



Political Life in the City of Kannauj (From the fifth century AH to the sixth century AH / the eleventh century AD to the twelfth century AD)

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Abstract

We chose the topic (Political Life in the City of Kannauj from the Fifth to the Ninth Century AH), in which we showed the most prominent Ghaznavid campaigns against the city of Kannauj and that this city continued its hostility to the Muslims for a long time, so no Arab force was able to control it directly due to its immunity and geographical location, as it was under the control of the Hindu kingdoms. Then we showed the dominance of the Ghurids over the city of Kannauj despite the many political divisions that these ruling states went through. The Ghurids penetrated into the land of India and were able to conquer many cities and impose their control over them.

Keywords: Life, Politics, Kannauj, 5th to 9th century AH

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Introduction

The subject of political life in the city of Kannauj is one of the important subjects in which the administrative parts and the preservation of power were shown, in addition to its geographical location, the vastness of India, and the multiplicity of its kingdoms. The study attempted to know the political conditions that occurred in Kannauj and which continued its hostility towards Muslims for a period of time. The nature of the study required that the research be divided into several sections. In the first section, we addressed the Ghaznavid campaigns on the city of Kannauj (409 AH-590 AH/1018 AD-1194 AD), while the second section was entitled the dominance of the Ghurids over the city of Kannauj (590-591 AH/1194 AD-1195 AD).

The First Topic

Political life in the city of Kannauj from the fifth century AH to the sixth century AH / the eleventh century AD to the twelfth century AD)

The first section: The Ghaznavid campaigns on the city of Kannauj (409 AH - 590 AH / AD 1018 AD - 1194 AD)

The city of Kannauj, like the rest of the Indian cities, continued its hostility to the Muslims for a long time, so no Arab force was able to control it directly; due to its immunity and location, which was under the control of the Hindu kingdoms, and it continued in this state until the Muslims invaded it in the fifth century AH, as the ruler of Kannauj, Rajibal (349 AH - 409 AH / 960 AD - 1018 AD), the last king of the (Gurjara Pratihara) dynasty, when Mahmud of Ghaznawi attacked India, headed towards Kannauj in the year (409 AH / 1018 AD) and saw it as if it were a city raising its head to the sky and in it there is a beauty that is unparalleled among other cities.

Islamic sources state that Mahmud of Ghazni arrived in the city of Kannauj in the month of Shaban of the year (407 AH/1017 AD), and when its ruler, King Rajibal, heard of him, he fled and crossed the Ganga River, and Sultan Mahmud was able to impose his control over it and its suburbs and the forts it contained, and there were seven castles overlooking the Ganga River.

The reason behind Mahmud of Ghazni heading towards Kannauj is that it was the seat of the empire in northern India since the days of Harsha the Great, and it was ruled by Rajibala, the last ruler of Gurjara-Pratihara, who fled as soon as he heard the news of Mahmud of Ghazni's approach, and he was able to besiege the city and conquer it without much resistance. The reason for this wealth that was in the city is that it has ten thousand houses of idols that the Indians claim was built two to three hundred thousand years ago, and that they have continued to sanctify them since that time, and Sultan Mahmud allowed it to his army, so they seized the treasures and jewels in it.

As a result of this victory achieved by Mahmud, it led to the anger of the Hindu officials after they learned that their cities had surrendered to the Muslims and that their king Rajibal had fled. Ibn al-Athir mentions this, saying: ((When he returned to Ghazni, the cursed king Bidda sent messengers to the ruler of Qanuj, Rajibal, rebuking him for his defeat and surrendering his country to the Muslims. The conversation between them was prolonged, and their matter ended in disagreement. Each one of them prepared for his companion and marched towards him. They met and fought, and Rajibal was killed, and the killing came upon most of his soldiers. Bidda became more evil and arrogant because of what happened to him, and his fame spread in India and rose, and some of the kings of India, whose country Yamin al-Dawla ruled, sought him out, defeated him and destroyed his soldiers, and became part of his group and his servant and took refuge with him, so he promised to return his kingdom to him, and to preserve his lost property for him, and apologized for the attack of winter and the succession of dew)).

