

¹⁹ N. Hasan, *Sultan Ahmet Hazini'nin "Cevâhirü'l-Ebrâr min Emvâci'l-Bihâr" Eseri ve Onun Yesevi Araştırmalarındaki İlmi-Tarihi Kıymeti.* [Sultan Ahmet Hazini's "Cevâhirü'l-Ebrâr min Emvâci'l-Bihâr" and Its Scientific-Historical Value in Yasawi Studies.] PhD Thesis. Tashkent, 1999. C. Nematova. *Yesevilik ve Onun İçtimai-Felsefi Fikir Revacındaki Yeri. [Yasawism and Its Place in Social-Philosophical Thought]* PhD Thesis. Tashkent, 2002. M. Hacıyeva., *Hoca Ahmet Yesevî'nin Manevi-terbiyeyi Görüşleri, [Moral and Educational Opinions of Hodja Ahmed Yasawi]* PhD Thesis, Tashkent, 2004. Şodiev P. *Sûfizm v Duhovnoy Cizni Narodov Sredney Azni (IX-XIII vv).* DD. (Tashkent, 1993). İshmuhamedova M., "Devoni Hikmat'ning Qolyozmalari" ND. (Tashkent, 1995). Karimov E.E. *Sûfiyskie Tarikati v Tsentralbnoy Azii XII-XV vv.* DD (Tashkent, 1998). Karimov E.E. *Yesaviye i Hodcagan Nakşbandiye: İstoriye Deystvitelnaya n Vimeshlennaya.* (Tashkent, 2000). Nsmoilor M., *Şayh Hudoydodning "Bahr ul-Ullum" Asari XVI Asrdagi Muhim Tasavvufiy Manba,* ND. (Tashkent, 2007).

²⁰ Hoca Ahmed Yesevî. *Divan-ı Hikmet. Yeni Bulunan Hikmetler.* [*Divan-e Hikmah. Newly Found Wisdoms*] Prepared by. N. Hasan. (Tashkent, 2004).

²¹ M. İshmuhamedova, *Divan-ı Hikmet Elyazmaları Katalogu [Divan-e Hikmah Manuscripts Catalogue].* (Tashkent, 2004).

²² N. Haqqul, N. Hasan and A.Bektosh. *Hoca Ahmad Yesevi: Hayoti, İcidi va An'analari.* (Tashkent: Adabiyot Camgarmasi Naşriyoti, 2001).

have been published, not only by Uzbek scholars but also by scientists abroad.²³

In 1995, Yasawi's works were studied as the subject of an academic dissertation for the first time. A chapter of the associate professorship

