

YASSAWI CULTURE VERSUS HISTORICAL MARXIST DIALECTIC*

Tarihi Marksist Diyalektik Karşısında Yesevi Kültürü

Dossay KENZHETAYEV**

Muzaffer TAN***

Abstract

It is clear that Sufism is one of the most important elements that contributed to the spread of Islam among the Turks. In this sense, as the founder of the first Turkish Sufi tradition, Ahmad Yassawi, who left a deep mark on the spiritual life of the Turks deserves a special attention. Since the Yassawi culture was the first example of Turkish Sufi tradition, spiritual activities of Ahmad Yassawi has a remarkable place. Ahmad Yassawi is considered as the first Sufi of Turkish culture. Yassawi culture is the deepest dimension of living religious experience. It neither made any concessions to the seventy-year communist regime, nor accepted the compromise. It did not melt in front of the synthesis of atheist education. It did not lose its identity under the weight of atheist propaganda and pressure, and survived until today. Even after the power in Turkestan passed to the communist regime which argued that it destroyed the eternal foundations of the economic, social, religious life of Islam, Islam continued to exist, and in this the Yassawi culture had a crucial role. This research deals with the problem of the importance of Yassawi culture from a historical point of view.

Keywords: Ahmad Yassawi, Yassawi culture, Sufism, Marxist Dialectics, Atheism

Öz

Tasavvufun, İslam'ın Türkler arasında yayılmasına katkıda bulunan en önemli unsurlardan biri olduğu açıktır. Bu anlamda ilk Türk Sufi geleneğinin kurucusu olan ve Türklerin ruhsal yaşamına derin bir iz bırakan Ahmet Yesevi özel bir ilgiyi hak etmiştir. Yesevi kültürü Türk Sufi geleneğinin ilk örneği olduğundan, Ahmed Yesevi'nin manevi faaliyetleri dikkate değer bir yere sahiptir. Ahmet Yesevi Türk kültürünün ilk mutasavvufu sayılmaktadır. Yesevi kültürü, yaşayan dini deneyimin en derin boyutudur. Ne yetmiş yıllık komünist rejime taviz verdi, ne de onunla uzlaşmayı kabul etti. Ateist eğitimin sentezi karşısında erimedi. Ateist propaganda ve baskı altında kimliğini kaybetmedi ve bugüne kadar hayatta kaldı. Türkistan'daki iktidar, İslam'ın ekonomik, sosyal, dini yaşamının ebedi temellerini yok ettiğini iddia eden komünist rejime geçtikten sonra bile, İslam var olmaya devam etti ve bunun içinde Yesevi kültürü çok önemli bir role sahiptir. Bu araştırma, Yesevi kültürünün önemini tarihsel bir bakış açısından ele alacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ahmet Yesevi, Yesevi kültürü, Tasavvuf, Marksist Diyalektik, Ateizm

* Geliş Tarihi: 10.02.2020, Kabul Tarihi: 28.05.2020, DOI: 10.34189/hbv.95.012

** Prof. Dr., Hoca Ahmet Yesevi Uluslararası Türk-Kazak Üniversitesi, Beşeri Bilimler Fakültesi, İlahiyat Bölümü, Kazakistan, dosaykz@mail.ru, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0507-1011>

*** Doç. Dr., Ankara Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi, Temel İslam Bilimleri Bölümü, İslam Mezhepleri Tarihi Anabilim Dalı, Ankara/Türkiye, tanmuzaffer@yahoo.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6969-0618>

1. Introduction

It is clear that Sufism is one of the most important elements that contributed to the spread of Islam among the Turks. In this sense, as the founder of the first Turkish order, Ahmad Yassawi, who left a deep mark on the spiritual life of the Turks deserves a special attention (Eraslan, 1995: 794). Since the Yassawi culture was the first example of Turkish Sufi tradition, spiritual activities of Ahmad Yassawi has a remarkable place. So, Fuad Köprülü described Ahmad Yassawi as the first Sufi of Turkish culture (Köprülü, 1991:415).