Rajipal fled after he was terrified, leaving his city unprotected in front of the army of the Islamic army and destroying the temples that were prominent in the conscience of some prominent leaders, including the ruler of Chandela, Vidhyadhara, which aroused his anger and he tried in one way or another to confront the Islamic armies, which prompted him to organize a league of some prominent rulers to defend their religion and their country. The members of this league were dissatisfied with Rajyapala, the ruler of Kannauj, who fled from his capital without showing any resistance to the invaders, so they attacked him, defeated him and killed him. Vidhyadhara Nanda seized Kannauj and imposed his control over it and appointed his son Trilochanapala (409 AH/1018- 418 AH/1027) as the ruler of Kannauj.

In this regard, Al-Kurdizi mentions that the Sultan headed to discipline Nanda, saying: ((From there, Sultan Mahmud led an army to the state of Nanda and crossed several large rivers. Nanda learned of the news of the arrival of the army of Islam, so he prepared for war and gathered a large army, which contained thirty-six thousand horsemen, five thousand one hundred and forty infantry, and six hundred and forty elephants. There were weapons, treasuries, and fodder for the same number of this army. When Prince Mahmud approached him, he dismounted and mobilized the army, and prepared the right and left flanks, the center, the two wings, the vanguard, and the rearguard. He sent the vanguards, and dismounted with determination and caution. He sent a messenger to Nanda, advising him, threatening him, and warning him. He also sent him letters threatening and warning him: Convert to Islam and you will be safe from this war, this ordeal, and this corruption. Nanda replied, I will have no business with you other than war.)) We conclude from this text that the numerical figures are exaggerated, perhaps to arouse the reader's suspense.

When Mahmud heard about Vidyadhara Nanda's actions and his control over Kannauj, he launched another campaign against it in the year 410 AH/1019 AD, because he was naturally keen to prevent a battle from forming against him and took control of all seven fortresses of Kannauj. Nanda had no choice but to withdraw from the battle. However, Islamic and foreign sources did not mention the reasons behind Nanda's withdrawal from the battle despite his superiority in numbers and equipment over the Muslim army. After the latter's withdrawal, Mahmud and his army were able to obtain a lot of spoils from Kannauj, about twenty thousand thousand dirhams and more, and fifty-three thousand captives, and three hundred and fifty camels. It is worth mentioning that after Sultan Mahmud imposed his control over the city, he

appointed one of his loyalists, Ahmad Nial Tekin, as his deputy in India. In the year (421 AH/1030 AD), he invaded the city of Narsa, which is one of the greatest cities in India, as it had approximately one hundred thousand fighters. He looted and destroyed the works and plundered it. He came to the city and entered it from one of its sides. He plundered it one day and did not take it over until they left and spent the night outside it, fearing for themselves from the people of the country. They divided the money in half and wanted to return the next day, but its people defended them. Ahmad Nial returned with his soldiers to his country. We see that the text exaggerates in mentioning the number of soldiers, as it mentions that it had approximately one hundred thousand fighters and they plundered it quickly. So, what was the role of these soldiers and why were they unable to defend their city? As for Trilochanapala, the ruler of Kannauj, he did not enjoy strength and courage. In the year (405 AH/1014 AD), Sultan Mahmud advanced towards Bari, the capital of Vidyadhar Nanda, and seized it. Then he headed towards Kannauj and took refuge. Trilochanapala went to Kashmir, but Mahmud pursued him there and defeated a combined army of Trilochanapala and his new ally Tunga, the ruler of Kashmir. Mahmud did not consider it safe to enter Kashmir, but Trilochanapala also did not want to end his days as a refugee in Kashmir. His ambition was to rule Punjab, the kingdom of his ancestors. Therefore, he returned to the eastern part of Punjab and entered into an alliance with Vidyadhar Nanda, who was one of the most powerful princes in northern India. Mahmud had no choice but to end this complex alliance between the Indian kingdoms at that time. He was indeed able to break it after he went to India and was able to defeat Trilochanapala's forces in a battle near the Rama Ganga River. The latter had only the Kannauj region to nominally rule, which led to divisions among his followers, some of whom assassinated him between 412 AH/1021 AD and 413 AH/1022 AD. After the latter's death, his son Bimabala succeeded him. (413 AH/1022 AD-417 AH/1026 AD) He ruled as a small tribal leader in Kannauj, he had no achievements, he died in the year (417 AH/1026 AD), and with him the glorious glory of the powerful Pratihara family in northwestern Hindustan ended and its decline and decline in the city of Kannauj.

