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THE VIZIER INSTITUTION IN THE RULING OF THE GREAT SELJUK EMPIRE

The state structure of the Great Seljuk Empire took advantage of the traditions of the Kok Turkic Khaganate (552–603; 682–744) and Ghaznavid states (977–1186) and remained faithful to the traditions of the Oghuz state organization as a new system of government. The institution of the vizier of the Great Seljuk Empire, which was the mainstay of the government organization, was the most influential institution of the Arabian Caliphate and the Ghaznavid state. We examined to determine the importance of the vizier institution in the central government of Empire, its financial, military, religious duties, and its relationship with the Sultans on the basis of a comparative analysis of the facts obtained from primary sources and different research. The Seljuk state was formed during the conquests of the Seljuk Oguzes, led by the Seljuk dynasty, also on the basis of the countries of the Near and Middle East. It existed in the 11th–12th centuries for almost 60 years. If in the first period of their development, the Seljuks significantly expanded their possessions at the expense of Horosan, Kharezem, western Iran, Azerbaijan, Iraq, then later, with the beginning of the Crusades, the Empire lost its gains. There was a growth of feudal fragmentation, separatist aspirations of vassals developed. At the same time, significant parts of the territory were allocated to relatives and these territories subsequently became independent sultanates. The distribution of lands to relatives, as well as to prominent warriors and other representatives of the nobility, contributed to the fact that these lands began to be inherited, which also became the basis for the collapse of the centralized State apparatus. All this weakened the centralized power. The position of the vizier under the Seljuks was the most important. Under Sultan Suleiman, the vizier was Nizam al-Mulk, who was considered a prominent political and statesman of his time.

Key words: vizier institution, Nizam ul-Mulk, Seljuks, ruling system, Sultan.

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ІНСТИТУТ ВІЗИРІВ У ПРАВЛІННІ ВЕЛИКОЇ СЕЛЬДЖУКСЬКОЇ ІМПЕРІЇ

Державний устрій імперії Великих Сельджуків продовжив традиції Кокського тюркського каганату (552–603; 682–744) та держави Газневидов (977–1186) і також залишився вірним традиціям огузького державного устрою як прогресивної системи уряду. Інститут візира Великої сельджукської імперії, що становив основу державної організації, був найвпливовішим інститутом Арабського халіфату та держави Газневидов. Ми розглянули особливості правління цієї держави, щоб визначити значення інституту візира в центральному уряді Імперії, його фінансові, військові, релігійні обов'язки та її відносини із султанами, на основі порівняльного аналізу фактів, отриманих з першоджерел та різних досліджень. Держава Сельджуків утворилася під час завоювань огузов-сельджуків на чолі з династією Сельджуків, також на основі країн Близького та Середнього Сходу. Воно проіснувало у XI–XII століттях майже 60 років. Якщо перший період свого розвитку Сельджуки значно розширили свої володіння рахунок Хоросана, Харезма, західного Ірану, Азербайджану, Іраку, то згодом, з початком хрестових походів, імперія втратила завоювання. Йшло зростання феодалної роздробленості, розвивалися сепаратистські прагнення васалів. При цьому значні частини території були виділені родичам, і ці території згодом стали самостійними султанатами. Роздача земель родичам, а також видатним воїнам, іншим представникам знаті сприяло тому, що ці землі стали переходити у спадок, що також лягло в основу розпаду централізованого Державного апарату. Все це послабило централізовану владу. Посада візира при Сельджуках була найважливішою. За султана Сулеймана візиром став Нізам аль-Мульк, який вважався видним політичним і державним діячем свого часу.

Ключові слова: інститут візира, Нізам уль-Мульк, сельджуки, правляча система, султан.

Introduction. Since the Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258) began to weaken as a political entity of Islam, there have been many attempts to rebuild

Islamic unity as politically and religiously. From this point of view, the state of the Seljuk Turks, as a new type of Islamic state, represented the Sunni

Orthodox community at the social and cultural aspects, and achieved great success in modernizing the system of statehood in Central Asia, the Middle East, and Western Asia. The state ruling system that Seljuks established in the field of state institutions and governance played an important role in the development of the Muslim state system. The vizier institution which had a political succession to the Ghaznavid state and was under the influence of the Abbasid caliphate, was the most important government institution in the Seljuk Empire. However, during the Seljuk period, the vizier institution became one of the most developed institutions of the Muslim state model, and the minister had more powers than any other government official (Klausner, 2019: 62). The Seljuk vizier was the most important element of the state mechanism and, was responsible for everything in the central state power as the main representative of the Sultan.

