

A New Example from The Scientific Heritage of The Scholars of The Fergana School of FIQH

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Abstract: This article examines a newly identified representative of the Fergana School of Fiqh and analyzes the manuscript work *Fatāwā al-Qā'idīyya* by Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali al-Qā'idī al-Khujandi. The study explores the development of local scholarly traditions in the Fergana Valley during the medieval period and highlights the significant contribution of regional jurists to the advancement of Hanafi jurisprudence in Transoxiana and the wider Islamic world. Using manuscript analysis, historical-comparative, and source-critical methods, the research investigates the structure, content, and scholarly significance of the work, as well as its relationship to the legal opinions of prominent Fergana scholars, particularly Taj al-Din Abu Bakr al-Akhsikati al-Khujandi. Special attention is given to surviving manuscript copies preserved in Uzbekistan and foreign collections. The findings reveal that *Fatāwā al-Qā'idīyya* represents an important yet understudied source for understanding the intellectual heritage of the Fergana School of Fiqh. The study also demonstrates the growing influence of the Persian language in legal literature during a period traditionally dominated by Arabic scholarly writing. The article contributes to the reconstruction of the scholarly history of the Fergana Valley and underscores the importance of further research on unpublished manuscript sources related to the region's Islamic intellectual heritage.

Keywords: Fergana School of Fiqh, Hanafi jurisprudence, Islamic intellectual heritage, medieval Transoxiana, manuscript studies, *Fatāwā al-Qā'idīyya*, al-Qā'idī al-Khujandi, Taj al-Din al-Akhsikati, Islamic legal scholarship, Persian language, Central Asian scholars, Fergana Valley.

Introduction: In the territory of our country, various branches of science and scholarship developed rapidly during the early medieval period. This era, referred to in academic literature as the "First Renaissance," witnessed the emergence of great scholars from our region who made enormous contributions to scientific and intellectual progress. One of the distinctive features of this period was the formation of unique scholarly schools in different parts of Transoxiana (Mawarannahr), each of which contributed significantly to the intellectual development of the region.

Research has confirmed that a distinctive scholarly tradition also emerged in the Fergana Valley during the early medieval period. The Fergana school of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), which took shape during this era, produced scholars who occupied a prominent

place not only in Mawarannahr but throughout the Islamic world and played an important role in the development of Islamic sciences.

The number of prominent representatives of the Fergana fiqh school who originated from various cities of the Fergana Valley during the early medieval period exceeds one hundred. Among them were scholars from Akhsikat (Akhsikent), such as Abu al-Wafa Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Akhsikati (d. 519/1126), Dhu al-Fada'il Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Akhsikati (465/1073–528/1134), Asir al-Din al-Akhsikati (501/1108–594/1198), Abdullah ibn Qaid ibn Aqil ibn al-Husayn ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Ahmad al-Akhsikati (461/1069–514/1121), and Abu Rashad Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Akhsikati (406/1067–535/1140).

From Koson came scholars such as Abu Bakr ibn Mas'ud ibn Ahmad Ala al-Din al-Kasani (d. 585/1191), Abu al-

Jawd Ata ibn Ahmad ibn al-Sadiq al-Khalidi al-Kasani (12th century), and Bakr ibn Sulayman ibn Imran ibn Ilyas al-Kasani (d. after 513/1120).

From Margilan emerged figures including Abd al-Aziz ibn Abd al-Razzaq al-Marghinani (d. 477/1085), Ali ibn Abd al-Aziz ibn Abd al-Razzaq Zahir al-Din al-Kabir al-Marghinani (d. 506/1113), al-Hasan ibn Ali Zahir al-Din al-Kabir ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Marghinani (12th century), and Shaykh al-Imam Abu al-A'imma Abd al-Aziz ibn Abd al-Razzaq ibn Abu Nasr ibn Ja'far ibn Sulayman ibn Matkan al-Marghinani (406/1016–476/1084).

