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ISLAMIC BUREAUCRATS IN LATE ANTIQUITY: ADMINISTRATION AND ELITES DURING THE UMAYYAD CALIPHATE (CA. 661-750 C.E.)

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ABSTRACT:

This dissertation examines the symbiotic relationship between state formation and the emergence of a religiously and ethnically diverse elite during the Umayyad Caliphate (41-132/661-750 C.E.). The project foregrounds the socioeconomic backgrounds of Umayyad-era administrators using a prosopographical approach to Muslim and non-Muslim sources in Arabic, Syriac, Coptic, and Greek. Previous scholarship on the early Islamic period has prioritized the religious or ethnic identity of administrators and interpreted Umayyad-era state reforms as efforts by Islamic political elites to demarcate and enforce a social hierarchy between Muslims and non-Muslims or conquerors and conquered. In contrast, the current dissertation contends that Umayyad administrative appointments and reforms were economically and politically motivated to create and maintain an emerging class of elites—one composed of both new members and those from pre-Islamic elite families. As a result, the evolving socioeconomic makeup of Umayyad administrators reflects how new and old elites negotiated identity and authority to shape a new empire.

To Katy & Kaden (mom's second favorite)

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Introduction

The Umayyad Caliphate (41-132/661-750 C.E.) was the first Islamic dynastic empire; but what made the Umayyad Caliphate "Islamic"? Or even an empire? Scholarship on the early Islamic period tends to focus on the religious consequences of the emergence of a new faith and empire. These approaches often prioritize those who ruled and what the rulers – and their subjects – believed. What it meant to be a Muslim, Christian, or Jew in late antiquity is treated as a question largely concerned with belief.[1] Recent late antique scholarship, however, demonstrates that communal boundaries based on a religious identity were not as rigid as normative sources often projected. This dissertation reconsiders early Islamic state-building and its impact on society by departing from scholarship's tendency to prioritize religious identity and traces the changing socioeconomic backgrounds of Muslims and non-Muslims who were appointed within the Umayyad bureaucracy.

The dissertation argues that frameworks prioritizing changes in confessional membership (*Islamization*) or ethnic/linguistic demographics (*Arabization*) do not accurately reflect how administrative appointments functioned as an instrument of the state nor do they fully appreciate the range of actors who participated in shaping the Umayyad state. Existing scholarship on early

[1] For this observation applied to a socio-legal approach to an Islamic identity, see Lena Salaymeh, "Taxing Citizen: Socio-legal Constructions of Late Antique Muslim Identity," *Islamic Law and Society* 23 (2016): 333-367; especially 334 where she makes a similar observation about scholarship's tendency to equate identity with belief.

Islamic society has focused on the religious or ethnic identity of administrators and interpreted Umayyad-era state reforms as part of a broader ideological campaign by Muslims to demarcate and enforce a new social hierarchy between Muslims and non-Muslims or conquerors and conquered. In contrast, my project demonstrates that Umayyad administrative appointments and reforms were economically and politically motivated to create and maintain an emerging aristocracy, one composed of both new members and those from pre-Islamic elite families. By highlighting how economic and social networks transcended ethnic and religious communities, my research explores how a religiously diverse elite engaged with one another to help create a state that preserved—or undermined—their privileged positions in society.

Historical & Historiographical Scope:

This dissertation is focused on the administrators of the Umayyad Caliphate; specifically, the dissertation examines the administrators who staffed the Umayyad bureaucracy from the Caliphate of Mu‘āwiya following the First Islamic Civil War (41/661 C.E.) until the reign (and subsequent assassination) of al-Walīd II (d. 126/744 C.E.), after which the authority and recognizability of an Umayyad Caliphate was in serious question with the initiation of the Third Islamic Civil War and subsequent—if not concurrent—‘Abbāsid Revolution. In short, the dissertation examines the changing socioeconomic background of administrators between the First and Third Islamic Civil War (ca. 41-126/661-744) in order to ask what these changing backgrounds tells us about the participation of administrators in the politics and culture of the Umayyad Caliphate.

The project explores the relationship between state building and the emergence of an Islamic elite—not to be confused with the emergence of Muslim elites. By that I mean, the project demonstrates the broad cast of actors—including non-Muslims—who participated in

discourses about Islamic governance, administration, and culture. Many non-Muslims will be highlighted as examples of "Islamic" elites. This is related to a second ambition of the project: namely, proposing an alternative model for grouping individuals for a period teeming with identities and categories: Muslim, Christian, Jew, Zoroastrian, Arab, Persian, Greek, and client. These categories, while acknowledged as dynamic in scholarship, inevitably influence the way scholars organizes groups, as well as the questions we ask. Thus, while ethnic, essentialist, and nationalistic frameworks have become increasingly less popular over time, scholarship is still fixated on discussing the social history of the early Islamic period in terms of interactions between religious communities and identifying individuals based on their membership within a social or cultural group.

There is an inherent difficulty in invoking categories and group identities with connotations and meanings that transcend our period. Identities, concepts, and terms are influenced by the conceptions of the contemporary reader as well as the social-political-religious context of medieval authors. As will become increasingly apparent in the project, anachronisms in literary sources add layers of complications for deriving historical material for the period. The later redactions of events, likewise, imbue narratives with the motivations of their authors, which may or may not have existed in the period under discussion.[2]

In the field of early Islamic studies, a solution this historiographical issue had been proposing methods for deducing earlier layers of texts, both in Muslim and non-Muslim sources. This project, however, is not interested in proposing an alternative hypothesis for identifying the earliest layers of historical events, but rather puts forth an approach that disregards, or at least

[2] See especially Chapters 2 and 3.

attempts to look beyond, many of the connotations associated with various groups in society. This is done so in two ways: first, I adopt a prosopographical approach to the source material; and second, I employ social theory to recognize groups based on their common socioeconomic characteristics, or, in theoretical terms, their capital (social, economic, and cultural) and social space.

Methodology: *Prosopography & Bourdieu*

The Arabic literary sources for the early Islamic period are rife with historiographical complications and complexities—to the point that it has almost become redundant to even acknowledge the fact. Because of the pervasiveness of anachronisms in our literary sources for the period under discussion, scholars often project these anachronisms back onto early Islamic historical analysis—or at least are often accused of doing so. It has proven difficult to provide an interpretation of the early Islamic period without being subjected to allegations of cherry-picking materials.[3] Conversely, scholars have relied on such limited and sparse sources that they are left with a great deal of room for speculative interpretation.[4] This has created major hurdles for the historiography of the period and widely different methodological approaches and assumptions.[5]

My project attempts to circumvent some of the complications in the literary sources by not depending on any one specific event, individual, geography, or source, which could be subject to a particular historiographical, political, or theological bias. Rather, my approach relies

[3] For example, see the mutual book reviews of Fred Donner and Robert Hoyland. Review of *In God's Path,* by Fred Donner, *al-ʿUṣūr al-Wusṭā* 23 (2015): 134-140; and review of *Muhammad and the Believers,* by Robert Hoyland, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44, no. 3 (2012): 573-576.

[4] For example, Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), and Yehuda Nevo and Judith Koren, *Crossroads to Islam: The Origins of the Arab Religion and the Arab State* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2003).

[5] For an overview of approaches until the end of the twentieth centuries, see, Fred Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing,* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1998): 1-31,

on the quantitative nature of prosopography. That is to say, it utilizes an approach that investigates "the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives. The method employed is to establish a universe to be studied, and then to ask a set of uniform questions—about birth and death, marriage and family, social origins and inherited economic position, place of residence, education, amount and source of personal wealth, occupation, religion, experience of office, and so on."[6]

Prosopography

In his prosopographical study of the early Islamic Hijāz, Asad Ahmed confesses that "This book was not easy to write; and it is not easy to read."[7] Only a stubborn and naïve kid from Texas would read that line and think, "can't be that hard." Never to settle for learning from the mistakes of others, I endeavored ever forward and have reached a similar conclusion. A prosopographical study certainly provides useful frameworks for approaching our source material and attempting to avoid some of the pitfalls inherent in our narrative literary sources—or narrative sources in general.[8] However, the source material is not always consistent with the material it has preserved for administrators and much of what is preserved does not always peak the interests of social and economic historians. While I would have greatly appreciated if Ibn 'Asākir would have kept track of the financial investments of his biographees in a similar way that some Twitter accounts now track the stock trades of American politicians, this was not the

[6] Lawrence Stone, "Prosopography," *Daedalus* 100, no. 1 (Winter, 1971): 46. See also, T. F. Carney, "Prosopography: Payoffs and Pitfalls," *Phoenix* 27, no. 2 (1973): 156-179. André Chastagnol, "La prosopgraphie, méthode de recherche sur l'histoire du Bas-Empire," *Annales* 25, no. 5 (1970): 1229-1235.

[7] Asad Ahmed, *The Religious Elite of the Early Islamic Hijaz: Five Prosopographical Case Studies* (Oxford: Unit for Prosopographical Research, Linacre College, 2011), 15.

[8] For example, in Chris Wickham's magnum opus of late antique social history, *Framing the Early Middle Ages,* he confesses that, "As for narrative sources, I have, in general, tended to disbelieve them, but I have presumed that they reflect a rhetorical field, of acceptance of what was plausible to say to someone at any given moment," *Framing the early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean 400-800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 8.

case—which is admittedly more a problem for me rather than the likely hundreds of thousands of those who have made use of Ibn ʻAsākir's biographical masterpiece. When economic matters are discussed, the literary sources can be either elusive and or exaggerative concerning details about a biographees' estates or wealth. Therefore, it is difficult to deduce an "economic class" from biographies alone. For this reason, I have examined individuals' relationship to administrative structures as an alternative to one's relationship to the *means* or *modes* of production.[9]

Prosopography is a quantitative approach to historical sources that attempts to "identify and then describe trends in relatively abundant data."[10] It aims to gather as much data on individuals about whom, on their own, we know only very little; but collectively we are able to create "collective biographies" of individuals who share common professions, economic status, or backgrounds. For the project, I created a database of "collective biographies" of

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[9] See Chapter 4.

[10] T.F. Carney, "Prosopography: Payoffs and Pitfalls," *Phoenix* 27, no. 2 (1973): 157. For its implementation in late antiquity, see Vincent Puech, "La méthode prosopographique et l'histoire des élites dans l'Antiqué tardive," *Historique* 314 (2012):155-168, and Claude Nicolet, "Prosopographie et histoire sociale: Rome et l'Italie," *Annales* 25, no. 5 (1970): 1209-1228. For prosopographical approaches in an Islamic historiographical context, see Steven Judd's critic of reliance of chronicles in *Religious Scholars and the Umayyads: Piety-Minded Supporters of the Marwanid Caliphate* (London: routledge, 2014), 1-23. For *ṭabaqāt* and its prospects for prosopography, see, Richard W. Bulliet, "A Quantitative Approach to Medieval Muslim Biographical Dictionaries," *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient* 13, no. 2 (1970): 195–211; Claude Gilliot, "Prosopography in Islam An Essay of Classification," *Medieval Prosopography* 23 (2002): 19–54; Asad Ahmed, *The Religious Elite of the Early Islamic Hijaz*; Majied Robinson, *Marriage in the Tribe of Muhammad: A Statistical Study of Early Arabic Genealogical Literature,* Berlin: De Gruyter (2020). For *ṭabaqāt* as a genre of Arabic literature, see Hamilton Gibb, "Islamic Biographical Literature," in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Bernard Lewis and P.M. Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 54-58; Claude Gilliot, "Ṭabaḳāt," in *EI2*; Khalidi Tarif, "Islamic Biographical Dictionaries: A Preliminary Assessment," *Muslim World* 63 (1973): 53–65; Ibrahim Hafsi, "Recherches sur le genre "Ṭabaqāt", dans la littérature arabe I," *Arabica* 23, no. 3 (1976): 227–65; M.J.L. Young, "Arabic Biographical Writing," in *Cambridge History of the Arabic Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983): 168–87; Wadād al-Qāḍī, "Biographical Dictionaries: Inner Structure and Cultural Significance," in *The Book in the Islamic World: The Written Word and Communication in the Middle East*, ed. George Atiyeh (Albany: State University of New York: 1995): 93–122; Marica K. Hermansen, "Survey Article: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Islamic Biographical Materials," *Religion* 18, no. 2 (April 1988): 163–82; Michael Cooperson, *Classical Arabic Biography: The Heirs of the Prophets in the Age of al-Mamun* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): 1-23; Wadād Al-Qāḍī, "Biographical Dictionaries as the Scholars' Alternative History of the Muslim Community," in *Organizing Knowledge: Encyclopaedic Activities in the Pre-Eighteenth Century Islamic World*, ed. Gerhard Endress (Leiden: Brill, 2006): 23–74; For a bibliography of *ṭabaqāt* literature, see Paul Auchterlonie, *Arabic Biographical Dictionaries: A Summary Guide and Bibliography* (Durham: Middle East Libraries Committee, 1987).

administrators to identify their common socioeconomic backgrounds and trace how these changed in response to, or better put, in conversation with Umayyad state building.

For the project, I primarily utilized individuals and biographies gleaned from Islamic-Arabic chronicles (al-Ṭabarī, al-Ya'qūbī, Balādhurī, Ibn Khayyāṭ, etc.), al- Jahshiyārī's administrative history (*Kitāb al-wuzarā' wa al-kuttāb*), and biographical dictionaries (especially Ibn 'Asākir's *Ta'rīkh madina Dimashq* and to a lesser extent Ibn Sa'd's *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr* and al-Mizzī's *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*). Arabic naming formulas are particularly promising for prosopographical study because an individual's name often includes, at the very least, the name of their father or son (i.e., *fulān* ibn *fulān, so-and-so* the son of *so- and-so*). Thus, the name of a single bureaucrat allows for the further exploration of their ancestors, relatives, and descendants which reveals additional information concerning the broader social and economic network of the original administrator. Papyrological, numismatic, and material sources from Greek, Coptic, Pahlavi, and Arabic as well as Christian literary texts in Greek, Syriac, and Arabic have supplemented these Islamic-Arabic literary sources. This confluence of source material reflects a major shift in the historiography of the early Islamic period—the shift from overcoming the lack of contemporary literary sources to reconciling the surplus of documentary, archeological, epigraphic, numismatic, and literary materials.

Finally, it is worth clarifying the number of the administrators discussed in the dissertation. The project is based on a prosopographical approach to the source material but has predominantly relied on qualitative analysis of said source material. A quantitative approach, in my opinion, has serious shortcomings due to the limited and inconsistent nature of the source material. Biographical dictionaries vary in terms of the content they preserve; thus, one cannot assume that the lack of explicit reference to estates necessarily means that the person *did not* own

property. This is not to say that quantitative approaches do not have a role in the study of early Islamic society,[11] but that, at least for my data set, I found the data to be too inconsistent for quantitative or statistical analysis to be considered seriously. Likewise, some administrators simply lack any biographical context at all or fail to reflect a broader trend. Thus, it is worth clarifying that the project is not a series of biographies of all the administrators, but a study of them as a group in order to better understand the impact of Umayyad state building on society beyond changes in the religious confession of administrators and rulers.

In short, the dissertation adopts a prosopographical approach to Umayyad bureaucrats in order to identify aspects of their social networks, economics, and cultural backgrounds. I use this information to identify trends across time and to group administrators based on common characteristics that transcend discipline specific analytic categories (such as Arab, non-Arab, Muslim, non-Muslim, client, patron, etc.). That is, I group administrators based on socioeconomic backgrounds, or in the framework of Pierre Bourdieu, their shared "social space" based on the accumulative "capital."