General overview on the sources

We would like to briefly provide information about the vizier institution on the sources and references that we have used in this paper. Until recently, only a few attempts were realized on the analysing of the state structure of the Seljuk Empire based on primary sources and the writing of research papers on this topic. However, in recent years, many research have been written on Seljuk history, Seljuk state organizations and governing systems directly related to our subject. There are the most important primary sources on the history of the ruling system of the Great Seljuk Empire: “Al-Kamil fit-Tarikh” (“The Complete History”) of Ali ibn al-Athir, “Akhbar al-Dawlat is-Saljukiyah” of Sadr al-Din Husseini, “Siyaset-name” of Nizām al-Mülk, “Rahat us-Sudur wa Ayat us-Surur” of Muhammad bin Ali ar-Rawandi.

One of the important works on the history of the state structure of Seljuk Empire is the work titled “Vizierate in Seljuks (1055-1194): a study on civil administration” of Carla L. Klausner. This work provides detailed and in-depth information about the vizier institution that situated the central part of state (Azerbaijan, Iraq and Iran) from the entrance of the great Seljuk emperor Toghrul Bey I (1038-1063) to Baghdad in 1055 until the death of Toghrul II (1132–1134) (Klausner C. L., 2019). Other work titled “The history of Great Seljuk Empire: Alp Arslan and his period” which is in three volumes of Mehmet Altay Koymen is very important for this historical task. The author gives information about state organizations, the central court and the institution of viziers during the reign of the Great Seljuk Emperor Alp Arslan (1063–1072) in the third volume, which is directly related to our subject (Köymen M.A., 2016).

The works titled “Vizierate in the Great Seljuk Empire” of Aydin Taneri (Taneri A., 1967), “Medhal to the Ottoman State Organization” of Ismail Hakki Uzuncharshili (Uzunçarşılı I. H., 1988), “Seljuk State and the History of Atabegs” of Akbar Najaf (Nəcəf Ə., 2010) are valuable research on the history of the vizier institution in the period of Seljuks.

The vizier institution

Many of the weaknesses inherent in the system of government of the Seljuk Empire were already apparent before the establishment of the state. One of them was the division that arose after the spread of the military iqta (sharing the lands for military service) system with the notion of Turkish power, in which members of the dynasty were seen as entitled to power (Klausner, 2019: 25). The Seljuk state administration was not unitary, was the dual military base. Carla L. Klausner described the political structure of the Seljuks as “a dictatorship based on the dual military structure with Turkish slaves and Turkmens, ruled by the Khorasanians and accepted by the majority of the people” (Klausner C. L., 2019: 31). The Seljuk system of civil administration benefited from the forms of government that preceded either in Central Asia or in the Middle East. However, it should be noted that this system was still formed during the Seljuk period. Although the Seljuks used their previous forms of government, this did not mean that there were no changes in the Seljuk administration.

A governing body is a division of the state into different institutions and departments that perform different functions. In other words, the central organization of the state is the governing body of the state, and this work, which is done by the ministries today, has been done by the divans since the time of the Abbasids (Köymen, 2016: 156). The Great Vizier of the Great Seljuk Empire, Nizām al-Mülk, wrote a long account of the life and organization of the state palace, the military organization and the provincial organization in his book titled “Siyaset-name”, but he wrote very little about the government organization that headed himself (Nizāmü'l-Mülk, 2018: 19-26). In our opinion, the main reason for this is that the government organization has a traditional structure. That is, we observe that since the time of the Abbasids, Samanids and Ghaznavids, the names, quantities and even the duties of the Divan have changed very little (Köymen, 2016: 156). The Grand Divan consisted of the following structures: 1) Divan al-insha wal-tughra, sometimes called divan-i rasail wa divan-i insha. 2) Divan al-zaman wal-istifa (also called divan-i istifa-yi mamalik or Divan-i ishraf-i mamalik) 4) Divan-i arz (Uzunçarşılı, 1988: 43-44). The vizier, who presided over divan, also presided over a separate divan.

