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Factors Influencing the Formation of Zaynuddin ibn Nujaym as a Faqih

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Abstract: The eminent scholar Ibn Nujaym was one of the outstanding teachers of his time and ranked among the leading scholars who mastered the religious sciences, including the Qur'an, Hadith, and Fiqh. He acquired a profound command of Hanafi jurisprudence and developed a particular devotion to the science of Fiqh. This becomes evident through a study of the scholar's life and biography. Accordingly, this study examines the factors and driving forces that influenced and shaped him as a jurist (faqih).

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Before addressing the topic in detail, it is appropriate to briefly discuss the concept of the "science of Fiqh." The distinctiveness and comprehensiveness of Islamic law lie in the existence of well-established juridical principles and foundations. These principles and foundations themselves constitute independent disciplines within the sciences of Fiqh and Usul al-Fiqh.

The science of Fiqh serves to systematize legal rulings, harmonize the underlying causes (ʿillah) that give rise to legal judgments, and organize issues across various juridical chapters. Ibn Nujaym mastered the juridical sciences of the Hanafi school to such an extent that he was even referred to among scholars as the "Second Abu Hanifa."

In the contemporary period, the need to systematize juridical principles has become increasingly relevant in order to facilitate the study and comprehension of this discipline. As a result, jurists have paid greater attention to legal maxims and methodological principles. Among such scholars is Imam Zayn al-Din ibn Ibrahim ibn Muhammad Ibn Nujaym al-Misri al-Hanafi (d. 970 AH).

This study briefly addresses Ibn Nujaym's birth, his status in the scholarly world, his journeys in pursuit of knowledge, his relationships with contemporary scholars, as well as the intellectual and social environment that influenced his personality and scholarly methodology.

The scholar's full name is Zayn al-Din ibn Ibrahim ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Bakr al-Hanafi. Due to the prominence of his scholarly forefathers who lived in the 10th century AH, he became known as Ibn Nujaym al-Misri. Ibn Nujaym was born in Cairo in 926 AH (1520 CE). He was recognized as an imam, a scholar, and a uniquely distinguished authority of his era.[1] It is worth noting that Ibn Nujaym was born in the very year when the

[1] Ибн ал-Имод, Шиҳобиддин Абу ал-Фалаҳ Абдулҳай ибн Аҳмад ибн Муҳаммад ал-Акрий, ал-Ҳанбалий, ад-Димашқий. 1993 йил.

Ottomans first entered Egypt. The scholars Muhammad Ahmad Siraj al-Din and Ali Jumʿa, in their work *al-Rasāʾil al-Zayniyya fī Madhhab al-Ḥanafiyya*, point out that his youth and family life were marked by modest living conditions. Like other children of his time, he memorized the Noble Qur'an at one of Cairo's schools and, alongside this, demonstrated strong proficiency in other fields of knowledge.

He studied Hanafi jurisprudence diligently and mastered it within a relatively short period. His teachers highly esteemed him for his intellectual ability and perseverance in seeking knowledge. Moreover, he distinguished himself through his interest in Sufism and exemplary moral conduct, serving as a role model for others. Despite his young age, he was entrusted with issuing legal opinions (fatwas) and delivering lessons.[2]

The scholar lived and carried out his intellectual activities during two major ruling periods. The years 926/1520 correspond to the end of the Mamluk state and the beginning of Ottoman rule in Egypt. In 1517, the Ottoman sultan Selim I brought an end to Mamluk dominance and established Ottoman authority over Egypt.

The transformation of the state administrative system created favorable conditions for Ibn Nujaym's future scholarly achievements. After the Ottomans assumed control of Egypt, they devoted significant attention to reforming the political, economic, administrative, and Sharīʿa-based legal systems, addressing the errors and shortcomings that had arisen under Mamluk rule. In particular, ambiguities in legislation had contributed to the decline of the Mamluk state.

Following the fall of the Fatimid state in Egypt and the rise of the Mamluks—namely the Ayyubids—to power, all governmental laws were initially implemented in accordance with the Shāfiʿī school of jurisprudence. Later, more specifically during the rule of Baybars al-Bunduqdārī[3] By that period, one judge (qāḍī) from each of the four legal schools was appointed to the position of *Qāḍī al-Quḍāt* in the country. This situation led to a deterioration of the religious atmosphere within the government. Mutual disputes emerged among the population, with individuals asserting, "My legal school is correct, and my views are right," which resulted in growing sectarian disagreements and the erosion of social cohesion[4]. Moreover, during the Mamluk period, one of the main factors that led to the deterioration of the social environment in Egypt was the practice whereby sultans accepted money from candidates aspiring to judicial positions and appointed them to the office of *Qāḍī al-Quḍāt*. Such appointments resulted in ignorant and unqualified individuals assuming judicial authority, which in turn led to injustices in the implementation of Sharīʿa rulings and caused widespread public dissatisfaction with the government.

