THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC SCIENCES DURING THE SELJUK SULTAN SANJAR PERIOD

INTRODUCTION

The name of the Seljuk state is derived from the name of Seljuk ibn Dukak, the chief of the nomadic Turkic-Oghuz tribe living on the banks of the Syrdarya. The Seljuk Turks were Mahmud Ghaznavi’s viceroy in Khorasan. In 1038, Tughril (1038-1063), the grandson of the Seljuks, conquered Nishapur and declared the establishment of his state in the Khorasan region and partly in Mawarannahr. In 1040, the Battle of Dandanaqan took place between the Ghaznavid sultan Mas’ud and Tughril. After the defeat of Mas’ud in the Battle of Dandanaqan, the Seljuk state ruled over a large area consisting of Khorasan, Khorezm, western Iran, Azerbaijan and Iraq. In 1055, Tughril also captured Baghdad. The Abbassid caliph al-Quim (1031–1075) handed over power in Baghdad to Tughril, declaring him the “King of the East and the West” and marrying his daughter (S. Agadjanyan, 1991:66).

The Seljuks sought to create all the conditions for the development of science and culture. In the Seljuk madrasahs, both natural and exact sciences were taught from socio-religious knowledge. Students were given a monthly stipend and provided with space, taught by mature scholars of their time, and had thousands of volumes of libraries at the disposal of students of science. We know that in some madrasas the number of students is in the thousands. For example, it is known that one of the Nizamiyah madrasas, founded by Nizamulmolk, was home to 6,000 students.

METHODS

The traditional serious focus on knowledge and enlightenment among Muslim rulers did not lose its importance even during the Seljuk period. The first madrasah in the Seljuk state was built in 1046 in Nishapur by order of Tughril (Ali Öngül, 2003). Fakhr al-Din Gurgani (d. 446/1054), the author of “Vis and Ramin”, one of the great writers of his time, was the chairman of the Ray office in the time of Sultan Mas’ud, the son of Mahmud Ghaznavi. Scholars such as Abul A’la ibn Hassul (d. 450/1058), the author of “Dumyat al-qasr fi shu’ara al-asr” Ali ibn Hasan Baharzi (d. 467/1075) have been active (Haji Khalifa, 2016:461).

During Tughril’s reign, the Hanafi sect was declared the state sect. During this period, there was serious competition in the state between Hanafi and Shafi’i. Izzuddin ibn al-Athir, in his work “al-Kamil fi at-Tarikh”, said: “He asked the Sultan for permission to criticize the Rafidis in the mosques of Khorasan. With the permission of the sultan, Amid al-Mulk began to criticize the Rafidis as well as the Ash’arites. The minister did so because he feared that Abu Sahl Nishapuri, one of the leaders of Nishapur and a Shafi’i, would become a minister in the future. As a result, mature representatives of the Shafi’i school, such as Imam al-Juwayni, Abu Suhail Muwaffaq, Abul Qasim Qushairi, and Imam Baihaqi, were forced to leave the land of Hijaz. This continued until Alp Arslan ascended the throne and was appointed minister of Nizamulmulk, the Shafi’i. According to some narrations, Amid al-Mulk repented for his treatment of the Shafi’is” (Ibn al-Athir, 1987:365).

DISCUSSION

Sultan Alp Arslan (1063–1072), who ascended the throne after Tughril’s death, patronized science throughout the country. During his time, in 1067, the first madrasah was built in Baghdad. This madrasah was named “Nizamiyah” because it was built on the initiative of Minister Nizamulmulk. Later, madrasas built in Ray, Nishapur, Merv, Balkh, Herat, Basra, Isfahan, and Mosul were also called Nizamiyah. In contrast to the politics of Tughril’s time, clerics from
Annotation. This article discusses the scholars who worked during the dynasty that ruled under the name of the “Great Seljuk Empire” in the XI-XII centuries, their works, and their great contribution to the development of Islamic civilization. The article also discusses the activities of Nizamiyya madrasahs, which were famous in the middle ages. There are many studies on the scientific and intellectual life of the Seljuk State in the periods of Alp Arslan and Melikshah. However, the period of Sultan Sanjar has not been studied as a whole except for a few articles. The enlightenment of the Great Seljuk period reached its peak after Sultan Melikshah during the reign of Sultan Sanjar. Sultan Sanjar himself had surpassed his ancestors in every way in his patronage of science and enlightenment. Although his reign distinguishes with the battles against various misguided sects science also did not cease. On the contrary, the sultan himself sought to create conditions for all the sciences in the kingdom. With the need arising from this situation, it is aimed to examine the scientific and intellectual structure of the Sultan Sanjar period with this study. During the reign of Sultan Sanjar, the scholars in the geography of Khorasan and Mawarannahr (Transoxania), their works, studies, innovations, and intellectual life will be examined. Within the framework of the scientific environment provided by Sultan Sanjar and his contributions to Islamic civilization, the point where the Seljuks brought the scientific heritage they took over and how they achieved this will be analyzed.