This divan is mentioned in the sources as "the Divan of Vizierate" (Divan al-Vuzara). It is known that the Divan of Vizierate is sometimes called the "Council of the Presidency and the Ministry" (Köymen, 2016: 157). In the Great Seljuk Empire, the vizier institution was established by Sultan Toghrul I in the state structure. Sultan Toghrul I appointed Abul Qasim Buzgani to this position (Reşîdü'd-dîn, 2014: 68).

The Seljuk vizier was a civil servant in charge of all state affairs as the Sultan's deputy. According to sources, the viziers had great influence over the Seljuk rulers. In his work, Nizâm al-Mülk gave information about the role of the vizier in the state organization. The Seljuk vizier mentions that the rulers who became famous in history owed their fame to their viziers and gave many examples in this regard. We did not need to mention those rulers because it was off topic. However, we would like to note Nizâm al-Mülk's views on ministers as follows: "It is necessary to control the work of viziers so that they have not performed their duties properly. The goodness and the badness of the shahs and the country depend on them: if the vizier is kind and upright, the country will be prosperous, the people will be happy, peaceful, there will be plenty of food, and the shah's heart will be calm; if the minister is bad-tempered, malicious, unimaginable disturbances will occur in the country, the shah is always wandering and worried, and the country is in a state of panic" (Nizâmü'l-Mülk, 2018: 19-20).

As a civil servant, the vizier in charge of the financial, legal, religious, and military affairs of the state was accountable only to the Sultan. Viziers could be questioned from time to time only at the request of the ruler of state. The vizier, who was responsible for the security of the country and the welfare of the people, managed the financial and administrative affairs of the state through the bureaucrats at his disposal. Since the main task of the state administration was to collect taxes, the financial side of the ministry was also of great importance (Klausner, 2019: 63). As in the case of the Samanids and Ghaznavids, it was the vizier's job to improve the financial situation and to ensure that there was always money in the treasury for emergencies (Taneri, 1967: 107). According to the Nizâm al-Mülk, "... property is settled by tax collectors. The head of all tax collectors and other officials is the vizier" (Nizâmü'l-Mülk, 2018: 39-42).

Income and expenses were accounted for in the Divan al-zaman wal-istifa, but as far as we know from the famous story of the dispute between Nizâm al-Mülk and Hasan ibn Sabbah, who was a secretary in the Divan al-zaman wal-istifa at that time, it was the vizier who presented the accounts to the Sultan (Nizâmü'l-Mülk, 2018: XVIII-XX). Fiscal policy was

run by many viziers, who were responsible for setting new taxes and raising existing ones. Nizâm al-Mülk imposed new taxes on rulers, provinces and large cities in the most remote parts of the country. After the death of Kamal al-Mulk al-Sumayrami, the vizier of Sultan Mahmud ibn Muhammad raised the "illegal taxes" (mukus) imposed on merchants. Mas'ud's vizier, Kamal al-Din Muhammad al-Hazin, embarked on a large-scale financial reform, and the results of his efforts began to grow when he was killed by his enemies (Klausner, 2019: 64).

The vizier, rather than being a palace official, had the authority to manage the expenses and finances of the dynasty and the treasury as the head of the financial department. For example, Mas'ud's vizier, Kamal al-Din Muhammad al-Hazin, inspected the sultan's daily food and catering expenses (Klausner, 2019: 64). In addition, the vizier consistently managed the cash payments to the army at his command only through the arz al-jaysh, who was responsible for this work. Thanks to this position, the vizier and the central administration had control over the military ranks (Klausner, 2019: 65). However, as payments to military units began to be made through the transfer of land, and as the country's lands gradually fell out of the control of civilian administration, they lost control of the area.

