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2-бөлім

ЯСАУИ МҰРАСЫ: ТІЛ ЖӘНЕ ӘДЕБИЕТ

Section 2

YASAWI HERITAGE: LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Раздел 2

НАСЛЕДИЕ ЯСАВИ: ЯЗЫК И ЛИТЕРАТУРА

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THE IMAGE OF PARADISE IN YASAWI'S "DIVAN-I HIKMET" AND DANTE'S "DIVINE COMEDY"

Аңдатпа. Мақалада Ясауидің «Диуани хикмет» дастаны мен Дантенің «Құдыретті комедия» поэмасындағы жұмақ бейнесі салыстырыла қарастырылады. Ясауи гуманистік ұлы

мұратты адам рухының өзегі ретінде ұғындырып, жұмақты рух мәңгілік салтанат құратын орын деп бейнелесе, Данте осы оймен үндесіп, жұмақты ғажайып қалыпта суреттегені туралы тұжырым жасалады. Екі туындыдағы жұмақ бейнесін салыстыра келе, гуманистік мұраттың мәңгілік өзекті тақырып екенін дәйектеуге қол жеткізіледі.

Кілт сөздер: гуманизм, рух, екі дүние, жұмақ, түркі мәдениеті, дүниетаным, хикмет жанры.

Abstract. The article compares the image of paradise in Yasawi's dastan «Diwani Hikmet» and in Dante's poem «The Divine Comedy». It is concluded that Yasawi interpreted the great humanistic idea as the source of the human spirit, depicting paradise as a place where the spirit reigns forever,

and Dante was in tune with this idea and described paradise in a beautiful way. Comparing the image of paradise in the two works, it was possible to establish that the humanistic idea is an eternal topical topic.

Keywords: humanism, spirit, two worlds, paradise, Turkic culture, worldview, hikmet genre.

Аннотация. В статье сравниваются образ рая в дастане Ясави «Дивани хикмет» и в поэме Данте «Божественная комедия». Делается вывод, что Ясави интерпретировал великую гуманистическую идею как источник человеческого духа, изображая рай как место, где дух царит вечно, а Данте был созвучен этой мысли и описал рай в прекрасном образе. Сравнивая образ рая в двух произведениях, удалось установить, что гуманистическая идея – вечная актуальная тема.

Ключевые слова: гуманизм, дух, два мира, рай, тюркская культура, мировоззрение, жанр хикмет.

The origins of humanity's belief in "eternal life" remain unknown to modern scholarship. If we turn to mythological narratives, which represent some of the oldest forms of human worldview, we can observe that this belief in eternal life gave rise to concepts such as the "two worlds" and the "three-world" model. Moreover, the idea of eternal life as a state of celebration, happiness, and freedom from sorrow is fundamentally grounded in virtue and righteousness.

The values embedded within ancient spiritual traditions played a significant role in shaping human moral consciousness. The afterlife, understood as the eternal abode of the soul, designates Paradise as the destination of those who embrace virtue and goodness. In other words, Paradise (Jannah, Heaven) is the dwelling place of righteousness, while Hell is the abode of evil intentions and wrongdoing. The imagery of Paradise and Hell became a central theme not only in sacred scriptures but also in literary works. Among such works, Dante's *The Divine Comedy* occupies a special place. Comparing Dante's depiction of Paradise with the wisdom expressed in the hikmets of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi enables us to recognize the foundations of a universal artistic and spiritual worldview.

Let us first consider the concept of Paradise.

"Paradise is the eternal abode where those whose sins have been forgiven by Allah enjoy everlasting bliss in the afterlife. In contemporary usage, the terms *beiyish* and *zhumak* are often used interchangeably. However, they are not absolute synonyms. The meaning of *beiyish* is broader" [1, p. 465]. Thus, Paradise (*zhumak*) is understood as consisting of several levels within the greater realm of Heaven (*beiyish*). The levels are traditionally listed as: 1) Dar al-Salam; 2) Dar al-Qarar; 3) Jannat al-Na'im; 4) Jannat 'Adn; 5) Jannat al-Ma'wa; 6) Jannat al-Firdaws; 7) Jannat al-Khuld; and 8) Jannat al-Ni'mah. (The Traditional System of Kazakh Ethnographic Categories, 2014:465)

The image of Paradise is vividly depicted in *The Tale of the Houri Maidens* by the eminent figure of Kazakhstan's spiritual heritage, the saint and poet Mäshhür Jüsip Köpeev:

In Paradise stands the Tree of Tūbā, its leaves immense and grand;
Its radiance surpasses the sun, and all is filled with light.
Though its roots are in the heavens, its crown bends downward,
Inclining toward the earth, its branches hanging low.
Its appearance resembles the sun itself;
Countless are its fruits, sweeter than honey.
Laden with fruit and descending from the celestial sky,
It fills the entirety of the eight gardens of Paradise.

