

A New Example from The Scholarly Legacy of The Fergana School of FIQH

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Abstract: This study explores the scholarly contributions of the Fergana School of Fiqh, with a focus on two prominent figures: Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abu-al-Qasim ibn Abu Rajo al-Qaydi al-Khojandi and Tajuddin Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Ahsikati al-Khojandi. Their work, particularly *Fatawa al-Qaidiyya*, represents a significant contribution to Hanafi jurisprudence in the Transoxiana region during the medieval period. Manuscript evidence indicates that the early Mongol invasions influenced an increasing use of Persian alongside Arabic in fiqh compositions, marking a gradual linguistic transition in the scholarly tradition. The study highlights the historical context of major cities in the Fergana Valley, including Ahsikent and Khojand, and emphasizes the cultural, economic, and intellectual development that shaped these scholars' works. Further research on these manuscripts is expected to reveal previously unexplored aspects of the Fergana Fiqh School, contributing to the broader understanding of Central Asian Islamic legal and intellectual history.

Keywords: Fergana School of Fiqh, Abu Abdullah al-Qaydi al-Khojandi, Tajuddin al-Ahsikati al-Khojandi, *Fatawa al-Qaidiyya*, Hanafi jurisprudence, Persian and Arabic manuscripts, Central Asia, Transoxiana, medieval Islamic scholarship, manuscript studies.

Introduction: In the early medieval period, various branches of science and knowledge developed rapidly in the territory of our country. This period, often referred to in scholarly literature as the "early renaissance," saw scholars from our region making significant contributions to this scientific progress. One distinctive feature of this era was the formation of unique scientific schools in different regions of Transoxiana, and these schools contributed to the overall development of science in the region. It is a well-established fact, confirmed by later research, that a distinct scientific school emerged in the Fergana region during the early medieval period. During this time, the Fergana School of Fiqh was also established in the Fergana Valley, which played an important role in the development of Islamic sciences in the medieval period. It not only influenced Transoxiana but also contributed to the broader Islamic world by producing scholars who held a significant place in the

advancement of Islamic knowledge.

In the early medieval period, the Fergana School of Fiqh produced over one hundred prominent scholars from various cities of the Fergana Valley. From the city of Ahsikent/Ahsikhat came: Abu-l-Wafa Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ahsikati (d. 519/1126), Zu-l-Fazail Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Ahsikati (465/1073–528/1134), Asiruddin al-Ahsikati (501/1108–594/1198), Abdullah ibn Qoid ibn Aqil ibn al-Husayn ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Ahmad al-Ahsikati (461/1069–514/1121), and Abu Rashid Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Ahsikati (406/1067–535/1140). From Koson: Abu Bakr ibn Mas'ud ibn Ahmad Alaudin al-Kosoni (d. 585/1191), Abu-l-Jawd Ato ibn Ahmad ibn as-Sadiq al-Khalidi al-Kosoni (12th century), and Bakr ibn Sulayman ibn Imran ibn Ilyas al-Kosoni (d. after 513/1120). From Margilan: Abdulaziz ibn Abdurrazzaq al-Marghinoni (d. 477/1085), Ali ibn Abdulaziz ibn Abdurrazzaq Zahiruddin al-Kabir al-Marghinoni (d.

506/1113), Al-Hasan ibn Ali Zahiruddin al-Kabir ibn Abdulaziz al-Marghinoni (12th century), and Ash-Shaikhul-Umam Abu-l-Aimma Abdulaziz ibn Abdurrazaq ibn Abu Nasr ibn Ja'far ibn Sulayman ibn Matkan al-Marghinoni (406/1016–476/1084). From Uzgend: Ali ibn Sulayman ibn Dawud al-Khatibi Abu-l-Hasan al-Uzgendî (11th century), Abu Muhammad Abdurrahman ibn Abdullah ibn Ishaq ibn Ahmad al-Uzgendî (d. 513/1120). From Osh: Mas'ud ibn Mansur ibn Mursal al-Oshi (d. 518/1125), Muhammad ibn Sulayman Abu Abdullah al-Oshi – Shaykh al-Islam, Nasiruddin (12th century), and Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Khalid Abu Abdullah al-Oshi (d. 612/1216), From Andukon (Andijan): Abu Hafu Umar ibn Muhammad ibn Tahir al-Andukoni al-Sufi (480/1087–545/1150). From Khokand (Kokand): Abu Tayyib Tahir ibn Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn al-Khayr al-Makhzumi al-Khukandi (d. 501/1107). From Khojand: Abu Imran Musa ibn Abdullah al-Muaddib al-Khojandi (d. 360/1067). These names can serve as examples of representatives from various fields of knowledge.