The vizier, who was aware of every issue in the central government and had a influence in every issue, dealt not only with political and administrative issues, but also with military issues. The vizier was mainly responsible for recruiting troops during the expansion of the state, which made many visits to each side. However, ministers such as Sadr al-Mulk, the vizier of Muhammad ibn Malikshah, who came to power after the reign of Sultan Malikshah, were also responsible for organizing military units in the service of the Sultan (Klausner, 2019: 66). The vizier was expected to accompany the Sultan on his conquests and was often entrusted with arranging and directing of the military conquests. There are several facts about the fact that Vizier Nizâm al-Mülk led the army as a commander in the war. It was Nizâm al-Mülk who brought the army to the battlefield during the war with Kutalmush (Köymen, 2016: 163). Giving information about this, Sadr al-Din al-Husseini writes: "When the two soldiers entered each other, the vizier Nizâm al-Mülk hugged his weapon. Amir Gulb al-Din Kulsarig and Amir Bahlavan were appointed to the right wing of the Sultan, Amir Jash's father Altuntağı and Qaid Amir Suteki were appointed to the left wing of Sultan, and Amir Baldaci and Amir Sungurja, Amir Aghaci and other members of the great rulers were appointed along with the Sul-

tan (el-Hüseynî, 1943: 21). The vizier's command authority is observed not only during visits, but also in peacetime. Thus, vizier Nizâm al-Mülk would inspect and control the army at certain times (Köymen, 2016: 163).

One of the important issues is that the vizier, who is the head of a civil organization, should have his own military forces, consisting of slaves (ghulams) as the same commander. It is known that there were no less than 300 slaves under the command of vizier Kunduri and after his resignation these slaves were divided among the pilgrims by the order of the Sultan. M. A. Koyman also informed about this in his work. Although Nizâm al-Mülk, who had more than 1,000 slaves during the reign of Sultan Malikshah, did not have this number during the time of Alp Arslan, there is no doubt that he had more slaves than vizier Kunduri. The vizier paid the salaries of the slaves under his command (Köymen, 2016: 164).

It is known that the powers of the viziers are very wide, as he is the absolute representative of the Sultan. Indeed, there is no state issue that is not within the competence of viziers. However, viziers often received orders and instructions from the Sultan when dealing with state affairs. Sources also confirm that the viziers had great influence over the Seljuk rulers. For example, in the Seljuk Empire's relations with the Caliphate, the vizier had the authority to act on behalf of the Sultan and to write to the Caliph (Köymen, 2016: 159). As we know, the Abbasid Caliphs of Baghdad gave addresses and nicknames not only to the Seljuk sultans, but also to the statesmen appointed by these sultans as viziers. In the time of the first Seljuk Sultan Toghrul bey, the Caliph gave the nickname "Sayed al-vuzara" (the lord of the viziers) in addition to "Amid al-muluk" to the vizier Kunduri (Köymen, 2016: 159).

Like a ruler of state, a vizier could issue decrees with his signature from the cabinet. In particular, he had the power to make appointments or remove, if necessary, except for those who were known to have been appointed by the "sahib al-divan". The vizier also had the authority to write and send conquests letters (fath-nama) on behalf of the Sultan. During his first visit to the Caucasus, Sultan Alp Arslan had conquered lands, the spoils of war and the captives were announced to the Abbasid caliph of Baghdad by a vizier Nizâm al-Mülk (Köymen, 2016: 160).

The vizier's authority is observed not only in matters relating to the countries directly ruled by the empire and in the appointments made to them, but also in matters relating to the indirect rule, that is, in matters relating to vassal states (Taneri, 1967: 114-115). It was the minister's duty to supervise the fulfillment