Bourdieu, Social Space, & Forms of Capital

My methodology for recognizing groups is heavily informed by the social theories of Pierre Bourdieu, particularly his theories on "forms of capital" and "social space."[12] For the project, I have relied on Bourdieu for two purposes. First, Bourdieu's theories provide a

[11] For example, Majid Robinson's recent *Marriage in the Tribe of Muhammad.*

[12] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J. G. Richardson (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 241-258; *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), esp.171-197; "The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups," *Theory and Society* 14, no. 6 (1985): 723-744; *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984). Bourdieu's models are not without thier detractors, for example, Alain Caillé, "La sociologie de l'intérêt est-elle intéressante? (à propos de l'utilisation du paradigm économique en sociologie," *Sociologie du Travail* 23, no. 3 (1981): 257-274.

consistent vocabulary for discussing administrators of various backgrounds throughout the project. Second, Bourdieu's model for identifying groups based on their social space is an intriguing way to attempt to circumvent the religious reductionism in scholarship, at least in my opinion. That is to say, social space is a model that allows us to recognize Christian, Muslim, and client administrators as a group based on their accumulative value of economic, social, and cultural capital and not based on their religious, cultural, or ethnic identity.

In order to avoid economic reductionism for recognizing groups (i.e. by their relationship to the *means* and *modes* of production), Pierre Bourdieu proposed models that better appreciated the non-economic forms of capital.[13] For Bourdieu, capital (i.e. power) can exist in the forms of social, cultural, or economic capital.[14] Social capital consists of the social networks at one's disposal and one's ability to leverage these connections to further their ambitions.[15] Whereas social capital is the networks at one's disposal, cultural capital is the dispositions, cultural goods, skills, and education valued and prioritized (often arbitrarily) amongst members of society.[16] Finally economic capital refers to literal money or property. This information is applicable for identifying common characteristics amongst administrators, such as administrators with economic capital or those who share social networks.

[13] Bourdieu, "Forms of Capital," 242-243; *ibid.,* "The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups," 723-727.

[14] While at times I think one could make the argument for recognizing the *institutionalization* of forms of capital (such as Arabic literary culture institutionalized in scribal education), for the most part, this dissertation has avoided discussing or distinguishing the various forms of capital in their *embodied, objective, institutionalized* state.

[15] Bourdieu, "Forms of Capital," 248-249.

[16] *Ibid*., 243-248; Bourdieu, "Culture Reproduction and Social Reproduction," in *Knowledge, Education, and Cultural Change,* ed. Richard Brown (London: Tavistock, 1973), 71-112. This category is the most broad of Bourdieu's forms of capital, see also, David Swartz, *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 75-82.

The aggregate value of capital, in theory, locates one's place in the social field or social space. That is, it provides coordinates to map individuals on the social field, the "multi-dimensional space of positions such that every actual position can be defined in terms of a multidimensional system of co-ordinates whose values correspond to the values of the different pertinent variables. Thus, agents are distributed within it, in the first dimension, according to the overall volume of the capital they possess and, in the second dimension, according to the composition of their capital—i.e., according to the relative weight of the different kinds of assets within their total assets."[17] For this project, is important to simplify this model, as reconstructing a three-dimensional social space for the Umayyad period is all but out of the question. However, what I want to emphasize is recognizing groups based on their shared volume of economic, social, and cultural characteristics, not their membership in a particular religious confession or ethnic background. That is to say, recognizing not only the social space of administrators but recognizing that their place in the social field correlated with their privilege position in society. By grouping administrators as individuals with a certain amount of accumulated capital, it allows us to additionally recognize the forms of capital that most contributed to this total value. This is important because it allows us to recognize a non-Muslim and Muslim administrator as sharing a similar social space based on economic or social wealth, even though the cultural capital at their disposal may have differed.[18]

This theoretical framework thus provides a consistent vocabulary and method for recognizing groups. For the social history of the early Islamic period, this is particularly applicable—which is why I am far from the first to be influenced by Bourdieu's theories in my

[17] Bourdieu, "The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups," 724.

[18] This means, I suggest, that non-cultural forms of capital (namely economic wealth and social networks) were prime factors for employment within the administration.

analysis.[19] Importantly, the framework allows us to recognize the success of various forms of social, economic, and cultural capital accumulation amongst members of the Umayyad administration which, in turn, sheds light on the "immanent structure of the social world, i.e. the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices."[20] In other words, what were the most valuable forms of capital for securing positions within the administration, how did these change over the course of Umayyad state building, and how can these insights be applied to our understanding of the emergence of the Umayyad Caliphate's impact on late antique society?

Dissertation Overview & Chapter Breakdown

Two trends are stressed in this dissertation. First, the project emphasizes the wide cast of actors who were instrumental in shaping Umayyad era state structures and participated in discourse about Islamic polity and identity. Importantly, this included members from the pre-Islamic elite as reflected in the employment of non-Muslims or non-Arab converts to Islam. Second, the dissertation demonstrates the limitations in a number of discipline specific paradigms and analytical categories when applied to the early Islamic period, in particular *Islamization* and *Arabization*. Christians, Jews, Muslims, tribe, Arab, and "non-Arab" are all categories imbued with an indeterminate number of connotations and expectations. This dissertation hopes to demonstrate the utility of embracing the multi-confessional and ethnically diverse nature of the Middle East by recognizing the way members of various communities

[19] For example, the recent use of Bourdieu's theories in Luke Yarbrough, *Friends of the Emir: Non-Muslim State Officials in Premodern Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 15-23 and the earlier use by Michael Chamberlain in *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus,* 1190-1350 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 21-25.

[20] Bourdieu, "Forms of Capital," 242.

interacted and engaged with one another to help shape the first Islamic empire. By adopting an approach that uses members of the bureaucracy as a window into wider social units, my project aims to contribute to our understanding of the social history of the Umayyad period—not to write a more comprehensive or exhaustive description of the actual administration.[21] Bureaucrats are the means to an end, and not an end in themselves.

Chapter Breakdown

The dissertation consists of four chapters. In Chapter 1, I discuss the historical and historiographical scope of the Umayyad administration. The chapter highlights the literary anachronisms for the early Islamic administration as reflected in inconsistencies between later literary portrayals and contemporary papyri and inscriptions. Thus, rather than approaching the administration as a set of institutions, the chapter foregrounds those who staffed the administration. The chapter makes the connection between politics and polity in both the pre-Umayyad and Umayyad administrations. As a result, the chapter argues that Muʿāwiya's inclusion of non-Muslims and clients in his upper administration illustrates the way pre-Islamic regional elites participated within and contributed to early Islamic state building.

Chapter 2 demonstrates two important characteristics concerning religious identity that are of particular importance for the project. First, the chapter argues that religious identity (particularly that of Christians) can be understood as a lens for recovering their socioeconomic background. By highlighting evidence of the affluence of lower ranking Christian administrators

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[21] This is likely unnecessary with current scholarship; see, for example, David Biddle, "The Development of the Bureaucracy of the Islamic Empire" (PhD diss., University of Texas, 1972). Irit Irene Blay-Abramski, "From Damascus to Baghdad: The 'Abbasid Administrative System as a Product of the Umayyad Heritage (41/661-320/932)" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1982). ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Dūrī, *Early Islamic Institutions: Administration and Taxation from the Caliphate to the Umayyads and Abbāsids*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011).

preserved in papyri, I argue that the presence of Christians in the Umayyad administration indicates the continued value of their pre-Islamic forms of social and economic capital. Further, their employment tells us something about how members of the pre-Islamic levant responded to, interacted with, and participated in the emergence of the Umayyad empire. Additionally, the chapter proposes a unique way of viewing non-Arab converts (*mawālī* sg. *mawlā,* often refered to as clients in English secondary literature) serving in the administration by considering them likewise as the continuation of pre-Islamic elites in Islamic late antiquity, just that *mawālī* administrators had converted to Islam while their non-Muslim colleagues had not. The chapter, in short, stresses the importance of recognizing the socioeconomic backgrounds of individuals and not just their religious confession.

Chapter 3 critiques popular historiographical models for interpreting the administration and associated reforms of the Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik and his governor al-Ḥajjāj. The chapter argues that rather than centralizing the caliphate, the makeup of the administration reflects the continued incorporation of regional elites into the growing state. Not only is this relevant for our understanding of the Umayyad administration, but it also likewise critiques the common scholarly practice of employing these historiographical models (*Arabization*, *Islamization,* and centralization) of Umayyad society in general. The chapter encourages models of the state that recognize the agency (and self-interests) of administrators and argues for a better appreciation of the negotiation of power across the Umayyad Caliphate. Doing so allows us to move beyond simply seeing the state as a mechanism for taxation and distribution, but recognizes how administrative control functioned as a means of maintaining and reproducing status and loyalty in the Islamic late antiquity.

Finally, in Chapter 4, I discuss the evidence that administrators were elites in three ways. First, I highlight examples of administrators being removed (as well as reinstated) resulting from their administrative reputations. This, I argue, demonstrates the influence of administrators and reflects their powerful status in society and politics. Next, I highlight the relationship between civic patronage and economics by connecting the patronizing activities of caliphs and members of their administration. Finally, the chapter concludes by examining the famous "Letter to the Secretaries" by likely the most celebrated Umayyad administrator, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib (d.132/750). The analysis highlights the methods ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd employed to articulate a place for scribes within the class of elites and argues that the letter can be read as a window into the value of social and cultural capital in late Umayyad society.

Chapter 1
The Matters of Kings:
The Origin & Structure of the Umayyad Administration

"I am the first of the kings"
Anā awwal al-mulūk
-Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān[22]

According to the nineth-century historian al-Ya'qūbī, Mu'āwiya was a first of many: the first to install a bodyguard (*haras*), create police forces (*shuraṭ*), employ chamberlains (*bawwābūn*),[23] drape curtains in the court (*arkhā al-sitār*), employ Christian administrators, and to be escorted by men holding lances, take the alms tax (*zakāh*) from stipends (*a'ṭiya*), to sit on a throne (*sarīr*) above his audience, establish the office of the seal (*dīwān al-khātam*), to employ forced labor in building projects (*banā wa shayyada al-binā' wa sakhkhara al-nās fī binā'ihi*), and to confiscate the property of others for himself.[24] It is in this context, this list of firsts, that al-Ya'qūbī attributes the declaration "I am the first of Kings" to Mu'āwiya, the first Umayyad Caliph.

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[22] Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:276.

[23] Literally doormen or gatekeepers; the translators of al-Ya'qūbī suggest that this term is likely synonymous with the latter term *ḥājib* pl. *ḥujjāb*, meaning chamberlain, *The Works of Ibn Wāḍiḥ al-Ya'qūbī: an English Translation,* ed., Matthew Gordon, Chase Robinson, et. al., 911 (Leiden: Brill,2018); al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh* 2:276; see also, Clifford Bosworth, "Ḥādjib" in *EI2.*

[24] Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:276. Elsewhere, al-Ya'qūbī also credits Mu'āwiya with being the first to drape the Ka'ba with a silk brocade (*kasā al-ka'ba al-dībāj*), *Ta'rīkh,* 2:283.

Whether Mu‘āwiya made the proclamation himself or it was attributed to him as a result of his unfavorable representation by later authors, a number of administrative firsts are credited to his caliphate in sources beyond al-Ya‘qūbī. The phrase "I am the first of kings," nevertheless, is emblematic of the historiographical hurdles for the period, including the study of the administration, and demonstrates the intricate relationship of anachronisms and reality in our source material. On the one hand, the expression is likely a fabrication attached to Mu‘āwiya by those who were critical of him personally or the Umayyad caliphate in general.[25] Al-Ya‘qūbī precedes Mu‘āwiya's declaration by quoting the influential jurist Sa‘īd al-Musayyab who laments that Mu‘āwiya "was the first one who returned this authority (*al-amr*) to a kingship (*annahu awwal man a‘āda hādhā al-amr mulkan*).[26] However, there is no contemporary evidence that Mu‘āwiya identified himself as king (*al-malik*). Rather, there is substantial evidence that he was recognized as the "Commander of the Believers" *amīr al-mu'minīn*. Not only is Mu‘āwiya identified as the "servant of God, Mu‘āwiya the *amīr al-mu'minīn"* in two Arabic inscriptions marking the construction of dams during his caliphate, but the title is both transliterated and translated in two other inscriptions in Greek and Pahlavi respectively.[27] A

[25] Later Muslim authors were often critical of both Mu‘āwiya and the Umayyads; for a summary of his literary portrayal, see Stephen Humphreys, *Mu‘awiya ibn Abi Sufyan: From Arabia to Empire* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006), 3-9.

[26] This likewise could be a fabrication. Sa‘īd al-Musayyab was a prominent early jurist in Mediana who had a major influence in the formation of early Islamic law and was highly regarded for his piety and knowledge of *ḥadīth*; Charels Pellat, "*Fuḳahā' al-Madīna al-Sab‘a*" in *EI2*. The recent English translation of al-Ya‘qūbī's *Ta'rīkh* translate the phrase as "he was the first to turn this matter into a kingship;" however, I think the use of the word *amr* is intentional, as mentioned below, *amīr al-mu'minīn* was the title employed by early caliphs and this allusion that the "*amīr*-ship" of previous leaders of the community being reverted to a generic kingship by Mu‘āwiya is a more abrasive, and linguistically creative, critique of Mu‘āwiya and perhaps reflects an actual discouraged disposition amongst members of the early Islamic community that the political organization they may have envisioned would actually not come to fruition, al-Ya‘qūbī, *Ta'rīkh* 2:276, *The Works of Ibn Wāḍiḥ al-Ya‘qūbī*, 912.

[27] George Miles, "Early Islamic Inscriptions Near Ṭa'if in the Ḥijaz," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 7 (1948): 236-242 and Sa‘d b. ‘Abd al-Azīz al-Rashīd, *Diārsāt fī al-āthār al-islāmiyya al-mubakkira bi-l-madīnat al-munawwara* (Riyad: 2000), 46-60 cited in Robert Hoyland, "New Documentary Texts and the Early Islamic State," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 69, no. 3 (2006): 413.

Greek inscription from the baths at Ḥammat Gader contains a transliteration of the Arabic title: Ἀβδάλλα Μαάυια ἀμήρα ἀλμουμενήν (*ʻabdalla Maauia amera almoumenen*) "The servant of God, Muʻāwiya the *Amīr al-mu'minīn*."[28] Elsewhere, the title is translated in Pahlavi on coins minted in Dārābjird in 663-664: *myy'wy' ʻmyl wylwyšnk'n* (*Maawia amir i-wruishnikan*) "Muʻāwiya the commander of the believers."[29]

In terms of administration, literary sources attribute to Muʻāwiya a number of reforms and state building projects, some of which may have support in papyrological and numismatic evidence.[30] The highest levels of his administration did include Christians and several sources attach him the creation of the bureau of the seal (*dīwān al-khātam*) and the establishment of a bodyguard unit (*ḥaras*). Even these, however, still face historiographical obstacles. As pointed out by Yaara Perlman, while the *ḥaras* was institutionalized during the caliphate of Muʻāwiya, there are literary references of individuals serving as the *ḥaras* for previous caliphs and even the Prophet.[31] Thus, on the one hand, there are attributions for creating an official institution, such as the *ḥaras,* while on the other hand, there are references for individuals, again such as the *ḥaras,* carrying out the assigned responsibility of the institution prior to its "institutionalization." This chronological haze is a particularly common—and vexing—issue in the literary sources for the

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[28] Judith Green and Yoram Tsafrir, "Greek Inscriptions from Ḥammat Gader: A Poem by the Empress Eudocia and Two Building Inscriptions," *Israel Exploration Journal* 32, no. 2/3 (1982): 95. Ḥammat Gader is the location of a hot spring south to the Sea of Galilee.

[29] John Walker, *A Catalogue of the Arab-Sassanian Coins Volume 1* (London: The British Museum, 1941), 25-26. Pahlavi transcription based on Hodge Malek's own, *Arab-Sasanian Numismatics and History during the Early Islamic Period in Iran and Iraq Volume 1* (London: Royal Numismatic Society, 2019), 300-301.

[30] For example, the renewed discussion concerning if Muʻāwiya minted coins in Mahdy Shaddel, "Monetary Reform under the Sufyanids: the Papyrological Evidence," *Bulletin of SOAS* 84, no. 2 (2021): 263-293 and Clive Foss, "A Syrian Coinage of Muʻāwiya?," *Revue numismatique* 158 (2002): 353-365.