Different views of the Sufi tradition are portrayed in Turkestan. For example, there is a statement that “any order after the Sufi idea finally matured” (Eraslan, 1995: 794), just as there is a statement that The first time, in the 12th century, Islam began to come across the serious attacks of non-Muslim invaders (in the east - Karakitai, in the west - Crusaders), Sufism played the role of defender of the faith, and was characterized as a movement of the masses. In this sense, for example, when the external and internal enemies the number of which has increased dramatically began to attack on the faith, the society gathered around the sheikhs, subordinating his life and rigorous system of mandatory rules, appeared on the scene as the Sufi orders (Bennigsen, 1988: 16).

Here what is meant by the “Yassawi culture” is “Turkish Sufism”, “Sufi orders of Turkestan”, “Muslim faith of Turkish people” or more broadly “Turkish Islam”. Similar ideas are found in the works of the orientalists and Turcologists of tsarist Russia. It is known that extensive studies of Turkish culture, folklore, beliefs, language, literature, mythology, rituals and traditions were conducted in tsarist Russia. These “collected materials” were used by the Soviet government and the Communist regime against the Turks in their efforts to assimilate and destroy all faith and cultural values of local people.

It is known that al-Gazzali (d. 1111), the famous medieval Muslim theologian, jurist, philosopher and mystic argued that Sufism has superior methods to defend Muslim creed than that of Batiniyya, Kalam and philosophy. This view did not escape the attention of the ideologists of Communist regime. Therefore, using the Sufi ideas, principles, they adopted “the Marxist dialectical interpretation of historical materialism.” as their methods. Lenin has a famous statement “Nothing can arise out of nothing ... so we shall build the new socialist system out of the materials at our disposal” And so, the atheism has seen as an inseparable part of the Marxist-Leninist ideology and called “scientific atheism” (Topaloğlu, 1999: 13). From a theoretical and practical point of view, the scientific atheism became the method of propagation of atheism, laying the foundation of atheist education system.

Objectively speaking, the atheistic communist regime used theoretically and practically the cultural materials of Yassawism” in education. How and by which methods was this system of education able to use the Turkic cultural values, that is,

the Yassawi culture in creating a foundation for its aims? The answer to this question now and in the future will be of paramount importance from the viewpoints of Islam and human life. Our work aims to search for answer to this question.

2. Theoretical and Practical “Foundation” of Scientific Atheism

Objectively speaking, we can say that materialist monism which reduces the existence of God to the material principles has been the philosophical basis of atheism. Monism is referring to the systems that reduce the being to the single principle such as idea, spirit, material etc. On the other hand, as in the monism, in the pantheism creator and his creations are combined and reduced to a single principle (Erdem, 1990: 3). From this point of view, materialism is in a sort of relationship with the monism and pantheism. For example, a material system that exists comes down to the atom of matter. Suleiman H. Bolay defines atheism as follows: “Atheism does not recognize any cause in the explanations of natural phenomena. It accepts the world as a single and immutable existence. This entity is an immanent entity. In this sense, Pantheism can be considered an atheist understanding” (Bolay, 1996: 387). As a product of idealist thought, the concept of the immanent is, later on, used by the materialist and some monist systems.

Thus, Soviet ideologists shows materialism as the philosophical and ontological source of of atheism and while pantheism as the source of materialism (Nurgaliyev, 1996: 260). In this point there exists information that in the middle Ages, materialism continued its existence in the form of pantheism and atheism, based on the concept of “infinity of nature and God.” In the Enlightenment, it continued to exist in the form of Hylozoism - the notion that all matter is animated, or on its own, or through participation in the functioning of the world of the soul, or in any similar way. In terms of the relationship of God and the universe Hüsametdin Erdem points out “Pantheistic perception has two forms: the first is the fact that God is the unique truth and the second is the universe is the only truth. In these two pantheistic explanations of relationship between God and universe, the former is refers to theistic explanation, the latter to the atheistic one. The first (acosmism) is more metaphysics; the second (pancosmism) is physical and material. While the religion and philosophy lie in the Cosmism, the open materialism lies in pancosmism” (Erdem, 1990: 10). This is the same “material” as what was used by Soviet ideologists.

The theoretical foundation upon which “scientific atheism” is based in using the Yassawi culture is pantheism. That is, the basis of Yassawi-Sufi tradition was purposefully identified with pantheism, even if its unreliability was realized by Soviet ideologists later.