However, these events did not end with the death of Sultan Mahmud Ghazni in the year (421 AH/1030 AD), before his death he divided his state between his two sons Masoud and Muhammad, but soon after the death of their father a dispute arose between them and Masoud I gained the upper hand, so he defeated his brother, blinded him and threw him in prison for ten years from (421 AH/1030 to 432 AH/1040 AD). During the reign of Masoud I, the Abbasid Caliph Al-Qa'im bi-Amr Allah sent him a consecration of power and granted him the title of Sultan. Masoud continued his father's policy of protecting the Ghaznavid state's possessions, and he also annexed more Indian lands. This consecration granted authority, power and legitimacy to the Ghaznavid state because it had become subject to the Abbasid Caliphate. When the situation was settled for Sultan Masoud, he marched from Ghazni to Khorasan to prepare its affairs. His agent and his father's agent in India, Ahmad Nyal Tekin, had become too powerful there, and he was tempted to become tyrannical, so he refused to accept the conquest and showed rebellion. The Sultan marched to India and Ahmad Nyal returned to obedience. But as soon as the Sultan returned to his seat of power in Khorasan, Ahmad declared rebellion once again in India, and gathered the crowds. Sultan Masoud (426 AH/1034 AD) sent a large army to him, and wrote to the kings of India to take the doctrines from him. When the armies fought him, he was defeated and fled to Multan, and from there he headed to Bhatia * in a group, but the king of Bhatia was unable to stop him. Relations continued between the two parties, sometimes peace and sometimes military confrontation.

In the year (426 AH / 1034 AD) the city of Kannauj was invaded by Ahmad Nial Tekin, but he was not able to stay for long and was soon expelled from it. By bad coincidence, the floods descended and swept him away and drowned him, and he died. When the water swept away his body and threw it to the land, a man from the army of his opponents found him and recognized him, so he cut off his head and sent it to Talq bin Jahlun, who sent it to Balkh. Prince Masoud ordered a pillar to be erected and the head hung on it, and his end was in India. As for the situation in Kannauj, the kings of the Rashtrakuta dynasty continued to impose their control over it. Gopala (428 AH / 1036 AD), the last king of that dynasty, took over and was able to impose his control over the city, and northern India submitted to him. He presented himself as the master of northern India and imposed tribute on the Hindu rulers. In the year (451 AH / 492 AH) - (1059 AD - 1088 AD), Ibrahim took over the rule of the Ghaznavid state and restored the system of The state fought

corruption and restored its dominance to its glorious era and put in place a strong policy to impose his control and advance the empire and progress and prosperity in all aspects. Ibrahim sent his son Mahmud with an army of invaders consisting of 40 thousand horsemen to launch a raid on eastern Punjab, between the years (455 AH - 463 AH / 1063 AD and 1070 AD). Mahmud was able to achieve successful victories that enabled him to express his personality and thus his father made him the ruler of India. The Jahadavala dynasty ascended to the rule of Kannauj and the first king of the dynasty was Chandradeva (483 AH - 497 AH / 1090 AD - 1103 AD), also known as (Mahitala) (and Mahi Yala), ruled the city of (Kannauj).

It is mentioned that Chandra Deva was known as Chand Rai, the elephant keeper. When the army of Prince Mahmud of Ghazni invaded India and defeated its king, and after he achieved a crushing victory over him, the princes came from all sides and offered loyalty and gifts to the conqueror, including a large number of elephants. He ordered the establishment of a stable in Kannauj and made Chand Rai its guard. It was said that Chandra Deva joined the Muslims in order to build his wealth. Before serving as a stable keeper under the leadership of Mahmud, Chandradeva continued to rule for a long period (483 AH-497 AH/1090-1103 AD), during which he was able to establish a kingdom with strong sovereignty. The city of Kannauj witnessed a kind of stability and prosperity after continuous conflicts before Jahadavala took control of it. He tried to expand his kingdom, so he sent an army from Kannauj towards the Kingdom of Magadha, but its ruler, Balasamanta Bhimayas, was able to repel the forces of the ruler of Kannauj and failed to control it. Chandra was succeeded by his son Madanachandra (known as Madanapala in about (498 AH - 507 AH / 1104 AD - 1113 AD) who ruled over the city of Kannauj and made it his capital. The Ghaznavid state continued to launch raids and attacks on Indian cities. Sultan Masoud III Ghaznavid launched a raid between (498 AH - 499 AH / 1104 AD - 1105 AD) on the city of Kannauj and captured it and imprisoned its ruler Madanapala and displaced the Jahadavala family and captured the city and opened it to his army. The ruler of the city remained imprisoned for a long period of time. However, the Jahadavala family, despite their displacement from the city, did not lose control of the country. Govindakandra continued his military campaigns and set up his camp in the village of Visbhupura near Kannauj in order to release his father and restore their city, but he was unable to do so. In the year (503 AH / 1109 AD), he was forced to pay a ransom. In exchange for his father's release, Govindakandra (508 AH-550/1114 CE-1155 CE) accession to the Jahadavala rule marked the culmination of an era of success and expansion. Govindakandra was undoubtedly the greatest king of his dynasty, and also one of the greatest kings of his time. His extensive conquests and extensive diplomatic relations made the Jahadavala dynasty at that time an important factor in the politics of North India. As a prince, this ruler was known for his shrewdness and political acumen. He was able to fight many successful defensive battles during the reign of his father, Madanapala, and enjoyed all the royal privileges.