[31] Yaara Perlman, "The Bodyguard of the caliphs During the Umayyad and Early Abbasid Periods," *Al-Qantara* 36, no. 2 (2015): 317-318.

study of the Umayyad administration, most of which were written after the Umayyad Caliphate and by authors using the administrative standards and terminology of their own period.

However, this dissertation is not about solving these historiographical problems, but asking how Umayyad state building impacted the make-up of elites and the means they employed to maintain and pass on their privileged position in society. This chapter, therefore, serves as both a chronological overview of the Umayyad administration and an examination of the makeup of the early Umayyad administration from approximately 41-73/661-692. To this end, the chapter first provides a chronological synopsis of the Umayyad administration. This entails a balance of understanding the Umayyad administration in practice (based on contemporary documentary and material evidence) and the Umayyad administration in theory (based on how later authors described it). As will become clear below, the way administration is described in literary sources does not necessarily reflect the way it existed on the ground. This observation is critical as we attempt assign particular duties and responsibilities for individuals leading administrative bureaus.

The first part of the chapter describes the origin of the Islamic administration with the creation of the *dīwān* as a means to register those eligible for payment from the communities shared revenue. Next, I discuss how a term for "register" evolved to mean "bureau" and became attached to various bureaucratic and administrative institutions. This matter is complicated because our literary sources tend to employ anachronisms for describing the administration and its structure based on the author's contemporary administrative practices. That is, 'Abbasid-era administrative terminology, theory, and practice are used to describe Umayyad administration. These anachronisms and the literary inconsistencies for describing the administrative structures and employment are further complicated by the at times contradictory papyrological and material

evidence. The distinction is important because the project is interested in understanding the symbiotic relationship between state-building and elite formation and not revising our understanding of the structure or operation of the administration itself.

In the next section of the chapter, I discuss the social space of the pre-Umayyad administration by highlighting the employment of political elites in the early administration, especially people who became future caliphs. This in turn, provides some context for why the administrative responsibilities were vague for much of the early Umayyad caliphate; namely, they were positions staffed due to political influence and loyalty rather than bureaucratic efficiency for accomplishing a particular administrative objective. Finally, the chapter discusses the social space of the earliest Umayyad administrators, how it was similar to or differed from that of their pre-Umayyad colleagues, and how early Sufyānid state building impacted the makeup of the administrative elites. As mentioned above, several sources attribute to Mu'āwiya a number of administrative innovations, many of which would become new bureaus in and of themselves. These can be understood as evidence that he did in fact see himself as a "king" and the first of a hereditary dynasty as well as one who willingly or unknowingly departed from the precedents set by his predecessors—just maybe not to the extent of his later redactors would like to project.

This points to two facets of the early administration. First, the sociopolitical makeup of administrators in the early Islamic bureaucracy reflects the idea that administrative tasks were less systematized than their later literary portrayals. This does not mean that administration was non-existent or even unsophisticated. Scholars like Petra Sijpesteijn and Arietta Papaconstantinou have already demonstrated the early presence of Islamic government following

the Islamic conquest.[32] The nuance here is that positions attributed to administrators of the early Umayyad state (such as head of a particular bureau) should not necessarily be understood as representative of distinct administrative structures, but as membership within the political elite. This is particularly evident in the makeup of the pre-Umayyad bureaucracy. Second, political connections heavily influenced the pre-Umayyad and even early Umayyad administration. However, and especially beginning with the Umayyad caliphate, the cast of elites expanded beyond Ḥijāzī leaders, which reflects the further incorporation of a broader pool of early Islamic elites beyond the handful of members of the Sufyānid, and later Marwānid, royal family.

The Administration in Theory & Practice

The earliest state structure for the early Islamic community arose to solve problems related to organizing and distributing the surplus of wealth brought in during the conquest, or solving what *The Wire's* Marlo Stanfield would refer to as "one of those good problems."[33] The *dīwān* (pl. *dawāwīn*) emerged as the early Islamic community's method of registering and organizing those eligible for a share in the conquest surplus. It is for this reason that we likely have the etymological explanation for how a word associated with a register (*dīwān*) would transform over time to represent a government bureau.[34] Our sources typically use the term to refer to a set of responsibilities that transcended a particular administration or individual and credit the caliph under whom this transition for *ad hoc* to institution took place. In this way, the

[32] Petra Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 49-114; Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Administrating the Early Islamic Empire: Insights from the Papyri," in *Money, Power and Politics in Early Islamic Syria,* ed. John Haldon (Farnham: Ashgage, 2010), 57-74.

[33] *The Wire,* 2004, Season 3, episode 6, "Homecoming." Directed by Leslie Libman. Aired October 31, 2004 on *HBO.*

[34] For example, *dīwān* is used to describe a collection of poetry or prose; 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dūrī, "*Dīwān,*" in *EI2.*

development of the *dīwān* from informal registers to developed bureaus mirrors many of the early stages of Umayyad state-building and the caliphate recognizing itself as a state composed of designated administrative structures with responsibilities that transcended the appointment of a particular individual or solving a specific issue.

According to tradition, the *dīwān* developed from the register (*sijill*) of those eligible for the revenues of the conquests (*fay'*).[35] Early in the post-Muhammad Islamic community, payments from the community's shared pool of revenue became fixed amounts in the form of stipends (*'aṭā'*).[36] Although dates differ in our sources, the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 23/644) is credited with instituting the first *dīwān* to keep track of those eligible for a stipend and the amount they were allocated.[37] Sources likewise vary about the reason(s) for 'Umar to transform the informal register into a formal office. As the spoils of war increased, organizing everyone's share became increasingly difficult to manage on an *ad hoc* basis. According to multiple traditions, Abū Hurayra returned from Baḥrayn and presented 'Umar with 500,000 dirhams—an amount that apparently was so unbelievable to 'Umar that he questioned if Abū Hurayra quite grasped the number he reported, to which Abū Hurayra responded "yes, 100,000 *dirham*, a 100,000 *dirham*, a 100,000 *dirham,* 100,000 *dirham,* and 100,000 *dirham*."[38] 'Umar

[35] The most up to date survey and overview of the Umayyad administration is Legendre's excellent "Aspects of Umayyad Administration" in *The Umayyad World*—a article to which much of this chapter is heavily indebted. For earlier, but dated in many ways, influential summaries on the history of the *dīwān* and early Islamic taxation, see 'Azīz al-Durī, *Early Islamic Institutions,* 161-170; *ibid*.,"Dīwān," in *EI2;* David White Biddle, "The Development of the Bureaucracy of the Islamic Empire during the Late Umayyad and Early Abbasid Period," (PhD diss., The University of Texas, 1972); Michael Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*; Hugh Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs* (London: Routledge, 2001), 59-78; Frede Lokkegaard, *Islamic Taxation in the Classical Period: With Special Reference to the Circumstances in Iraq* (Copenhagen: Branner and Korch, 1950), and Daniel Dennett, *Conversion and the Poll Tax in Early Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950).

[36] Kennedy, *Armies of the Caliphs,* 61.

[37] Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ* 449-451; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:175; and al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 47 give the date of year 20; al-Ṭabarī, however, dates it to 15 AH, *Ta'rīkh*, 1:2411.

[38] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 49. In the version preserved in Balādhurī and Abū Yūsuf, with its narration going back to Abū Hurayra himself, 'Umar was still hesitant to believe him and told Abū Hurayra that you must be tired

then climbed the minbar and addressed the community of believers, "Oh people, a great deal of wealth has come upon us! Do you wish for it to be divided by weight or number?"[39] A man in the crowd responded that he had seen the Persians (*al-a'ājim*) using a *dīwān* for such a purpose, to which 'Umar responded they should establish a *dīwān* and it was done accordingly.[40]

We should probably share 'Umar's original skepticism concerning the amount of booty and even extend our skepticism to the entire account itself. A Sassanian *dirham* weighed approximately 4 grams, meaning that 500,000 *dirhams* would weigh nearly two and half tons—quite a load to move the roughly 800 miles between Baḥrayn and Medina. Beyond this, the account is an example of the historiographical topos "pseudo cause," which blends alleged origins and motivations to explain an historical event.[41] A similar course of events, this time with 1,000,000 *dirhams* brought by Abū Mūsa al-Ash'arī, is even repeated by Abū Yūsuf's following the above tradition in his *Kitāb al-Kharāj.*[42] However, we can glean from these accounts and others that the *dīwān,* in whatever its origin, was designed to organize and allocate the distribution of surplus.

The other aspect of the early *dīwān* that is associated with 'Umar is its relationship between military organization, the payment of soldiers, and the establishment of garrison cities

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and he should return in the morning, after which Abū Hurayra returned and again reiterated the massive sum; Baladhurī, *Futūh,* 2:246; Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj,* 45; in al-Ya'qūbī the amount is 700,000, *Ta'rīkh* 2:176. Al-Dawsī al-Yamānī Abū Hurayra was a companion of the prophet, governor of Baḥrayn for 'Umar, and prolific transmitter of Prophetic traditions (estimated to some 3,500), J. Robson, "Abū Hurayra," in *EI2.*

[39] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 49.

[40] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 49; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 453. In Abū Yūsuf's account, it does not specify the *al-ajām*, *Kitāb al-Kharāj,* 45. Elsewhere in Balādhurī, the system is associated with the "kings of Syria," whom al-Walīd b. Hishām b. al-Mughīrā witnessed using the *dīwān* and *jund* to organize the distribution of surplus and organize the military (*jund*), *Futūḥ,* 449. Al-Ṭabarī uses the term anachronistically to describe a Sassanian military registry, *Ta'rīkh,*1:993.

[41] Albrect Noth, *The Early Arabic Historiographical Tradition,* 180-181; Gerd-Rüdiger Puin, "Der Dīwān von 'Umar Ibn al-Haṭṭab," (PhD diss., University of Bonn, 1970), 95-100.

[42] Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-kharāj,* 46.

(*amṣār*, sg. *miṣr*) and military districts (*ajnād,* sg. *jund*). First, following the success of the Islamic conquest, the Caliph ‘Umar is said to have encouraged members of the conquering armies to settle in *amṣār* rather than living across the countryside.[43] The soldiers (*muqātila*) who settled in these cities would then be further subdivided into ‘sevenths’ based on tribal identities.[44] These early *amṣār* included two in Iraq (Kūfa and Baṣra), Fusṭāṭ in Egypt, and Jābiya, southwest of Damascus, in Syria in addition to Medina.[45] Not only did these garrison cities function as the departure point for future military expeditions, they operated as the regional "capitals" that collected taxes, calculated revenues (spoils of war, taxes, etc.) and distributed the respective shares to those living there. Each *miṣr* would have its own *dīwān* to keep track of deposits and payments (*‘aṭā’*) from the local treasury. Therefore, the early connection between military, revenue, and stipends has led scholars to consider the motivation for the two to be one in the same. ‘Abd al-Azīz al-Durī considers the establishment of the *dīwān* and *amṣār* as part of ‘Umar's larger ambition "to make the Arabs into a militant *ummah* (nation) and to orient it towards struggle (*jihād*) in the interests of Islam. Therefore, he wanted to assign salaries (*rawātib*) and stipends *(‘aṭīyāt*) to fighters from the treasury *–bayt al-māl*—to suffice them as recompense (*ma‘ūnah*) for their labor. He wanted to keep a register (*sijill*) of the names of the fighters and their families."[46] However, one could make the counterpoint that ‘Umar (or whoever

[43] For a summary of settlement patterns in Iraq, see Mornony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest,* 239-253; for Syria, see Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests,* 245-250; and for Egypt, see Petra Sijpesteijn, "Landholding Patters in Early Islamic Egypt," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 9, no. 1 (2009): 120-133.

[44] Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs,* 7.

[45] Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs,* 7. In al-Ya‘qūbī the line between *jund* and *miṣr* is blurred; according to al-Ya‘qūbī there were seven *amṣār:* Medina, al-Sha'm (Damascus?), Jazīra, Kūfa, Baṣra followed by a lacuna in the text, which is then followed by the establishment of the military districts (*ajnād*): Filastīn, Jazīra, Mosul, and Qinnasrīn, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:176. Kennedy surmises the two missing *amṣār* from al-Ya‘qūbī's list were Fusṭāṭ in Egypt and possibly Merv in Khursān, *The Armies of the Caliphs,* 62.

[46] Al-Durī, *Early Islamic Institutions,* 162. Kennedy suggest this was for them to preserve their military authority in the region and "discourage them from becoming assimilated and losing their religious and ethnic identify," *The Armies of the Caliphs,* 7.

initiated the *dīwān* as a systematized way of distributing conquest revenue) was simply responding to the influx of booty and not necessarily creating the infrastructure to facilitate further expansion. Individuals and communities very well may have lived in *amṣār* (or at least near one) because it was economically and pragmatically logical to live near the location from which their stipends were paid and not because of an ideological program or expression of ethnic/religious solidarity. This interpretation is also reflected in some of our literary sources that suggest that individuals were instructed to live within their district rather than in a particular *miṣr*.[47] Nevertheless, the connection between distribution of conquest revenue (*fay'*) and the *dīwān* is almost universally connected in the Arabic source material.[48]

Second, there was also dispute about how the pay should be allocated and who deserved what share—a topic that would not be settled during the caliphate of ʻUmar, if ever during the Umayyad Caliphate. According to Abū Yūsuf's eighth-century *Kitāb al-Kharāj,* our oldest surviving literary source for the topic, Abū Bakr would distribute income from the spoils of war first according to what the Prophet had promised various groups and then equally amongst the rest of the community.[49] ʻUmar, it would seem, did not think that those who opposed the Prophet during early periods of Muhammad's lifetime deserved an equal share as those who fought with him. Thus, ʻUmar is said to have allocated shares based on when one became a member of the community according to key events (i.e. the migration from Mecca to Medina, those who joined before or after the Battle of Badr, *etc*.) or one's relationship to the Prophet Muhammad (i.e. his wives, in-laws, relatives, *etc*.).[50] There were also discussions about whether stipends could be

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[47] Balādhurī, *Fūtuḥ,*131-132; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 1:2524.

[48] For additional discussion and citations, see Duri, *Early Islamic Institutions,* 161-180.

[49] Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj,* 42.

[50] *Ibid*.

inherited, what to do with the remaining surplus (*faḍl*) after the distribution of stipends, if non-Arab Muslim converts (*mawālī,* sg. *mawlā*) should receive the same portion, and if stipends were payment for past or current military service.[51] These issues are clouded by the (at times) contradictory literary discussions and have been discussed at length elsewhere.[52] The several literary accounts that attribute the creation of the *dīwān* to 'Umar may in fact refer to the broader institutionalization of set methods of recording and allocating shares of surplus during the period—which would have been a major organizational feat when we consider the size of the community, discussions about whether stipends would be inherited, the payment for converts, *etc*.[53]

Anachronisms in Administrative Literature

As pointed out long ago by Albrecht Noth, "Doubts arise as to whether traditions which report on such "offices" were original, above all because such "offices" are generally understood to refer to clearly defined activities with persons specifically assigned to them. Here the early period is quite obviously being regarded from the viewpoint of a centralizing power, that is to say, according to the circumstances of later times…we might at most admit that in this period certain activities which afterwards became familiar as "offices" were practiced on an *ad hoc* basis by various people (such as scribes, judges, or financial administrators)."[54] With Noth's observations in mind, over the course of the Umayyad Caliphate, what began as a term for

[51] For example, H.A.R. Gibb, "The Fiscal Rescript of 'Umar II," *Arabica* 2, no. 1 (1955): 1-16.

[52] For example, al-Durī, *Ealry Islamic Institutions,* 165-167; Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs,* 62-65; Patricia Crone "The Pay of Client Soldiers in the Umayyad Period," *Der Islam* 80 (2003): 284-300; Claude Cohen, "'Aṭā'," in *EI2*.

[53] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 1:2411-2414; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh* 2:175-176; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 448-452, 454-460; According to traditions, the stipend amount ranged from 200-1200 *dirhams,* Cl. Cahen, "*'Aṭā',* in *EI2.* For an exhaustive collection of accounts related to its distribution, see Ibn al-Sallām, *Kitāb al-Amwāl,* 488-675.

