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Research Paper

Floor, Willem. Safavid Government Institutions

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Willem Floor, the author of *Safavid Government Institutions*, is a famous Dutch Iranologist, who has published various books about the history of Iran especially during the Safavid, Afsharid, and Qajar dynasties, some of which are translated into Persian.

Safavid Government Institutions is organized into three chapters:

1. The organization of the central government
2. The organization of the provincial government
3. The organization of the army

In the first chapter, an analytical perspective of the main positions in the Central Government of Iran during the Safavid Dynasty is presented. After determining the geographical scope of the Safavid Dynasty and the organization of the Central Government, positions –e.g., lawyer, *Amir Al-Omara* or *Sepahsalar*, *Vizier* (prime minister), *royal court*, *the office*, *royal secretariat*, *thesecretary*, *Majles-Nevis*, and *Mohrdaran*– and their duties are explained. Moreover, a valuable list of officials and their periods of employment are presented in tables; therefore, he concludes that transferring the power of the Safavid administrative system from *Mamalek*(government) landsto *Khasseh* [*King's Demesne*] landswas reflected in *Vizier* and other government positions.

This book can be criticized for the lack of documentation of the supreme *divan*. In fact, the *divan* system might have left some documents, examples of which could have been presented to help understand the system. For instance, presenting examples of seals(*Mohr/Toqra*), licenses (*parvanche*), numbers, prefaces, badges, and cheques ... in line with historical data could be very important in improving this research.

The second chapter concentrates on the administration of the country and its division into *mamalek*and *Khasseh*lands. It investigates the states and provinces, –e.g., *Chekhour Saad*,*Qarabagh*, *Sherwan*, *Herat*, *Mashhad*, *Kandahar*, *Astarabad*, *Gilan*, *Mazandaran*, *Arab Iraq*, *Isfahan*, *Hamedan*, *Kurdistan*and the Central Province – how they are governed and the governors' relationship with the

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Safavid Central Government.

Regarding this chapter, it is not explained how different it is from *'The System of the Safavid States'* by Röhrborn. Furthermore, Floor could have demonstrated the boundaries and the extent of these territories and their changes at different periods through various maps.

Chapter Three, the most detailed part of the book, deals with the organization of the Safavid Army, explains the necessities, and consequences of reforms during the reign of Shah Tahmasp, and especially focuses on the reign of Shah Abbas. Moreover, this chapter explicates different army groups, – e.g., *Qurchis*, *Gholams*, *Tofangchis*, *Tupchis*, and *Navy* – their uniforms and military equipment, their camping and military arrangements, and other army-related issues.

About this chapter, it can be said that the author could have used the pictures of the military uniforms and equipment –some of which still exist in museums around the world –as well as present maps of the military operations similar to what Khanbaba Bayani has done in his book entitled *'A Military History of Iran during Safavid Dynasty.'*

This book was primarily translated by Kazem Firouzmand under the title *'Divan and Qoshun'* and was published by Agah Publishers in 2009. However, having been unfamiliar with Government texts and terms, the translator has made lots of errors so that it required a fresh translation. Thus, Hasan Zandiyeh has translated the text along with explanations about the author's text in 65 pages.

First, he identified the errors that Firouzmand made such as incorrect referents, wrong names of people, tribes, clans, nationalities, geographical areas, incorrect government terms, and writing mistakes. Then, he revised them completely. It should be noted that all of these revisions are confirmed by Willem Floor.