In these lines, Paradise is portrayed through the image of the Tūbā Tree, a sacred tree traditionally associated with heavenly bliss in Islamic belief. Its divine light, abundance of sweet fruits, and presence throughout the eight levels of Paradise symbolize eternal happiness, prosperity, and spiritual fulfillment. (Kopeev, 2013, p. 176).

Paradise is described as a realm of "honey-sweet fruits, the springs of Kawthar, magnificent dwellings, and houris (maidens of Paradise)" (*The Traditional System of Kazakh Ethnographic Categories*, 2014: 466). These images are portrayed as sources of spiritual joy and divine illumination for the human soul. However, attaining such a blessed abode requires a life guided by virtue, righteousness, and good deeds in this transient earthly world.

In his *Divan-i Hikmet*, Khoja Ahmed Yasawi exemplifies profound humanistic ideals through the dialogue between Paradise and Hell. The notion that human morality is measured by honor and conscience, as well as the commitment to spiritual values, is clearly expressed through the poetic form of *aitys* (verbal contest), a genre deeply rooted in Kazakh folklore. In other words, virtue is revealed through its comparison with evil and wrongdoing. In the traditional Kazakh art of *aitys*, the objective is to overcome one's opponent through eloquent,

insightful, and persuasive speech. Yasawi skillfully harmonized the genre of hikmet with the content and form of Turkic poetry, employing it as an effective means of conveying his spiritual and ethical message. It is well known that such binary oppositions have served as cultural codes throughout human history, symbolizing the struggle for spiritual purity and moral elevation.

If the noble aspiration of humankind is to attain truth through the path of virtue, then, according to Yasawi's worldview, spiritual perfection is achieved through four stages: *Sharia* (Shari'a), *Tariqa* (the spiritual path), *Haqiqa* (ultimate truth), and *Ma'rifa* (spiritual knowledge and gnosis).

In the gardens of Sharia, I proclaimed my calling;
In the rose-garden of Tariqa, I wandered in delight.
Taking wings from Haqiqa, I became like a bird in flight;
I opened the gate of Ma'rifa as well, my friends (Yasawi, 2016, p.8)

The manner in which each of these spiritual concepts contributes to the perfection of the human being is interpreted through the language of *hikmet*. In other words, in order to attain the abode of Paradise, a person must turn toward spiritual refinement and moral perfection.

A whole historical stage of Turkic culture is associated with the teachings of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi. It is well known that the art of the word occupies a central place in cultural consciousness. From this perspective, it is natural that Sufi poetry absorbed the worldview, traditions, customs, and ethical norms of the Turkic world. As Yasawist scholar A. Abduov notes, "Yasawi's Sufism is integrally connected not only with poetry, but also with politics, art, history, and economics, and more broadly with the entire mentality of Turkic-speaking society (Abduov, 2022, p. 7).

The content of Yasawi's *hikmets* is significant due to its foundation in high humanistic ideals. As the earliest and most outstanding example of the *hikmet* genre in Turkic poetry, *Divan-i Hikmet* occupies a special place in the history of spirituality and literature. Rooted in Eastern poetic tradition, this genre encompasses several formal poetic structures.

A number of artistic works in world literature have been devoted to the themes of Paradise and Hell. Among them is the *Divine Comedy* (1265–1321) by the great Italian poet Dante Alighieri. This idea is further supported by A. Abduov, who states: "We consider Khoja Ahmed Yasawi's *Hikmets* as a religious-philosophical genre of poetry that provides insight into the culture and inner spiritual world of the Turkic peoples. Many of its narratives are ideologically similar to world-famous literary works. For instance, there are thematic parallels between *Divan-i Hikmet* and Dante's *Divine Comedy*" (Abduov, 2022, p. 14). Moreover, the humanistic ideas found in the works of other prominent figures in world literature also resonate with the legacy of Yasawi.

Dante's poem has been preserved through centuries as a valuable work that poetically represents the spiritual realm in a unique form, and Yasawi's work is regarded as being on an equal intellectual and artistic level.