He mentioned that Govind Chandra had taken all precautions to guard the borders of his kingdom from the Ghaznavids, especially after the recent incident of Kannauj during the reign of his father. Therefore, he sent an army to protect the holy city of Varanasi from the Ghaznavids, and appointed his wife, Queen Kumaradevi, over it. In addition, the rulers of the Ghaznavid state after Masoud III had periods of rule that were between strength and weakness, especially the sultans whose rule coincided with the rule of Govindakandra, the ruler of Kannauj: They are Sherzad (509 AH / 1115 AD), who took power for one year and was killed by his brother Arslan, and took his place in the year (509 AH - 512 AH / 1115 AH / - 1118 AD). Conditions worsened during his reign and the power of the emirate diminished and its prestige was lost, as he was preoccupied with the conflict with Bahram Shah, as a battle took place between Arslan Shah and Bahram Shah, so the Sultan of Khorasan, Sanjar, took advantage of the situation and sided with Bahram to seat him in Arslan's place in the year (512 AH - 547 AH / 1118 AD - 1152 AD). The latter tried to appease Sanjar with money and made his sister intercede with him, but he did not accept either money or intercession, so Arslan was defeated and took refuge in his Indian possessions. The city of Kannauj witnessed during this period: The last period of the Ghaznavid rulers was calm and stable; because they were busy with conflicts among themselves, no Ghaznavid army attacked the city during this period. It is mentioned that Arslan tried to regain Ghazni from Bahram, who had become under the care of his uncle Sanjar, and he was able to defeat Bahram once and the Sultan of Khorasan Sanjar came to rescue Bahram and Arslan was executed. This, if it indicates anything, indicates the instability of the rulers of the Ghaznavid

state and their political differences. This is what Abu al-Fida supported while talking about the successors of Masoud III, saying: "After him, his son Arslan Shah bin Masoud ruled, and he held his brothers, and fled from his brothers Bahram Shah, and sought refuge with Sultan Sanjar bin Malik Shah, the ruler of Khorasan. Sanjar sent to Arslan Shah to intercede for Bahram Shah, but he did not accept it. Sultan Sanjar marched to Ghazni, and Arslan Shah gathered his armies and horses, and they fought and the fighting between them intensified, so the army of Ghazni was defeated, and Arslan Shah was defeated. Sanjar entered Ghazni and seized it in the year 510, and took great sums of money from it, and he decided the sultanate to Bahram Shah bin Masoud, and that he should deliver a sermon in his kingdom to Sultan Muhammad, then to King Sanjar, then to the Sultan and the aforementioned Bahram Shah. Then Sanjar returned to his country, and Arslan Shah had fled to the direction of Hindustan, then..." He gathered a group and returned to Ghazni. Bahram Shah sought help from Sanjar again, so he sent an army to him. When they approached Arslan Shah, he fled without fighting, and they pursued him until they caught him. Bahram Shah strangled his brother Arslan Shah and buried him in his father's grave in Ghazni. Arslan Shah was killed in the year 512 AH. We have mentioned it before so that we can follow the incident one by one. Arslan Shah was twenty-seven years old when he was killed.

In the year (547 AH - 551 AH / 1152-1156 AD), Khosrow Shah took over the Sultanate of Ghazni, succeeding his father Bahram, but he was unable to resist the repeated attacks of the Ghor tribe. On the other hand, Varanasi and Kannauj were well protected under the direct rule of Govindakandra whose western borders were guarded by three feudal dynasties, including the Jadipur-Adipati Gopala dynasty in Kannauj, which indicates that Kannauj, despite the Ghaznavids' conquest, remained under Rajput rule.

