

ZAYNIDDIN VOSIFI: HIS LIFE, LITERARY ACTIVITY, AND THE STRUCTURE OF «BADOYE' UL-VAQOYE'»

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Zayniddin Vosifi was a prominent literary figure and intellectual of the late fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth century. His full name was Zayniddin Mahmud ibn Abduljamil. He was born in Herat into a family of munshis (scribes and literary secretaries). He received his early education in Herat and studied at the Shahrukh Madrasa, where he acquired extensive knowledge of Arabic, literature, fiqh, and other fields of learning. From an early age, Vosifi became involved in the literary circles of Herat. At the age of sixteen, he met Alisher Navoi, whose literary school had a significant influence on the formation of his creative activities. Owing to the political instability in Khorasan and the persecution under Shah Ismail, Vosifi eventually moved to Movarounnahr.

Between 1512 and 1515, he lived in Samarkand and Bukhara, and later stayed in areas such as Farkat (present-day Parkent), Tashkent, and Shahrisabz. In 1518, his invitation to Shahrukhiya by Keldi Muhammad Khan strengthened his connections with the court and political circles. From 1525 until the end of his life, he lived in Tashkent, where he continued his scholarly, literary, and governmental activities. Vosifi's activities were not limited to literature. He participated in Keldi Muhammad Khan's campaigns in Khorasan in 1528–1529, and from 1540 he was engaged in preparing state documents at the court of Barak Khan. His life journey and his activities in various political, scholarly, and literary environments were subsequently reflected in the works he produced. Vosifi's literary activity began at approximately the age of twelve or thirteen. He worked in prose genres such as letters, petitions, and stories, and skillfully employed various artistic devices, particularly the saj' style. His mastery in creating diverse similes and employing the art of muammo was also highly praised by Alisher Navoi.

The most important example of Vosifi's literary heritage is his work Badoye' ul-vaqoye'. Alongside the author's personal observations, the work reflects the scholarly, literary, historical, and cultural processes of the first half of the sixteenth century in the regions of Khorasan, Movarounnahr, Turkestan, and Iran. In addition to prominent scholars such as Ibn Sina, Abdurahman Jami, and Alisher Navoi, the work contains information about representatives of the literature and music of the period, statesmen, and other notable figures. The work also contains significant information

concerning the political and cultural life of Tashkent and its surrounding areas. In particular, the Kaykavus chorbog‘ is described as one of the important centers of the literary and intellectual environment, where poets and writers gathered and held discussions. The work also provides information about poets, artists, calligraphers, and other prominent figures who lived and pursued their creative activities in Tashkent and its surrounding areas.

Among the information concerning Tashkent in the work, the city’s natural and urban environment is also given due attention. In particular, a masnavi consisting of 83 couplets artistically depicts the beauty of Tashkent, its gardens, climate, and clear waters. These accounts are important for understanding not only the political and cultural life of sixteenth-century Tashkent, but also its urban environment and living conditions. The work Badoye’ ul-vaqoye’ possesses distinctive structural and thematic features. The work presents the author’s personal memories, historical events that he witnessed, the activities of various rulers and statesmen, the scholarly and literary milieu, the lives of prominent figures, as well as various aspects of social life through stories, narrative poems, and conversations. Therefore, the content of the work is not limited to an account of political events but also reflects the broader socio-cultural landscape of its period.

At the beginning of the work, information related to the author himself, his life journey, and his literary activity occupies an important place. In the Peshguftor, significant episodes concerning Vosifi’s origins, the events he experienced, the political and social situation in Khorasan, his arrival in Movarounnahr, and the subsequent course of his life are presented. This section is important for understanding the subsequent content of the work, as it reveals the author’s attitude toward historical events and provides an opportunity to observe the environment of his time. In the subsequent sections of the work, events related to life in Samarkand and Bukhara occupy a prominent place. Information concerning the severe winter, famine, and high prices in Samarkand, the lives of scholars and students, the author’s relations with learned individuals, and the literary and intellectual environment enriches the social content of the work. The journey to Bukhara and the events that took place there are likewise presented on the basis of the author’s direct observations. Such information is of considerable importance for studying the everyday life and social environment of the cities of Movarounnahr in the early sixteenth century.

The work also provides extensive coverage of episodes related to rulers and the court environment. Information concerning events associated with Ubaydullah Khan, gatherings of the ruler, statesmen, and the scholarly and literary milieu at the court

demonstrates that the author maintained close relations with the circles of the rulers. At the same time, Vosifi provides information, based on his direct observations, about the system of governance of his time and the relations between rulers and scholars and literary figures. In particular, the sections devoted to Mirza Ulugh Beg and Amir Alisher Navoi contain various stories and reflections concerning their virtues, scholarly and literary activities, and personal characteristics. Information about Mavlono Binoi, Pahlavon Muhammad, Ibn Sina, and other prominent figures further enhances the scholarly and literary value of the work. Through these accounts, the author not only portrays historical figures but also draws attention to their contributions to the development of science, literature, and culture.

In the subsequent sections of the work, individual figures and events associated with them are presented in the form of stories and narrative poems. These include accounts of such figures as Amir Sayyid Jalal al-Din Margʻinoniy, Tajunnasab, Khoja Nizam al-Mulk Khafi, Keldi Muhammad Sultan, Mavlono Ogahi, and Khoja Shihab al-Din Ishaq. Alongside historical events, these stories and narrative poems also contain details concerning people's character, behavior, relationships, and way of life. The use of forms such as Guftor, Hikoyat, and Doston in the structure of the work contributes to the diversity of its narrative style. The author presents some events directly in the form of personal recollections, others as conversations and discussions, and still others as stories or narrative poems. As a result, historical reality, artistic representation, personal observation, and literary tradition are closely integrated throughout the work. In the structural organization of *Badoye' ul-vaqoye'*, events are not always presented in a strictly chronological order. The inclusion of several events, stories, or accounts of historical figures within a single thematic framework strengthens the memoir-like character of the work.

Conclusion. The life and literary activity of Zayniddin Vosifi are of considerable importance for the study of the scholarly, literary, and social environment of the sixteenth century. His work *Badoye' ul-vaqoye'* incorporates historical events, personal memories, and various narratives, providing valuable information about life in Movarounnahr and Khorasan. The thematic and structural diversity of the work makes it possible to regard it as one of the important historical sources for studying the political, social, and cultural life of the period.

References

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