

ARAB ADMINISTRATION AND SETTLEMENT POLICY IN AZERBAIJAN

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Abstract. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the caliphs who came to power continued the conquests started with the aim of spreading Islam. Some of these activities were related to Azerbaijan. Like every state, the Arab caliphate had its own administrative system, which was more or less the same in all regions. The Arab armies governed the newly conquered territories by appointing governors. From the first day of its capture, Azerbaijan began to be governed by governors appointed here. The first governor who adopted Ardabil as his center, as it was during the Sassanid period, was Hüzeyfa b. al-Yaman has been. We can say that the Arab caliphate aimed to reduce the influence of the Byzantine and Khazars, the leading states of that time, in the region by attracting the local people to their side and forming a unified power unit relying on the support of the local people in the future struggle against them.

Keywords: Azerbaijan, Arab administration, settlement policy, administrative system.

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Received: 17 March 2024;

Accepted: 22 April 2024;

Published: 31 May 2024.

1. Introduction

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the caliphs who came to power continued the conquests started with the aim of spreading Islam. Some of these activities were related to Azerbaijan. Like every state, the Arab caliphate had its own administrative system, which was more or less the same in all regions. The Arab armies governed the newly conquered territories by appointing governors. A general governor was appointed to these territories and that governor also appointed an administrator for each city. After the Islamic armies came out of the Arabian Peninsula, they first made scouting trips to Azerbaijan and then settled in this region once and for all from 642-43. With this, the population of Azerbaijan got acquainted with a new religion, culture and administration. After that, another branch of the centrally controlled Islamic state was opened. Therefore, the administration established here was not much different from those established in other regions of Islamic geography.

From the first day of its capture, Azerbaijan began to be governed by governors appointed here. The first governor who adopted Ardabil as his center, as it was during the Sassanid period, was Hüzeyfa b. al-Yaman has been. But Huzeyfa b. al-Yaman appointed after him Salman b. After the martyrdom of Rabia, when he was appointed

How to cite (APA):

Gurbanov, A. (2024). Arab administration and settlement policy in Azerbaijan. *Islamic History and Literature*, 2(2), 87-91 <https://doi.org/10.62476/ihl22.87>

governor of Azerbaijan for the second time, he held the governorship for a while from the city of Barda, but Ardabil was still recognized as the center of government.

Hz. Osman and Hazrat. At the time of Ali, Ashas b. Kays served as governor of Azerbaijan from the city of Ardabil. Even Ardabil gained the distinction of having the first Islamic architectural work of the region with the mosque he built here. Later, we witness the transfer of the administration of the region to the cities of Tabriz and Maragha.

It should also be noted that Azerbaijan was subject to the governorship of Kufa in matters of army, military movement and administration from the beginning of the Islamic conquests. However, this situation continued until the time of the Umayyad caliph Abdul Malik (65–85/685–705), after which Azerbaijan was subordinated to the governorship of al-Jazira.

According to the new administrative system established in Azerbaijan and neighboring regions, the management of the captured territories was given to local dynasties and administrators. Local dynasties were responsible for the administration of internal affairs, ensuring order and implementing innovations here. The Muslim emirs did not interfere in their internal affairs, but considered that they had finished their work by collecting taxes and providing defense through Arab officials.

2. Arab Administration and Settlement Policy

As the clearest example of what we are talking about, we can point to the region of Arran. So Arran Salman b. After it was captured by the Islamic army under the command of Rabia, the administration of this region was given to the Mehranis, a local ruling dynasty.

We can say that the Arab caliphate aimed to reduce the influence of the Byzantine and Khazars, the leading states of that time, in the region by attracting the local people to their side and forming a unified power unit relying on the support of the local people in the future struggle against them. This is the reason why the people who participated in the wars in Armenia and Darband were exempted from jizya tax. This was another reason for the administration of captured territories to local dynasties.

On the other hand, this situation had a great help in maintaining order among the people. But all this did not apply to every region. Thus, the management of strategically important cities and regions such as Darband was done by Arab administrators. The reason for this was the frequent attacks of the Khazars from the north and the deployment of a large number of military forces in Darban. As Islam spread later and under difficult conditions in the mountainous areas, the administration of Darbant was also more difficult than in the plains.

In the early days of the conquests, governors of Azerbaijan managed military and civil affairs together, as in other places. That is, they were the commander of the soldiers in the region, the chief judge of the courts and the tax officials. But later, with the establishment of divans, these duties began to be managed by different persons.

In Azerbaijan, there were two divans where income and expenses were recorded. One of these was in Atropatena and the other in Arran. The divankhana in Atropatena used the Pahlavi script, while the Roman script was used in Arran. From this, it is clear that the working form of divans in the regions subject to Sassanid and Byzantium, which existed earlier, was preserved as it was. The reason for this was that the Arabs

did not have an ancient administrative system like the Byzantine and Sassanid ones. This was the reason why divans were first written in Persian and later in Arabic.

It can be concluded from this that the Arabs thought differently when occupying these regions compared to other areas. Thus, the Arab armies did not think that they would win in such a short time and did not prepare a plan on how to manage them in advance. At the same time, Azerbaijan has been such a politically mixed territory, which has caused it to be kept as it was in the first years without changing anything. This was the reason why they used local administrators in the early days, but later refused them. But we must not forget that no matter how much authority the Muslims have in the territories captured according to Islamic religious rules, they should recognize the rights of the local people in some areas. As long as this principle was followed, there were no problems in the society. But later, especially starting from the Umayyad and Abbasid period, the change in these relations led to justified protests and insecurity of the people.