Some experts of scientific atheism found out that such distortions are not allowed to continue, thus that it is not possible to find a compromise between the doctrine of Karl Marx and worldviews of Ahmad Yassawi (Mambetaliyev, 1969: 39). However, there are some people who still accept the united pantheism and monotheism, mys-

ticism and Sufism. Here are some examples: pantheistic terms to refer to mystical concepts used in the Islamic Sufism. The historical fact is that because of the perception of pantheism as atheism, many put them on one scale and looked at them with suspicion. However, whatever the case, since they do not deny the existence of God, the pantheists cannot be regarded as atheists (Afifi, 1975: 36). If you try to understand the similarities and pantheistic Sufi philosophy in terms of form and content, in fact it turns out that “scientific atheism” is not scientific, and the science and philosophy are only the vehicles to hide the ideological and political purposes (Topalođlu, 1999: 14).

In reality, the ideology of Marxism has no relevance to science, because the Marxist theory of communism primarily saw the thought and philosophy as a vehicle to change the world, thus ascribing the concept of God an ideological and practical meaning. Atheism in the Marxist ideology, more than being scientific atheism, is basically eclectic, not philosophical and theological (i.e. theoretical atheism is not possible), and carrying official, political, ideological and practical features (Taylan, 1998: 113). Therefore, being an inseparable part of Marxism-Leninism, atheism became a propaganda tool in the fight of communist regime against religion. It is known that atheism was the official ideological cult of state during the reign of Stalin, and in later periods scientific atheism was put into action to struggle against religion (Erşahin, 1999: 306). The main doctrine of Marx and his followers was the fact that religion is the means to oppress and manage the people. Therefore, it is obligatory to eliminate religion, because religion is the opium for the people. After the elimination of religion, the individual must be taught that he is himself the highest value, and thus he must obtain his freedom (Topalođlu, 1999: 140).

Moving in this direction, Marx argued that atheism has social and economic foundations, and, therefore, to make it the ideology of working class he gave it a political character (Erşahin, 1999: 129). According to him religion has a social basis. That is, religion has emerged from the existence of classes (the rich and the poor) in the society. With the elimination of the classes, it will be possible to realize Socialism. In order to realize Socialism and to cultivate Soviet people -a single international human being- it is necessary to separate nations from their religions. Besides, the religion was also seen as the source of nationalism. On this issue, Gerhard von Mende said: “In the Soviet Union, there is a very hard fight against Islam, since Islam is considered to be a part of the Turkish nationalist feelings and thoughts. Thus, this should be regarded as the struggle against Turkish nationalism and culture (Mende, 1966: 128).

Method of historical dialectical materialism tries to see everything in the world through their own glasses and interpret them in a materialistic perspective (Topalođlu, 1999: 159). Therefore, it argues that the basis of religion is the social and economic structure of society, regarding it as one of the forms of social consciousness, such as culture, morals, law, politics and aesthetics. Accordingly, to establish Socialism in this way will provide the social and political freedom of the individual, and destroy the sources that cause the emergence of religion. “In Marxist understanding, nation

is not an object that has developed in the course of time, so it is a phantom that is only a product of a particular economic period that goes along with the capitalism of bourgeois and to disappear with it. It follows that the national unity is essentially alien to communism, and the criterion is not “nationality” but “class” (Mende, 1966: 97).

Lenin writes on this subject as follows: “As the forerunners of liberty and the enemies of exploiters, workers all around the world bring their peculiar national cultures at their disposal”. In other words, their particular national cultures formed in the course of time as the oppressed class (misery-poverty), and they were envoys of Communism that prepared the revolutionary spirit. In this sense, the communist regime is the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat (the exploited class and the poor) which the people search for. Concerning the fact that the communist regime used the idea of poverty as a weapon, Süleyman H. Bolay writes as follows: “Marxism, in fact, contrary to what is claimed, is not science, but is essentially a method of social action. And in this by prioritizing the working class and its interests it takes worker’s power as a final goal” (Bolay, 1996: 270). According to Marxists, the characteristic of this system is, as a classless society and the founder of socialism, to express the historical position of the working class and place it on an economic basis. These are the theoretical grounds of scientific atheism. Atheism is divided into various forms: absolute atheism is the lack of a concept of God in consciousness; the theoretical atheism is the denial of God, knowing of its existence; the practical atheism is to lead a life as if God does not exist; indifferent atheism is the lack of interest in the dispute over the existence of God; science atheism is the adoption of atheism on an ideological basis.