From Uzgend came Ali ibn Sulayman ibn Dawud al-Khatibi Abu al-Hasan al-Uzgandi (11th century) and Abu Muhammad Abd al-Rahman ibn Abdullah ibn Ishaq ibn Ahmad al-Uzgandi (d. 513/1120). From Osh were Mas'ud ibn Mansur ibn Mursal al-Ushi (d. 518/1125), Muhammad ibn Sulayman Abu Abdullah al-Ushi, and Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Khalid Abu Abdullah al-Ushi (d. 612/1216). From Andukan (Andijan) came Abu Hafs Umar ibn Muhammad ibn Tahir al-Andukani al-Sufi (480/1087–545/1150). From Huqand (Kokand) came Abu Tayyib Tahir ibn Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn al-Khayr al-Makhzumi al-Huqandi (d. 501/1107), while from Khujand came Abu Imran Musa ibn Abdullah al-Mu'addib al-Khujandi (d. 360/971).

The names listed above are only a few examples of scholars representing various branches of learning. Efforts to identify, study, and introduce into academic circulation information concerning the names, biographies, and scholarly legacies of representatives of the Fergana fiqh school should continue. The study and publication of works preserved in manuscript collections is a demanding process requiring considerable labor and long periods of research.

Indeed, if we consider that the corpus of Eastern manuscript sources preserved within our country alone consists of tens of thousands of volumes, only a small portion of which has been studied to date, there can be little doubt that many new names and works remain to be discovered. Furthermore, when we take into account the manuscripts related to the scholarly heritage of our region's scholars that are preserved in major academic centers around the world—including Russia, Turkey, England, France, Germany, and other countries—the scale of the work becomes even more apparent. At the same time, the prospects for discovering new scholars and previously unknown works remain highly promising.

The cities that have existed in the Fergana Valley since ancient times, their level of development during the medieval period, urban architecture, and the state of development of science and culture have been

discussed to a considerable extent in various sources. Ancient Fergana, according to medieval historians, including Abu Sa'd Abd al-Karim ibn Muhammad al-Sam'ani (506/1113–562/1167), was a province occupying a vast territory beyond the rivers Jayhun (Amu Darya) and Sayhun (Syr Darya). Among those who provided information about the region, Al-Istakhri noted that the mountains of Fergana were rich in mineral resources. He wrote that gold, silver, iron, coal, mercury, and other minerals were extracted there.

It has been established that during the Middle Ages a number of major cities flourished in the Fergana Valley and that various branches of science and scholarship developed successfully within them. Historical sources provide information about many of the valley's towns and villages. For example, Al-Muqaddasi (10th century) reported that there were more than forty large and small cities in the Fergana Valley. As for Abd al-Karim al-Sam'ani, he mentioned nine cities, seven villages, and one locality (mahalla). Among these were the cities of Akhsikat, Koson, Margilan, Quva, Osh, Uzgend, Khaylam, Kokand, and Khujand. He also listed a number of villages, including Andukon, Gazak, Zarkan, Yadukhkat, Navqad, and Lomish. One of the capital cities of ancient Fergana was Akhsikent (Akhsikat). According to Abd al-Karim al-Sam'ani, it was one of the most beautiful and well-kept cities of Fergana. Meanwhile, Yaqut al-Hamawi reported that the city was situated on a plain among mountains, at a distance of one farsakh from the Syr Darya River. He further noted that the city's citadel (fortress) and rabad (suburban district) were enclosed by walls and that the city had four gates. Around the city there were gardens, while within the rabad (suburban district) there were numerous ponds and irrigation canals running through it. The main congregational mosque (Jāmi' Mosque), the marketplace, the citadel, and other buildings were located in the inner part of Akhsikent. Gold and silver were extracted from the mountains in this region. Archaeological excavations carried out in the area of Eski Aksi (Old Aksi), located in today's Namangan Region, show that the city of Akhsikent holds an important place in the history of Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, and played a significant role in the cultural development of the region. Indeed, the city's history spanning several millennia has also been confirmed by archaeological research.