of the conditions of vassal states. Apparently, the vizier determined the amount of annual taxes that the vassal rulers would pay to the imperial treasury in accordance with the terms of the vassalship (Köymen, 2016: 160). He was also the vizier who supervised the fulfillment of the conditions of vassal rule by the vassal rulers in their countries. It was the vizier's job to arrange for the vassal rulers to come to the sultan's palace at certain times to demand their obedience, and to ensure the soldiers under the vassal rulers joined the imperial army if necessary. M. A. Koyman says: "Sultan Alp Arslan, who came to Diyarbakir on his way back from Syria to fight the Byzantine Empire, had promised to put Abul Hasan Said ibn Marwan, who had obeyed him in advance, on the throne of the Marvanoghullari state. On the other hand, his rival, his brother Nizam ad-Din, also managed to get the consent of the Seljuk vizier Nizâm al-Mülk by presenting a lot of money and gifts. Nizam ad-Din, who came to the Sultan with the Seljuk vizier, presented the Sultan with a lot of money and jewelry. The vizier Nizâm al-Mülk informed and proposed to the Sultan to appoint Nizam ad-Din to the throne. Although the Sultan had promised to Nizam ad-Din to put his brother Saidi on the throne, Nizâm al-Mülk asked him to leave the matter to him. While Sultan was on the hunt, Nizâm al-Mülk brought Said, chained him and threw him into prison. Nizam ad-Din, on the other hand, placed the Marvanoghullari on the throne of the state and gave him the nickname "Sultan al-umara" (Sultan of Emirs)." (Köymen, 2016: 161-162). This example shows that the vizier Nizâm al-Mülk resolved the issue of vassal state in the time of Alp Arslan in accordance with his wishes. Another noteworthy point here is that the vizier gave nicknames and addresses to vassal rulers like the same Caliph and Sultan. The fact that the vassal rulers stood before the vizier Nizâm al-Mülk clarifies the essence of the vizier-vassal rulers' relationship.

After clarifying the place and role of the vizier in the state organization, his relations with the ruler at the head of the empire, one of the issues that attracted attention was the question of how much the vizier received from the state. According to Aydin Taneri, the Seljuk ministers had four sources of income (Taneri, 1967: 167). The first of these was the percentage of the vizier's share of state revenues. The Sultans gave iqta to their viziers, who appreciated their services. Seljuk viziers had a wide range of skills. For example, Sultan Alp Arslan added to the iqta of Nizâm al-Mülk and gave him his hometown of Tus as iqta. Thus, the second source of income for the viziers was the income from the iqta given to them. The third source of income for the ministers

is the share of the spoils obtained during the visits of the Seljuk army (Taneri, 1967: 168). The vizier's fourth source of income is the vizier's salary. They also received a salary from the state for his position as a vizier. However, we do not know exactly how much the vizier was paid for his work. It is possible to have an opinion on this issue only if we look at the lifestyle of the Seljuk viziers. For example, Nizām al-Mülk, who had a hard time supplying 7 dinars to buy a horse when he was just starting his civil service, later became very wealthy when he became a vizier (Köymen, 2016: 174). Another example is how much wealth Kunduri had when his property was confiscated after he was removed from the vizier position. Just as it is possible to have an idea of the luxurious life of the vizier and the living and inanimate wealth he possesses with the salary he receives from the state, so it can be seen from the donations of the same minister to religious and scientific scholars and money spent on charities. There was a large crowd of people around the Nizām al-Mülk who were grateful to him for this. The vizier gave some clergymen 1,000 dinars at a time. As far as we know, during the reign of Malikshah, Nizām al-Mülk distributed about 300,000 dinars a year to the poor, Sufis and those who recited the Qur'an (el-Hüseynî, 1943: 46). Vizier Kunduri gave 1000 dinars to the famous author Bakherzi for his poem praising him. Again, Kunduri gave 1,000 dinars to a secretary with beautiful writing (Köymen, 2016: 175). As for the money spent on architecture, it is known that Nizām al-Mülk built bridges and roads almost everywhere in the lands ruled by the Great Seljuk Empire and built madrassas in big cities.

The Seljuk vizier had many of the same characteristics as the Seljuk Sultan. These were the robe, the seal-ring, the sword, the pillow, and the. When viziers were appointed by the Sultan, they received a robe (khilat-i khass). This was also called "khilat-i vazarat" (Taneri, 1967: 142). It is clear from the sources that the Sultan also gave a robe to the viziers who valued his services. For example, Malikshah gave robes to Nizām al-Mülk, who successfully repulsed the revolt. Another example is that Toghrul bey wore a robe to vizier Kunduri for his services in his marriage to Khalifa's daughter (Taneri, 1967: 143).