[54] Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition*, 52.

registering those eligible for a share of conquest revenues would become the title used to describe any administrative bureau with an assigned (yet often illusive) set of responsibilities. The terminology, and the exact responsibilities, are difficult to determine in our source material and many of the terms and concepts are likely anachronistic, reflecting Noth's observation above. Labeling individuals as the head of a particular bureau is far from consistent in our source material, yet some patterns do emerge.[55]

During the Umayyad Caliphate, administrators are most often associated with the *dīwān*s *al-jund, al-kharāj, al-rasā'il, al-khatām,* and *buyūt al-amwāl wa-l-khazā'in,* and less frequently to the *dīwān*s *al-barīd*, *al-nafaqāt, al-ṣadaqa,* and *al-ṭirāz.*[56] However, the responsibilities of these various bureaus is illusive and their description in 'Abbāsid-era literary sources often contradict documentary and material evidence from the period.

Dīwān al-Jund

In secondary literature, the *dīwān al-jund* roughly corresponds to the earliest iteration of the *dīwan* discussed above and was the list of soldiers and/or their family members who were eligible for stipends.[57] The *dīwān al-jund,* the registry of those eligible for stipends and their rate, is said to have been recorded in Arabic from the beginning.[58] The *dīwān al-jund* therefore was a regional *dīwān* installed in various provinces in order to keep track of those eligible for a share in

[55] The most glaring example of this is Ibn Khayyāṭ groups the *al-kharāj* and *al-jund* as a single office while al-Jashiyārī rarely mentions *al-jund*; see below.

[56] For an overview of the various *dīwān*s during the 'Abbasid Caliphate, see Maaike van Berkel, "Accountants and Men of Letters: Status and Position of Civil Servants in Early Tenth Century Baghdad," (PhD diss., University of Amsterdam, 2003), 56-63.

[57] Al-Durī, *Early Islamic Institutions,* and *Ibid*., "Dīwān," *in* EI2.

[58] Al-Jahsiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā'* 78. Kosei Morimoto has suggested that *P.Lond* 1492 as an example of a *dīwān al-jund* in Greek, and thus not in Arabic from the beginning, "The *Dīwāns* as Registers for the Arab Stipendaiaries in Early Islamic Egypt," 227-239; however, this has not been accepted by other scholars, most notably Petra Sijpestiejn and Hugh Kennedy, see Chapter 2 for discussion and references.

distribution of local surplus. The convergence of military interest, geographical location, and regional finance represent the prime framework of the early *dīwān.*

In literary sources, the *dīwān* was not only involved with the redistribution of surplus but also the collection of tribute (spoils of war, taxation, etc.). Therefore, the *dīwān al-jund* it is often juxtaposed with *dīwān al-kharāj* (*dīwān* of taxation) in literature, especially following the reforms associated with the Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 65/72-86 / 685/692-705). Al-Jahshiyārī, while not using the term *jund,* seems to make this point when discussing the *dīwān*s in Kufā and Baṣra during the caliphate of ʿAbd al-Malik: "there remained in Kūfa and Baṣrā two *dīwāns,* one in Arabic for the census (*li-iḥṣa' al-nās*) and their stipends—this was the one which ʿUmar (I) had conceived—and the other for the purposes of finance (*li-wujūh al-amwāl*) in Persian. In Syria (*al-shām*) similar: one in Greek (*al-rumīya*) and the other in Arabic."[59] In a sense, we have a system that administrates taxation (originally in the local languages) and another that contained the lists of those individuals eligible for payment.

It is unclear, however, if the *dīwān al-jund* was a bureau *per se* or represented the register of those eligible for stipends kept at the various military districts (*jund* pl. *ajnād*) or garrison cities. In chronicles, the *jund* most often means a group of soldiers or a military district, mirroring its use in the Qur'ān in which it references an army or group.[60] For example, ʿAbdallāh b. Saʿd is said to have belonged to the army (*jund*) of Egypt before ʿUthmān appointed him over its army/*jund* (*kāna ʿAbdallāh b. Saʿd min jund misr fa-ammara ʿAbdallāh b. Saʿd ʿalā jundihi*).[61] This responsibility, however, was distinct from that of governor, which uses the word

[59] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 78.

[60] Qur'ān 36:75 and Qur'ān 44:24; Nitzan Amitai-Preiss, *"Arḍ* and *Jund*," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 19 (2016): 133.

[61] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 1:2814.

'amal to describe 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ's governorship of Egypt during the same period (*aqarra 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ 'alā 'amalihi*).[62] In short, *al-jund* is used to refer to the army, a reference for a military district, and a means of keeping track of those eligible for stipends.

According to tradition, 'Umar established four military districts in Syria: Ḥims, Damascus, al-Urdunn, and Filastīn, with Qinnasrīn a later added by the Caliph Yazīd I (d. 64/683).[63] These originated from the four districts (*kuwar* sg. *kūra*) that 'Abu Bakr assigned various generals to conquer in the year 13/634.[64] In these literary accounts, however, it still unclear if *jund* means military regiment or a particular district, but it is clear that these divisions were aimed at organizing the military and facilitating its pay.[65] In al-Ṭabarī, before returning to Medina, 'Umar addressed an audience in Syria by making it clear that it is from this region (and not Medina) that their spoils (*fay'*) will be distributed in addition to being assigned living arrangements (*manāzil*) and your military assignments. 'Umar continues, "we have mobilized for you a military (*jannadnā la-kum al-junūd*)… provided places for you to settle (*bawwa'nākum*)…and we have arranged for you to receive your food rations (*aṭmā'*), stipends (*a'ṭiyāt*), allowances (*arzāq*), and share of the surplus spoils (*magānim*)."[66] In this context, *jund* is used to describe armies that are connected to a geographical district in which those eligible would receive their substance and share of the conquest revenue.

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[62] *Ibid*.

[63] Dominique Sourdel, *"Djund,"* in *EI2*; see also, Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs,* 31.

[64] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 1:2090.

[65] While some have suggested the *ajnād* system adopted the pre-existing Byzantine system of *themata* (military districts), this has been convincing disproven by John Haldon who argues that they are based on the administrative and military districts under *duces*, "Seventh-Century Continuities: The Ajnād and the "Thematic Myth,"" in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East III,* ed., Averil Cameron (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995), 379-421.

[66] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 1:2524.

The blurred boundary between *jund* as term for army in the earliest Islamic period compared to its later usage to refer to a military district is reflected in the lack of the term appearing in contemporary documents or material evidence. Papyri, seals, and inscriptions use the term *arḍ* to describe the above-mentioned districts, not *jund*. Nitzan Amitai-Preiss has pointed out that *jund* is preserved in only two archeological documents, two inscriptions dated 297/909-910 during the Caliphate of al-Muqtadīr.[67]

Examining seals, Amitai-Preiss demonstrates that the term used was *arḍ,* which continued to be used even into the eleventh century.[68] An Umayyad tax document, preserved on an ink inscription on a small marble tablet from Andarīn (ancient Androna and approximately fifty miles south of modern Aleppo), mentions a certain al-Layth b. al-Dhiyāl, the governor for the *amīr* Mu'awiya, son of the commander of the believers (*amīr al-mu'minīn*), over the province (*arḍ*) of Qinnasrin and its people.[69] Within these provinces there were further subdivisions, *kūra* and *iqlīm*, which are attested in papyri and inscriptions. The inscription from Andarīn continues with the request that recipient should send their tax allotment from the

[67] Akima Elad, "Two Identical Inscriptions from Jund Filastin from the Time of the Caliph al-Muqtadir, *Journal of the Economic and Social history of the Orient* 35 (1992): 301-360; Nitzan Amitai-Preiss, "*Arḍ* and *Jund, Israel Numismatic Journal* 19 (2016): 134.

[68] This equating of *arḍ* as a district also allows her to propose an additional administrative/military district: *arḍ Ba'alabak* in addition to *arḍ Filastīn* and *arḍ al-Urdunn*. It would seem that *arḍ Ba'alabak* would eventually be absorb into *arḍ Dimashq* and thus part of what later became known as *jund Dimashq;* Amitai-Preiss, "*Arḍ* and *Jund*," 134-135, 138. The term *arḍ* is also the term used in early medieval literature referring to the administrative provinces in Iraq and Jazira; Michael Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquests,* 131-163; Legrendre, "Aspects of Umayyad Administration," 135

[69] الليث بن الذيال عامل الأمير معوية بن امير المومنين على ارض قنسين واهله, translation my own, transcription from Robert Hoyland, "Khañṣira and Andarīn (Northern Syria) in the Umayyad Period and a New Arabic Tax Document," in *Power, Patronage and Memory in Early Islam: Perspectives on Umayyad Elites*, ed. Alain George and Andrew Marsham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 137-138.

(sub)district (*iqlīm*) of Ra‘bān al-Awwal.[70] Hoyland points out that “The Administrative hierarchy is the same as that found in the Nessana papyri of southern Palestine: the smallest units is the *iqlīm,* which is part of a larger unit called a *kūra,* which is itself part of the province, here designated *arḍ,* of which there were five in Greater Syria (Palestine, Jordan, Damascus, Homs, and Qinnasrin).”[71] This same administrative hierarchy is found on bilingual (Arabic and Greek) papyri from Nessana. Dated to the 670’s, the papyri are “from the people of Naṣṭān, from the *kūra* of Gaza of the *iqlīm* of al-Khalūṣ (*min ahl Niṣṭān min kūrat Gazza min iqlīm al-Khulūṣ* / ἀπὸ Νεστάνων κλήματος Ἐλούσης χώρας Γάζης).[72] Therefore, without even tackling the issue of what responsibilities and authority were attributed to the head of the *dīwān al-jund,* we are faced with the overwhelming evidence from contemporary seals, inscriptions, and papyri that the term *jund* was not used for territorial divisions during the period.[73]

Interestingly, al-Jahshiyārī seems to reflect this idea that the *dīwān al-jund* was not necessarily a separate bureau. For the Umayyad period, an individual in charge of the *dīwān al-jund* is only referred to twice in al-Jahshiyāri’s *Kitāb al-wuzāra’*: first for ‘Amr b. Sa‘d al-‘Āṣ al-Ashdaq who served as the secretary of the *dīwān al-jund* for Mu‘āwiya and second for ‘Abd al-Malik b. Muhammad b. al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf during the caliphate of Walīd II.[74] As will be

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[70] تكفي مكوس من إقليم رعبان الأول, Hoyland, “Khañṣira and Andarīn,” 137-138. *Mask* (pl. mukūs) is term associated with a customs tax, W. Björkman, “Maks,” in *EI2*; see also, Michael Lecker, “Were Customs Duties Levied at the Time of the Prophet Muhammad?,” *Al-Qantara* 22, no. 1 (2001): 19-43.

[71] Hoyland, “Khañṣira and Andarīn,” 139; in note 15 Hoyland likewise points out that while *jund* is the term used in later literary sources it is not used in documents or inscriptions from the seventh or eighth centuries.

[72] من اهل نصتان من كورة غزة من إقليم الخلوص. The Greek mentions the region of Elusa (al-Khalūṣ) first followed by the providence of Gaza. Transcriptions based on an amalgamation of all three, some of which are missing letters because of damage to the documents; *P.Ness*, 60, 61, 62. Other papyri contain the Greek formulas for the administrative divisions, but the Arabic portions are missing or damaged (i.e. ἀπὸ Νεστάνων κλίμα(τος) Ἐλούσης χώρ(ας) Γάζης in *P.Ness* 63).

[73] The confusion is reflected in primary sources as well; for example, Balādhurī, *Futūḥ* 131-132. For a summary of the administrative divisions in the various providences, see Legendre, “Aspects of Umayyad Administration,” 135.

[74] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 60, 118.

discussed below, the earliest iterations of the administration were staffed heavily by members of the upper echelon of political and military elites and, as such, it is not surprising to see the general al-Ashdāq credited as the leader of the *dīwān al-jund*.[75] In administrative lists preserved in Ibn Khayyāṭ, the *dīwān al-jund* is attached with the *dīwān al-kharāj* as a single responsibility from the Caliphate of ʿAbd al-Malik on, possibly reflecting Ibn Khayyāṭ's interpretation that the "*dīwān al-jund*" was primarily a military register and following the administrative reforms of ʿAbd al-Malik it was formally incorporated within the *dīwān al-kharāj*—a bureau more common in our literary sources but not without its own set of historiographical hurdles.[76]

The difficulty recovering the *dīwān al-jund*, however, does not mean that there was no administrative presence in these regions or that there were not regular systems of pay—actually quite the oppositive.[77] The importance of this administration, or taxation in general, cannot be understated because our sources suggest a large number of individuals who were eligible for pay—an amount that very well took up to, if not over, 80 percent of a region's revenue.[78] Based on numbers in Baladhūrī's *Ansāb al-Ashrāf,* the revenue of Basra during the governorship of Ziyād b. Abihi (ca. 50's/670's) was supposedly 60,000,000 *dirhams* a year—36,000,000 of

[75] Al-Ashdaq was general and governor of Mecca who was killed during a failed coup during the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik; K.V. Zetterstéen, "ʿAmr b. Sa'īd b. al-ʿĀṣ b. Umayya al-Umawī, known as al-Ashdak," in *EI2*.

[76] For example, Sulaymān b. Saʿid in al-Jashiyārī is said to be over the *dīwān al-rasāʾil* for ʿAbd al-Malik and the over the *dīwān al-kharāj* for al-Walīd I, while in Ibn Khayyāṭ says he was in charge of *dīwān al-jund wa al-kharāj*; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 81 and 90; Ibn Khayyāt, *Ta'rīkh,* 299. For discussion about "conversion" of the *dīwān,* see Chapter 3.

[77] For example *P.Michaelides Q16* discussed by Sijpesteijn which illustrates both the practice as well as the apparently very real fact that funds were not infinite, as it encourages the recipient to receive their share before funds run out, "Army Economics: An Early Papyrus Letter related to *ʿAṭā'* Payments," in *Studies in Middle eastern Society, Economy and Law in Honor of A.L. Urdovitch,* ed. Margariti Eleni Roxani, Adam Sabra and Petra Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 247-249.

[78] Kennedy, "Military Pay and the Economy of the Early Islamic State," 159.

which went to the salaries of troops and another 16,000,000 for their families (*al-dhurrīya*).[79] During roughly the same period, Baṣra is reported to have had 80,000 men registered on the *dīwān* and there were 40,000 registered in Egypt.[80] Kennedy points out that in the case of Baṣra, even if soldiers were being paid only 200 *dirhams* (which according to literary sources would be on the low end of payment), this would entail the distribution of at least 16,000,000 *dirhams* a year.[81]

Papyri and urban development also indicate the monetary payment of soldiers. First, we have documents recording *'aṭa* payments and mentioning *rizq*. For example, *P.Ness* 62 requests the recipient to pay the *rizq* of ninety-six mudd (مدى / *μοδιους /modii*) of wheat and oil for the months of Rajab and Sha'bān (June-July).[82] Additionally, Hugh Kennedy, and more recently Fanny Bessard, have examined the growth of cities and urban economies which resulted from Islamic monetary compensation.[83] Therefore, there is satisfactory evidence that the early Islamic administration collected and distributed surplus during our period—with societal changing consequences that, in spite of the admirable work of Kenndy and Bessard, are often overlooked by scholarship's inclination for identifying an inflection point in changes in religion, language,

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[79] Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf* IVa, 189-190; Kennedy, "Military Pay and the Economy of the Early Islamic State," *Historical Research* 75 (2002): 159.

[80] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:433; Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr,* 102.

[81] Kennedy, "Military Pay and the Economy of the Early Islamic State," 162.

[82] *P.Ness* 63; the Greek portion of the papyri specifies that this correlates with the harvest (ὑπὲρ καρπῶν). Example of 'Atā' payments in Arabic papyri include *P.Heid.Arab I* 1 and *P.Michaelides Q16*, the latter of which is the subject of Sijpesteijn's "Army Economics: An Early Papyrus Letter related to *'Aṭā'* Payments," 245-267, see 256 for additional discussion and references.

