The Role of Endowments on Social and Scientific Life in Bilad As-sham (Greater Syria) During the Ayyubi Period (570-661 A.H./1173-1262 A.D)

A thesis by
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Abstract

One of the Islamic culture traits was the various charity activities and spending on all the charitable gifts. The endowment system (waqf) which extended and grew with the growing Islamic society was one of them, and was widespread and prevalence when capital was there. Then, rulers and rich people felt the necessity for giving so to contribute in the development and improvement movement. The religious feeling drived the ulama and some ordinary people to sign as endowment all what they have or some of it however little it was. The endowment system developed and became a system with special regulations, with which the endowments could be arranged in a systematic way by various governmental institutions. History has recorded for the Ayyubi State a number of concerns and regulations in all of the cultural features. One notices that the cultural activities in the Ayyubi state went in a parallel line with the military Jihadic activities. The rulers were leading the military, engaging in battles with the crusades, and in the meanwhile they never neglected the cultural aspects pertaining to the social welfares, or development of the scientific arena. The Ayyubis made scores of good deeds. Many installations were instituted which kept their memory alive, and contributed in the service of all Muslim people. During their period they had built mosques, schools, bimarstanat (hospitals), khangahat (suffi houses), rubt (social welfare houses), and khans (hotels)... etc. The building of those installations was not only done by the rulers but they were also done by who ever have the ability to do them such as rich and important people, and even women.
The primary force that motivated all of those cultural projects were the endowments. The Ayyubi rulers were very eager to take care of and to develop according to regulations and rules which helped in the endowment prosperity and growth. This study has been concerned with all of these aspects through all its five chapters. It outlined the role of endowments on social and scientific life in Bilad As-Sham (Greater Syria) during the Auyybi period.

The researcher.