After it was captured by the Arab armies of Azerbaijan, it is very difficult to determine the ethnic composition of the population and who they are. The main reason for this is that there is very little written information about the places of residence and the ethnic groups that make up the population. Especially during the time of Khulafai Rashid and the Umayyads, while the number of Arabs who were relocated was very small, we find more information about the relocation of families during the Abbasid period. This also shows that the Arab army did not transfer anyone to the newly occupied territories without establishing a sound administration and ensuring political stability.

In the new regions they occupied, the Arab armies occupied only the big cities and important points and placed small military garrisons in order to protect the magisterial roads there. The main part of the army would move to the center of the regions and continue their conquests there. Soldiers in Arab armies participated in battles for four years and then returned to their homes. New fighters replaced them in the army.

The resettlement of Arab families to these regions began after the conquest of Azerbaijan was completed and a strong Arab administration was established here. Belazuri provided information about the first transfer policy to Azerbaijan. Taking advantage of the political strife at the center of the Caliphate, the people of Azerbaijan refuse to pay taxes. As a result of this, governor Ashas b. Kays asks for military help from Kufa. At that time, the Arab families who were part of the sent army were also placed in Azerbaijan. And they are ordered to invite the population here to Islam and obedience.

For the first time in Azerbaijan, the Umayyad caliphate gave land to Arab families and gave them the opportunity to live a sedentary lifestyle in the occupied territories. With this, the caliphate solved two problems at once. The caliphate ensured the continuity of the government, firstly by the stipends to be given to the new settlers from the state treasury and secondly by establishing Arab rule in the newly captured territories with their help. For this reason, in the beginning, a few families were relocated, but later they were relocated in the form of tribes.

According to the information provided by the historian Belazuri, Arab families from Basra and Syria were moved to Azerbaijan. Each of these families could own as much land as they could. Even the Arabs, who bought land from the local inhabitants, used them only for the protection and cultivation of these lands. In such conditions,

after a while, the population of Azerbaijan fell into the position of servants working on the lands of the Arabs. Belazuri, who gave all this information, did not give any information about which tribe was transferred first.

The migration policy was carried out taking into account the relief, strategic importance and composition of the population of the occupied territories. Especially when the Islamic armies occupied Arran, they encountered Christians who were people of the book. At the same time, the Arabs did not interfere in the internal affairs of the population living there, taking into account the danger of the Khazars who often attacked from the north. The Arab army built military garrisons here just to prevent future Khazarian attacks. The expenses and food of these garrisons were taxed by the people of Arran. Especially Maslama b. Abd al-Malik stationed twenty-four thousand soldiers from Syria in Darban and assigned them a certain amount of salary.

After the collapse of the Umayyads and the rise to power of the Abbasids, there were some changes in the resettlement policy. Thus, the Abbasid caliphate recalled the Arabs who had been settled by the Umayyads before them to Azerbaijan and decided to settle their supporters or new families who supported them. The main reason for this was that the earlier ones supported the Umayyad caliphate. If this policy was not applied, the Abbasid influence in Azerbaijan would be very weak, which would lead to secession from the center as a result. At times, there were even disputes between those who moved earlier and those who arrived later, which mostly affected the local population. Some time after this policy will be implemented, we will be a live witness of it.

According to the information given by Belazuri and Istakhri, the pro-Umayyad soldiers and families stationed in the Darband military garrison could not remove the Abbasid caliphate from there and this situation continued after Caliph Mutawakkil (232–246/874–861). With that, the Abbasid caliphate could not remove the displaced Syrians in Darban and left them to fend for themselves. For this reason, the Arabs living in Darband later separated from the Arab caliphate and founded the independent Sulami Emirate, which continued until the Mongol attacks. The forced exchange of Umayyad supporters with Abbasid supporters was stopped, at least partially, during the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid (169–193/786–809).

It is understandable that the Arab armies, when they first arrived, kept their previous systems of administration and registration as they were and there are many reasons for this. But later, firstly, the migration policy, the change of local administrators, the transfer of some regions and cities to the hegemony of the Arabs and finally the replacement of the Persian language with the Arabic language led to the emergence of some political and social problems. First of all, the upper class of the local people became unemployed and lost the authority and opportunities they had before. Second, the change of language also created a group of illiterates in all strata of the people, which led to the disintegration of the intelligentsia.

3. Conclusion

As a result of our research and evaluating the historical sources, we can come to the conclusion that the arrival of Arabs to Azerbaijan and its results can be divided into two stages. The first stage is the actions during the time of Khulafai Rashid, which is the form of the army's arrival, its actions, its relations with the people, the impressions it left, its religious sensitivities and administrative methods. So, as a result of this, the

local population welcomed them very well in the early days, they started to live as equals in a short time and even learned their languages and religions. In short, there were no political, cultural and economic problems at this first stage.

However, during the Umayyads and Abbasids, which we call the second stage, the attitude and view of the local population towards the Arab administration completely changed. The reason for this was the behavior of the incoming army, the arbitrariness of the appointed governors, the tax, administrative, social and migration policy implemented by the caliphate. Also, after a while, the Arabs who came here saw the local population as second-class people from both religious and human points of view and valued them accordingly, which led to protests in the society.

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