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“HISTORY OF BAYHAQI” AS A SOURCE OF THE GHAZNAVID PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

This article is about Abulfazl Bayhaqi's "History of Bayhaqi" which describes the history of the Ghaznavid dynasty that ruled in Eastern Iran, Khorasan, Afghanistan and Northern India between 352/963 and 582/1186. It gives information about the author of the work, the date of writing, the content, copies and translations. The death of his teacher Abu Nasr and the fact that Bayhaqi was not old enough prevented him from reaching higher levels. He worked in the same position with Abu Sahli Zuzani. As mentioned above, Bayhaqi's work consists of thirty volumes and only parts of the work that date back to the reign of Sultan Mas'ud ibn Mahmud Ghaznavi (421/1030-432/1040-1041) have survived, which are the end of Volume V, Volumes VI, VII, VIII, IX and X. This work is important from the point of view of the fact that it is one of the primary sources; the information contained in it includes the events witnessed by the author of the work.

KEYWORDS: *Ghaznavids, Rasailidiwan, Maqamat, Nasir Li Dinillah, Altintash, Peshawar Copies.*

INTRODUCTION

There are some works such as "History of Yamini", "Zayn al-Akhbar", "History of Bayhaqi" which covers the history of the Ghaznavid period [11: 9-10]. Of these Abulfazl Bayhaqi's "Tarihali Sabuktegin" which known as "Tarihi Bayhaqi" (History of Bayhaqi) is of particular importance due to the accuracy of the data, the high level of reliability. This work is important from the point of view of the fact that it is one of the primary sources; the information contained in it includes the events witnessed by the author of the work. The fact that the play contains a lot of information about the history of the Uzbek people and statehood means that it is important to study this work.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Abulfazl Muhammad ibn Husayn Bayhaqi was born in 386/996 in the village of Harisabad, Bayhaq district, southeast of Khorasan [12: 737]. Information about the author is given in several works covering the history of the Middle Ages, of which the author of the work “History of Bayhaq” (تاريخ بيهق) Ibn Funduq¹ [1: 62-63] wrote the following: “He heard countless hadiths and interpreted them when the time came. He also has Arabic poems. At the age of twenty-seven he became a student of Khoja Abu Nasr Mushkan who served as the head of the Rasaili Diwan (رسائل ديوان) at the court of Sultan Mahmud and Mas’ud. The death of his teacher Abu Nasr and the fact that Bayhaqi was not old enough prevented him from reaching higher levels. He worked in the same position with Abu Sahli Zuzani. He lived under good care and grace in the service of the sultan and minister” [4: 175]. Ibn Funduq stated that Bayhaqi was the secretary of Sultan Mahmud, Sultan Muhammad, Sultan Mas’ud, then Sultan Mawdud and Sultan Farrukhzad, and ceased his activities in the palace during the time of Sultan Farrukhzad [4: 175].

Bayhaqi’s resignation from the palace was due to the following events. During the reign of Ghaznavid Sultan Izzud-dawla Sultan Abdu Rashid ibn Mahmud Ghaznavi (440/1049-443/1052), one of the military commanders Tugrul (d. 1052) rebelled against the sultan. As a result of the revolt ten of the princes were killed along with the sultan. The remaining relatives and supporters of the sultan were imprisoned. Among them was Abulfazl Bayhaqi. However, this captivity ended in forty days. Sultan Farrukhzad (443/1052-1059) killed Tugrul, seized power and released all the prisoners. From that day onwards, Bayhaqi spent the rest of his life creatively. Bayhaqi died in Ghazna in the month of Safar (August-September) in 470/1077 [12: 737].

Bayhaqi has a work called “Maqamat” or “Kitab Maqamat”. He wrote about Maqamati Mahmudi [6: 234] and Maqamati Bu Nasri Mushkan [6: 234]. It is possible that these two will be two separate divisions of Maqamat. Bayhaqi’s other work “Ziynat al-kuttab” was narrated by Ibn Funduq as follows: “He wrote Ziynat al-Kuttab which is unique in its field” [4: 175]. Unfortunately, neither of Bayhaqi’s two works listed above has survived. The work that has come down to us is known as “Tarihi Bayhaqi” [12: 738].

Bayhaqi began writing this work in 409 / 1018-19. Referring to the time of writing, the author states the following sentences: “If one of the readers of my book complains that the sentences of Abulfazl are too long, my answer to him is as follows: “I am writing a history that covers fifty years, thousands of pages, and contains the names of very famous and great people from different tabaqats” [6: 199]. It is clear from these sentences of the author that the work was written for fifty years. However, the known volumes V-X of the work cover only the events from 421/1030 to 432/1040-1041.

