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The Introduction To Ibn Abidin's "Radd Al-Muhtar"

Tursunov Mukhiddin Davudovich

Department of Islamic History and Source Studies, IRCICA, International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan

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*Correspondence: Tursunov Mukhiddin Davudovich

Email: tursunov1@gmail.com

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Abstract: This article provides information about the introduction to Ibn Abidin's "Radd al-Muhtar," one of the eminent scholars of the Hanafi school of thought. The article also covers the origins, development, and spread of the Hanafi school, along with details about its prominent scholars and the methods they used in acquiring knowledge.

Keywords: Hanafi School, Radd Al-Muhtar, History Of Jurisprudence, Fiqh, "Al-Jome' Al-Kabir," Allama Ibn Abidin, "Al-Mabsut," "Az-Ziyadat," Sultan Malik, "Nasb Ar-Roya," "Inoya," "Fath Al-Qadir."

Introduction

Ibn Abidin's "Hoshiya Ibn Abidin" consists of twelve volumes, beginning with the following introduction: "The best of words is the Book of Allah, the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (peace be upon him), and the worst of matters are newly invented ones, and every newly invented matter is an innovation (bid'ah), and every innovation is misguidance." We seek help from Allah, ask for His guidance and forgiveness, repent to Him, trust in Him, praise Him with all good, and give thanks to Him. We reject those who criticize You and turn away from them. O Allah, we worship You alone, pray to You alone, and prostrate to You alone. We long for Your mercy and fear Your punishment, as Your severe punishment is destined for the disbelievers.

Methodology

The book "Radd al-Muhtar ala Durr al-Mukhtar fi Tanwir al-Absar" is popularly known as "Hoshiya Ibn Abidin." This work was written by Shaykh Allama Muhammad Amin ibn Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, and the author is widely known as Ibn Abidin. May Allah bless his soul and illuminate his grave.

This work holds great significance among the later Hanafi scholars as it carefully addresses many issues that emerged in later periods, offering detailed explanations of their rulings. In fact, Ibn Abidin's commentary became one of the primary sources relied upon by jurists, judges, and scholars.

The content of the book is a comprehensive commentary on Imam Haskafi's "Durr al-Mukhtar" (which itself is a commentary on Imam Tamurtoshi's "Tanwir al-Absar"). Ibn Abidin's commentary, titled "Radd al-Muhtar," is known as "Hoshiya Ibn Abidin." He passed away before completing this commentary, and it was later finished by his son, Shaykh Allama Muhammad Alavuddin, in two volumes, which he titled "Qurrat Ayyun al-Akhiyar li Takmilat Radd al-Muhtar."

In the early 14th century, a famous scholar from Egypt, Abdul Qadir bin Mustafa bin Abdul Qadir al-Rafi'i al-Hanafi, wrote valuable revisions and notes in Ibn Abidin's commentary, presenting it to the author and calling it "Tahrir al-Muhtar ala Hoshiya Radd al-Muhtar." This work later became known as "Taqrir al-Rafi'i."

Ibn Abidin's commentary and its extended version, along with "Taqrir al-Rafi'i," were presented to scholars and students. The introduction provides valuable insights into the emergence, stages, and terminology of the Hanafi school, and further elaborates on the commentary of "Tanwir al-Absar" and "Durr al-Mukhtar." Additionally, the biography of the author, his printed and manuscript works, his pen names, and the explanation of his terminology, along with his perseverance in transmitting knowledge, are also discussed.

We pray that Allah accepts our righteous deeds, forgives our sins before our death, and grants us His mercy. Sayyid bin Muhammad al-Sinnari writes: "When discussing the Hanafi school, Imam Shafi'i said: 'Whoever wants to study fiqh in detail should follow Abu Hanifa, for he was successful in fiqh.'"

This statement from Imam Shafi'i, despite his own status as an imam in fiqh, highlights the significance of Imam Abu Hanifa's contributions to fiqh, showing that after him, his disciples greatly contributed to its development.

The Hanafi school underwent three main stages: 1) The emergence phase, 2) The development phase, and 3) The consolidation phase. Like other schools, the Hanafi school has passed through these stages and has been firmly established over several centuries.

Result and Discussion

The Hanafi school originated in Kufa, a major scholarly center where many of the Prophet Muhammad's companions, including Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, settled. Prominent students like Alqama bin Qays, Ibrahim al-Nakha'i, and others, including Imam Abu Hanifa, studied under Abdullah ibn Mas'ud's legacy. Imam Abu Hanifa studied under Hammod bin Sulayman for 18 years, eventually succeeding him as a teacher and jurist.

Imam Abu Hanifa utilized debate, discussion, and consultation as essential methods to solidify knowledge in his students. He believed that this approach ensured that students could express their views with confidence, add to discussions, and reach clear conclusions. Only after discussions were completed did he allow issues to be written down. He emphasized: "If a hadith is authentic, it is my school's position," and "We cannot give fatwa based on what we don't know for sure."

After Imam Abu Hanifa's passing, his prominent students such as Abu Yusuf, Muhammad bin Hasan, and others carried his legacy, spreading Hanafi fiqh throughout the Islamic world. Abu Yusuf, in particular, became the chief qadi under the Abbasid caliphs

and played a key role in establishing the Hanafi school as the official school of fiqh in many regions.

Conclusion

Hanafi fiqh continued to expand, with notable scholars like Muhammad bin Hasan writing influential works such as "al-Jome' al-Kabir," "al-Mabsut," and "az-Ziyadat." These texts played a crucial role in the spread of the Hanafi school.

In the 8th century, the Hanafi school reached a phase of stability, continuing to be one of the most widely practiced schools of fiqh across various Islamic states. Under the Ottomans, the Hanafi school became the official legal system, with the publication of "Majallat al-Ahkam al-Adliyya" and its influence on Islamic law across the empire.

Today, the Hanafi school is practiced in many parts of the Islamic world, including India, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and others. It is also taught in universities and is a subject of comparative study in academic institutions.

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