[83] Hugh Kennedy, "From Polis to Madina: Urban Change in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria," *Past and Present* 106 (1985):3-27; *ibid.,* "Military Pay and the Economy of the Early Islamic State," 155-169; Fanny Bessard, "The Urban Economy in Southern Inland Greater Syria from the Seventh Century to the End of the Umayyads," in *Local Economies? Production and Exchange of Inland Regions in Late Antiquity,* ed. Luke Lavan (Leiden: Brill 2013), 377-421; *ibid., Caliphs and Merchants: Cities and Economies of Power in the Near East (700-950)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

or culture for identifying an "Islamic society." Therefore, *jund* may very well be an anachronistic term attached both to the bureaucracy and/or military districts, but the existence of a register to keep track of those eligible for pay very likely existed in one form or another from the early Islamic period.[84] As summed up by Kennedy, "The evidence of papyri demonstrates that lists and records were kept but it may also suggest that the *dīwān* took a number of different forms in different places and that practice was more divers than might appear from the literary sources."[85]

Dīwān al-kharāj

The *dīwān al-kharāj,* the bureau of taxation, served as the main administrative structure for collecting taxation for the region. However, here too, there is a difficulty reconciling discrepancies between papyrological evidence and the descriptions in later sources. First off, Gladys Frantz-Murphy points out that, "in the papyri, the term *kharāj* is not attested during the Umayyad period. The term is, however, well attested in documents from the fourth/tenth century, the period in which both narrative historians lived and wrote. Furthermore, late narrative sources attest great confusion as to the tax status of land in Egypt at the time of the conquests, while contemporary papyri provide no information as to the tax status of anyone, or of any land, before the early Abbasid period."[86] Therefore, again before discussing the responsibilities of a particular administrative position we are confronted by the lack of its usage in contemporary sources despite its widespread appearance in later source material. Even two different tenth century

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[84] For examples of Arabic papyri listing names which could be an early iteration, See Puin "Der Diwan Von Umar al-Hattab," 123-124.

[85] Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs,* 67.

[86] Gladys Frantz-Murphy, "The Economics of State Formation in early Islamic Egypt," in *Papyrology ad the History of Early Islamic Egypt,* eds. Petra Sijpesteijn and Lennart Sundelin (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 104; see also, Gladys Frantz-Murhpy *Arabic Agricultural Leases and Tax Receipts from Egypt, 148-427 A.H./765-1035 A.D.* (Vienna: Brüder Hollinek, 2001).

Egyptian Christian chronicles, discussing two separate regions (Syria and Egypt), employ the term to refer to high ranking administrative officials: Manṣūr is identified as the *ʿāmil al-kharāj* of Damascus prior to the Islamic conquest by Eutychius and Athanasius is identified as the "head of the *dīwan al-kharāj*" in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria.*[87] However, the earliest use of *kharāj* on an Arabic papyri, at least as I have found, are two Arabic tax receipts from Khurāsān dated to the year 147.[88]

As mentioned above with the difficulty with the term *jund,* this does not mean that taxes were not collected during the period. Based on papyri from early Islamic Egypt, there were two taxes: ordinary or public taxes (δημόσια *dimosia*) and extraordinary (ἐκστραόρδινα *ekstiraordina*).[89] These taxes were most commonly paid in cash (τὰ χρυσικὰ δημόσια *ta krusika demosia*) but also in kind, as was the corn-tax or *embola.*[90] The ordinary taxes were the land-tax (δημόσια *demosia*), poll-tax (ἀνδρισμός *andrismos*, διάγραφον *diagraphon*, διαγραφη *diagraphe*), and *dapane* (δαπάνη), a fee to pay for the salaries of local tax officials.[91] The poll-tax was paid only by men, whereas the land-tax was paid by the owner regardless of their sex in two yearly payments, which could also be divided into additional instalments.[92] A governor would determine a set lump sum for the areas land-tax (δημόσια) and *embola.* Lower level assessors would then divide this sum between their districts' land, poll, and *dapane* in order to

[87] Manṣūr: *Das Annalenwerk Des Eutychios Von Alexander,* 127; Athanasius: *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria,* 48.

[88] Geoffrey Khan, *Arabic Documents from Early Islamic Khurasan* (London: The Nour Foundation, 2007), 92-95.

[89] Bell, *P.Lond* IV, xxv.

[90] Bell points out that the *embola* could be paid in cash (ἀπαργυισμος), but this was discouraged as the quotas of the corn-tax seem to have varied, whereas taxes in coin were regular, *ibid*., xxv-xxvi. Thus, individuals paying the of the *embola* (wheat but also barley) in kind provided a hedge against a price increase of wheat and an insufficient amount of cash to purchase requested delivery.

[91] *Ibid*.

[92] *Ibid*., xxvi-xxvii.

determine the amount due from each taxpayer.[93] The entirety of these quotas would not necessarily find their way to the treasury in Fusṭāṭ, but what did was funneled primarily to pay the stipends of those stationed in Egypt.[94]

The poll-tax (διάγραφον *diagraphon* or ανδρισμος *andrismos*) warrants further discussion as it is typically equated with the Arabic *jizya* tax imposed upon all non-Muslims.[95] Jean Gascou and Arietta Papaconstantinou have argued, however, that the early *diagraphon* was not a religious tax but simply a tax imposed on the conquered by the conquerors.[96] Kosei Morimoto has also drawn attention that the Arabic use of *jizya* was used to describe both a poll-tax (*jizya al-ra's*) as well as a land tax (*jizya al-arḍ*), highlighting its linguistic flexibility in contrast to later definitions in legal text.[97] Chase Robinson and Geoffory Khan have likewise argued that the later presentations of the *jizya* tax (as well as *kharāj)* reflect the later terminology and systematization of legal scholars.[98]

[93] *Ibid*., xxvii.

[94] *Ibid*. xxx-xxxi.

[95] The origin of the term is from Qur'ān 9:29, "Fight those of the People of the Book who do not (truly) believe in God and the Last Day, who do not forbid what God and his Messenger have forbidden, who do not obey the rule of justice, until they pay the tax (*jizya*) and agree to submit," *The Quran: A New Translation by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). For a summary of amount as calculations based on later literary legal sources, see A.S. Tritton, *The caliphs and their Non-Muslim Subjects,* (London: Frank Cass, 1970),216-218.

[96] Jean Gascou, "De Byzance a l'Islam : Les impôrts en Egypte après la conquête arabe, » *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 26, no. 1 (1983): 97-109; *ibid*., "Arabic taxation in the Mid-Seventh-Century Greek Papyri," in *Constructing the Seventh Century*, in ed. Constantin Zuckerman, (Paris: Associat des Amis du Centre d'Historie et Civilisation de Byzance, 2013), 671-677; Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Administrating the Early ISlamic Empires: Insights from the Papyri," in *Money, Power and Politics in Early Islamic Syria,* ed. John Haldon (Farnham: Ashgate), 57-74.

[97] Note here again that the term *kharāj* is not used, but *jaziya al-arḍ*, Kosei Morimoto, *The Fiscal Administration of Egypt in the Early Islamic Period* (Dohosha:1981), 136.

[98] Chase Robinson, *Empire and Elites after the Muslim Conquest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 44-50, esp.46-47; Khan, *Arabic Documents from Early Islamic Khurasan* (London: The Nour Foundation, 2007)*,* 43. For anachronisms resulting from later administrative systematization in general, see also Albrect Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition,* 48-49.

As with the *dīwān al-jund,* the *dīwān al-kharāj'*s nomenclature is anachronistic but there is no doubt that taxes were being collected and distributed throughout the Umayyad period. Within the socioeconomic makeup of those tasks with heading this *dīwān,* a common characteristic amongst them is their pre-Islamic connections to the administrative and economic infrastructure of the region. Importantly, individuals connected to the administrative position, and the administration, were almost always wealthy individuals. As mentioned above, some 80 percent of governmental revenue was allocated for financing the military, an expense of upmost importance when we consider the number of revolts and civil wars over the course of the Umayyad period. Therefore, the individual heading the taxation of a region would have a sizable amount of fiscal and monetary influence.

*The Other Dīwān*s

Medieval authors also assign individuals as the heads of other *dīwān*s, most notably the *dīwān al-rasā'il.* Our understanding of these *dīwān*s is likewise mired by later projections of the office. Looking at the actual employment of *dīwān*s in isolation, it is unclear what the exact responsibilities were for particular positions. In the later Umayyad period, one can certainly make the case that administrators such as Sālim and his student, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Katib (likely the most famous of Umayyad administrators) demonstrate that the position as head of the chancellery bureau (*dīwān al-rasā'il*) entailed a very high level of Arabic linguistic ability and creativity that may not have been necessary for individuals heading other bureaus.[99] However, there are cases in which patterns and themes do emerge.

Dīwān al-rasā'il

[99] See Chapter 4 for discussion of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd and his teacher, Sālim.

The *dīwān al-rasā'il* was responsible for facilitating the caliph's (as well as governors) formal correspondence and issuing formal diplomatic documents. As pointed out by al-Durī, al-Jahshiyārī does not describe *dīwān al-rasā'il* as an official bureau, and only rarely mentions an individual staffed to it.[100] In contrast, al-Qalqashandī states that the *dīwān al-rasā'il* was the first *dīwān* and was established in order to facilitate the communication between the Prophet, his associates, and kings of the region.[101] Administrative lists preserved in chronicles at the end of a caliph's reign, such as by al-Ya'qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, and Ibn Khayyāṭ, often include the distinction between those who served in the *dīwān al-rasā'il* and in other *dīwān*s. For example, 'Ubayd b. Aws al-Ghassānī is referred to as Mu'āwiya's secretary of correspondence (*kātib al-rasā'il*) in administrative lists preserved by Ibn Khayyāṭ and al-Ṭabarī, while he is simply identified as an administrator/scribe (*kātib*) in al-Jahshiyārī's *Kitāb al-wuzarā'* and Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī'*tasmiyat kuttāb umarā'*.[102] The blurred nature of this *dīwān,* as well as those who staffed it, likely results from the nature of the early Islamic administration in which positions responsible for correspondence, organizing taxes, and distributing surplus were often one in the same. As will be discussed below, this is particularly the case in the earliest periods of the Islamic era in which positions within the administration should be understood more as membership within a political cabinet more so that bureaucrats staffed with specific responsibilities.[103]

[100] Al-Durī, *Early Islamic Institutions,* 169.

[101] Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shā fī kitābat al-inshā,* 1:91

[102] Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 228; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:838; al-Jahshiyārī, 59; *TMD*, 22:317. Al-Razī's text does not survive but is cited frequently in Ibn 'Asākir, see Jens Scheiner, "Ibn 'Asākir's Virtual Library as Reflected in his *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*," 213-219; and Gerhard Conrad, *Abū 'l-Ḥusain al-Rāzī (-347/958) und seine Schriften: Untersuchungen zur frühen damaszener Geshichtsschreibung,* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft: 1991.

[103] For example, the future Caliphs 'Uthmān, 'Alī, Mu'āwiya, and Marwān b. al-Ḥakam are all said to have served as scribes/administrators in some capacity prior to their position as caliph; see discussion and references below.

There are instances, especially later in the Umayyad caliphate, where a distinction possibly arises between those whose main responsibility was correspondence compared to those in charge of taxation. The most famous Umayyad secretary, ʿAbd al-Hāmīd b. Yaḥyā al-Katīb, served at the end of the Umayyad caliphate and is highly remembered for his linguistic capacitary and influence on the Arabic epistolary genre.[104] For the early Umayyad period, one explanation that I posit is that those often associated with taxation (*dīwān al-kharāj*) were from families with pre-Islamic connections to the region compared to those who served in the correspondence bureau (*dīwān al-rasa'īl*) were often Arabian immigrants. This was likely the case in the administration of the governor Ziyāb b. Abihi (d.42/673) in Iraq. Zādhānfarrūkh was in charge of taxation (*al-kharāj*) and was a native of the region.[105] ʿAbd al-Raḥman b. Abī Bakra managed the correspondence bureau (*rasa'īl*) and his father, Abū Bakra, was an early migrant to Iraq and would likely be unfamiliar with the existing administrative networks.[106] However, as pointed out above with the term *kharāj* itself, the line between the two positions may have very well been blurred. We should be hesitant to read too much into a set of responsibilities tied to a particular administrative position let alone expect that an individual was employed because of their ability to carry out that task alone.

[104] See discussion in Chapter 4.

[105] See Chapter 2 for references.

[106] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 62. Abū Bakra was an early settler in Baṣrā and ʿAbd al-Raḥman is credited with being the first Muslim born in Baṣra; see Chapter 3 for extensive discussion on Ziyād, Abū Bakra, ʿAbd al-Raḥman, and Zādhānfarrūkh. A notable exception from the above distinction between those serving in taxation and correspondence is Yaḥyā b. Yaʿmar who was the secretary for Yazīd b. al-Muhallab during his governance of Khurasan and was originally from Ahwāz (in southern Iran). According to a tradition, Yaḥyā's eloquence in a letter sent to al-Ḥajjāj was so impressive that al-Ḥajjāj requested Yazīd b. al-Muhallab send Yaḥyā to him, after which al-Ḥajjāj interrogated him about his Arabic proficiency and the mistakes of others. The conversation culminated when al-Ḥajjāj demanded to know if he (al-Ḥajjāj) makes any mistakes. Yaḥyā at first says of course not, but after being further questioned, relents that, yes al-Ḥajjāj has a small accent, can extend or shorten some sounds incorrectly, and at times he use *inna* when he should use *anna.* Al-Ḥajjāj, apparently not enthusiastic about Yaḥyā's superior eloquence, tells Yaḥyā that he has three days to leave Iraq and if al-Ḥajjāj sees him after the third day, he will kill him; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 83-84; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1131-1132.

Dīwān al-khātam

The *dīwān al-khātam,* the bureau of the seal, was responsible for keeping a copy of all the correspondence issued by the caliph to prevent forgery and for placing the confirming seal on official documents. Its origination is attributed to Mu'āwiya who is credited with installing the bureau to copy and seal documents after an attempted forgery.[107] However, as is almost to be expected, this was not the earliest attestation of the use of a seal by the early Islamic community, but possibly the institutional practice of copying and storing official caliphal documents.[108] According to Balādhurī, the practice was based on the Sassanian system and was first instituted by Ziyād b. Abihi.[109] When an edict or letter was issued, a notary (*ṣāḥib al-tawqī'*) would endorse (*waqqa'*) it in the caliph's presence while an attendant (*khādim*) of the notary would record the document in an official record (*tadhkira*), which would then be sealed by the caliph with his seal.[110] After this, the original document would be transmitted to a certain *ṣāḥib al-zimān* who would deliver it to the *ṣāhib al-'amal* who wrote on the document "From the Caliph" (literally, "from the king" *min al-malik*) and carefully copied the document. Next, the letter was returned to the *ṣāhib al-zimān* who showed it to the caliph and then compared the copied letter with the one in the official record before being finally approved and sealed in the presence of the caliph or an advisor.[111] How accurately the description in Balādhurī matches the actual practice

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[107] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 59-60.

[108] For example, the Prophet Muhammad is said to have used a silver ring with "Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allāh" engraved on it—which, according to Balādhurī, was lost by 'Uthmān, *Futūḥ,* 461-462.

[109] Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 464.

[110] *Ibid*.

[111] *Ibid*.

is unclear, but it seems that Mu‘āwiya's innovation would be the formalizing of the practice of copying and sealing documents and not the use of a seal in general.

For material evidence of early Islamic seals, Petra Sijpesteijn has drawn attention to several remnants of seals on Egyptian papyri from the early Islamic period. These include the seal of the first governor of Egypt, ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ and the military Commander ‘Abdallāh b. Jābir, the latter of which dated to 22/643 C.E—some nearly twenty years before Mu‘āwiya's caliphate.[112] Attributions to Mu‘āwiya with creating a bureau around this practice, if we are to give them any credence at all, must therefore be restricted to the practice of copying letters and systematizing the seals on official documents. Mu‘āwiya is said to have instituted the *dīwān al-khatām* after ‘Amr b. al-Zubayr, the then current governor of Iraq, changed Mu‘āwiya's invoice for 100,000 *dihram*s to 200,000 *dirham*s.[113] This, as above, reflects the "pseudo-clause" topos which employs a specific event to explain a larger phenomenon.[114] The practice of copying and sealing documents, however, should not come as a surprise and would certainly be needed when we consider the geographical expanse of the Caliphate and the need to send official documents concerning administrative and military matters. The official heading the *dīwān al-khatām* can be understood as a high-ranking bureaucrat and advisor who was involved in the official communications of the governor or caliph they served.[115]

Dīwān al-barīd

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[112] *PERF* 556 and *SB* VIII 9751 respectively; Sijpesteijn, "Seals and Papyri," 173.