The first symbol of the vizier was divit (Köymen, 2016: 177). Divit was a gold item confirming that the Sultan had given the vizier authority in the civil sphere (Taneri, 1967: 144). We would like to narrate an incident received from Sadr ad-Din al-Husseini regarding divit: The Sultan, who sent a letter to Nizām al-Mülk through the Taj al-Mülk, wrote: "Thou hast conquered my kingdom and kingdom, and hast distributed my

land among thy children, and upon thy sons, and upon thy sons. Or do you think that I will not be able to lift the dividend of the ministry and save the people from your aggression?" Nizām al-Mülk writes in response: "May God always make you in the kingdom, you see me as a partner and rival in the kingdom, but know that this divit of vizierate you have given me is connected with your crown. When you take it from me, there will be no trace of your crown." (el-Hüseynî, 1943: 47-48). It is clear from this incident that the divit of vizier was a symbol of his authority, as well as a symbol of the Sultan's crown.

The cushion, which belonged to the vizier and resembled a throne, was called a "dast" and was also considered a symbol of vizierate (Köymen, 2016: 177). Vizier mainly sat on the cushion in his position in the "Dar al-vuzara" and in the divan meetings (Klausner, 2019: 144). When Kunduri came to Iraq with Toghrul Bey, he was sitting on the dast of vizierate. The tent (sera-parda) in which the vizier resided when necessary and had the right to beat the drum three times a day in front of him was also a symbol of his vizier status (Taneri, 1967: 144). When a Seljuk vizier was appointed, he was also given a seal. Aydın Taneri gave the same marks on the seals of many Seljuk viziers. There was the Hamd Allahi Ala Naimihi of Nizām al-Mülk, the Ahmad Allah Vashkurahi of İzz al-Mülk, the Hamd Allahi Ala Naim of Fakhr al-Mülk, the Hamd Allahi Ala Naimihi of Sadr al-Mülk. The sword was also a symbol given to the vizier by Sultan (Taneri, 1967: 145).

The address and nicknames of the vizier also represented his personality and position. The great Seljuk viziers were nicknamed "Sahib" and "Khaja". In the sources, the words "Sadr", "Dastur", "Khaja -e bozorg", although rare, "Sadr-e azam" were also used as nicknames. In addition, the vizier had many nicknames for his duties: Sahibi ajal-i muayyid, Mansur-i muzaffar, Sadr al-İslam wal-muslimin, Nizām al-Mülk was-salatin, Seyid al-vuzara fil-alamin (Taneri, 1967: 145).

The sultans gave the viziers addresses on the occasion of their inauguration and on the basis of their subsequent success. The most interesting event in this matter is the granting of the title of "Atabeg" to Nizām al-Mülk. However, there is a difference of opinion as to who gave this address to Nizām al-Mülk and after what event. According to Ibn al-'Athir, after Nizām al-Mülk stated during the Gavurd uprising that "looting of the people's property would have bad consequences," Sultan Malikshah gave him the title of "Atabeg", saying, "I have left you the solution of every problem, big or small, you are my father." (İbn el-Əsir, 1996: 104). Mirkhwand and Khwandamir

write that the title of “Atabeg” was given to Nizām al-Mülk by Alp Arslan after the battle of Malazgird (Klausner, 2019: 146).

Rauf Huseynov states that Nizām al-Mülk was the vizier of the Seljuk emperors Alp Arslan and Malikshah in 1063-1092, and at the same time he was the “Atabeg” of both sultans. In several epigraphic inscriptions of 1082/1083, after the Abbasid Caliph al-Muqtadi, Malikshah, and Tutush, the name of Nizām al-Mülk is mentioned as "Vizier, Sheikh

al-Ajal, Nizām al-Mülk Atabeg." (Гусейнов, 1966; 182-183). The Atabegs were the tutors and educators of the ruler's sons.

Conclusion. Toghrul Bey, the first Sultan of the Great Seljuk Empire, was able to create a perfect system of statehood by applying the system of governance of the Kok Turkic Khaganate and Ghaznavid states to his Seljuk rule. This system and structure of statehood was later applied and enriched by the Turkish-Muslim dynasties during their rule.

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