



The Role of Bukhara Jurists in the Development of the Hanafi School

Nematov Ulugbek Ochilovich

Researcher Uzbekistan

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*Correspondence: Nematov Ulugbek Ochilovich

Email: u_nematov@gmail.com

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Abstract: This article highlights the historical significance of the city of Bukhara and the role of Bukhara's jurists in the development of the Hanafi school of thought founded by Abu Hanifa (may Allah have mercy on him). The article discusses the scholarly activities of Abu Hafs Ahmad ibn Hafs al-Kabir al-Bukhari, his students, and the madrasa traditions in Bukhara. In particular, the article provides a detailed account of the introduction and spread of the Hanafi school in Mavarounnahr, as well as the contributions of Abu Hafs Kabir to science and knowledge.

Keywords: Bukhara, Hanafi School, Abu Hanifa, Abu Hafs Ahmad ibn Hafs al-Kabir, Science, Madrasa, Mavarounnahr, Students, Historical Significance, Islamic History.

Introduction

Throughout history, the city of Bukhara has held a prominent place among the world's greatest cities due to its scholars, intellectuals, and rich culture (Muminov, 2021). The Hanafi school, founded by Abu Hanifa (may Allah have mercy on him), began to spread widely in the mid-8th century and reached distant regions, including Mavarounnahr, by the end of that century. The formation of Hanafi centers in various cities was significantly influenced by the schools of Iraq and Khurasan. Abu Hafs Ahmad ibn Hafs al-Kabir al-Bukhari (born in 768, died in 832), a student of Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani (d. 805), founded the Bukhara school (Khalidov, 2019).

Methodology

His full name was Ahmad ibn Hafs ibn Zaburqan ibn Abdullah ibn Bukhari. After thoroughly mastering all the sciences available in his homeland, he traveled to Baghdad. There, he studied Hanafi jurisprudence under Imam Muhammad (may Allah have mercy on him) and then returned to his homeland (Maruf, 2020). For this reason, he is recognized as the first person to introduce the Hanafi teachings to Mavarounnahr.

Sources and research indicate the introduction and spread of the Hanafi school (Bukhara direction) in Mavarounnahr as follows: Abu Hanifa (d. 767) - Muhammad ibn al-

Hasan al-Shaybani (d. 805) - Abu Hafs Ahmad ibn Hafs al-Bukhari (d. 832) - his son Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abu Hafs al-Bukhari (d. 878) - Abu Muhammad Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Ya'qub Subazmuni al-Bukhari (d. 952) - Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Fadl al-Bukhari (d. 981) - Abu Ali Husayn ibn Khidr al-Nasafi (d. 1032-33) - Shams al-A'imma Abdulaziz ibn Ahmad Halwai (d. 1056-57) (Vambery, 2018).

The research of Islamic scholar Ashirbek Muminov also confirms this account of the introduction and spread of the Hanafi school in Mavarounnahr. Abu Hafs Ahmad ibn Hafs al-Kabir al-Bukhari established a madrasa in Bukhara, significantly contributing to the development of religious and scientific knowledge. Due to his efforts, Bukhara became one of the centers of the Hanafi school. The Orientalist scholar Anas Bokievich Khalidov mentioned that the first madrasas in the entire Arab dominion were built in Mavarounnahr and Khurasan, proposing that the first madrasa was the "Farjak" madrasa in Bukhara (Khalidov, 2019). This madrasa, however, burned down in a fire in 937.

Result and Discussion

Furthermore, based on Najiy Maruf's research, it is stated that "before the establishment of the first madrasa in Baghdad, there were 33 madrasas in Nishapur, Bukhara, Ghazna, and Bushanj." The Abu Hafs Kabir madrasa in Bukhara was considered one of the most renowned madrasas of its time. Historian Vambery, in his work "Tarikh-i Bukhara," and al-Sa'di in "Tarikh al-Duwal," emphasized that the madrasa of Imam Abu Hafs al-Kabir al-Bukhari was the most esteemed and sought after by scholars and students from various regions of the Islamic world (Vambery, 2018).

Abu Hafs Ahmad ibn Hafs al-Kabir (may Allah have mercy on him) educated and trained numerous jurists. Among his notable students were his son Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Hafs (Abu Hafs al-Saghir), Abu Ja'far Rizwan ibn Salim Badakuri, Abu al-Hasan Muqatil ibn Said Baydari, Muhammad ibn Hatam Subizuqi, Abu Zahhak Fazl ibn Hassan Sutikani, Abu Sa'id Sulayman ibn Dawud Sharqi, Harith ibn Abdulwafa Bukhari, and Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Hafs Zaburqan (d. 264/878). Furthermore, Abu Salih Tayyib ibn Muqatil al-Khunamati and Abu Hasan ibn Talib al-Ghishati narrated hadiths from him. According to Abdulkarim Sam'ani's work, "Al-Ansab," many of Abu Hafs's students resided in the village of Kharajir.

Due to the abundance of scholars named Abu Hafs at the time, Ahmad ibn Hafs was referred to as "Abu Hafs al-Kabir" (the Great). In his youth, Imam Bukhari studied under Abu Hafs al-Kabir. It was Abu Hafs al-Kabir who inspired Imam Bukhari to compile authentic hadiths. One of Abu Hafs al-Kabir's teachers, Abu al-Hasan Nuri, had also started compiling authentic hadiths but was unable to complete this endeavor. Following his teacher's advice, Abu Hafs himself began compiling authentic hadiths but focused more on jurisprudence after returning to Bukhara. Unable to fulfill his own mission, he entrusted this task to his capable student, Muhammad ibn Ismail (Imam Bukhari) (Maruf, 2020).

Conclusion

Sources note that after teaching Imam Bukhari, Abu Hafs al-Kabir noticed his deep passion for hadith and prayed for him, proclaiming, "A great muhaddith (hadith scholar)

will emerge from this person in the future!" Abu Hafis al-Kabir was recognized as a renewer (mujaddid) of Islamic scholarship in his time. His rare works, which have survived to this day, will undoubtedly continue to serve the Muslim community (Vambery, 2018).

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