[113] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:206.

[114] See note above on Noth.

[115] There is also the issue of "neck sealing" or seals used as part of a passport or to certify one's payment of taxes; however, there is no indication in the literary materials that that this practice was related to the *dīwān al-khatām.* For the issue of seals in neck sealing and passports, see Chase Robinson, "Neck Sealing in Early Islam," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 48, no. 3 (2005): 401-441.

The *dīwān al-barīd,* often referred to as the "postal bureau," is also attributed to the time of Mu'āwiya.[116] Derived from the Latin *veredus/*Greek βέρεδος (*beredos*) referring to "post horse" or possibly, as argued more recently, the Akkadian term *beru* (pl. *beri*) referring to a distance "over ten miles," the *barīd* facilitated the transmission of information between regions and intelligence gathering.[117] Examining Greek Papyri in Egypt from during the governorship of Qurra b. Sharīk (in office 90-96/709-714), Adam Silverstein identifies several instances where the term is used in various forms (βερεδάριον *beredarion,* βερδ *berd,* βεριδ *berid*) describing a messenger or courier.[118] In an Arabic papyrus form the same period, the connotation seems to be that the *ṣāḥib al-barīd* was also involved in gathering intelligence about the local community.[119] This is not to say that the Muslim community first started sending letters across distances during the caliphate of Mu'āwiya nor that we can confidently date its "institutionalization" to his caliphate; however, papyrological evidence, in addition to mile markers, demonstrates that a postal system was in order during the Umayyad Caliphate. However, references to an individual

[116] Al-Durī, *Early Islamic Institutions*, 169; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-a'shā fī ṣinā'at al-inshā*, 14:368. See also, Amikam Elad, "The southern Golan in the Early Muslim Period: The Significance of Two Newly discovered Milestones of 'Abd al-Malik," *Der Islam* 76 (1999); Adam Silverstein, "Documentary Evidence for the Early History of the *Barīd,*" in Petra Sijpesteijn and Adam Lennart, *Papyrology and the History of the Early Islamic Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 153-161; *ibid*., *Postal Systems in the Pre-Modern Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 53-89; ibid., "Barīd," in *EI3.*

[117] Adam Silverstein further cautions that we should be hesitant to equate etymology of the term with the structure (or origin) of the institution itself, "Etymologies and Origins: A Note of Caution," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 28, no. 1 (2001): 92-94.

[118] Silverstein, "Documentary Evidence for the Early History of the *Barīd,*" 154.

[119] *P.Cair.Arab* III 153 cited in Silverstein, "Documentary Evidence for the Early History of the *Barīd,*" 154. Petra Sijpesteijn points out that *P.Apoll* 64.2 (late seventh century-early eighth) mentions "I send you him by mail service" (πέμπω ὑμῖν αὐτόν βερέδοις) as evidence that this mail system likely included private letters as well as official documents, *Shaping a Muslim State,* 246 note 148.

as the head of this "bureau" are almost non-existent for the Umayyad period, with none mentioned in al-Jahshiyārī.[120]

The Blurred Line Between Public & Private

For the Umayyad period, our literary sources mention a small number of administrators whose authority and responsibility seem to blur the lines between managing public and private property. These are the *dīwān*s *al-nafaqāt, al-mustaghallāt, al-ṣadaqa,* and *al-ṭirāz.* References for a head of these *dīwān*s are rare but offer insight into how the line between personal economics and "public" management was often blurred—a topic discussed at length in Chapter 4. For the pre-Islamic period, al-Jahshiyārī describes the *dīwān al-nafaqāt* as one of the two *dīwān*s of the Sassanian empire (the other being the *dīwān al-kharāj*). The *dīwān al-nafaqāt* handled the kingdom's expenses, especially expenditures for the army (*kull ma nufaqu wa-yakhruju fī jaysh aw ghayrihi*).[121] For the Umayyad period, the first mention of the *dīwān al-nafaqāt* is during the caliphate of the Sulaymān b. ʻAbd al-Malik (r. 96-99/715-717) and a certain ʻAbdallāh b. ʻAmr al-Ḥārith who was in charge of military expenditures (*al-nafaqāt*), treasuries (*buyūt al-amwāl*), the coffers (*al-khazā'in*), and slaves (*al-raqīq*).[122] The only other administrator directly tied to the position is Ziyād b. Abī al-Ward al-Ashjaʻī, who is said to have inscribed included into of Marwān II inscriptions at the ports in Tyre (Ṣur) and Acre.[123]

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[120] There is one instance where someone is said to have traveled *via* the *barīd* (*'alā al-barīd*), al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 83.

[121] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 32.

[122] al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 92; according to Ibn Khayyāṭ, ʻAbdallāh would serve in the same position for Hishām, as well, *Ta'rīkh,* 319, 362.

[123] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitab al-wuzarā',* 133; *TMD* has his name as al-Mushajʻī? (المشجعي), 19:246-247. The inscription, it would seem, has not survived since it is only mentioned in *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arab* in reference to al-Jahshiyārī's statement, 37.

It is unclear if this *dīwān* existed as a separate entity or operated in conjunction with other institutions, particularly the treasury (*bayt al-māl*). According to his biography in Ibn ʻAsākir and Ibn Khayyāṭ's *Ta'rīkh,* ʻAbdallāh b. ʻAmr al-Ḥārith served for Walīd I, Sulaymān, and Hishām, but *al-nafaqāt* is only mentioned with his role in Sulaymān's administration.[124] Elsewhere in Ibn Khayyāṭ, ʻAbdallāh b. ʻAmr al-Ḥārith is said to only have managed the treasuries (*buyūt al-amwāl*) and coffers (*al-khazā'in*).[125] To complicate matters further, Ibn ʻAsākir, citing Ibn Khayyāṭ, states that Abdallāh b. ʻAmr al-Ḥārith oversaw the royal garments (*al-thiyāb*) in addition to the treasuries and coffers and thus does not even include *al-nafaqāt.* All of this is to say that the *dīwān* likely did not exist as a separate institution nor should we credit Sulaymān initiating some type of administrative reform with its sudden reference in a literary source.

We can likewise extend this to the unique attestation of an administrator in charge of the *mustaghallāt* for al-Walīd I (r. 86-96/705-715).[126] Nufayʻ b. Dhu'ayb was al-Walīd I's own *mawlā* and it is unclear if this responsibility was restricted to managing the income of al-Walīd I's own properties or merchant taxes/custom duties in the city of Damascus, where he is said to have his name inscribed on a plaque in the saddlers' market in Damascus (*ismuhu maktūb fī lawḥ sūr al-sanājīl bi-Dimashq*).[127] Several Caliphs owned property and would extract rent from their estates, however its sudden (and unique) appearance of Nufayʻ's leadership of the *mustaghallāt* for al-Walīd I does not suggest the creation of a new administrative bureau or state structure.

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[124] Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 319; *TMD* 31:236.

[125] Ibn Khayyāt, *Ta'rīkh,* 312, 362.

[126] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 90.

[127] Michael Lecker, *pace* al-Durī, seems to suggest that the responsibility was managing Walīd I's and other Caliphal properties rented to others, "Were Custom Dues Levied at the Time of the Prophet Muḥammad?," *al-Qantara* 12 (2001): 22; Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 90.

Elsewhere, the individual credited with managing caliphal estates is identified as the manager of the *dīwān al-ṣadaqa,* Isḥāq b. Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb, who likewise is said to have his name inscribed on a mosaic.[128] The *dīwān al-ṣadaqa* managed incoming revenue from the non-obligatory alms tax imposed on Muslims, which distinguishes it from other fiscal taxes.

In short, it would seem that the major difference between the *mustaghallāt* and the *nafaqāt* is that the *mustaghallāt* managed income while the *nafaqāt* managed expenditures. Teasing particularities about the responsibilities with between the two is tentative at best considering their rarity in literary sources. The responsibilities of each likely was under the umbrella of financial administration in general; that is, within responsibilities of those in charge of the *bayt al-māl* or the official treasury of the Islamic community. The *bayt al-māl*, in theory, was the storehouse for the Islamic community as a whole collected from taxation, spoils of war (*'fay*), alms (*ṣadaḳa* and *zakāt*), as well as miscellaneous assets (i.e. the property of a deseeded person with no heir, etc.).[129] These two positions, therefore, can be understood as apparatuses within the *bayt al-māl* with authority concerning its income and distribution.

The *dīwān al-ṭirāz* is likewise rare with only one administrator tied to the position in al-Jahshiyārī's administrative history, *Kitāb al-wuzarā'*. During the Caliphate of Hishām, a certain Junāda b. Abī Khālid was the manager of the *ṭarāz*.[130] Al-Durī, in his overview of Islamic administrative systems, suggests that the manager of the *ṭarāz* had "the task of overseeing the factories which wove the official clothing, banners and emblems, and these were the factories for

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[128] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitab al-wuzarā',* 106. Isḥāq b. Qabīṣa, including an inscription which mentions him, is discussed at length in Chapter 3.

[129] N.J Coulson and Cl. Cahen, "Bayt al-māl," in *EI2.*

[130] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 107.

embroidery (*ṭarz*)."[131] More recently, Mehdy Shaddell has suggested that Junāda b. Abī Khālid's responsibilities may have primarily been concerned with Hishām's textile business endeavors, which would seem to correlate with several of the above administrators' whose oversight of private property overlapped with their "public" duties as an administrator.[132] These administrators highlight how the distribution of "public" money was not a disinterested practice based on established parameters, but reflects the negotiation between personal economics and public expenditures. This observation, specifically the "negotiated" aspect cannot be stressed enough. As will be evident throughout the rest of the dissertation, everything was negotiable and negotiated. Individuals negotiated their tribal identities, conquering Islamic armies negotiated tax brackets, and caliphs and regional elites negotiated the responsibility of local fiscal and monetary policies. In short, everything was negotiable, and as such we should emphasize the dynamics of this process and not attempt to recover a static current driving Umayyad administrative history from Muhammad to the 'Abbāsids.

The Pre-Umayyad Administrators

Up to this point, I have provided a broad chronological outline of the Umayyad administrative systems, even if rather crudely, In this next section, I argue that when we include the makeup of the administration in conjunction with the descriptions of the various bureaus, we are able to recognize that their influence extended beyond the duties of a particular office. Rather, members of the administrative elite were influential and powerful members of society and not passive employees. Their employment in the administration placed them in literal

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[131] Al-Durī, *Early Islamic Institutions,* 169.

[132] I thank Mehdy Shaddel for drawing my attention to this interpretation as well as the reference in al-Ya'qūbī that mentions Hishām's involvement in the manufacturing of various textilis, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:393-394.

proximity to the power of caliph and influence over governmental decisions—including the collection and distribution of surplus (taxation, spoils of war). Therefore, recognizing the social space of those who staffed administrative positions sheds light on the symbiotic relationship between Umayyad state-building and the emergence of "Islamic" elites—some of whom were not even Muslim.

For the pre-Umayyad period, it is worth pointing out the prominent characteristics about the early administration and administrators—and especially those aspects that would grow increasingly rare over the course of the Umayyad Caliphate. The first of these is that administrators, especially if we include the scribes for the Prophet Muhammad, would go on to serve superior political positions.[133] The Prophet Muhammad's administration was staffed by three future caliphs, or *Commanders of the Believers* if we want to throw further confusion on the plethora of anachronistic terms for the period.[134] The future caliphs 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and 'Uthmān were said to have written down revelations (*al-waḥy*) as well as the first Umayyad Caliph, Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān, who along with Khalīd b. Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ, would write about the Prophet's "possessions," or perhaps "business matters" (*ḥawā'ij*).[135] Abū Bakr's administration staffed the future Caliph 'Uthmān,[136] whose administration included two future Umayyad caliphs: Marwān b. al-Ḥakam and 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān.[137] The presence of future

[133] Not surprisingly given the Prophet Muhammad's significance, there are a surplus of individuals narrated to have serve as a scribe or even as simply as written down something in the presence of the Prophet that makes deducing too many trends from his administrative difficult beyond broad observations. For a biographical collection of these individuals derived from accounts in *ḥadīth* as well as in chronicles and *adab* literature, see Muhammad Muṣṭafā al-A'ẓamī, *Kuttāb al-nabī ṣallā Allā 'alayhi wa-sallam* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1974).

[134] For example, Robert Hoyland has pointed out that the term Caliph was not adopted by what we now refer to as caliphs, Hoyland, "New Documentary Texas and the Early Islamic State," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 69, no. 3 (2006): 405.

[135] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 43; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:836.

[136] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',*47; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:836.

[137] Al-Jahshiyārī, 54; *Kitab al-wuzarā',*54; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:836.

caliphs within earlier administrations is a characteristic of this earliest period with the possible exception of al-Ashdaq, who served in Mu'āwiya's administration and would go on to challenge 'Abd al-Malik for the position of caliph.[138]

Additionally, it was more common for future governors to staff administrative appointments during the pre-Umayyad Caliphate.[139] Al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba and 'Abdallāh b. Sa'd b. Abī Sarḥ both served as scribes for the Prophet before becoming governors.[140] Al-Mughīr b. Shu'ba was appointed governor of Baṣra by the Caliph 'Umar, where he had a quite scandalous but influential career and apparently a number of marriages, as well.[141] 'Abdallāh b. Sa'd was a scribe for the Prophet before he apostatized and joined the *mushrikūn* in Mecca.[142] After the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad is said to have ordered 'Abdallāh b. Sa'd's execution but spared him at the bequest of 'Uthmān who was 'Abdallāh b. Sa'd's milk brother (*kāna akhāhu min al-raḍā'a*).[143] 'Abdallāh would go on to serve with 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ in the

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[138] 'Amr b. Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ al-Ashdaq was the son of Umm al-Banin bt. Al-Hakam, and thus the nephew of the caliph Marwān and cousin of 'Abd al-Malik; Werner Caskel, *Ǧamharat an-Nasab Das Genealogische Werk des Hišham ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 1:9, 2:183. Originally al-Ashdaq was appointed as governor of Medina by Mu'āwiya and Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya, but he would later stage a coup against 'Abd al-Malik during the Second Islamic Civil War—a decision that ultimately lead to his decapitation at literal the hands of or request of 'Abd al-Malik, *TMD* 46:29; K.V. Zetterstéen, "'Amr b. Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ b. Umayya al-Umawī, known as al-Ashdaq, *EI2;* G.R. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661-750* (London: Routledge, 2000), 59.

[139] In contrast to future Caliphs serving in administrations, there are instances of this; see examples in Chapters 3 and 4.

[140] We could also possibly include a certain al-Ḥuṣayn b. Numayr who is listed as a scribe of the Prophet by al-Jahshiyārī and others; for further references, see 'Aẓamī, *Kuttāb al-nabī,* 46-47. Al-Ḥuṣayn was a general and became governor of Ḥimṣ during the caliphate of Yazīd; however, this is unlikely the same individual since he is said to have died in the year 67/686 at the battle of Khazīr; Lammens, "al-Ḥuṣayn b. Numayr," in *EI2.*

[141] Al-Mughīra would later become governor of Kūfa as well. He is credited with the record number of marriages and divorces, ranging from 300-1000; Lammens, "al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba," in *E12.*

[142] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā'*, 45-46.