Section Two

The Ghurids' dominance over the city of Kannauj (590-591 AH/1194-1195 AD):

Despite the many political divisions that the ruling states went through, including the Ghaznavids, we find that Kannauj was not exposed during that period to Ghaznavid raids; As its weak rulers were preoccupied with wars among themselves on the one hand and with the Ghurids on the other hand, especially since weakness began to set in their rule, in addition to the fact that most of the rulers and men of the state were immersed in a life of extravagance and luxury, and after the rulers of Ghur and their princes were appointed, dismissed, transferred and imprisoned by the Ghaznavid sultans, the situation was reversed and part of these sultans became under the control of the princes of the victorious parties, including the Ghurids, whose danger increased after their arm grew stronger, so their leader, Ghiyath al-Din, fought the Turkmen Ghazis and extended his authority over Ghazni. With the assumption of the Ghurid sultan, Ala al-Din was determined to continue the military operations on the war. It is mentioned that during his time (34) fierce battles took place between them, in which he was victorious and seized Ghazni, the capital of the Ghaznavid emirate, and ordered it to be burned, so it was set on fire for seven days, so most of the city's landmarks were burned and the Ghurid army committed horrific massacres in the city, killing, looting and robbing the residents and exhuming the graves of the sultans. Except for the graves of Mahmud, Masoud and Ibrahim, the city was in ruins and devastation. In order to ensure stability, the Sultan ordered the transfer of large numbers of Ghazni's inhabitants to the Ghor region.

After the overwhelming victories achieved by Alauddin Ghori, he obtained the title of Jahan (Conqueror of the World), which he was envied for and proud of being (the lamp of the Abbasid house). Vijayachandra, son of Govindachandra, ascended to the rule of Gadavala in the year (550 AH-565 AH/1155 AD-1169 AD), also known as Vijayapala or Maldeva, and ruled for about 15 years. Govindachandra's kingdom extended to Rudrapali. The rule was disputed by Govindachandra's sons, Vijayachandra and his brothers Asvat Chandra and Rajyapala, as Asvat held the title of Yuvaraja the heir, while Rajyapala held the title of Maharajaputra (prince). However, Vijayachandra defeated them in the war of succession and was able to ascend to the rule and inherited his father's royal titles. It is clear to us that during that period, the city of Kannauj did not object to the Ghaznavid raid; Due to the weakness of their authority after losing Ghazni, their prestige was lost and their authority became confined to the city of Lahore. During the reign of Vijayachandra, Kannauj was invaded by Khusrau Shah, who came to India after the repeated attacks of the

Ghor on Ghazni, which led to its loss. He spent the rest of his life there, but Vijayachandra was able to repel the attack. However, he lost Delhi after his struggle with Shahamana in the year (560 AH / 1164 AD). It is clear that the king of Kannauj faced conflicts with both parties, which led to the weakening of his power, and thus he lost Delhi and his rule ended in the year (565 AH / 1169 AD). King Jayachandra, son of Vijayachandra, ascended to the rule of Kannauj in the year 1170 AD. He was known as one of the great kings of Kannauj, as his status was great among the kingdoms and they were subject to his authority. The city of Banaras continued to remain as a second capital for Jahadavala during his reign, and Shahab al-Din al-Ghori was able to conquer Kannauj. 590-591 AH/1194-1195 AD) and killed its king, Jayachandra.

Conclusion

- 1- It became clear to us through our study of the political life in the city of Kannauj from the fifth century AH to the ninth century AH that this city was known for its hostility to Muslims for a period of time and remained so until the invasion of Muslims led by Mahmud Ghaznawi in the fifth century and the control of the Ghaznavids over it, and because it was the seat of the empire in northern India.
- 2- The expansion of India in the Indian subcontinent, and the multiplicity of its kingdoms, as the political motive was represented by preserving their authority, so the system of government was hereditary and limited to the royal family, as Sindh and India were divided into many regions and provinces with rulers, and yet they were linked by their strong political unity under the banner of the supreme ruler of the country.
- 3- Weakness settled in the city of Kannauj and devastation and destruction spread due to the many political divisions that the ruling states went through, including the Ghaznavids and the Ghurids, and the Ghurids penetrated the lands of India and were able to conquer many cities and impose their control over them, perhaps including the conquest of the city of Multan and Lahore.

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