The *hikmets* of Yasawi have been extensively studied with regard to their history of composition, poetics, Sufi-philosophical ideas, socio-political significance, and their role in the dissemination of Islamic values by scholars such as N. S. Banarli, E. E. Bertels, A. K. Borovkov, E. R. Rustamov, V. I. Zokhidov, and others.

Following Kazakhstan's independence, Yasawi's legacy has been studied in greater depth, leading to significant scholarly conclusions. Scholars from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have translated and published Yasawi's works, produced research articles, and introduced new sources into academic circulation. In the field of humanities, researchers such as A. Nysanbayev, M. Zharmukhamedov, M. Shafigov, S. Dautov, and A. Abduov have contributed substantially to the study of Yasawi's heritage.

In world literary studies, Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* has also been widely researched. Scholars have examined its philosophical, spiritual, linguistic, mystical dimensions, as well as its structural and artistic nature. Among these studies are T. S. Eliot's essay on Dante included in *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (1933), A. Kh. Gorfunkel's *Philosophy of the Renaissance* (1980), and K. Landa's monograph *The Poetics of Joy in Dante's Comedy* (2021, St. Petersburg).

The shared ideas between Yasawi's *Divan-i Hikmet* and Dante's *Divine Comedy* are also highlighted by Yasawist scholar A. Abduov in his study *The Worldview of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi*.

Khoja Ahmed Yasawi is recognized as the spiritual mentor of the entire Turkic world and a great figure of the Sufi tradition who placed faith and spiritual purity at the highest level. *Divan-i Hikmet* is a philosophical-didactic literary work based on the folkloric traditions of nomadic Turkic peoples and written in accordance with their linguistic and stylistic features. The original manuscript of this written heritage has not been preserved. The earliest known copy dates back to the 15th century and was transcribed in Arabic script. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it was published in Kazan, and in the early 20th century in Istanbul and Tashkent.

Dante Alighieri is regarded as the last poet of the Middle Ages and the first poet of the Renaissance. According to Dante scholars, the *Divine Comedy* originated from the poet's visionary experiences over ten days, beginning in the sacred week of the year 1300. The poem is believed to have been written between 1307 and 1321. This epic work is widely regarded in academic discourse as an encyclopedia of medieval Italian life. Born in Florence and educated at the Universities of Paris and Bologna, Dante was deeply familiar with the literary heritage of antiquity and the works of his predecessors. He regarded the ancient Roman poet Virgil, author of the *Aeneid*, as his intellectual guide.

Dante's poem is structured into three parts: *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso* (in Kazakh translation: "Tamuk," "Place of Purification," and "Paradise"; in Russian translation: "Hell," "Purgatory," and "Paradise"). Each section consists of thirty-three cantos, with an additional canto in the *Inferno*, bringing the total structure to one hundred cantos. In comparison, Yasawi's poetic heritage consists of 134 *hikmets*, along with a "Preface" and a section titled "Supplication to the Merciful Allah, the Answerer of All Prayers." The work, which reflects on conscience, faith, and spiritual perfection, begins with the following verses:

By divine command, the decree of the Truth reached me, friends,
I descended into the midst of a single ocean, friends.
By the will of the Creator I was commanded to that ocean,
Praise be to God, I crossed it safely, friends.

The poem begins with the following lines:

"My age has come, life has passed, I have flown to the sky;
My heart overflowed, and in confusion I fell back to the earth.
I struggled greatly with the ego and Satan,
I passed through the stage of patience and contentment, friends" (Yasawi, 2016, p. 7),

through which the author's philosophical reflection on the Creator and the meaning of life, as well as his spiritual ideal, becomes evident. The narrative also describes his experiences at the ages of nine, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen:

"I repented and submitted myself to the Truth, friends;
I repented and avoided sinful deeds" (Yasawi, 2016, p. 7).

The age of fifteen is presented as a stage of approaching spiritual maturity. Expressions such as "entering the sea," "crossing the sea," "struggling with the ego," "becoming a guarantor of one's own soul," and progressing from the stage of "patience and contentment" to "poverty

and contentment,” as well as “diving into the ocean like a diver,” “drinking spiritual nectar,” and “repenting” all represent stages of the author’s spiritual journey toward moral perfection. The narrative further continues with descriptions of the ages forty, fifty, and sixty. Ultimately, at the age of sixty-three, the poet’s retreat into seclusion (*khalwa*) is presented as his final step toward purification.