For example, Shaykh Sirāj al-Dīn ibn Mulaqqan reportedly paid four thousand dinars to Sultan Qalāwūn in order to obtain the position of judge[5]. Also, Jamaluddin Muhammad Makini bribed the sultan with three thousand dinars to become a judge of the Shafi'i sect.[6]. After accepting bribes to become judges, in order to collect the money spent on bribes, if two people complained about the same case to the courts, the one who had paid the bribe would be given a ruling in favor of that person. Therefore, when the Ottomans conquered Egypt, Sultan Suleiman I reprimanded the captured judges, saying: "You are the ones who took bribes to issue Sharia rulings."[7].

[2] Сирож. 1999 й. Муҳаммад Аҳмад. Муҳаммад Али Жумъа. Раоил Ибн Нужай ал-иқтисрдиййа вал-мусаммат ар-рисала аз-зайния фи мазҳаби ал-ҳанафия. Ал-Қоҳира. Даруссалам. Ж.1. –Б.7.

[3] Мамлукларнинг бу подшоси Мисрда 1260 йилдан бошлаб 17 йил давомида ҳукуматни бошқарган.

[4] Доктор Муҳаммад Аҳмад Сирож. Расоил Ибн Нужайм иқтисодия. – Қоҳира: Дорус салом, 1999. –Б. 9.

[5] Ибн Ҳажар Асқалоний. Инбоҳул ғумр бианбоҳил умр. – Қоҳира: Иҳёу туросил исломий, 1969. 1 ж, –Б. 172

[6] Муҳаммад ибн Иёс. Бадоиуз зуҳур фи вақоиуд духур. – Қоҳира: Ҳайъатйл мисрия лил кутуб, 1984. –Б. 71

[7] Муҳаммад ибн Иёс. Бадоиуз зуҳур фи вақоиуд духур. – Қоҳира: Ҳайъатйл мисрия лил кутуб, 1984.

In early 1517, the army of Selim I entered Cairo, forcing the Mamluk forces to retreat to Upper Egypt. However, they were soon defeated there as well. Their leader, Tumanbay, was captured and executed by hanging in Cairo. Subsequently, the Hijaz (Western Arabia), regarded as the sacred land of Muslims, was brought under control. Shortly thereafter, Selim I also obtained the key to the Kaaba.

Despite the establishment of Ottoman rule over Syria and Egypt, no fundamental changes occurred in the feudal system or feudal relations in these regions. Syrian and Lebanese feudal lords who had supported the Mamluks during the war were deprived of part of their landholdings, whereas feudal elites favored by Selim I expanded their estates using lands confiscated from the Mamluks. Only in the vicinity of Aleppo did the Ottomans introduce a military land system, distributing land among Turkish sipahis. The province of Aleppo was transformed into a military stronghold aimed at suppressing uprisings among the Syrian population.

During the reign of Selim I (1520–1566), the Ottoman Empire reached the peak of its military achievements. Following the conquest of Egypt, the authority of the Ottoman sultans extended along the entire North African coast as far as Morocco.

It would not be an exaggeration to state that Sultan Selim I's objectives regarding the development of Egypt created an exceptionally favorable scholarly environment for Ibn Nujaym and other scholars of his stature. In the first half of the sixteenth century, Ottoman rulers expanded their territories significantly by conquering new lands across Europe, Asia, and Africa. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Safavid power strengthened along the eastern borders of the Ottoman state. By 1510, Shah Ismail I (1502–1524) had brought under his control nearly all territories that had previously belonged to the Aq Qoyunlu state. The rise of the Safavid state—having adopted Shiʿism as its official religion—not only constrained Ottoman expansion in the East but also threatened its internal stability.

In 1514, the Ottoman army inflicted a decisive defeat on the Safavids at the Battle of Chaldiran near the city of Maku. The Ottomans captured the Safavid capital of Tabriz but were unable to maintain control over Iran and subsequently withdrew to Anatolia. Upon leaving Tabriz, the Ottomans relocated more than 700 families of craftsmen to Istanbul, where they were resettled.

According to the peace treaty signed in 1515, several districts of Armenia, together with the city of Erzurum and the northern part of Iraq, including the city of Mosul, came under Ottoman control. Following the conclusion of the war with Iran, the Ottomans launched campaigns into Arab territories. At that time, Syria and Egypt were united under Mamluk rule, led by Sultan Qansuh al-Ghawri, an ally of Shah Ismail. In the summer of 1516, the Ottoman army, under the command of Sultan Selim I (1512–1520), advanced into northern Syria. In the very first battle near Aleppo (24 August 1516), the Ottomans achieved a decisive victory. Turkish artillery played a crucial role in securing military superiority, and the Mamluk sultan Qansuh al-Ghawri was killed in battle. In Egypt, the Mamluks offered strong but ultimately unsuccessful resistance.