Key words: Seljuks, Nizamiyya madrasah, Islamic civilization, tafsir, kalam, fiqh, tasawwuf, history.


Калит сузлар: Салжукудар, Низамия медресесі, ғылыми ұсыныс тарихы.

The madrassa library in Baghdad has been endowed with books for 6,000 years by the regime. Abu Is’haq Shirazi was the first director of the madrasah. Imam Ghazzali was the director of the madrasah from 1091 to 1095.

The Nizamiyya Madrasah in Nishapur was built in 1058 in honor of Imam al-Haramain Imam al-Juwayni (419/1028-478/1085), who was forced to emigrate to Hijaz during the Tughril period. Imam al-Juwayni was the first teacher of the madrasah (Richard Bulliet, 1972:73). This madrasah differed in construction and education from the Simjuri madrasah, which ruled Khorasan from 940 to 1000, and the “Sa’idiya” madrasah of the Ghaznavids. Until Tughril’s death, the madrasah was called “Sultan Madrasah”.

From 300 to 400 students studied at the madrasah. Sufi, commentator, muhaddith, author of the works “ar-Risala”, “at-Tahbir fi-t-Tazkir”, “at-Tafsir al-Kabir” by Abul Qasim Qushairi (376/986-465/1072), Muhammad ibn Ahmad Marwazi (d. 465/1072) such scholars worked in the madrasah.

The Nizamiyya madrasah in Isfahan was built in 1072 next to the Masjid al-Juma in the city center. The madrasah was taught by Abu Bakr Sadreddin Khojandii (d. 483/1090), Fakhriddin Abul Ma’ali (d. 559/1163), and Abu Sa’id ibn Abu Bakr (XIII century). The magnificent library of the madrasah, like the one in Baghdad, functioned until the 14th century. Abul Qasim Abdullah ibn Tahiri (XI-XII centuries) was a teacher in the Balkh madrasah. The madrasah was taught by scholars such as Abu Sa’id al-Harawi (12th century) and Ziyavuddin Sadir al-Aimm (XII century). Rashiduddin Watvat (d. 573/1177), a poet and writer of the Khorezmshah period, is also a graduate of this madrasah (Ibn Is’fandiyor, 2002:109–112). The madrasa was demolished in 1153.

Before these madrasahs began to operate, those who sought knowledge had to travel to distant cities. Nizamiyya madrasahs have fully met this need.

After the death of Sultan Alp Arslan in 1072, his 13-year-old son Malik-Shah (1072–1092) ascended the throne. In 1074, Malik-Shah conquered Termez, Bukhara, Samarkand, and later Fergana. During the reign of Malik-Shah, the Seljuks were very militarily and politically powerful. The capital was moved from Nishapur to Isfahan. The king also declared Nizamulmulk as his minister. Like his father, he sponsored science and education.

The historian of the Ottoman period, Ahmad ibn Mahmud (d. 1570), in his work “Book of Seljuk Empire” (“Seljuqnama”), describes the contribution of the Nizamulmulk to science and enlightenment as follows: “Those who could not see Nizamulmulk’s patronage of science told the sultan, “Nizamulmulk spends 300,000 dinars a year from your treasury on Quran memorizers, jurists, and Sufis. If this money is spent on troops, we can conquer Constantinople”. Nizamulmulk replied to Sultan Malik-Shah in this letter: “O Sultan of the worlds! Allah has bestowed upon you and on me blessings that none of His slaves have. Do you see 300,000 dinars more than those who remember the Book of Allah? You spend twice as much on soldiers. However, the bullet fired by them does not go more than a mile. And with this money, I will form such an “army” that their knowledge will not be able to prevent them from ascending to the Throne of Allah. “To Sultan Malik-Shah Nizamulmulk, increase the number of this “army” as much as you can. I will give you as much wealth as you want. The riches of the world is yours”. (Ahmad ibn Mahmud, 1977:142–144).
During the reign of Sultan Malik-Shah, an observatory was built in Isfahan and a madrasah in Tabaristan. The English orientalist Henry George Raverty, in his study of the medieval Muslim historian Minhaj ad-din Juzjani’s “Tabaqati Nosiri”, assesses the development of science during the reign of Sultan Malik-Shah as follows: «Sultan Malik-Shah has a lot of good things left in the world. One of them is the correction of errors in the science of Nujum. Nujum and arithmetic scholars, by order of Malik-Shah, developed a new method of observing the stars and redefined the days of the moon. A new calendar “Jalali” was developed for the state» (H.G. Raverty, 1873:142).