“I bid farewell and stepped into the underground world,
I renounced the worldly life and turned toward the Truth...
I stood in prayer throughout the night reciting Ta-Ha,
I fasted during the day and performed evening prayers,
In this state I remained beneath the earth,
Remembering Mustafa with longing and devotion” (Yasawi, 2016, p. 19).

Spiritual purification and liberation from sin in religious thought is understood as a necessary rite through which the soul attains its eternal abode. At the initial stage of the formation of this concept (approximately 1150–1250 CE), purification was associated with an intermediate state after death, where the soul was believed to undergo a series of trials and experiences. The notions of purification and atonement instilled in the medieval human consciousness a belief in eternal life and the afterlife, while also offering hope for the forgiveness of sins committed in earthly life. Ultimately, the idea of purification encouraged individuals to take moral responsibility for their actions during their lifetime and to consciously uphold ethical values. It also emphasized that human beings must pass through hardship and suffering in order to be fully cleansed of their earthly sins.

If the essential meaning of Yasawi’s *hikmets* lies in this spiritual-epistemological content, then Dante’s work, which poetically represents the mysterious and transcendent dimensions of the human memory and imagination, is thematically aligned with it.

The core idea of Yasawi’s *hikmets* is that the human being, as a spiritual entity belonging to both the transient world (*fana*) and the eternal world (*baqa*), must live in accordance with the ethical principle of humanity.

The Divine Comedy was recognized in its own time as a *poema sacra*—a sacred poem reflecting on the transcendent world. From a contemporary perspective, it is regarded as an epic work written in poetic form that expresses philosophical ideas through artistic imagery, consisting of three parts (*cantiche*): *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*. As noted by translator and scholar K. Akhmetov, who translated the poem into Kazakh, this work is “an epic written in poetic form, consisting of three sections (‘Hell,’ ‘Purgatory,’ and ‘Paradise’) that present philosophical ideas through artistic representations” (Alighieri, D. *The Divine Comedy*, translated from Russian by K. Akhmetov, 2012, p. 11).

Dante’s quest is fundamentally a search for the path of Truth. The “deceptive and treacherous visions” that nearly lead Dante astray from the path of Truth can be interpreted as the manifestation of what Yasawi describes as the human “nafs” (the ego or lower self). In Yasawi’s *hikmets*, the “search for the Truth” signifies devotion to the ultimate reality (*Haq*). His statement, “Fearing the Truth, I did not fall into fire; thus I was purified” (Hikmet 1, p. 8), reflects a sense of moral responsibility before one’s conscience.

“I have reached the age of sixty-three; I passed through heedlessness,
I failed to firmly uphold the command of the Truth; I became ignorant.
I neglected worship and became negligent;
I sought evil and turned away from the righteous, friends” (Yasawi, 2016, p. 9).

In Yasawi’s *hikmets*, it is repeatedly emphasized that every human action remains under the constant awareness of the Creator. Both good and evil are known to God.

The spiritual journey of the one who, at the age of fifteen, is “guided onto the path by Khidr” becomes a central motif in the content of each *hikmet*. The reason for his withdrawal

into the earth at the age of sixty-three is explained in the second *hikmet*, in twenty-two stanzas, which begins with the lines: “O friends, listen to what I say / Why did I enter the earth at the age of sixty-three?” and each stanza concludes with the refrain: “For this reason I entered the earth at the age of sixty-three.”

The pursuit of spiritual purity, sincerity before the Truth, commitment to the highest human ideals, and the recognition of ultimate reality constitute the main reasons for Yasawi’s withdrawal from the surface of the earth into seclusion (*khalwa*). In Dante’s poem, the *Purgatorio* section similarly resonates with Yasawi’s act of retreating underground to engage in worship and purification.

One of the primordial archetypal concepts embedded in collective human memory is the concept of the spirit. Yasawi’s emphasis on the recognition of Truth is fundamentally aimed at attaining spiritual perfection. The spirit must remain at its highest level, and it is evaluated through elevated spiritual standards. Its association with chaos and cosmos, light and darkness, good and evil, day and night, and moral dualities such as righteousness and wickedness reflects a mythological and religious worldview in which the spirit occupies a central position in the struggle of opposites.

The belief in the immortality of the spirit is deeply rooted in human consciousness. For this reason, it has occupied a significant place in artistic creation and has become a central theme and expressive core in various forms of literary art.

The model of the world structure is widely recognized for its binary and dyadic nature. Such phenomena and entities, which exist in close interrelation, derive their oppositional structure from the very laws of creation. In archaic mythology, the concepts of life and death defined the corresponding notions of space and existence. For ancient peoples, passage from this world was understood as a transition into another spatial realm. Life in the other world was interpreted as a continuation dependent on the purity of the soul in this world, in accordance with universal ethical principles.