Thus, after placing Yassawi culture on its own “practical grounds”, scientific atheism passed “the education” that constitutes its “theoretical ground”. Indeed, «Scientific Atheism» sees itself from theoretical and practical aspects as a method of spreading atheism, that is, atheism is a unique system of learning (Topaloğlu, 1999: 158).

In this regard, Lenin states that the Communist Party’s goal is to destroy the connection between the exploited, oppressed classes (the poor) and the organized religious propaganda, and thus, to save the workers from the religious prejudices in real sense. For this purpose, the Party should organize the most common form of scientific education and anti-religious propaganda. The party must organize the broadest anti-religious education and advocacy (Erşahin, 1999: 133). Accordingly, “The Communist Party, the leader and conscious cadre of the masses of revolutionary laborers, had to accept religious beliefs as an obstacle and hostile power to be removed from the way to the Communism through administrative and police measures, if necessary” (Bennigsen, 1988: 55).

Under the communist regime, scientific atheism in line with the Marxists and Leninists was taught in the schools as a compulsory course. Besides, all mass com-

munication means were used for propaganda against religion such as private radio broadcasts, anti-religion films and theater plays, fixed or mobile exhibitions, anti-religious auto-clubs held once a week in order to educate the nomads in the highlands, atheism museums, anti-religious reading rooms, anti-religion clubs, including clubs of “atheist youth”, in the primary and secondary schools, books, brochures, newspaper articles, periodicals for special fields, and numerous conferences and special talks for the public, specialists of the “Agitprop” (advocacy/preacher and propaganda work) who visit Muslims and those who hesitate to teach them the truths and the superiority of Dialectical Materialism.

The communist regime took the continuous education against religion -the “synthesis” theory based on the principle of ignoring God at any moment- from the dhikr (invocation/remembrance), which is the principal element and the most important ceremony of the Yassawi culture. However, in the words of Alexander Bennigson historical struggle between religion and atheism (the communist regime) is an endless struggle and will not reach any side at the final victory. This question will be dealt with when the Yassawi culture is considered.

3. Interpretation of History of Yassawi Culture in Terms of Dialectical Materialist Method

Ahmad Yassawi’s mystical tradition of love did not disappear in Turkestan even in the time of Communist regime. The ideologists of the communist regime defined this culture and tradition as a dangerous force to the atheism, and for the benefit of society they used it for their atheistic propaganda methods. For the complete reconstruction of the existing social, economic, political and cultural life, Lenin said that “using the available material for the construction of socialism” Marxist doctrine was the unique weapon of historical dialectical materialism (Erşahin, 1999: 128). Later, those who said that it was difficult to reconcile Karl Marx (doctrine) socially and economically with the wisdoms of Ahmad Yassawi submitted in front of the methodology of the Marxist historical dialectical doctrine (Mambetaliyev, 1969: 39). It is worth remembering that the dialectical materialism is a materialist understanding that sees possible to reorganize the world, likening this to a system of ideas evolving in mind more than a living organism, and that explains this evolution through the thesis, antithesis and synthesis phases (Bolay, 1996: 257). This means that it is a philosophical theory that interprets history in a materialist way and sociologically deals with the evolution of history and human activities in general, because in the methodology above there were antithesis, i.e. bases showing how the teaching of Ahmad Yassawi and Marxist doctrine are synthesis and complementary of each other.

In the teachings of Marx, there are social periods historically evolving in parallel with the economic systems. According to this teaching, Islam emerged along with feudalism, one of these social periods. This society, i.e. feudalism brought religion with itself. Because, in order to establish a “balance” between the exploiting and the

exploited (poor) classes in society a tool was needed for the benefit of the exploiting class. And this tool, as supposed, was religion.