The work of searching for information on the names, biographies, and scholarly legacies of representatives of the Fergana School of Fiqh, and introducing them into academic discourse, must continue. This is because researching the works preserved in manuscript collections and bringing them to light is a laborious and long-term process. Considering that the Eastern manuscript sources in our country alone comprise several tens of thousands of volumes, and only a very small portion of them has been studied to date, there is no doubt that many new names and works remain to be discovered. Moreover, if we also take into account the manuscripts related to the scholarly heritage of our region's scholars preserved in major research centers around the world—in Russia, Turkey, England, France, Germany, and other countries—the scope of this work is vast. At the same time, it gives strong grounds for hope regarding the discovery of new names and works.

The cities that have existed in the Fergana Valley since ancient times—their level of development in the medieval period, urban architecture, and the state of scientific, intellectual, and cultural advancement—have been discussed to a considerable extent in various sources.

According to ancient Fergana and medieval historians, including Abu Sa'd Abd al-Karim ibn Muhammad Sam'ani (506/1113–562/1167), the region occupied a large territory beyond the Jayhun and Sayhun rivers. Istakhri, who also provided information about the region, emphasized that the mountains of Fergana were rich in mineral resources, noting that gold, silver, iron, coal, mercury, and other minerals were extracted there.

In the medieval period, a number of large cities were established in the Fergana Valley, and various branches of science and knowledge developed successfully in these urban centers. Historical sources provide information about many towns and villages in the valley. In particular, al-Muqaddasi (10th century) reported that there were more than forty large and small cities in the Fergana Valley. Abdulkarim Sam'ani mentioned nine cities, seven villages, and one neighborhood. Among these were the cities of Ahsikent, Koson, Margilan, Kuva, Osh, Uzgend, Khaylam, Kokand, and Khojand, as well as a number of villages such as Andukon, Gazak, Zarkan, Yadukhat, Navqad, and Lomish .

One of the capital cities of ancient Fergana was Ahsikent (Ahsikat). Abdulkarim Sam'ani described this city as one of the most beautiful and well-maintained cities of Fergana, while Yaqut al-Hamawi reported that it was located on a plain among the mountains, at a distance of one farsakh from the Syr Darya. According to his account, the city had a fortress and a suburb surrounded by walls, with four gates. Around the city there were gardens, and within the suburb there were numerous ponds through which canals flowed. The large Friday mosque, the market, the fortress, and other buildings were located within the inner part of Ahsikent city. Gold and silver were mined from the mountains in this area.

Archaeological excavations conducted in the area of Eski Ahsikent, located in present-day Namangan region, indicate that the city of Ahsikent held significant importance in the history of Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, and occupied a special place in the region's cultural development. Indeed, archaeological research has confirmed that the city has a history spanning several millennia. According to experts, Ahsikent was founded in the 3rd century BCE and, from the eve of the Arab conquest until the mid-9th century, was known in the valley by the name "Fergana". Ahsikent also flourished as the political, social, and economic center of the Fergana Valley during the period of the centralized Samanid state. This conclusion is confirmed by copper coins minted in Ahsikent during that period, which have been found in many provinces of Central Asia. Thus, the coins struck in Ahsikent played an important role in the economy of the Samanid state. Later, although the political capital was moved from Ahsikent to Uzgend during the Kara-Khanid period, Ahsikent remained the economic center of the entire Fergana Valley in the 11th–12th centuries. Continuous caravans arrived here from the countries of the Mediterranean and India. Among the material and cultural artifacts discovered at the ruins of Eski Ahsikent, glazed ceramic vessels are particularly

notable, some of which bear inscriptions in Kufic script. This indicates that the artisans of Ahsikent had developed a distinct school for glazing and decorating pottery during that period.

In the medieval period, Khojand was also considered one of the major cities of the Fergana Valley. This city, located along the Syr Darya, was conquered in 721–722 CE during the reign of Caliph Yazid ibn Abdul Malik. Yaqut al-Hamawi noted that the city was situated on a mountain slope with a river running through its center. Istakhri further reported that trade ships regularly navigated this river. In the work *Hudud al-'Alam*, it is reported that the area around the city of Khojand had many fertile lands, with pomegranate trees being especially abundant, and that the city's inhabitants were courageous and warlike. There are also opinions that the city of Khojand 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 research conducted in manuscript collections, we succeeded in identifying another representative of the Fergana School of Fiqh associated specifically with these two regions, as well as a work attributed to him. This work is *al-Fatawa al-Qaidiyya*, authored by Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abu-l-Qasim ibn Abu Rajo al-Qaydi al-Khojandi. The work is considered a key source on the Hanafi fiqh, which predominated in our region. In the introduction of the manuscript, the author states that he composed this work in response to the needs of many of his contemporaries and that its compilation was based on fatwas included in the collections of later scholars in the genres of *al-Nawazil* and *al-Waqi'at*. The most important information here is that Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abu-l-Qasim ibn Abu Rajo al-Qaydi al-Khojandi explicitly refers, in preparing this work, to the fatwas of Shaykh, Imam, and Qadi Tajuddin Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Ahsikati al-Khojandi. When citing the names of scholars, the author of the work refers to them as "al-Ahsikati mawlidan, al-Khojandi mawtinan"—that is, "by birthplace Ahsikati, by place of residence Khojand." From this perspective, we can see that the work involves two representatives of the Fergana School of Fiqh. So far, we have not been able to find detailed information clarifying the identity of Tajuddin Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Ahsikati, whose fatwas the author relied upon in compiling the work. However, it is beyond doubt that Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abu-l-Qasim ibn Abu Rajo al-Qaydi al-Khojandi, who held the titles Shaykh, al-Imam al-Ajal, al-Ustaz, Ustaz al-Aimma, and Mufti al-Sharq wa-s-Sin, and Tajuddin Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Ahsikati al-Khojandi, who held the titles Shaykh, Imam, Qadi,