The dialogue between Paradise and Hell in *Divan-i Hikmet* is valuable because it is grounded in a humanistic Sufi worldview that articulates a key spiritual principle. In this regard, the author’s intellectual depth and artistic maturity are particularly evident in his effective use of the *aitys* tradition as a narrative model.

The depiction of Paradise and Hell in Yasawi’s *hikmets* through a dialogic or disputational form reflects a model that became deeply rooted in Kazakh and earlier Turkic cultural consciousness. In the text of the *hikmet*, the dispute between Paradise and Hell begins as follows:

“Paradise and Hell argue, and within their dispute there is meaning. Hell says:
‘I am greater, for Pharaoh and Haman are with me.’

Paradise replies:

‘You do not understand what true value is. Pharaoh and Haman are with you, while Joseph and Canaan are with me’ (*Forty Hikmets*, 2013, p. 41).

Pharaoh and Haman are regarded as sinners who doubted the Creator and claimed divinity for themselves. These two figures, frequently invoked in descriptions of Hell, are also mentioned in the Holy Qur’an. The Paradise’s rhetorical response to Hell—asking “What kind of judgment do you possess?” and presenting Joseph (Yusuf) and Canaan (Kana’an) as its exemplars—carries a distinct theological and symbolic meaning. The disputation continues as follows:

Hell says:

“I am greater, for within me dwell many worldly slaves,
Their hands bound with diamond chains and fiery shackles.”

Paradise replies:

“I am greater, for I am the abode of the prophets;
Before them are Kawthar, maidens of Paradise (houris), and attendants” (*Forty Hikmets*, 2013, p. 41).

Hell boasts of those who suffer within it, bound by diamond chains and fire-inflicted restraints. Paradise, in contrast, emphasizes that it is the dwelling place of the prophets and describes the divine rewards assigned to them, including the river of Kawthar, houris, and heavenly attendants.

Hell continues its disputation, referring to those whose bodies are consumed by torment, while Paradise responds by highlighting its righteous servants and the blessed gardens promised to the believers.

Paradise says:

“I am greater, for righteous servants dwell within me,
And before the believers there are infinite blessings and blooming gardens.”

Hell replies:

“I am greater, for within me dwell tyrannical servants,
For the oppressors there is poison and bitter venom.”

Paradise responds:

“I am greater, for learned servants are in my presence,
In their hearts are the verses of the Qur’an and the traditions (hadith)” (*Forty Hikmets*, 2013, pp. 41–42).

Hell once again asserts its superiority by referring to deceivers and hypocrites whose necks are bound with chains of fire, while Paradise speaks of Sufis whose hearts are filled with remembrance (*dhikr*) and contemplation (*fikr*), and of those who adhere to the path of Truth:

Hell says:

“I am greater, for within me lie deceitful ones;
Around the necks of hypocrites are fiery chains.”

Paradise replies:

“I am greater, for within me are those who follow the path of Truth;
In the hearts of Sufis are remembrance (*dhikr*), contemplation (*fikr*), and the praise of Subhan” (*Forty Hikmets*, 2013, p. 41).

Hell further mentions those who do not perform prayer, describing serpents and scorpions around their necks as symbols of punishment. Paradise, in contrast, asserts its superiority through reference to the ultimate spiritual ideal of humankind and the divine attributes of the Creator:

Paradise says:

“I am greater, for within me is the Vision of the Beloved;
The Merciful and Compassionate Lord reveals the Divine Countenance” (*Forty Hikmets*, 2013, p. 42).

Thus, the disputation concludes with the victory of Paradise and the defeat of Hell. The arguments and claims of Hell are shown to be morally and spiritually flawed, associated with evil rather than goodness, and therefore displeasing to the Divine Truth. Accordingly, the dialogue ends with the triumphant and didactic resolution of Paradise:

Hell then stood in silence,

While Paradise ascended to the heavens;

“O servant Khoja Ahmed, what have you understood?

Only God is the One who makes all things known” (*Forty Hikmets*, 2013, p. 41).

In this dialogic structure, Yasawi contrasts good and evil, virtue and vice, and human actions that elevate or degrade moral being. The narrative thus serves as a spiritual lesson, guiding the reader toward inner purification and ethical refinement.