According to them, in the whole Middle Ages when the religion was widespread the struggle against the power (exploitative) mass was naturally conducted in the non-religious form, that is in the form of sects and heresy. Marxists have tried to show the appearance of atheism and heresy as the first appearances of struggle against the religion and government. For example, uprisings in the Abbasid Caliphate took place in Iran, in the south of Central Asia and Kazakhstan under the banner of fire-worship, Mazdeism, Manichaeism, Qarmatism and Sufism (Tadzhikova, 1989: 51), and the fact is that all of these revolts were religious form was natural, because, at that time, the revolution could be realized only through the heretical actions of religious denominations. For, in those times, rebellions could occur against religion through religious sectarian activities. In fact, the motives of the riots were social inequality and social injustice in the society. This led to the emergence of social utopists who, in terms of Marxist interpretation, seek for universal humanist values among various Islamic sects (Kenjetay, 2003: 35).

The cause of rebellions and the revolutionary reactions was social inequality in society. This causes the emergence of social utopians among members of various Islamic sects who demanded global humanistic values. The ascetic movement in the early periods of Sufism emerged, according this viewpoint, as a reaction to the Umayyad power, their luxury life, richness and the moral corruption of the society. This rebellion and reaction is the most primitive and passive form of communist revolution. Ascetism arose as a response to the social inequality in Muslim society". In other words, there were social equality and justice at the heart of Sufi movements, even if they were passive. In fact, there are ontological differences between Wahdat al-Wujûd and pantheism. However, in the Marxist interpretation, it is emphasized that the Sufis have a "unity" between materialism and pantheism, and even materialism and ore. They attempt to substantiate this claim with the understanding that "Allah is creator and also a creature and is unique and many" in the Sufi philosophy. This theory stems from the idea of change that emanation from God, that is, from God to matter, from light to darkness, from unlimited to limitless, and finally from paradoxical to a second type. As a matter of fact, the universe, breaking off its first basis, will transform into the unity of light and darkness, the unity of Allah and the universe, that is, the unity of thesis and antithesis. By saying that "the material world will come into being through a kind of emanation from God and that the divine spirit there will gradually become materialistic, she easily dresses the methodology of the Materialist Dialectics upon mysticism and Wahdat al-Wujûd. Thus, the methodology of the Materialist Dialectic easily fits in with the comprehension of Sufism and Wahdat al-Wujûd.

Most Soviet ideologists consider Islam from a Christian point of view. When talking about Islam, they give the priority to Christianity. After saying "Medieval Eastern pantheism developed in naturalistic and mystical direction as it is in the

West”, they considered and categorized the Yassawi culture according to the “Western perspective.” In fact, the inhuman practices of the church in the middle Ages, which had been made in the name of God, played a major role in the enmity of religion that emerged during the period of enlightenment and became evident in the modern era. The main source of Marx’s criticism was Western culture and Christianity. Today, there are also those who consider Marx as a positive and “unique thinker who defends human against the socio-economic, religious, and political affairs of his own society” (Fromm, 1997: 182).

Soviet ideologists even show the great Muslim thinkers such as Avicenna (d. 1037), al-Farabi (d. 950) who never had materialistic ideas as the enemies of religion, naturalist, pantheist, free thinkers of the Middle Ages who dealt with natural events and human in a systematic way (Tadzhikova, 1989: 78).

On the basis of Sufism’s view of love of God (muhabbatullah) and “love is knowledge of Allah (marifatullah), the experts of scientific atheism tried to show that Islam is not the religion of love, on the contrary, it is the religion of fear (Tadzhikova, 1989: 80). As the “pantheist understanding” which approach God through love brings about the deification of human, it became a reactive thought that removed the authority of Islam which in their views is exploiter and the ideology ruling class.

According to Marxist perspective, the socio-political aspect of mysticism was very weak. So, they argue that the sufis generally criticized the social order in a limited way and desired “virtuous state” under the rule of the ruling class. This is surprising since they do not understand that the Sufis’ solution was not a political and armed revolution but a spiritual revolution. Moreover, they accused the religion and the Yassawi culture of being a mass of doctrines that cannot go beyond being the “last breath of the exploited creatures, the heart of a heartless world”, and not showing clear and precise way to change the world (Tadzhikova, 1989: 86).

