



The Reflection of the Religious Orientation of the Safavid Kings in the Developments of the Institution of Hasba (1501-1722)

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Abstract

Hasba institution is one of the long-established institutions that has always had a decisive and effective role in the social and economic relations of Islamic lands, including Iran, during the centuries. According to the sources, the Prophet (PBUH) used to visit and take care of the markets and stopped the sellers from hoarding and unreasonable pricing and buying and selling goods before entering the market and cheating and fainting in the goods. This institution was established to manage urban affairs and monitor people's ethics and behavior in the beginning of Abbasid rule. Although this institution initially had limited tasks, the expansion of the territory of the Islamic society and the creation of new and at the same time systematic structures increased the development of bureaucracy and the emergence of executive institutions and organizations. Gradually, many religious tasks, such as enjoining good and forbidding evil, were included in the authority of the Hasba institution. During several centuries, the field of action of this institution expanded and was connected with ethics, sharia and economy, until with the establishment of the Safavid Shia government and their religious preaching, fundamental changes and transformations took place in this institution.

While before the Safavid era, the Hasba institution was one of the administrative and religious organizations whose function was to supervise religious, economic-social and even health affairs, despite the lack of auditors in fulfilling their duties, this institution and position continued until the end of the Safavid era. In the early period, in addition to the main task of monitoring the markets, the institution of Hasba and Mohtasab was also responsible for religious, moral, health and similar matters. However, the developments in the Safavid government and the change of the military and religious nature of the early period to the bureaucratic and centralized nature during the period of Shah Abbas I and the period after him, had a major impact on the amount and multiplicity of the duties of the Hasba institution. In terms of the political-religious structure, this period was influenced by religion and the influence of prominent scholars, and the religious king, due to being at the head of this system, played a decisive role in the set of religious, social and cultural activities.

Analyzing the functions and powers of Hasba institution and its developments as a



social and cultural institution is one of the main goals of this article. The main question of the article is, what changes did the religious orientation of the Safavid kings bring about in the Hasba institution? The premise of the article is that during this period, the Hasba institution was mixed with its governmental concept, and due to the political and religious changes and religious orientation of the Safavid sultans, the field of activity and powers of this institution faced changes.

During the Safavid period, the religious claims of the Shiite kings and the invitation of the Shiite scholars and jurists to help and their double action, which at one time chose the path of obedience and at another time the path of disobedience, brought Sharia and jurisprudence matters into a new stage, and many matters which until then was less paid in the Sunni governments, became important. As a result, Hasba received more attention and Shia jurists began to theorize about its duties and powers. In the continuation of changing the structure of the Safavid government from Sufi thoughts to Sharia-oriented, it was the beginning of the transition to jurisprudential Shiism; The arrangement that was established during the reign of Shah Abbas I and as a result of the changes in the duties of this institution compared to the past and the separation of its powers caused an important change in its structure. The results of the research show that according to the religious direction and the determining role of the kings, the main duties of this institution were separated and assigned to other groups. In fact, this period has been a return to the primary role of the accounting institution; To the extent that at the end of the period, the duty of Muhtasib was limited in monitoring the market and buying and selling of goods and became non-spiritual and non-religious in nature. Also, the most important historical task of this institution, commanding what is good and forbidding what is evil, was removed from the authority of the Hasba institution and its implementation was in the hands of the Shah and in another period was entrusted to Shiite jurists and scholars by the Shah. In this way, one of the reasons for the weakening of the Hasba institution was the transfer of a part of its duties - which was within the scope of Islamic law - to the authority of Shia jurists.

Keywords: Nihad al-Hasbah, religious orientation, function, Mohtasib al-Mamalek, Safavid.



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