According to researchers, Bayhaqi’s famous work consists of thirty volumes. The work is known as “Tarihi Nasiri” (تاريخ ناصري) [3: XI] and “Jamitarikhiali Sabuktegin” (جامع تاريخ آل سبکتکين) [3: XI] as well as “Mujalladati Abulfazl Bayhaqi” (مجلدة ابي الفضل بيهقي) [12: 737-738]. But there is no clear definition of how the author named his work. It is claimed that the name “Tarihi Nasiri” is derived from the nicknames “Nasirud-din” of Sabuktegin, the founder of the dynasty, or “Nasirli dinillah” of Mas’ud ibn Mahmud Ghaznavi. However, only the part of this rare work known as “Tarihi Bayhaqi”, or more precisely, the part that contains historical events of the time of Sultan

Mas'ud, has survived[2: 289]. For this reason, this work is also known as “TarihiMas'udi” (History of Mas'ud).

One of the important aspects of this work is that the author has written only the events that he witnessed. While working in the service of Bayhaqi's palace, especially during the reign of Sultan Mas'ud, he served as a famous scribe and trusted secretary. For this reason he became a person aware of the whole policy of the kingdom. Despite being a palace official, he narrated historical events, their causes and consequences, without further praise or exaggeration. He brings history in the form of days, months, years. If there is a document substantiating an event, he tried to give it.

As mentioned above, Bayhaqi's work consists of thirty volumes and only parts of the work that date back to the reign of Sultan Mas'ud ibn Mahmud Ghaznavi (421/1030-432/1040-1041) have survived, which are the end of Volume V, Volumes VI, VII, VIII, IX and X. They contain information about the political, socio-economic, military life, as well as diplomatic relations with neighboring countries during the reign of Sultan Mas'ud, the system of administrative management, and the structure of the palace[6]².

The issue of political disunity and the struggle for the throne between the successors, which began with the death of Mahmoud Ghaznavi comes in the very first parts of the work. The work also contains information about some events related to the founder of this dynasty Sabuktegin (pp. 313-315, 327-319, 681-715). One of the aspects that increase the importance of the work is that it contains valuable information about the Samanids, Karakhanids, Khwarezm-Shahs and Seljuks. For example, at the end of the fifth volume there was a letter to the khan of Turkestan Kadyrkhan (pp. 125-138) and a decree to Khwarezm-Shah (pp. 139-148), in the sixth volume, Sultan Mas'ud sent a letter to the khan of Turkestan, Kadyrkhan, through two envoys to renew the treaty (pp. 305-307, 333-349), in the seventh volume, Sultan Mas'ud wrote a letter to Khwarezm-Shah Altintash (pp. 503-510), Sultan Mas'ud's envoys brought a bride from Turkestan together with Karakhanid ambassadors (pp. 643-650), in the eighth volume the deterioration of relations between Amir Mas'ud and Bugrakhan, the sending of Amir Sadiq Tabbani as an ambassador to Kashgar and Taraz, and the end of the dispute with the help of Arslankhan (pp. 793-803), in the ninth volume several battles between the Ghaznavids and the Seljuks (pp. 867-892, 893-909, 917-957), a letter from the Ghaznavids to Arslankhan (pp. 959-967), and a story about Amir Mansur Nuh Samani (975-991), in the tenth volume the information about Khwarezm and Khwarezm-Shah Altintash (pp. 1017-1021, 1023-1026, 1027-1028) are among them. Much of this information was personally witnessed by the author and was based on official correspondence.

There are several manuscripts of the work, which are kept in Tehran, India[13: 31]³, Peshawar, St. Petersburg, as well as in the Bodleian Library of Oxford University⁴ [14: 97; 12: 738].

The first printed edition of this work was prepared by British orientalist V.H. Morley and V.N. Lis in 1861-1862[10]. But this print did not have the margins (hashiya) and catalog parts that today's readers will need. Muhammad Adib Peshawari prepared a lithograph of the History of Bayhaqi in Tehran in 1887 and published it in book form. The publisher added comments and margins in this edition[8]. Today, two editions of “Tarikhi Bayhaqi” are widely spread. The first one is Said Nafisi's edition, published in 1319/1907 under the title “Dar piyamuni Tarihi Bayhaqi”[15]. This edition consists of three volumes, and the third volume consists of a margin

only. The second edition was published jointly by Qasim Ghani and Ali Akbar Fayyaz in Tehran in 1324/1913. It is based on copies from Tehran, India and Peshawar, with text, commentary, margins and indexes [6].

The work was translated into Arabic by YahyaHashhab and SadiqNashat in 1376/1956[7]. The English translation of the work was published by K.E.Bosfort in three volumes under the title "The History of Beyhaqi". The Russian translation was made by A.K.Arends in Tashkent in 1962 under the title "Istoriya Mas'uda"[9]. The work was translated into Turkish by NejatiLugal[3].

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Abulfazl Bayhaqi's "History of Bayhaqi" is an important source that directly covers the history of the Ghaznavid period and the political, socio-economic and cultural life of Eastern Iran, Khorasan, Afghanistan, North India, Khwarezm and Mawarannahr in the first half of the 11th century. The most important aspect of this work is that the author wrote down the events he witnessed and relied on official correspondence to cite them. The presence of valuable information about the Samanid and Karakhanid rulers, Khwarezmshahs, Seljuk commanders and their activities in the work further enhances the significance of this work for researchers.

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