As seen in the Marxist and Leninist classics, they adopted that “since in the Middle Ages, only religion and theology were known as an ideology, the rebellion and the struggle of the people developed between the Sufi orders in a religious form and, therefore, they had to fight against Islamic ideology through Islam’s own principles and evidences” (Tadzhikova, 1989: 89). Another scholar of atheism says “The Karakhanid state, which accepted Islam as its official religion, looked at mysticism as a kind of opposition.” They also associate the fact that Ahmad Yassawi’s thought attracted considerable attention in his own era among the Turks living in the steppes of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, as mentioned above, with the idea of opposition to the traditional Islam. The nomadic people needed this and the wisdom of Yassawi could meet this need, because Yassawi, as the supporter of the poor, criticized power and the status quo. According to them, it is possible to find the opposition of Ahmad Yassawi against the feudal mass and ideology of power not only in his piece master work *Diwan-ı Hikmat* (Divine Wisdom)ut also in many historical documents. One of

these evidences is that the order of Yassawiyya was contrary to the main theological principles of Islam. Likewise, the fact that Ahmed Yassawi was continually on exile or in seclusion is regarded as one of the evidences for this. They also present the works of W.W. Barthold as an evidence for this claim that the political power under Bughra Khan wanted to exterminate all sufis of Sheikh Abû Saïd in Transoxiana and many sheiks secretly took shelter in Marw (Barthold, 1964: 235).

The official Islamic scholars who were next to the ruler of the government, have built madrasahs to spread the Islam to large masses. Yet, besides these, there were lodges, camps in Kazakhstan in the Middle Ages. On the other hand, the works of Ahmet Yassawi were not written with the authority or support of any state or ruler. That is, the Marxist commentators predicted incompatibilities, even contradictions, between the official class of Islamic scholars and the Sufi tradition. The reason for that was to attract the Turkish Muslim presence living in the Soviet system to their side around the Yassawism.

Politically, even Emir Timur wanted to make use of Ahmet Yassawi's enormous dignity among the people, therefore he built a tremendous mausoleum next to his grave. The far-sighted deceitful politician built this mausoleum not for the service of Ahmet Yassawi to spread Islam, but to attract the hearts of people in that region.

In the Marxist interpretation, all principles of opposition existed in Yassawi culture. In this sense, for example, according to Yassawi, the most important treasure of man is poverty. The poverty office, as we have mentioned above, is the opposite wealth and takes the form of opposition to the political power. In other words, beside the workers-exploited poor, Yassawi sided against the power. Yassawi criticized the corruption of the Karahanid State and his senior administrators by arguing for absolute moral virtues, equality, justice and well-being with his religious-mystical wisdom. Such movements were progressive, even if under the name of mysticism, because they reflected the wishes, demands and desires of the majority of the people. For it reflected the will, desires, demands and needs of most people (Kenjetay, 2003: 112). However, a revolutionary dialectic self-ore was not present in mysticism. So he had no power to change society.

The history of medieval Kazakhstan is full of struggle against feudalism under the banner of mysticism. "Mysticism maintained its revolutionary opposition to feudalism. However, even if mysticism appeared to be the secret form of "revolutionary opposition" and an ideological struggle with and feudalism, it did not emerge in the active form of revolutionary movement. The nature of the revolutionary movement of mysticism showed itself in asceticism, the invocation to God and the rejection of the world to deserve all goods in the Hereafter".

According to them, another sign of the fact that Yassawi was not a theist and that he was not attached to a Sunni order of Islam was that he criticized the social order of his own period. Again, «According to the Qur'an and Sunnah, women are inferior to

men. More precisely, the woman has been rendered a home slave, and neither can go to social institutions on her own, nor can open her face in front of strangers. However, in Yassawi culture, women can join in the recitation. Facts and evidences indicated above suggest that Islamic practice has nothing in common with Yassawi culture on the issue of woman.

In Yassawi culture, freedom of will and freedom of behavior is seen evidently, whereas in the Qur'an, man has no freedom of will, he cannot go beyond fulfilling the will of Allah. Yassawi invited his disciples to cultivate and develop themselves and avoided the idea that humanitarian virtues originate from God. This is sufficient evidence to show the indeterminism of Ahmet Yassawi. "Yassawi did not apply for indeterminism against Muslim fatalism not only at the theoretical level but also in practical life" (Tadzhikova, 1989: 86).

Here, we have put forward the opinion of those who evaluate the wisdom of Ahmad Yassawi and the Yassawi and the place of social life in the historical process in terms of the "Marxist Historical Dialectical Method". Indeed, with the Marxist method, it is not possible to reach at anything other than these convictions.