[143] Arabic from Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr,* 9:502; al-Jahshiyārī, likewise, mentions that 'Abdallāh b. Sa'd and 'Uthmān were milk brothers, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 45. His apostasy is also connected in some traditions with allegations of altering the Prophet's revelation; see C.H. Becker, "'Abd Allāh b. Sa'd," in *EI2* and 'Aẓamī, *Kuttāb al-nabī,* 81-89.

conquest of Egypt and would even replace ʿAmr as governor of Egypt during the caliphate of ʿUthmān.[144] The promotions of these individuals from administrators to holders of superior government positions demonstrate how administrators in the period can—and should—be recognized as members of the political elite. This should not come as a surprise; the state was growing and the structures that would come to define it were in their earliest stages and largely developed in response to particular problems or issues facing the community.

The continued employment of individuals across administrations and the *ad hoc* nature of early administrative responsibilities are two characteristics that were also prominent in the pre-Umayyad as well as Umayyad administration. For the pre-Umayyad period, Zayd b. Thābit and ʿAbdallāh b. al-Arqam best exemplifies this theme. Both Zayd and ʿAbdallāh served as scribes for the Prophet,[145] Abū Bakr,[146] and ʿUmar,[147] while al-Aqram would serve under ʿUthman, as well as the Prophet Muḥammad.[148] Returning to the administration of the Prophet, there is likewise evidence early on that the administration functioned to serve practical matters. As mentioned above, ʿAlī and ʿUthmān wrote down revelations, something also carried out by additional members of the community; even though the responsibility of transcribing revelations is unique to the period of the Prophet, it demonstrates how positions operated to accomplish a

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[144] It seems as though that he might have already been serving as governor of Upper Egypt (*ṣaʿīd*) during the Caliphate of ʿUmar, Al-Kindī, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt,* 10; see C.H. Becker, "ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd," in *EI2* for additional timelines for his appointment in Egypt.

[145] Zayd is said to have written down revelations when ʿAlī and ʿUthmān were absent, but also that he oversaw correspondence with kings (*al-muluk*), al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarāʾ*. 43-44; ʿAbdallāh b. al-Aqram was one of the administrators in charge of keeping track of the tribes, water allocations, and the housing of the Anṣār during the lifetime of the Prophet, al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarāʾ,* 44.

[146] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarāʾ,* 47; al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh,* 2:836.

[147] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarāʾ,* 48. al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh,* 2:836.

[148] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarāʾ,* 54; al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh,* 2:836.

specific task rather than establish a policy.[149] Mughīra b. Shu'ba and al-Ḥasan b. Numayr served as administrators over the matters of the people (*yaktubān mā bayna al-anās*); 'Abdallāh b. al-Arqam b. 'Abd Yaghūth and al-'Alā' b. 'Uqba were in charge over the keeping track of the tribes, their water resources, and the living arrangements of the *Anṣār* (*yaktabān bayna al-qawm fī qabā'ilihim wa miyāhihim wa fī dūr al-anṣār bayna al-rijāl wa al-nisa'*), and Mu'ayqīb b. Abī Fāṭima kept track of war spoils (*maghānim*).[150]

The connection to politics was an important factor in one's employment—and would remain so during the Umayyad Caliphate. For membership within the administration, it would seem that social capital reigned supreme. While Zayd b. Thābit was recognized by medieval as well as modern scholars as linguistically trained and proficient, we should not discount the fact that he was likewise an early convert and prominent member in early Islamic Hijazī society and politics.[151] Thus, Zayd b. Thabit's literacy and linguistic aptitude may have been the exception rather than the rule for serving in the pre-Umayyad administration. It is clear from the makeup of the administration that political and social ties were the most valuable commodities for access to the administration. The majority of administrators were connected to the political elite of the period—three caliphs and multiple governors served in the pre-Umayyad administration. In short, looking at the makeup of the administrators indicates that administrators were much more than subordinate functionaries. Bureaucrats were influential members of society—not necessarily exceptional tax auditors.

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[149] Al-Jahshiyārī states the when 'Alī or 'Uthmān were not present, 'Ubayy b. Ka'b and Zayd b. Thābit would write down the revelations, *Kitāb al-wuzarā'*, 43.

[150] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 43; al-Tabarī only mentions 'Abdallāh b. al-Arqam b. 'Abd Yaghūth and al-'Alā' b. 'Uqba, al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:836.

[151] For references, see Michael Lecker, "A Jew with Two Sidelocks:" Judaism and Literacy in Pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 56, no. 4 (1997): 259-273.

The First Kings: The Sufyānids and early Marwānid Caliphate

Several sources attribute to Mu'āwiya a number of royal innovations and new bureaus—many of these, as discussed above, were not necessarily "new." On the other hand, Mu'āwiya's caliphate does appear to be a first in many regards. Beginning with Mu'āwiya's Caliphate, the highest echelons of the Umayyad bureaucracy includes non-Muslims and clients (*mawlā* pl. *mawālī*); that is, non-Muslims or clients are listed in administrative lists as the head of a particular bureau.[152] In Chapter 2, I discuss how we can understand these categories (client or non-Muslim) as a lens for recognizing the socioeconomic background of administrators. In this section, however, I will focus on how the makeup of the administrator reflects the relocation of the capital to Damascus more than the implementation—or disregard—of any pre-existing policies against hiring non-Muslims or using forced labor, which were two of the "innovations" attached to Mu'āwiya.[153] Thus, rather than seeing Mu'āwiya's caliphate and administrative makeup as a break from the pre-Umayyad administrations, I suggest that we continue to recognize these individuals as high ranking members of the political elite. As a result, this expands the pool of influential members of early Umayyad administrative politics beyond the personalities of individual caliphs and a handful of influential governors.

In this section I categorize two groups: those who have migrated from Arabia and those with pre-Islamic backgrounds to the region. Next, I highlight those with pre-Umayyad political influence or connections and argue that the incorporation of non-Arabian elites into Sufyānid

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[152] For example, the Christian Sarjūn b. Manṣūr is listed as serving over the *dīwān al-kharāj* for Mu'āwiya in al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 59.

[153] For the issue of forced labor, see Legendre, "Aspects of Umayyad Administration," 139-141; it seems, however, that this too should not be attributed as another "first" for Mu'āwiya, as there is evidence of its use prior to his caliphate, 140. Interestingly, attaching it to him might have been an attempted slight, inferring that using forced labor was unbecoming.

politics demonstrates how the expanding caliphate dynamically absorbed members of the elite into its body of Arabian political and administrative elite. As argued above, the early administration was not staffed based on administrative meritocracy and this should likewise influence our understanding of the early Sufyānid state.[154] As a result, we are able to recognize this group as defined by their social capital (manifested in connections with prominent members of society, both new and old) and economic capital. The second of these is more difficult to deduce and will be explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

Arabian Elites Abroad

A prominent argument throughout this dissertation is that members of society ingrained themselves within administrative structures as a means of influencing the distribution of local surplus (taxation, booty, etc.).[155] The migration of Arabian elites had an influence on the administrative makeup of the region. This entailed a merging of pre-Islamic and Islamic-era social and economic networks across the caliphate, something that is particularly evident in the make-up of the Umayyad administration.

For example, ʿUbaydallāh b. Naṣr b. al-Ḥajjāj ʿIlāṭ al-Sulamī whose biography in Ibn ʿAsākir states that he was included in as administrator of the *dīwān*s for Muʿāwiya (*kāna ʿalā dawāwīn Muʿāwiya*).[156] From this concise biography it is quite difficult to deduce any particular reason for his employment. However, looking at his father's and grandfather's biography we can recognize that his employment was a result of his family's early presence in Damascus. His

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[154] See Chapter 3 for recent scholarship on the Sufyānid state within debates about the supposedly centralizing reforms of the Marwānid ʿAbd al-Malik.

[155] See Chapter 3.

[156] Citing the now lost Abū al-Husayn al-Rāzī's *Tīsmiā al-Kitāb amra' dimashq, TMD* 38:129; for the survival of *Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī* in Ibn ʿAsākir, see note above. This position is echoed Al-Jahsiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 63.

grandfather lived in Medina before moving to Damascus, the city in which his properties were sizable enough to be mentioned in both his (al-Ḥajjāj's) and his son's (Naṣr's) biography in Ibn 'Asākir's *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*.[157] Whereas 'Ubaydallāh b. Naṣr's sparse biography tells us nothing about his socioeconomic background or potential reasons for his employment in the Umayyad bureaucracy, when we consider the biographies of his father and grandfather it is quite clear that he came from an influential family from Arabia who had settled in Damascus.

Other members of the political elite also served within Mu'āwiya's administration. First, there is also a certain Ḥabib b. 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, who according to al-Jahshiyārī served as one of Mu'āwiya's administrators.[158] This, on the surface, would suggest a high profile member of the Marwānid elite within Mu'āwiya's administration; however, 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān does not appear to have any son named Ḥabib and this is likely a mistake or the name has become corrupted over time. Nevertheless, another prominent member of the Umayyads was a member of the administration: 'Amr b. Sa'īd b. al-Āṣ al-Ashdaq.[159] Al-Ashdaq was the son of Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ who served as governor of Kūfa and Medina.[160] While I mentioned the several examples of future caliphs in the administration, al-Ashdaq (and his failed coup) is as close as we get for the early Umayyads.[161] Nevertheless, his prominent place in society demonstrates how membership within administration depended on social and political connections as it largely had in the pre-Umayyad period. Likewise, 'Ubaydallāh b. Naṣr and 'Amr b. Sa'īd demonstrate how

[157] Naṣr, *TMD* 62: 18; al-Ḥajjāj, *TMD* 12:101

[158] Al-Jahshiyāri, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 63.

[159] Al-Jahsiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 60; *TMD* 46:29. Al-Ashdaq led a failed coup against 'Abd al-Malik during the Second Islamic Civil War, see note above.

[160] C.E. Bosworth, "Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ" in *EI2.*

[161] He did, however, become governor of Mecca, K.V. Zetterstéen, "'Amr b. Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ b. Umayya al-Umawī, known as al-Ashdak," in *EI2; TMD* 46:29.

prominent members from Arabian society ingrained themselves in the administration in Damascus.

Conquered Elites?

There were also members of Mu'āwiya's administration who were not prominent members of pre-Umayyad Arabian society; however, that does not mean we are necessarily speaking of "new elites." Rather, these administrators were the product of pre-Islamic status possibly more so than their Arabian colleagues.[162] One example of this is the employment of 'Ubaydallāh b. Aws al-Ghassānī.[163] According to his biography, 'Ubaydallāh b. Aws was a *sayyid* of the people of Syria, and his *nisba*, "Al-Ghassanī," suggests he was likely a member of the pre-Islamic tribal confederacy of the Ghassānids.[164] The Ghassānids fought on the side of the Byzantines and lost at the Battle of Yarmuk in 636, so a member of the Ghassānids serving in Mu'āwiya's administration demonstrates the carry-over of pre-Islamic elites and leaders outside the Hijaz into the Umayyad government.[165]

Another factor about the early administration is the connection (or correlation) between administrative taxation and increasing personal wealth, either of the administrators themselves or their employer. The clients of Mu'āwiya, 'Abd al-Raḥmān and/or 'Abdallāh/Ubaydallāh b.

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[162] This observation, particularly as reflected in the employment of clients (*mawālī,* sg. *mawlā*), is discussed at length in Chapter 2.

[163] In *al-Iqd al-Farīd* he is identified as a certain Sa'īd b. Aws al-Ghassānī, 4:247; however, all other list identify him as 'Ubayd or 'Ubaydallāh, including his reference in al-Husayn al-Rāzī''s *Tismiya* preserved in *TMD*; al-Jahshyiarī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 59; Ibn Khyyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 228; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:837; *TMD* 38:169.

[164] *TMD* 38: 180. The Ghassānids were a subdivision of al-Azd who settled along levant and served as a phylarchate for the Byzantines in the pre-Islamic period, Irfan Shahîd, "Ghassān," in *EI2.* According to Fred Donner, it seems that most settled in the Ḥawrān and close to Damascus, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 107.

[165] This same line of reasoning can be applied to the prominent Christian in Mu'āwiya's administration, Sarjūn b. Manṣūr; he is discussed in the context of other Christians in the administration in Chapter 2.

Darrāj, played a critical role in securing properties for the Caliph Mu'āwiya in Iraq. It is unclear if this was two individuals or a single individual referred to by alternative names.[166] It is consistent in accounts, however, that a certain Ibn Darrāj was appointed over taxation in Kūfa during the governorship of al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba, who was originally an administrator for the Prophet Muhammad.[167] While there, several accounts suggest that Ibn Darrāj, either 'Abdallāh or 'Abd al-Raḥām, undertook land renovation projects in the region of al-Baṭā'iḥ which subsequently incorporated the renovated land into the caliph's estates (*ḍiyā'*), including cutting down reeds and building a dam.[168] These properties, according to Balādhurī's *Futūḥ al-budān,* drew an income of 5,000,000 dirhams.[169] Throughout the rest of the dissertation, this correlation between administration and wealth remains an important component in the symbiotic relationship between the administration and those who staffed it.

Conclusion

Returning to our lists of 'firsts," Mu'āwiya in many ways failed to live up to the hype. There are examples of individuals serving as *ḥaras* prior to his caliphate, seals existed before his caliphate, and others even employed forced labor. What is unique about his administration, however, is not necessarily his exercises in state building, but what the makeup of the administration tells us about those who were included in the upper echelons of Umayyad political elite. The pre-Umayyad elite was staffed by high ranking members of Arabian society—

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[166] Al-Jahshiyārī list both, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 53. In Ibn 'Asākir, there is a biography for "'Abd al-Raḥman, who is called 'Abdallāh b. Darrāj the *mawlā* of Mu'āwiya, *TMD* 34:340; an 'Ubaydallāh b. Darrāj, the *mawlā* of Mu'āwiya," *TMD* 37: 426; and a biography for a certain "Abdallāh b. Darrāj, the *mawlā* of Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān," *TMD* 28:35.

[167] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 43; Baladhurī, *Futūḥ,* 290.

[168] Baṭā'iḥ were the marshes in the region, al-Ya'qubī *Buldan,* 323. Al-Ya'qubī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:258; Baladhurī, *Futūḥ,* 290-293.

[169] Baladhurī, *Futūḥ,* 293.

which was similarly evident in Mu'āwiya's administration. However, it is the introduction of members from outside of the Hijazī elite ('Ubaydallāh b. Aws al-Ghassānī, the *mawlā/mawālī* 'Ubaydallāh and/or 'Abd al-Raḥmān, and the Christian Sarjūn b. Manṣūr) who best demonstrate the broad cast of actors who helped shape early Islamic politics and administrative polity at the beginning of the Umayyad period.[170]

[170] This observation is also reflected in some of the more recent studies based on papyri, such as Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic?: The Duke of Thebaid and the formation of the Umayyad State," *Historical Research* 89, no. 243 (2016): 3-18; and Cecilia Palombo, "The Christian Clergy's Islamic Local Government in Late Marwanid and Abbasid Egypt," (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2020).

Chapter 2
Between Exceptional & Exploited:
Religious Identity and the Early Islamic Administration

"A timorous old man was pasturing an ass in a meadow. Alarmed by the sudden war cry of enemy soldiers approaching, he urged the ass to flee for fear of capture. But the stubborn beast replied: "I ask you, are you assuming that the conqueror will load me with two packs at a time?" "No," said the old man. "Then," said the ass, "what difference does it make to me whose slave I am, so long as I carry only one pack at a time?"

Phaedrus, *Fables*, I:XV[171]

According to the tenth-century Christian Arabic chronicle, the *Annales of Eutychius,* when the inhabitants of Damascus grew weary of the ongoing Islamic siege in September 634, a city official (*ʿāmil*) named Manṣūr negotiated the terms for the surrender of the city. After securing safety for himself, his family, those with him, and the inhabitants of Damascus (except for the Byzantine soldiers), Manṣūr opened the east gates of Damascus and allowed the general Khālid b. al-Walīd and his army to capture the city.[172] This was not the first time Manṣūr had to

[171] *Babrius and Phaedrus*, edited and translated by Ben Edwin Perry, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 211.