As a result of the internal struggles for the throne that began after Sultan Malik-Shah, a period of stagnation arose in the Seljuk scientific environment. The recession continued during the reigns of Mahmud I (1092–1093), Berkyaruk (1094–1105), and Malik-Shah II (1105). After Muhammad Tapar (1105–1118) came to power, science and culture began to rise again. During this period, scholars from the time of Sultan Malik-Shah were mainly active.

Imam al-Ghazali dedicated his persian work “al-Tibr al-masbuk fi nasihat al-muluk”, and Ibn Balkhi dedicated his “Farsnama” to Muhammad Tapar. Muhammad Tapar built rabats for Sufis around each of the Nizamiyya madrasahs. Muhammad Tapar died in 1118. At this point, the Seljuk state was divided into two parts. Western Iran, Iraq and Azerbaijan were ruled by Mahmud II (1118–1131), son of Muhammad Tapar, under the name of the Sultanate of Iraq (1118–1194). Hamadan has been designated as the capital of the Sultanate of Iraq. In Khurasan, Sijistan, Khorezm and Mavarrannahr, Ahmad Sanjar (1118–1157), the son of Malik-Shah, was proclaimed sultan. Sultan Sanjar declared Merv as the capital of his state. After the death of Sultan Sanjar (1157) the Seljuk rule in Khurasan came to an end. In 1194, Khorezmshah Takash overthrew the Sultanate of Iraq. Another Seljuk state, the Sultanate of Konya, ruled until the XII century.

The period of Sultan Sanjar is the most prosperous period of the Seljuk state. Like his father, he sponsored science. Sultan Sanjar invited Khurasan not only Muslim scholars but also representatives of other religions. He had great respect and attention to scientists. “This land (Khurasan) was a place of knowledge, a source of virtue and a land of professions” (Ali ibn Sulaiman Rawandi, 2005:167).

Sultan Sanjar had high regard for scholars. Instead of interfering in the intellectual struggles between the sects, he followed the scholars. He also did not interfere in the disputes between the Hanafis and the Shafi’is in Nishapur. He had good relations with great scholars such as Imam al-Ghazali and Yusuf Hamadani. In 1110, he sent 50,000 dinars and a letter to Yusuf Hamadani, who was in Samarkand. In his letter, he asked to be blessed in his own right.

Sultan Sanjar distributed 700,000 dinars, 1,000 pieces of clothing, many horses, and other valuables from the treasury to scholars, physicians, and philosophers. When the treasurer said that the treasury was being emptied, he said, “If you say I am prone to wealth, it is not true. Distribute these clothes”.

During the reign of Sultan Sanjar, all branches of science developed. Scholars wrote mature works in the fields of tafsir, fiqh (jurisprudence), kalam, tasawwuf, philosophy, and the formal sciences.

Tafsir: During the reign of Sultan Sanjar, many works were written in the science of tafsir. The mufassirs of this period mainly wrote in the “historical” method. One of the mufassirs of this period was Abu Muhammad al-Husain ibn Mas’ud ibn Muhammad al-Farra’ al-Baghawi, a student of Imam al-Haramain Juwayni. (d. 516/1122) (Sama’aani, 1977:195–397). Al-Farra’ Baghwai was born in Baghsur between Merv and Herat. Year of Baghwai’s birth unknown. There are works on the science of tafsir, such as
“Ma’alim at-Tanzil also known as Tafsir al-Baghawi” and “al-Kifaya fi al-qiraa”.