By interpreting the Yassawi culture with the Marxist dialectic method, Scientific Atheism practiced some concepts and methods of Yassawi culture in atheist propaganda education. In this sense it is useful to give a few examples.

"Faqr" literally refers to poverty and necessity, while terminologically to the state of being spiritual and religious need. No matter how wealthy such a person is, he doesn't pay attention to it. The property of such a person is in his pocket, not in his heart, that is the person who reaches at the rank of the "faqr" is not the slave of the property; on the contrary, it is his slave. (Cebecioglu, 1997: 262).

Atheist agitprop experts argue "We are poor, and for this reason we are proud of poverty. Because, the state we built is the state of poverty. Soviet people mean "poor people". As Lenin puts it, our nationality is poverty. This is the dictatorship of the poor (proletariat) that Yassawi also wants." (Tadzhikova, 1989: 112).

The dhikr (remembrance), in Arabic, literally means remembrance which is the opposite of forgetting. As a term, dhikr refers to the state of forgetting everything except for truth, i.e. God. A person who loves something, he mentions it over and over again. So, dervish constantly remembers and mentions God in his heart (Uludağ, 1996: 588). They took this fact as a basis and applied it in contrast to the practice. Soviyet Atheist "agitprop" experts, on the other hand, struggled to inculcate the notion that God is absent at any time.

Even if they tried to dissolve the meaning of dhikr, they failed to reach a successful result (synthesis) because the dhikr refers to the remembrance of God (thesis) and atheism to the denial of God (antithesis). Whereas in the dhikr, the remembrance of God is the focal point, in Atheism Gos is practically ignored although

theoretically ignorance is not possible. In dhikr, there is a solid foundation and love of God. The signs of practical atheism manifest itself, even in the believers, in the form of prostitution, adultery and bribery.

As for sayr-u sulûk, literally it means to walk, to go on the road, to travel, while terminologically refers to walk in the spiritual path under the leadership of master to reach God. The passenger (guest) called saîr and sâlik (the so-called sulûk) takes a distance on this journey to the extent that he is cleared of his bad deeds and is well-behaved. At the end of the path (sulûk), he is given to love of God. In the Yassawi culture, sayr u sulûk among the nomads is common with the name of “Sal-serilik”. Since the members of the Yassawiyya Order were mostly nomads, the sayr u sulûk, namely “Sal-serilik” changed the shape. Nevertheless, the content of the Sal-serilik was the same as that of sayr-u sulûk. They only traveled continuously to spread worship of God, love of faith to the nomads, and they had teams like wrestlers, artists, and actors with them. These are also called “travelers”. Nomads were constantly aware of when, on which day and in which village travelers would be (Daurenbekov & Tursynov, 1999, 101-102). Therefore, Sal-serilik played an important role in the spread of Yassawi culture and Islam in the Kazakh steppes.

As mentioned above, the specialists of scientific atheism in anti-religious propaganda used all possible media. Anti-religious club activities in the form of mobile exhibitions, mobile educators and teachers for shepherds were almost the revitalization of Sal-serilik in the communist regime.

4. Conclusion

Undoubtedly, Hodja Ahmad Yassawi is the person of Islam who contributed significantly to Central Asia and Kazakhstan. His works and wisdom have not lost their importance until today, and their importance increases more and more as time goes on. The world view and teachings of Hodja Ahmad Yassawi are reflected in his works such as “*Divan-ı Hikmet*”, “*Miratu'l Kulup*”, “*Fakrname*”. Hodja Ahmad Yassawi is an integral part of Islamic Sufism. The basic principles of this path are: the respect of the student to the teacher, justice and surrender, recognition of God, generosity, trust, and contemplation.