Paradise in Dante's poem is depicted in the third part of *The Divine Comedy*. In Dante's representation, Paradise is a celestial realm composed of heavenly spheres inhabited by the blessed. Its structure is as follows:

- the first sphere: the Moon, the abode of those who failed to keep vows under compulsion and occupy the lowest level of Paradise;
- the second sphere: Mercury, the realm of reformers, just rulers, and those who suffered for righteousness;
- the third sphere: Venus, the abode of lovers;
- the fourth sphere: the Sun, the realm of wise philosophers and great scholars, arranged in two circles, moving in a harmonious dance;
- the fifth sphere: Mars, the abode of warriors who fought for faith;
- the sixth sphere: Jupiter, the realm of just rulers;
- the seventh sphere: Saturn, the abode of monks and contemplatives;
- the eighth sphere: the Fixed Stars, the realm of the victorious;
- the ninth sphere: the Primum Mobile, the pure crystalline heaven, the dwelling of angels and saints;
- the tenth sphere: the Empyrean, the final level of Paradise, represented as a flaming rose and a radiant river. At its center lies the amphitheater of the celestial rose, where the blessed dwell in eternal harmony. God and the blessed reside in this highest realm (Eliot, 1996, pp. 418–520).

y a transparent and soft cloud,
nourished only by the radiance of the sun.

Like a flawless diamond, or a subtle mist,
it absorbed us into its very essence,
like water drawn into light.

I was as fully immersed as I had been in earthly life;
and although no physical place could contain me,
I merged into that realm as body into body” (Alighieri, 2012, p. 425).

Or:

“As though the entire surrounding space was filled with light,
another radiant brightness appeared,
and a new splendor shone forth,
caressing like sunlight upon crystal” (Alighieri, 2012, p. 469).

In Yasawi's worldview, the essence of Paradise is characterized by the presence of Joseph (Yusuf) and Canaan (Kana'an), the prophets, the river of Kawthar, heavenly gardens, righteous believers, and scholars whose hearts are filled with verses of the Qur'an and the Hadith. Above all, Paradise is defined as the realm where divine mercy and grace are abundantly bestowed by the Creator.

The ultimate aspiration of human beings is to attain the height of moral and intellectual perfection. The central principle of Sufi doctrine in Islam is the purification of the heart and unwavering commitment to the path of Truth. Even those who err are given the opportunity for repentance and spiritual renewal. As researchers (Nurdauletova et al., 2022, p. 81) emphasize, Sufi teachings are grounded in key ethical principles such as love for God, which extends to the love and respect for all eighteen thousand worlds created by Him, the unity of humanity and nature, and moral categories such as compassion, merit, lawful and unlawful actions, sin,

patience, and contentment. These values are deeply rooted in the primordial history of human creation.

In Dante's *Inferno*, the tormented figures are those who failed to observe these fundamental moral principles and thus became sinners. The *Purgatorio*, in turn, represents a transitional space where the human soul struggles toward purification and moral elevation. The attainment of spiritual perfection is fully realized in the vision of Paradise.

Yasawi's *Divan-i Hikmet* serves as a model for honoring the highest humanistic ideals and instilling them in human consciousness. As Nurdauletova and other scholars note, the central principle of the Sufi worldview is the attainment of authentic human existence, that is, the level of being "a beloved servant of God," which is achievable only through the purification of the heart (Nurdauletova et al., 2022, p. 75). If goodness is regarded as the foundational core of literary expression, then preserving this origin and continuously nourishing the spiritual world becomes an eternal human aspiration. These two works—one philosophical and the other artistic—demonstrate, through different means, the significance of authentic human existence.

The profound poetic representation of the afterlife in human consciousness reaches its highest expression in Dante's literary imagination. One of the most outstanding embodiments of humanistic thought in world literature is Dante's *Divine Comedy*, which resonates strongly with Khoja Ahmed Yasawi's *Divan-i Hikmet*. While Dante depicts Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise on a vast narrative canvas with Virgil and Beatrice as spiritual guides, Yasawi conveys the same moral and metaphysical truths through the dialogic opposition of Paradise and Hell, using concise poetic expression to convey profound meaning.

Through this dialogue between Paradise and Hell, Yasawi emphasizes the eternal human aspiration toward spiritual elevation and moral perfection, presenting an idealized vision of truth in human consciousness. His use of the *aitys* tradition as a narrative form reflects not only his intellectual mastery but also his profound spiritual insight and universal humanistic vision. The significance and intellectual power of Yasawi's work are thus illuminated through comparison with Dante's *Divine Comedy*, one of the greatest masterpieces of world literature.

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