Another great mufassir of this period is Imam Zamakhshari (467/1075–538/1144) (Ibn Khallikan, 2007:168–174). The scholar’s full name is Abul Qasim Mahmud ibn Umar al-Zamakhshari. He was called “Teacher of Arabs and non-Arabs”, and “Honor of Khorezm” with deep respect and kindness. Zamakhshari has also created excellent works on literature, tafsir, hadith, and jurisprudence. There are works entitled, one of them “Al-Kashshaf” (“The Revealer; Quran Interpretation”), “Asas al-Balaghah”, “al-Mofassal fi sina’at al-i’rab”, “Maqamat al-Zamakhshari”.

Najmiddin Umar Nasafi (461/1068-537/1142) was also a mufassir on the Sultan Sanjar period (Imam adz-Dzahabi, 1996:1:56–157). Abu Hafs Najmiddin Umar ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad Nasafi Samarkandi is the full name of the Hanafi jurist, the representative of the teachings of maturidiyya, the mufassir, the muhaddith. “Al-Taysir fi al-Tafsir”, “Tafsir Nasafi”, “al-Akmal al-Atwal fi Tafsir al-Quran”, “Risalah fi al-Khata’ fi Qira’at al-Qur’an” have reached us.

There are differences in the interpretations of this period. Many mufassirs wrote commentaries based on their own beliefs. Some of the commentaries of this period were written in Persian.

**Hadith:** Among the muhaddiths of this period, al-Farra’ Baghawi can be mentioned. Baghawi’s “Sharh as-Sunna”, “Masabih as-Sunna”, “Al-Jame’ bayna as-Sahihayn”, “Al-Anwar fi Shamail an-Nabi al-Mukhtar”, and “Sharhu Jame’ al-Tirmidhi” is one of the most respected books (Haji Khalifa, 2016:195). The scholar’s works “Tilbah al-Talabah fi al-Istilahat al-Fiqhiyya”, “Manzumah fi al-Khilafat”, “Tuhfat al-muluk”.

**Fiqh (The science of jurisprudence):** During the reign of Sultan Sanjar, many works were written by Hanafi and Shia jurists. Among the hadith scholars, one of the Hanafi jurists, wrote “Tilbah al-Talabah fi al-Istilahat al-Fiqhiyya”, “Manzumah fi al-Khilafat”, “Tuhfat al-muluk”.


**Kalam:** During the Seljuk period, as the activities of such sects as Karramiyya, Batiniyya, Rafida, and Mu’tazilah increased, the need for books based on the teachings of “Ahl as-Sunna” in theology increased. During this period, many scholars wrote several works to refute the misguided sects. Abu Hafs al-Nasafi’s “Aqaid al-Nasafi” is one of the most authoritative works based on the teachings of Shia faith. One such scholar is Hamza ibn Hibatullah Nishapuri (d. 523/1128–29) (Efe Yesildurak, 2015:37). The scholar belonged to the Zaydiyya faith.
of maturidiyya. This work is second only to Abul Mu’in Nasafi’s “Tabsirat al-Adilla” in the teachings of Moturidiyya. Abu Hafs Nasafi had many works on philosophy and belief. Especially famous was his work “Manzumah fi al-Khilafat”.

Another mature scholar of this period was Shafi’i-Ash’ari Abul Fath Shahristani (469/1076-548/1153). The scholar’s “Nihayat al-Iqdam” wrote as a rebuttal against the Batiniyya.

Another representative of the doctrine of maturidiyya is Alauddin Samarkandi Osmandi (d. 551/1157). The scholar’s full name is Abul Fath Alauddin Muhammad ibn Abdulhamid ibn Umar ibn Hasan ibn Husain Samarkandi Asmandi, who was born in 1095 in the city of Asmand near Samarkand. This city is also called Osman or Samand. Sources say that he wrote a work on the kalam “Lubab al-kalam” or “al-Hidayah fi usul al-itiqad” (Sama’ani, 1977:246-247).

The full name of the scholar Muhammad Baihaqi (d. 565/1169), known as Ibn Funduk, was Abul Hasan Zahiruddin Ali ibn Zayd ibn Muhammad Baihaqi. There is his work “al-Ifada fi ithbat al-hashr wa al-i’ada”. The famous Hanafi jurist Siraj ad-din al-Ushi (d. 568/1173), a well-known scholar of Maturidiyya, also worked during this period (Haji Khalifa, 2016).

