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Review Article

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Mawlana Sobitkhontura Namangani – Representative of the Fergana School of Fiqh

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Abstract: This article provides information about the life and scholarly activities of Mawlana Sayyid Sabikhontura Namangani and his contribution to the development of the Fergana fiqh school. It also briefly introduces the activities of madrasas and the intellectual environment in the city of Namangan during his time. In particular, important information is provided about the scholar's intellectual heritage and the works he left behind, highlighting their significance in the present day.

Keywords: Fergana Fiqh School, Sabitkhontura Namanganiy, Abul-Maoniy, tafsir, hadith, fatwa, madrasa, al-Fath ar-Rahmoniy.

INTRODUCTION

Representatives of the Fergana School of Fiqh made a tremendous contribution to the development of Islamic sciences. In particular, their scholarly heritage in the field of fiqh deserves special emphasis.

In the Middle Ages, favorable conditions were formed in the Fergana region for the establishment of a local school of fiqh. Various sources and literary works state that over 500 scholars emerged from this region during that period. More than thirty of them are specifically recognized for their contributions to the development of the science of fiqh, including jurists such as Alouddin al-Kasani (d. 1191), Sirajuddin al-Ushi (d. 1179), Burhanuddin al-Marghinani (1118–1197), and Husamuddin al-Akhsikati (d. 1247). However, the lives and scientific legacy of most of these jurists have not been studied [3: 94].

The scholarly traditions of the Fergana School of Fiqh were continued by several scholars in later periods. Their scholarly activities—particularly those of the scholars who lived during the period after the Russian Empire entered our region—have remained almost entirely unstudied. One of those ancestors who contributed to the preservation of our religious values and to the development of the regional fiqh school was the scholar Sobitkhontura Namangani.

THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Sobitkhontura Namangani was a prominent scholar who emerged from the city of Namangan at the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. Very little information is available about him, and what exists is not sufficiently detailed. This is because the period in which he lived coincided with the height of colonial policies aimed at suppressing patriotic local forces and intellectuals.

Mawlana Sayyid Sobitkhontura was born in 1866 in a scholarly family in the city of Namangan [2: 60]. His full name is *Mawlana Sayyid Sobitkhontura Abu-l-Ma'ani ibn Sayyid Fayzikhontura an-Namangani al-Farghani al-Hanafi an-Naqshbandi*.

His ancestors were educated and well-known among the people. For instance, his fourth-generation ancestor, Muhammad Zokir an-Namangani an-Naqshbandi, was popularly known as "Zokirkhoja Eshon." He was a distinguished scholar and representative of Sufism in his time, and many of his descendants became muftis, judges, and scholars [9: 99].

His father, Fayzikhon Eshon; his grandfather, Ulughkhon Eshon; and his great-grandfather, Sulaymon Eshon, were all representatives of the Naqshbandi order. They held high ranks within the Kokand Khanate and served in various official positions.

His maternal ancestors were also educated, and his mother was an enlightened woman. As a result, she played a significant role in guiding all her children toward knowledge and raising them with strong moral and scholarly potential [9: 177].

Sayyid Sobitkhontura was the youngest of ten sons in his family. Four of them died in childhood, while the remaining six—Yahyokhontura, Davudkhontura, Junaydkhontura, Ikromkhontura, Kamolkhontura, and Sobitkhontura—grew up to become prominent scholars**.**

Sobitkhontura received his initial religious education from his father, Fayzikhon Tura. Being

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the youngest child in the family, his parents often encouraged his older brothers to assist him in his studies. As a result, he acquired his foundational knowledge at home. He then continued his studies at the "Azizkhoja" and "Sayyidqulibek" madrasas in Namangan.

For some time, he stayed at the spiritual center (dervish lodge) of Sayyid Inoyatkhoja ibn Ulughkhoja ibn Niyozkhoja Eshon Langariy (1836–1899), where he also received education and spiritual training [7: 14]. Although still young, his teachers recognized his abilities and granted him permission to teach introductory lessons to beginning students at the age of just twelve. Later, in pursuit of deeper knowledge, he went to Kokand and studied at the "Khan" madrasa there before returning [1: 61].

He studied in depth the sciences of tafsir, hadith, eloquence and jurisprudence from the most prominent scholars of his time, mastered the sciences of Sharia and achieved a high rank in tariqa. For this reason, he was appointed mufti of the Fergana Valley and Chairman of the Council of Ulema of the Valley. In those years, permission was granted with the signature of Sobitkhantura Namangani to publish more classified books [7: 313].

The activity of Sobitkhontura Abu-l-Ma'ani as the Mufti of the Fergana Valley is described as follows:

"In the city of Jalal-Abad in the Kyrgyz Republic, lives Zuhriddin Makhdum Bobo, now over one hundred years old, who continues to spread knowledge and guidance to Muslims through numerous fatwas. He recounts:

My spiritual guide had been invited to attend the scholarly council session of the religious administration of the Kokand Khanate. My father took me along to visit these great scholars. We traveled to the city of Kokand by train. The chairman of the council was Sobitkhontura Abu-l-Ma'ani. At that time, he served in the position of mufti, issuing fatwas. My spiritual guide asked him to offer a prayer (du'a) on my behalf. I was around nine or ten years old at the time" [7: 313].