²³ Muminov A., "Yeseviyye Tarikatının Doğuşu Hakkında" [About the Birth of the Yasawi Order], *Yedi İklim, Journal of Art, Culture and Literature* 5, no. 42, (1993): 10-13. "Ahmed Yesevi (Hikmetleri)" [Ahmed Yasawi (Wisdoms)]. Prepared by. İbrahim Hakkulov. Translated and Simplified by E.S.Toplu (Ankara: MEB Publications. 1995). Muminov A., Yasaviya Bastauları. Sbornik statey "Yasaviya Tağılımu." Vol. 22-30 (Turkestan: 1996). Hasan N., "Hazini'nin "Menba'ul-Ebhâr fi Riyazi'l-Ebrâr" adlı eseri" [Hazini's work titled "Menba'ul-Ebhâr fi Riyazi'l-Ebrâr"] *Journal of Sufi Science and Academic Research* 7, (2001): 243-248. Babadcanov B., Eikr Dcahr i sama: Sakralizatsiye Profannogo ili Profanatsiye Sakrol'nogo?/Podvickni İslama, Kul't Svyeth i Süfizm v Sr. Azii i na Kavkaze. C.237-250. (Moscow, 2003). Erkinov A., "Une Priyre (munajat) attribuye a Ahmad Yasawi" *Journal of The History of Süfism*, no. 4, (2003-2004): 279-291. Erkinov A., "Die eigenschaften der bucher volkstümlicher verbreitung. Der beispiel des Diwan-ı Hikmat des Ahmad Yasawi". *Manuscripta Orientalia. International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research* 9, no. 3 (2003): 48-51. Erkinov A., "Prayer against Fever, Connected with the Name of Khwaga Ahmad Yasawi." *Manuscripta Orientalia. International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research* 10, no. 2, (2004): 53-56. Babadcanov B., O Vidah Zikra Dcahr u Bratstv Tsentral'noy Azii. V ki: Nctorikokul'turn'ye Vzaimosvyezi Nrana i Dašt-i Kıpçaka v XIII-XVIII vv., C.133-158, -Almatı: 2004. Hasan N., "Hazini'nin Hayatı ve Eserleri Hakkında" [About the Life and Works of Hazini], *Islamic Literature* 35 (2001): 41-43; Seyfullah S., "Hasan N. Hazini'nin "Cami el-Mürşidîn" eseri Hakkında" [About Hasan N. Hazini's "Cami el-Mürşidîn"] *Journal of Sufi Science and Academic Research*, no. 12 (2004): 159-166; Hasan N., "Hazini'nin "Cevahir ul-Ebrâr" ve Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi'nin "Tarikat-nâme" eserlerinde Tarikat Adabı", [Sect Manners in Hazini's "Cevahir ul-Ebrâr" and Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi's "Tarikatnâme",] Proceedings of Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi International Symposium. İstanbul: 2005. Hasan N., "Hazini'nin Hayatı ve İcadi Haqıda (Uygur Tilida)" *Buloq Curnali*, no. 2 (2006): 48-52; Hasan N., "Alim Şeyh ve Onun "Lemehât min Nefehât il-Kuds" eseri" [Alim Sheikh and his work "Lemehât min Nefehât il-Kuds",] *Journal of Sufism and Academic Research* 18. (2007): 229-242. Hasan N., "Hodca Ahmad Yessavi i Prodviçenie İslama v Sredney Azii" *Araşan Gumanitard'ık İnstıtutunun İlmıy Curnalı*, no. 3-4, (2007): 139-147; Hasan N., "Orta Asya'da İslamiyetin Gelişimi ve Hoca Ahmed Yesevî" [The Development of Islam in Central Asia and Hodja Ahmed Yasawi], Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Contribution of the Turkic World to Islam. Isparta, 2007. Hasan N., O Sobranii Materialov i Podgotovke k İzdaniyu Entsiklopedii Hodca Ahmed Yesawi, "Koca Ahmet Yasaviya Murasi Men İliminin Zergiteli Meseleleri" Atgı Halıkaralılık Konferantsiye, Tukestan Kalası, 29 Kirkuyek-1 Kazan, C.37-40, Almaty: 2008. Hasan N., "Hoca Ahmed-i Yesevî'nin Hayatı, Eserleri ve Tarikatı Tetkikine Dair Bazı Meseleler" [Some Issues in the Life, Works and Methodology of Hodja Ahmed Yasawi] *Araşan Journal of Social Sciences*, no. 5-6 (2008): 75-80; Hasan N., "Yeseviliğe Dair Bazı Kaynak Eserler Hakkında" [About Some Reference Works on Yasawism] *Turkish Studies International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkic* 4, no.2 (2009): 618-633. Hasan N., "Divan-ı Hikmet'in İstanbul'daki Bir Nüshası Hakkında" [About a Copy of Divan-e Hikmah in Istanbul] *Adıyaman University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, no. 2. (2009): 79-82; Hasan N. "Arslan Bab ve Ahmed Yesevî" [Arslan Bab and Ahmed Yasawi] *Journal of Sufi Science and Academic Research*, no. 24. (2009):1-10.

thesis titled “The Formation and Development of Uzbek Sufi Poetry” by the literary scholar İbrahim Hakkul is about the life, works, and school of Ahmed Yasawi, the founder of Turkish Sufi poetry and the formation of this poetry.²⁴