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Ahmad Ghazali (d. 520/1126), the author of the works “Sawaneh”, “Lubob”, “Bawariq al-ilma’ fi l-radd ‘ala man yuharrim al-sama”, Ay al-qudot Hamadan (d. 525/1131), the author of the works “Zubdat al-haqaq fi kashf ad-daqaqiq”, “Tamhidat”, “Maktubat”, the author of the works “Adab al-muridiin”, “Gharib al-mashabih” Abu Najib Suhravardi (490/1097-563/1168), student of Abu Is’haq Shirazi, the author of such works as “Rutbat al-hayat”, “Kashf”, “Risalah dar adabi tariqah”, “Risalah dar akhlaq wa munajat” Yusuf Hamadani (440/1048- 535/1140), the founder of the Qadiyana sect Abdul Qadir Gilani (470/1077-561/1165-66), the student of Yusuf Hamadani, the founder of the Yassaviya sect, the leader of the sect known as “Piri Turkistan” Ahmed Yasawi (486/1093-561/1166) are considered to be one of the greatest mystics who worked during the period of the Seljuk, especially Sultan Sanjar. (Ibn Khallikan, 2007:97-98).

Along with the religious sciences, the science of grammar and the exact sciences also developed during this period Mahmud Zamakhshari, the author of the works “al-Maarrab”, “Mukhtasar fi-n-nahw”, “Mukhtasar sihah al-lugha” Mahbub ibn Ahmad Jawaliki (465/1073-540 /1154), linguists such as Umar ibn Sahlan Sawi (d. 540/1145), the author of “al-Risalah al-Sanjariyya”, dedicated to Sultan Sanjar, were active (Imam adh-Dhahabi, 1958, 1286-1290).

Also, poets such as Omar Khayyam, Mawlana Am’aq Bukhari (d. 543/1149), Abul Majid Sanai’i (d. 525/1131), Nizami Aruzi (d. 552/1157), Badiudhdhaman Abdulvasi’ Tabrizi (d. 555/1157), Abu Bakr Omar Balkhi (d. 555/1163-1164) and Awhaduddin Anwari (d. 585/1189); Muhammad Baihaqi, Abu Hatim Isfizari (d. 515/1121), Abul Qasim Badi Usturlabi (d. 534/1139-40), Abu Bakr Muhammad Balkhi (d. 555/1163-1164) and Abdullahan Khazini (XII century), Bahauddin Haraki (d. 553/1158), Aynuzzaman Hasan Marwazi (d. 548/1153) such as astronomers, physicists and mathematicians were active this period.

**ANALYSIS**

Whether a supreme ruler, a prince, or a princess belonging to the Seljuk dynasty, they all considered it their duty to build one or more madrasas in any city in the country. Ministers, emirs, and local governors also set an example. For example, the famous minister Nizamulmulk mentioned above built many madrasas in his time. Hundreds of students in each madrasah were educated in both religious and secular fields.

The traditional serious focus on science and enlightenment did not lose its significance even during the Seljuk period, and we can see this through the establishment of the dozens of madrasas mentioned above. The fact that this was the case is confirmed by the work of great scientists and poets of that time. When the historian and traveler Yaqut Hamawi (1179-1229) visited Merv, he saw that there were ten large libraries there. The historian wrote that no other library in the world can match the value and number of books stored in these libraries.

**CONCLUSION**

All sources confirm the development of science and culture in the Seljuk field. In addition to the religious sciences, progress has been made in the secular sciences. According to the project of astronomer and mathematician Omar Khayyam, an observatory was built in Isfahan. On behalf of Sultan Malikshah, he conducted observations at the observatory and...
reformed the solar calendar of the Sassanids, creating a new calendar (the “Malik-Shah calendar” or “Jalal era”).

During this period, many architectural monuments were built in the capital cities such as Nishapur, Merv, Isfahan, Ray, Hamadan, as well as in Bukhara, Samarkand, and Termez. Marv prospered, he was glorified as “Marvi Shahijahon” – “King of Cities”.

So, the Seljuk period is a bright page in the development of Islamic civilization. One thing is clear, the Seljuks from the Syrdarya region relied on centuries-old experience and traditions in the political, economic, cultural, and educational spheres of the Khorasan and Mawarannahr regions, and tried to continue them in their activities.

REFERENCES