According to specialists, Akhsikent was founded in the 3rd century BCE, and from the period preceding the Arab conquest until the mid-9th century, the valley was referred to by the name "Fergana". Akhsikent also flourished during the period of the centralized Samanid state as the political, social, and economic center of the Fergana Valley. This conclusion is also supported by

copper coins minted in Akhsikent during this very period, which have been discovered in most regions of Central Asia. Thus, the coins struck in Akhsikent played an important role in the economy of the Samanid state.

Later, during the Karakhanid period, although the political capital was transferred from Akhsikent to Uzgend, Akhsikent continued to remain the economic center of the entire Fergana Valley in the 11th–12th centuries. Continuous caravan routes from the Mediterranean countries and India passed through this region.

Among the material and cultural artifacts discovered in the ruins of Eski Aksi, glazed ceramic vessels are particularly noteworthy. Some of them bear inscriptions in Kufic script. This indicates that the craftsmen of Akhsikent had developed a distinctive school in the production and decoration of glazed ceramics during this period.

In the Middle Ages, Khujand was also considered one of the major cities of the Fergana Valley. Located on the Syr Darya River, the city was conquered in 721–722 during the reign of the Caliph Yazid ibn Abd al-Malik. Yaqut al-Hamawi reported that the city was located on the slopes of a mountain, and that a river flowed through its center. Al-Istakhri, on the other hand, states that commercial ships operated on this river, enabling trade navigation. In the work *Hudud al-'Alam*, it is reported that around the city of Khujand there were many fertile lands, and among fruit trees, pomegranates were cultivated the most. It is also stated that the city's inhabitants were brave and courageous people. There are also views suggesting that the city of Khujand was founded on the site of the ancient city of Eschata, which existed during the time of Alexander the Great (Iskandar Zulqarnayn), or even earlier. As a result of ongoing research in manuscript collections, we have succeeded in discovering another representative of the Fergana fiqh school associated specifically with these two regions, as well as a work attributed to him. This work is *al-Fatāwā al-Qā'idīyya*, authored by Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abi al-Qasim ibn Abi Raja' al-Qā'idī al-Khujandi.

The work belongs to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, which was predominant in our region. In the introduction of the manuscript, the author states that he wrote this work in response to the demands of many of his contemporaries and that, in compiling it, he relied on fatwas included in later scholars' compilations in the genres of *al-nawāzil* and *al-wāqī'āt*.

The most important information in this context is that Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abi al-Qasim ibn Abi Raja' al-Qā'idī al-Khujandi mentions that, in preparing this work, he referred to the fatwas of

Shaykh, Imam, Qadi Taj al-Din Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Akhsikati al-Khujandi. When mentioning the names of scholars, the author describes him as "al-Akhsikati in origin (mavlid), al-Khujandi in residence (mavtan)," meaning "Akhsikati by birthplace and Khujandi by place of life." From this perspective as well, we can observe the participation of two representatives of the Fergana fiqh school in this work.

We have not yet succeeded in obtaining precise information clarifying the biographies of the author of the work and Taj al-Din Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Akhsikati, upon whose fatwas he relied in its compilation. However, there is no doubt that scholars bearing titles such as Shaykh, al-Imam al-Ajall, al-Ustad, Ustad al-A'imma, and Mufti al-Sharq wa al-Sin, namely Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abi al-Qasim ibn Abi Raja' al-Qā'idī al-Khujandi, as well as Shaykh, Imam, Qadi Taj al-Din, Qadi li-Llah wa fi-Llah, Taj al-Din Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Akhsikati al-Khujandi, were among the leading scholars of their time. Research into their biographies and scholarly heritage will certainly continue.