As it is known, it is necessary to catalogue the books in which wisdoms are collected in order to examine and analyze Ahmed Yasawi’s poems. Certain works have been carried out in Uzbekistan in this field. For instance, Meryem Eşmuamedova did her doctorate study on manuscripts and printed copies of *Divan-e Hikmah* in 1995. She described the manuscripts and printed copies of *Divan-e Hikmah* in the libraries of Biruni Oriental Manuscripts Institute, the Hamid Süleyman Manuscripts Institute, in the Ali Şir Nevai National Library and in the libraries of Tashkent National University.²⁵ As a result of this, she published her book in 2003 in which *Divan-e Hikmah* manuscripts were described.²⁶ In 2008, the researcher prepared and published a comparative text of Ahmed Yasawi wisdoms based on some manuscripts in Uzbekistan.²⁷

In 2006, the *Manuscripts Catalogue of Yasawi Wisdoms*, prepared jointly with the Biruni Manuscripts Institute and the Yasawi Research Centre under the Ahmed Yasawi Turkish-Kazakh International University, was published in Turkestan. One hundred and seventy-five copies of *Divan-e Hikmah* have been described in this work.²⁸ The scientific novelty and difference of this catalogue is that copies and wisdoms that were not in the book prepared by Meryem Eşmuamedova were also included. In the copies included in this catalogue, some Yasawi follower poets whose names are not yet known and some new Yasawi wisdoms have been identified.

Cataloguing and publishing the copies of *Divan-e Hikmah* in Uzbekistan is important for Yasawi studies because this makes it

²⁴ Hakkulov İ., “Özbek Tasavvuf Şiirinin Teşekkülü ve Gelişmesi”. [Formation and Development of Uzbek Sufi Poetry] Associate Professorship Thesis. Tashkent, 1995.

²⁵ M. Eşmuamedova, “Divan-ı Hikmet’in Elyazmaları” [Manuscripts of “*Divan-e Hikmah*”]. PhD thesis. Tashkent: 1995.

²⁶ M. Eşmuamedova, *Manuscripts of “Divan-e Hikmah* (Tashkent: 2006).

²⁷ M. Eşmuamedova, *Divan-ı Hikmet’in Karşılaştırmalı Metni* [Comparative Text of “*Divan-e Hikmah*”], (Tashkent: 2007).

²⁸ Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies, Koja Ahmet Yasawi Hikmetlerinin Koljazba Katalogi [Koljazba Catalogue of Hodja Ahmed Yasawi’s Wisdoms], Prepared by. M. Hasani, N. Taşev, G. Kerimov, S. Esentemur, D. Rasulov, Ş. Ziyadov, B. Babacanov, A. Muminov, Turkestan, 2006.

easy to examine the various copies of *Divan-e Hikmah*. Besides this, it is very important and necessary to find, examine and catalogue hundreds of manuscripts and printed divan copies in libraries abroad.

As it is known, researching the works of Yasawi school poets is one of the important works in Yasawi studies. Those who have studied Yasawi until today have expressed their own views on his followers. For example, Prof. Dr. Zeki Velidi Togan, in his *Yesevî Mektebi Şairlerinin Şiirleri Fihristi (The Index of Poems of Yasawi School Poets)*, has shown the number of Yasawi followers known so far as twenty-nine.²⁹ The Turkestan catalogue also includes more than twenty wisdom-writer poets, starting with Süleyman Bakırgan. But according to our research, the number of followers of the Ahmed Yasawi school of wisdom is not just more than twenty, perhaps more than fifty. At the same time, pieces from the works of dozens of Yasawi followers such as Maflūj, Kul Musharraf, Kul Hayrullah, Kul Mahvī, Kul Muhibbī, and others have been detected in the Turkestan catalogue. This detection necessitated to research the works of writers and poets belonging to the Yasawi literary school mentioned in the catalogue.