Qadi lillah, and fi-l-lah, were among the leading scholars of their time. Continuing research to clarify their biographies and scholarly legacies remains essential.

Brockelmann records the author's date of death as 644/1247. Thus, there is reason to consider that the scholar Tajuddin Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Ahsikati al-Khojandi was a contemporary of the accomplished representatives of the Fergana School of Fiqh, such as Fakhruddin Qazikhon (d. 1196) and Burhanuddin al-Marghinoni (1118–1197). The work *Fatawa al-Qaidiyya* was compiled in accordance with the traditional structural organization of fiqh works. As a result, the fiqh issues in the work are presented within 54 books and several additional sections called *masa'il* (issues). The work is only occasionally divided into chapters and subsections. In substantiating the fatwas, verses from the Qur'an and hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him) are cited. In places where Qur'anic verses are quoted, the beginning of each verse is highlighted in red ink. A distinctive feature of the work is that certain topics are incorporated into sections typically associated with other subjects. For example, issues of ritual purification (*taharah*) are included under *Kitab as-Salat* (Book of Prayer), inheritance issues under *Kitab al-Wasaya* (Book of Wills), and so on. Alongside Tajuddin Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Ahsikati al-Khojandi, the fatwas of dozens of scholars from our region are also included in the work, such as al-Hasan ibn Sulayman al-Khojandi, al-Hasan ibn Ali al-Marghinoni, Fakhruddin Qazikhon, Zahiruddin al-Marghinoni, Ali al-Sughdi, and Umar an-Nasafi.

The manuscripts of the work *Fatawa al-Qaidiyya* have survived to the present day. Copies of the work are preserved in manuscript collections in various countries. The Manuscript Fund of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan preserves two copies of the work.

The first copy, cataloged under inventory number 2392, is quite old. Based on its paper, script style, and other paleographic features, it can be dated to the 13th century, possibly even copied during the author's lifetime. The manuscript comprises a total of 400 folios, measuring 19.5 × 29.5 cm. Each page contains 29 lines of text in *naskh* script. The manuscript is incomplete, with some folios missing.

The second copy, preserved under inventory number 4918 in the same collection, was copied in 1226/1811 CE by a scribe named Qilich Niyaz in *nasta'liq* script. This manuscript comprises 364 folios, with 24 lines of text per folio. Its dimensions are 25 × 29 cm. Written on Central Asian paper, this manuscript is well preserved.

A copy of *Fatawa al-Qaidiyya* preserved in Turkey under

inventory number 624 was copied in naskh script in 1122/1710 CE. Each page contains 27 lines of text framed in a gold-colored border. The titles of books, chapters, and sections are written in red ink. The manuscript comprises 515 folios and measures 20.9 × 30.9 cm.

Another notable feature of *Fatawa al-Qaidiyya* is that the fatwas are presented in both Arabic and Persian. This was likely because many inhabitants of Khojand spoke Persian, necessitating dual-language presentation. In fact, it is common in the works of representatives of the Fergana School of Fiqh to include Persian elements or even entire sentences in Persian. This was probably intended to explain certain terms and phrases to the local population. However, in *Fatawa al-Qaidiyya*, the Persian text constitutes a significant portion of the work. On each page, roughly half of the text is in Arabic, while the other half is in Persian. This situation may reflect the beginning of a gradual transition from the traditional practice of writing most fiqh works in Arabic to incorporating Persian within the Fergana School during that period.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the scholarly legacy of the Fergana School of Fiqh, represented by Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abu-l-Qasim ibn Abu Rajo al-Qaydi al-Khojandi and Shaykh, Imam, Qadi Tajuddin Abu Bakr ibn Ahmad al-Ahsikati al-Khojandi, demonstrates that during the early stages of the Mongol invasions in the region of Transoxiana, certain factors led to an increased use of Persian in the composition of fiqh works. As a result, from this period onward, writing fiqh works in Persian gradually became predominant in the region. The works of the Fergana School's scholars, including this particular work, have not yet been fully studied or published. Therefore, further research on this work is expected to reveal new aspects characteristic of the Fergana School of Fiqh.

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