Brockelmann dates the death of the author to 644/1247. Thus, it is reasonable to consider Taj al-Din Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Akhsikati al-Khujandi as a contemporary of prominent representatives of the Fergana fiqh school such as Fakhr al-Din Qazi Khan (d. 1196) and Burhan al-Din al-Marghinani (1118–1197).

The work *Fatāwā Qā'idīyya* was compiled in accordance with the traditional structural composition of classical fiqh works. As a result, the legal issues in the book are presented within 54 books (kutub) and several additional sections called "masā'il" (issues). The work is only rarely divided into chapters (abwāb) and subsections (fuṣūl).

In substantiating legal rulings, verses of the Holy Qur'an and Hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him) are cited. In places where Qur'anic verses are quoted, the beginning of the verse is highlighted in red ink.

Among the distinctive features of the work is the inclusion of certain topics within thematically related books. For example, issues of ablution (tahāra) are included within the "Kitāb al-Ṣalāt" (Book of Prayer), while inheritance matters are included within the "Kitāb al-Waṣāyā" (Book of Bequests), and so on.

Alongside Taj al-Din Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Akhsikati al-Khujandi, the work incorporates the fatwas of dozens of scholars from our region, including al-Hasan ibn Sulayman al-Khujandi, al-Hasan ibn Ali al-Marghinani, Fakhr al-Din Qazi Khan, Zahir al-Din al-Marghinani, Ali al-Sughdi, and Umar al-Nasafi.

Manuscripts of *Fatāwā Qā'idīyya* have survived to the

present day, and copies are preserved in various manuscript collections around the world. Two copies are held in the manuscript fund of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The first is manuscript no. 2392, which is relatively ancient. Based on its paper, script, and general paleographic features, it can be dated to the 13th century, possibly even copied during the author's lifetime. The manuscript consists of 400 folios and measures 19.5 × 29.5 cm. Each page contains 29 lines of text written in Naskh script. The manuscript is defective, and some folios are missing.

The second manuscript of this work is preserved in the same manuscript collection under inventory number 4918. It was copied in 1226/1811 in Nasta'liq script by the calligrapher Qilich Niyaz. The manuscript consists of a total of 364 folios, with 24 lines written on each page. Its dimensions are 25 × 29 cm. Written on Central Asian paper, the manuscript is well preserved.

Another copy of *Fatāwā al-Qā'idīyya*, preserved in Turkey under inventory number 624, was copied in 1122/1710 in Naskh script. Each page contains 27 lines of text, enclosed within a gold-colored frame. The titles of books, chapters, and sections are written in red ink. The manuscript consists of 515 folios and measures 20.9 × 30.9 cm.

Another noteworthy feature of *Fatāwā al-Qā'idīyya* is that its legal opinions (fatwas) are presented in both Arabic and Persian. This may be due to the fact that a significant portion of the population of Khujand consisted of Persian speakers, which necessitated presenting the rulings in two languages. In fact, in the works of scholars of the Fergana fiqh school, the use of Persian elements and occasional phrases in Persian is frequently encountered. This was likely connected to the need to explain and clarify certain terms and expressions for the local population.

However, in *Fatāwā al-Qā'idīyya*, Persian text constitutes a much larger portion. On nearly every page, about half of the text is in Arabic and the other half in Persian. Therefore, this situation may reflect the early stages of a gradual transition from the tradition of writing fiqh works in Arabic within the Fergana fiqh school to increased use of Persian.

In conclusion, the scholarly legacy of Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abi al-Qasim ibn Abi Raja' al-Qā'idī al-Khujandi and Shaykh, Imam, Qadi Taj al-Din Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Akhsikati al-Khujandi shows that, during the early period of the Mongol invasion of Transoxiana, certain factors contributed to the increased use of Persian in the composition of fiqh texts. As a result, from this period onward, the writing of fiqh works in Persian gradually came to occupy a

dominant position in the region.

The mentioned work of the representatives of the Fergana fiqh school has not yet been studied or published. Therefore, it is hoped that future research on this work will help uncover new aspects of the Fergana fiqh school.

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