Yassawi culture is the deepest dimension of living religious experience. It neither made any concessions to the seventy-year communist regime, nor accepted the compromise. It did not melt in front of the synthesis of atheist education. It did not lose its identity under the weight of atheist propaganda and pressure, and survived until today. Even after the power in Turkestan passed to the communist regime, which argued that it destroyed the eternal foundations of the economic, social, religious life of Islam, Islam continued to exist, and in this the Yassawi culture had a crucial role. The culture of Yassawi is the essence of Turkish presence and Islam. Thus, the base of unity and solidarity of Turks, whose supporters of “panturkism”,

which were considered very dangerous in the Soviet regime, were centered on the personality “Pir-i Turkistan Hodja Ahmet Yassawi”. So there was no alternative for the Soviets to use this ground of consciousness for their own purposes. It is for this reason that they examined the culture of Yassawi extensively. The principles of materialism and pantheism for an atheist ideology are a basis for positivist historicism. Therefore, the teachings of wahdet in the Yassawi Culture were used as the first step towards pantheism. Because they have recognized pantheism as the starting point of materialism and atheism. In another way, they regarded mystics as historical stages (thesis-antithesis-synthesis) of the “global communist revolution” in human history. For this reason, the culture of Yassawi is a source of great knowledge for determining determinist-historicism for the ideology of nobility. Some terms and understandings of Islamic mysticism were also an axiological and anthropological ground for the Communist ideology of Soviet. For example, concepts such as “proletariat-poverty”, “tovarish-salik”. By changing the content of concepts in Yassawi, they aimed to be the foundation of the human mind. Even now there are forces that are interested in this culture.

References:

- Afifi A., (1975). *Muhiddin İbnu'l Arabi'nin Tasavvuf Felsefesi*. (Translated by Mehmet Dağ). Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi.
- Barthold V.V. (1964). *Sochineniya*. T. 2. Moskva: Nauka
- Bennigsen Alexandre & Quelquejay, Chantal Lemercier. (1988), *Sufi ve Komiser (Rusya'da Musluman Tarikatları)*. Translated from French by Osman Turer. Ankara.
- Bolay, Suleyman Hayri. (1996). *Felsefi Doktrinler ve Terimler Sözlüğü*. Ankara: Akçağ.
- Cebecioglu, Ethem. (1997). “Fakr Maddesi”, *Tasavvuf Terimleri ve Değimleri Sözlüğü*. Ankara: Rehber.
- Daurenbekov, Zhakau & Tursynov, Edige. (1999). *Kazakh baksy-balgerleri*. Almatı: Ana Tili
- Eraslan, Kemal. (1995). “Ahmet Yesevi”, *Erdem Dergisi*. Hoca Ahmet Özel Sayısı, c.7, s.21, s.794
- Erdem, Husamettin (1990). *Panteizm ve Vahdet-i Vucud Mukayesesi*, Ankara: Yorum.
- Ershahin, Seyfettin. (1999). *Turkistan'da İslam ve Muslumanlar (Sovyet Dönemi)*, Ankara: İlahiyat Vakfı.
- Fromm, Erich. (1997). *Marx'ın İnsan Anlayışı*. (Translated by Kaan Öktan). İstanbul: Say.

- Kara, Mustafa. (1999). "Tarikatlar Dünyasına Genel Bakış". *İslamiyat*, c.2, s.3. Temmuz-Eylül. ss. 67-78.
- Kenjetay, Dosay. (2003). *Hoca Ahmet Yesevi'nin Düşünce Sistemi*. Ankara: Hoca Ahmet Yesevi Yayınları.
- Köprülü, Fuat. (1991). *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar*. Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları.
- Mambetaliyev S. (1969). *Perezhitki nekotoprykh musulmanskikh techenii v Kirgizii I ih istorii*. Frunze-Bişkek.
- Mende, von Gerhard (1966). *Komunist Bloka Milliyet Mefkuresi*. (Translated by Fethi Tevetoğlu, Aziz Alpagut). Ankara.
- Nurgaliyev R. (1996). "Materializm". *Philosophiyalyk sozdik* (Kazakh ensiklopediası bas redaksiyası). Almatı.
- Tadzhikova K. (1989). *Islam: mirovozreniye, ideologiya, politika*. Almatı: Kazakistan.
- Taylan, Necip. (1998). *Düşünce Tarihinde Tanrı Sorunu*. İstanbul: Ayışığı.
- Topaloglu, Aydın. (1999). *Ateizm ve Eleştirisi*. Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları
- Uludağ, Suleyman (1996). "Zikir Maddesi". *Tasavvuf Terimleri Sözlüğü*. İstanbul: Marifet.