In Egypt, the Ottoman governors carried out major reforms in the issuance and enforcement of Sharīʿa rulings. To support these reforms, the government created broad opportunities for the population to study religious sciences.

First and foremost, in order to preserve and develop the religious environment, the Ottomans needed to eliminate the negative perceptions of judges that had become deeply rooted in public consciousness. To achieve this goal, the following measures were implemented in the country:

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Shaped by the intellectual environment of his era, the scholar memorized the Qur'an from a young age and studied under prominent scholars of the time, including Shaykh Amin al-Din Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAli al-Hanafi, Shaykh Qasim Qutlubugha, and Shihab al-Din al-Shibli.

Alongside jurisprudence, the scholar also studied Sufism under his teachers. Recognizing his God-given abilities and exceptional talent, his teachers provided him with additional instruction beyond that given to other students. He soon mastered many key works of Hanafi jurisprudence and acquired the competence to derive Sharīʿa rulings through methodological principles (usul). As a result, even in his youth, Ibn Nujaym received formal authorization (*ijazah*) from his teachers to issue fatwas and to teach.

Despite his young age, the scholar not only mastered the juridical sciences under his teachers but also thoroughly acquired and internalized moral and spiritual knowledge, namely Sufism. This is evidenced by the account found in Najm al-Din Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazzi's work *al-Kawākib al-Sāʾira bi-Aʿyān al-Miʾa al-ʿĀshira* ("The Shining Stars on the Notable Figures of the Tenth Century," d. 1061/1651).

In this work, the author quotes the following statement:

"ʿAbd al-Wahhab al-Shaʿrani said: 'In 953/1546, I performed the pilgrimage together with Ibn Nujaym. During both the journey to Mecca and the return, I observed his interactions with his companions and found him to possess excellent character. Indeed, travel is a mirror that reveals a person's character.'"[8]

This testimony of the great scholar of his time, Sha'rani, about a young man who had reached the age of twenty-seven, indicates that Ibn Nujaim had mastered the science of Sufism as well as jurisprudence. At the same time, Ibn Nujaim (may Allah have mercy on him) had the ability to interpret texts that were famous within the school of thought in short sentences and to deduce fundamental issues based on rules. He was able to respond to the newly emerging rulings of his time through the main sources of Islam, relying on the rules of the Hanafi school of thought.[9].

Ibn Nujaim (may Allah have mercy on him) paid much attention to the science of jurisprudence and was engaged in this science. In the introduction to his work "Al-Ashbah wa-n-nazair", he said: "Indeed, the science of jurisprudence is a science that is of high value among the sciences, brings many rewards, has many benefits, is of high rank, fills the eyes with light, fills the hearts with joy, and turns the mind. Because this science distinguishes between the lawful and the unlawful, between the permissible and the impermissible. Even if all my members were to speak, I would not be able to describe it. The people of this science are the leaders of people and the pillars of religion."[10]

The political and economic stability maintained by the Ottomans during Ibn Nujaym's era, along with the significant attention given to Hanafi jurisprudence, was a primary factor in his emergence as a prominent scholar of the Hanafi school. In particular, examining the period in which he lived reveals that in Egypt, two fields of knowledge—Sufism and Fiqh—received special emphasis compared to other disciplines. Ibn Nujaym became an accomplished scholar specifically in these two areas.

Shaped by the intellectual environment of his time, the scholar memorized the Qur'an from a young age and studied under the eminent scholars of his era, including Shaykh Amin al-Din

[8] Нажмуддин Ғаззий. Кавокибус соира биаъёнил миъатил ашира. -Байрут: Дору кутубил илмия, 1997. –Б. 154.

[9] Ибн Нужайм. Росаилу Ибн Нужайм. –Б. 18.

[10] Аҳмад Ҳамавий. Ғомзу уюунил басоир ала маҳасинил ашбаҳ ван назоир. -Байрут: Дорул кутубил илмия. 1985. Ж. 1. –Б. 25. (Бундан кейин: Аҳмад ибн Муҳаммад Ҳамавий. Ғомзул уюнил басоир ала маҳасинил ашбаҳ ван назоир).

Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAli al-Hanafi, Shaykh Qasim Qutlubugha, and Shihab al-Din al-Shibli. Alongside jurisprudence, he also studied Sufism under his teachers. Recognizing his God-given talent and exceptional abilities, his teachers provided him with additional lessons beyond those offered to other students.

The scholar soon mastered numerous key works of Hanafi jurisprudence and acquired the competence to issue Sharīʿa rulings based on methodological principles (*usul*). Consequently, even in his youth, he received formal authorization (*ijazah*) from his teachers to issue fatwas and teach.

In conclusion, the political and social environment of Ibn Nujaym's era provided a fertile ground for his prolific scholarly work. His recognition as the "Second Abu Hanifa" reflects the high regard in which he was held. Notably, his citations of scholars from Bukhara and Samarkand in his works underscore the significance of studying his writings and highlight their enduring scholarly importance.