Ahmed Yasawi's wisdoms have been copied together with the works of well-known representatives of Turkish and Persian literature, such as Shams Tabrizī, Hafız Shirazī, Abdullah Ansari, Qasim Anwar, Kemal Hujandi, Abdurrahman Jāmī, Ali Şir Nevaī, Imameddin Nesimi, Muhammed Fuzūlī, Mirza Bīdil, Mahtumkulu, Meşreb, Sufi Allahyār, Saykali, Huveydi and Emiri. In the same manner, the gathering of wisdoms together with different divans, journals, folk tales, stories, narrations, epics, *jangnamehs*, *tarihnamehs*, *wafatnamehs*, *mirajnâmes*, *munajats*, religious-fiqh treatises indicates that Yasawi wisdoms have been read fondly, together with the aforementioned scholars and genres. Many works that have not yet been researched have emerged in these *Wisdom* copies and are also waiting for their own researchers.

Uzbek scholars have made efforts to show the historical value of Ahmed Yasawi's teaching. Indeed, Ord. Prof. Dr. Izzet Sultan considered Ahmed Yasawi a genius who "performed his own work

²⁹ Togan Z.V., "Yeseviliğe Dair Bazı Yeni Malumat" [Some New Information on Yasawism], *Fuad Köprülü Gift on the occasion of his 60th birthday*, (İstanbul: 1953, 527).

at a high level by fully understanding his historical mission". Sultan addressed the issues that constitute the basis of Yasawi's literary legacy and on which other objectives are based as "to invite people to know and love their Creator; to value man, the most honorable creation of God; to oppose cruelty and tyranny, especially injustice, and to defend the poor, orphans and the indigents who are victims of injustice."³⁰

4. Conclusion

Comparing the studies of Fitrat with the previous studies on Ahmet Yasawi shows that many aspects of Ahmet Yasawi and Yasawism are examined more comprehensively in the articles of Fitrat. One reason Fitrat does not dwell on the mentioned articles and criticizes some of them is that their scientific value does not satisfy Fitrat. For this reason, he started to learn the issue in a comprehensive and serious way by referring to the sources about Yasawi and Yasawism. Although the writers before Fitrat limited the information about Ahmed Yasawi to folk narrations or certain works, Fitrat expressed his own views to the public based on the copies of *Divan-e Hikmah* and works on Sufism and Yasawism. In other words, he wanted to solve the problem of authorship of Yasawi wisdoms and other problems related to Yasawi studies once and for all. However, due to the lack of resources from the Yasawi period, he was content to report only his current ideas and extracts. Herein lies the superiority of Fitrat's studies over previous articles.

Just as F. Köprülü founded the science of Yasawi studies in Turkey with his monograph titled *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar (The First Sufis in Turkish Literature)*, Fitrat can be said to have performed the same task in Uzbekistan. Because no other scholar before him had dealt with Ahmet Yasawi in such a broad scope and had not included Yasawi followers in the scientific assessment as an independent literary school. Although Fitrat's articles caused controversy when he was alive, they have not lost their importance until even today. With these aspects, Fitrat's studies have a unique value in Yasawi studies.

³⁰ Sulton İzzet, *Bahovuddin Haqshband Abadiyeti [Eternity of Bahovuddin Haqshband]*. (Tashkent: 1994), 10-23.

In conclusion, it should be said that Fitrat made serious preparations to do his research on Yasawi and Yasawism. He closely examined many reputable sources on the subject such as *Rashahāt Ayn-ul Hayat*, *Lamahāt min Nafahātü'l-Kuds*, *Samarātu'l-Meshāyih*, and reported his valuable ideas based on them. At the same time, it is understood from the article that he examined the manuscripts and printed copies of *Divan-e Hikmah* and had a deep knowledge of *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar (the First Sufis in Turkish Literature)* by F. Köprülü, which has a great importance in Yasawi studies. In other words, the referred articles by Fitrat about Yasawi and Yasawi school poets will always maintain their importance as the first serious studies at the beginning of the 20th century. On the other hand, there are more issues that need to be analyzed and resolved in Yasawi studies. It is difficult to conduct remarkable studies on Yasawi's life, works and teachings without considering the previous studies carried out within the scope of Yasawism.

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