According to records, Sobitkhontura made the pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca and Medina multiple times. He lived for three years in a neighborhood near Al-Masjid an-Nabawi in Madinah al-Munawwarah, where he engaged in scholarly work [9: 17]. There, he studied under a scholar named Sayyid Alawi. Before long, his fame spread among scholars of both the Arab world and Central Asia, and he became known by the honorary title *"Abu-l-Ma'ani"* (Father of Meanings). The people of Madinah, impressed by his scholarly depth in issuing fatwas and his method of teaching, began calling him "Abu Hanifa" [8: 69].

While living in Madinah, Mawlana Sobitkhontura was invited to an academic conference organized by the Saudi Council of Scholars. The conference was marked by deep scholarly debates and discussions. Sobitkhontura responded to most of the questions with well-grounded explanations and commentary. His strict adherence to Sharia and his extensive knowledge left a strong positive impression on the participants. The chairman of the council also specifically praised his scholarly ability and intellect. It was after this event that the scholars conferred upon Sobitkhontura the honorary title *"Abu-l-Ma'ani"* [2: 61].

Sobitkhontura Namangani, after staying for a period in Madinah al-Munawwarah, returned to his homeland, Namangan. He was welcomed with great joy by the people. Upon returning to Namangan, he not only issued fatwas on Sharia matters but also focused on teaching, preaching, and especially on the spiritual upbringing of students.

In the territory of the Kokand Khanate, the Naqshbandiyya-Majzubbiyya order had spread widely. Its development owed much to Abdulaziz Majzub Namangani (d. 1957), his descendants, and his disciples. In particular, during that time, Majzub Namangani's grandson Atoullohon Tura and Hoji Muhammad Eshon (known as Khojimat Eshon) played an important role. After the death of Atoullohon Tura, Sobitkhontura became the spiritual leader (murshid) of this order.

Also, after the death of his elder brother, Sayyid Yahyokhontura—who was a preacher, commentator, and devout scholar of his time—his students strongly requested that Sobitkhontura take his brother's place, deliver sermons to the followers, and provide guidance. Sobitkhontura agreed and continued his brother's work at the Jome Mosque. From early morning until noon, he taught the book *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* to more than two hundred students. On Fridays, after the dawn prayer, more than a thousand students and scholars gathered in the mosque, and he gave a sermon. The congregation listened attentively to his speeches, which were deeply impactful. At the end of the talk, he answered questions. At night, he would

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come to the mosque for the tahajjud prayer, and there would be a circle of dhikr (remembrance). Hundreds of people would attend these dhikr gatherings [8: 71].

In 1912, after the newly constructed "Mulla Qirgiz" madrasa was completed, he also served as a mudarris (teacher) there.

Not only students, but even other mudarrises in the city were eager to take lessons from Sobitkhontura. His influence and capability naturally attracted any person of knowledge to seek instruction from him. Among his students were prominent scholars and leaders of the Sufi path such as: Hamid Mirza Namangani (1902–1973), Abdugafur Qori, son of Abduljalil Domla (1872–1949), Lutfullohon Eshon, son of Mirzajon Eshon (1888–1972), Ishaq Makhdum, son of Mulla Solih (1908–1976), Hamidkhon Qori, son of Usmonkhon (1895–1958) [1: 70].

Sobhithontura Abu-l-Ma'niy's scholarly works are also quite substantial. He wrote works in Arabic, Persian, and Uzbek languages. His works in Uzbek and Arabic are published separately in collections.

The scholarly and literary legacy of the scholar includes the following works:

1. *"Bashorat an-Najot fi Isharat as-Solat"* (The Prophecy of Salvation in the Sign of Prayer).
2. *"Tajhiz al-Amwat"* (Preparing the Dead for Burial). This work is printed in the Turkic script in Uzbek language at the *Sinda* press in Bukhara.
3. *"Kitab at-Talaq"* (The Book of Divorce).
4. *"Kashf an-Niqab fi Masalat al-Hijab"* (The Clarification of the Issue of Hijab).
5. *"Iqaz al-Ghafil wa-r-Rafid bi Bayani Hukmi Aimat al-Mazahib"* (Awakening the Neglectful and Rejecting Those Who Deny the Rulings of the Imams of the Madhahib).
6. *"Bulugh al-Matalib wa-l-Ma'arib fi Hifzi Adabi Aimat al-Mazahib"* (Achieving Goals and Desires in Preserving the Etiquette of the Imams of the Madhahib).
7. *"Al-Baraheen al-Qati'a"* (The Decisive Evidence).
8. *"Al-Fath ar-Rahmoniy fi Fatawa as-Sayyid Abi-l-Ma'niy"* (The "Fath ar-Rahmoniy" work dedicated to the Fatwas of Abu-l-Ma'niy).

The majority of these books were printed in the lithographic method and were used as textbooks for students of knowledge at that time [8: 18].

In the final years of his life, Sobhithontura Namangani was persecuted by the Tsarist government. He was subjected to a search of his house on charges of opposing the government. However, no substantial evidence was found at his house, and he was taken to court and interrogated. They urged him to support the communist policies, but he refused to accept their demands. As a result, he was restricted from scientific activity and sentenced to house arrest for the remainder of his life.

Sobhithontura Namangani passed away in 1928 and was buried in the "Manguilik" cemetery in Namangan city [1: 70].

After our country gained independence, in 1992, one of the newly built mosques in Namangan city was named "Sayyid Sobhithontura."

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be stated that Sobhithontura Namangani, through his active social and scientific work and his works, contributed greatly to the continuation of the traditions of the Fergana Fiqh School and the preservation of our national and religious values. Researching and introducing to scholarly circulation the scientific legacy of the scholar, which sheds light on universal human ideas, national and religious traditions, and legal norms in fiqh science, is an important task ahead of us.

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