[172] *Das Annalenwerk Des Eutychios Von Alexander,* CSCO 471 *scr. Arabici* 44 (Leuven: Peeters, 1985), 137; Sidney Griffith, "The Manṣūr Family and Saint John of Damascus: Christians and Muslims in Umayyad Times," in *Christians and Others in the Umayyad State,* ed. Antoine Borrut and Fred Donner (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2016), 29. For details concerning the two recensions of Eutychios' *Annals,* see Sean Anthony, "Fixing John Damascene's Biography: Historical Notes on His Family Background," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 23, no. 4 (Winter 2015): 612; Michael Breydy, *Das Annalenwerk des Eutychios von Alexandrien: Ausgewählte Geschichten und Legenden kompiliert von Saʿīd ibn Baṭrīq um 935 A.D.,* CSCO 471, *scr. Arabici* 44 (Leuven: Peeters, 1985), vii-xxx; and Sidney Griffith, "Apologetics and Historiography in the Annales of Eutychius

navigate regime change in Damascus. The *Annales of Eutychios* states that the Byzantine emperor Maurice (r. 582-602) had originally appointed Manṣūr as tax official (*ʻāmil ʻalā al-kharāj*) and that he continued to serve in this role after the Sassanian capture of Damascus under Shah Khosro II (613-614) and again under the Emperor Heraclius (629-634) following the Byzantine reconquest.[173] Why, then, should Manṣūr flee with his Byzantine "owner" in the face of the new conquerors so long as he had to "only carry one pack at a time?"

When de Ste Croix invoked Phaedrus' fable of the sapient ass in his *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World,* he did not consider the allegory to be referring to privileged officials who were able to preserve much of their positions, property, and status over the course of subsequent regimes.[174] For Phaedrus, as well as de Ste Croix, the fable is about how the "change of sovereignty brings to the poor nothing more than a change in the name of their master."[175] Phaedrus and de Ste Croix interpret the donkey as representing the poor (*pauperes*); in our context, however, I see bureaucrats represented by an ass.

As a result of Manṣūr's role in the capitulation of Damascus, Eutychios claimed that Heraclius bade farewell to Syria and that "all the patriarchs and bishops of the whole earth" anathematized Manṣūr.[176] Their curses, however, seem to have had little material effect on

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of Alexandria: Christian Self-Definition in the World of Islam," in *Studies on the Christian Arabic Heritage,* ed. Rifaat Ebied and Herman Teule (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 65-89.

[173] *Das Annalenwerk Des Eutychios Von Alexander,* 127.

[174] G.E.M. de Ste Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World: From the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquests* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 444. Peter Sarris also references this fable and de Ste Croix in *Economy and Society in the Age of Justinian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 232-233; my appreciation to Sarris for drawing my attention to this fable and de Ste. Croix' use of it during his introduction to the workshop, "Class, Class Consciousness, and Identity in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages," at Cambridge University in January of 2020.

[175] *Babrius and Phaedrus*, 211.

[176] *Das Annalenwerk Des Eutychios Von Alexander*, 138. Muslim chronicles differ widely concerning the identity of the Damascene who negotiated the surrender. Albrecht Noth lists: a monk (*rāhib*), bishop (*usquf*), patriarch (*b-ṭrīq*), governor/lord (*ṣāḥib*), and a commander named Bāhān or N-sṭās b. N-sṭūs, "*Futūḥ*-History and *Futūḥ*-

Manṣūr, whose descendants would continue to enjoy high-ranking positions and wealth in Damascus under the Umayyad caliphate as Manṣūr had under the Byzantine emperors and Sassanian shah. Before the Islamic conquest, Manṣūr was, as far as we can know, a Christian; but his role within the administration of Damascus was not based on this condition. One can make the argument that only after the Islamic conquests did Manṣūr and his descendants become Christian bureaucrats rather than just bureaucrats.[177]

In the historiography of the Middle East, the religious identity of an individual, community, or even society is often prioritized in the interpretive framework for understanding not just religious change, but social, cultural, political, and even economic history. For many aspects of late antique society, religion and religious power were societal defining characteristics.[178] However, for positions within late antique bureaucracies, religious identity was a minor factor for one's employment, or at the very least, not the primary reason. They were bureaucrats who happened to be Muslims or Christians—not bureaucrats because of their faith without additional social, economic, or cultural capital. Nevertheless, scholars often filter early Islamic history through the lens of religious identity and stress the very same confessional

Historiography: The Muslim Conquest of Damascus," *Al-Qantara* 10, no. 2 (1989): 454. Sean Anthony also points out that Bāhān or Baanes (Greek, βαάνης, Syriac *bāānīs*) is also in Christian historiographical tradition attached to Theophilus of Edessa (d.785), "Fixing John Damascene's Biography," 611, n.9; see also, Robert Hoyland, *Theophilus of Edessa's Chronicle and the Circulation of Knowledge in Late Antiquity and Early Islam* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011), 99-103. For a comparison of Eutychius account with other chronicles, see Jens Scheiner, *Die Eroberung von Damaskus: Quellenkritische Untersuchung zur Historiographie in klassisch-islamischer Zeit* (Leiden: Brill, 2010) 617-622.

[177] For example, Luke Yarbrough comments that "the non-Muslim official was not self-existent, but had to be invented, and his existence discursively maintained across time and space." *Friends of the Emir: Non-Muslim State Officials in Premodern Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 32.

[178] For example, see the many works by Peter Brown; in particular: *The World of Late Antiquity: AD 150-750* (New York: Norton, 1989); *ibid., Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992); and *ibid.,* "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1998): 80-101. Garth Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

boundaries that are projected by their medieval sources (*sunnī,* Christian, etc.). Not only does prioritizing the religious background of bureaucrats diminish our understanding of the administrative history of the early caliphate, but it also limits the utility of sources related to bureaucracy as a window into the broader social world of late antiquity at the emergence of Islam. Thus, I argue that we should focus on the change in the social and economic capital that defined administrators' place in society, and not just the change in their religious confession, if we are to fully understand how the emergence of the Umayyad Caliphate impacted society. To do so, it is paramount to identify what characteristics, or forms of capital in Bourdieu's vocabulary, defined Christian administrators in the Umayyad Caliphate.

This chapter focuses on what it meant to be a Christian administrator in first/seventh century Umayyad administration (*ca*. 11-81/632-700) in terms of their social, economic, and to a lesser extent, cultural capital. Identifying these characteristics allows us to compare these administrators with their Muslim contemporaries and successors. The first part of the chapter discusses the historiography specifically dealing with Christians in the early Islamic administration and the *hagiographical* nature of sources related to Christians in the bureaucracy. Next, I discuss the papyrological and literary evidence for the era (*ca*. 11-81/631-700) Christian bureaucrats to highlight aspects about their socioeconomic backgrounds. I argue that the employment of Christians in the administration was more than merely the continuation of pre-Islamic practice, but rather was the survival of pre-existing forms of late antique capital. These forms of capital should be given particular attention in reconstructing the social space of administrators in late antiquity and interpreting the impact of the Umayyad state building. By identifying bureaucrats as a group defined by their social, economic, and cultural characteristics we are better able to understand how the decrease in their employment reflects the

contemporaneous reduction in the value of capital that “Christian” administrators had previously leveraged to legitimize and preserve their positions in society. This provides a more nuanced picture of a social world in which relationships to landownership, social networks, military employment, education, religious power, and politics all constituted coordinates of an individual’s social space.[179]

What is Religious about Bureaucracy?

In his recent, and already influential, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East,* Jack Tannous states that “The most obvious way in which Muslim rule changed the Middle East is that it eventually led to the Arabization and Islamization of the entire region: the very region, in fact, where Christianity was born and from which it spread to the rest of the ancient world. But what was the nature of this conversion?”[180] Prioritizing the “simple belief” of Muslim and Christians is an innovative framework to add nuance to our understanding of communal relations and late antique society. However, Tannous’ stance that the “most obvious way in which Muslim rule changed the Middle East” was the religious conversion of a population is emblematic of scholarship’s broader tendency to frame the emergence of Islam’s significance in terms of the changing religious demographics and/or culture (particularly the language) of members of religious communities.[181] Emphasizing the religion of the “non-elite” is a useful lens for attempting to understand religious conversion and how members of different faith communities interacted with one another; but it does not tell us why some individuals were “elite” and others

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[179] Pierre Bourdieu, “The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups,” *Theory and Society* 14, no. 6 (1985): 723-744.

[180] Jack Tannous, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 225.

[181] Tannous is not alone on this recent reconsideration of conversion during the early Islamic period, see also Christian Sahner, “Swimming Against the Current: Muslim Conversion to Christianity in the Early Islamic Period,” *JAOS* 136, no. 2 (2016): 265-284.

were not, or how the emergence of Islam and Muslim rule impacted the structures that defined one economically. For example, the degree of theological acumen of individuals in society does not tell us how families such as Barmakids in Iraq were able to preserve and maintain their status and privilege across so many generations.[182] When applied to early Islamic state building, the focus on changes in religious demographics obscures the social and economic changes that accompanied—if not predicated—the changes in the confessional membership of administrators.

Christian bureaucrats of late antiquity existed in a world in which they had access or restrictions to various combinations of social networks or economic wealth which in turn allowed them the training to attain and profit from bureaucratic positions. Simple identification as a member of the Christian faith did not facilitate access to the bureaucracy or the power associated with such a position. However, both medieval literary sources and modern historiography identify Christian bureaucrats by their religious identity. As will be discussed below, later Muslim authors, often bureaucrats themselves, associated Christian administrators with devious practices or ineptness as part of a larger project of articulating a distinct Islamic identity to the bureaucrat, emphasizing the profession's importance in the history of Islam, and establishing precedent against employing non-Muslims in the authors' sociopolitical milieu. Influenced by doctrinal rivalries, Christian literature narrated anecdotes about Christian administrators to legitimize a particular Christological confession or the status of a family. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to adopt religious identity as the interpretive framework for the period since it is explicitly stressed by early medieval authors. However, I argue that this religious dimension of Christian administrators was only a minor factor for their employment,

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[182] Kevin Van Bladel, "The Bactrian background of the Barmakids," in *Islam and Tibet, Interactions along the Musk Routes,* eds., Anna Akasoy, Charles Burnett, et. al., (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 43-88.

one which was based on the continued, but diminishing, value of late antique forms of economic and social capital.

This chapter demonstrates that non-Muslim administrators are better understood as pre-Islamic elites who were now competing with an emerging group of elites whose power was grounded in new social networks and alternative manifestations of economic wealth. For this reason, I argue that it is paramount to transcend historiographical nomenclature and tradition that identifies individuals by their religious identity. I highly doubt that any scholar would suggest that communal religious identity was homogenous—yet the underlying tendency to identify individuals, not only bureaucrats, by their religious identity remains pervasive. Therefore, Christian bureaucrats, ironically, serve as a case study for identifying groups beyond their religious confession.

The Historiography & Hagiography of the Christian Administrator in the Early Caliphate

Scholarly focus on Christians and non-Muslims in the early Islamic administrative literature and history has advanced drastically in recent years from earlier reductive, if not essentialist, characterizations.[183] This is most exemplified by the increased incorporation of papyrological evidence for the period as demonstrated by Clive Foss, Petra Sijpesteijn, Arietta Papaconstantinou, Marie Legendre, and Cecilia Palombo.[184] These scholars focused on

[183] For example, Herold Bell's position that "The Arabs, a people of relatively primitive organization and with no experience of empire, naturally took over much of the machinery of government which they found in the more advanced provinces which they conquered," "The Administration of Egypt under the 'Umayyad Khalifs," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 28, 278-286.

[184] Clive Foss, "Egypt under Mu'āwiya Part I: Flavius Papas and Upper Egypt," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 72, no. 1 (2009), 1-24; *ibid.,* "Mu'āwiya Part II: Middle Egypt, Fusṭāṭ and Alexandria," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 72, no. 2 (2009): 259-278; Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Administering the Early Islamic Empire: Insights from the papyri," in *Money, Power, and Politics in Early Islamic Syria,* ed. John Haldon (New York: Routledge, 2016), 57-74; Petra Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State,* and her plethora of additional references mentioned in the bibliography; Marie Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic? The duke of Thebaid and the formation of the Umayyad State," *Historical Research* 89, no. 243 (2016): 3-18; Cecilia Palombo, "The Christian Clergy's Islamic Local Government in Late Marwanid and Abbasid Egypt," (PhD diss., Princeton

documentary evidence from Egypt and provide a significantly more detailed understanding of the early Islamic administrative organization than one would be able to recover from literary sources alone. Muhammad b. Yūsuf al-Kindī (d.350/961) was the first Egyptian historian to write about the Umayyad administration and his work dates from roughly two and a half centuries after the conquest of Egypt.[185] With this gap in time, it is not surprising that al-Kindī's utility for our understanding the early Islamic administration is limited.[186] Arabic papyri, on the other hand, begin to appear early after the conquest of Egypt, such as a bilingual (Arabic and Greek) administrative document in addition to the wealth of papyri in Coptic and Greek.[187]

Papyri, however, pose limitations as well. Because of the arid climate, the desert margins of the Fayyūm (Middle Egypt) provide suitable conditions for the survival of papyri. However, the Fayyūm is some three-hundred miles from Fusṭāṭ in the Egyptian delta, which does not share these same favorable conditions, and, as a result, few documents from the region have survived there.[188] Thus, our documentary source material for the early Islamic period faces the same hurdle historians of Egypt have faced for other periods: to what degree can we extrapolate the situation in the Fayyūm as representative for the rest of Egypt?[189] Additionally, since the

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University, 2020). It is worthwhile to also mentioning the encyclopedic collection of Christian administrations by Louis Cheïkho, *Wuzarā' al-naṣrānīyah wa-kuttābuhā fī al-Islām* (Lebanon: al-Maktaba al-Būlusīya, 1987).

[185] Al-Kindī, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt or Kitâb el umrâ' (el wulâh) wa kitab el quḍâh of El Kindî,* ed. Rhuvon Guest (Leiden: Brill, 1912).

[186] For example, al-Kindī employs terms and concepts from his own time period rather than the terms and concepts reflected in papyri; Gladys Frantz-Murphy, "The Economics of State Formation in Early Islamic Egypt," in *From Al-Andalus to Khurasan: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World,* eds Petra Sijpesteijn, Lennart Sundelin, et. al (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 102.

[187] Yusuf Ragib, "Un papyrus arabe de l'an 22 de l'Hégire," in *Historie, archéologies et littératures du monde musulman,* ed., Ghislaine Alleaume, Sylvie Denoix et. al., (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale), 363-372.

[188] Marie Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic? The Duke of the Thebaid and the Formation of the Umayyad State," *Historical Research* 89, no. 243 (2016): 5-6. For a summary of the favorable conditions of the region of the Fayyum, see Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State,* 26-32.

[189] See Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State,* 31-32.

Umayyad Caliphate's capital was in Damascus and not in Egypt, many of the Umayyad political and administrative elites are never mentioned in Egyptian papyri and we are left only with later literary sources. For this reason, it is helpful to address the historiography of Christians in the Islamic administration in literary sources.

Approaches to Christian administrators in Islamic and non-Muslim literature has likewise advanced in recent years. Nancy Khalek and Luke Yarbrough have adopted literary methods to shift the discussion from historicity of Islamic attitudes about Christian administrators to the socio-political milieu of the authors.[190] Both Khalek and Yarbrough argued that negative tropes associated with non-Muslim Umayyad officials reflected the anxieties of ʻAbbāsid era authors and are not the preservation of early Umayyad animosity. Focusing on arguably the most influential medieval work on the Islamic administration and scribal culture (*adab al-kuttāb)*, al-Jahshiyārī's *Kitāb al-wuzarā' wa al-kuttāb,* Khalek argues that the representation of non-Muslim administrators were "purposefully crafted through the medium of the anecdotal exemplum, the compiler's chosen mode for the normative assessment of non-Muslim (especially Christian) administrative officials."[191] These "anecdotal exempla" frame administrative reform, particularly the translation of the *dīwān,* as Muslim responses to Christian bureaucratic ineptitude or as the result of non-Muslim arrogance. Khalek demonstrated that al-Jahshiyārī does this by

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[190] Nancy Khalek, "Some notes on the Representation of Non-Muslim Officials in al-Ǧahšiyārī's (d.331/942) *Kitāb al-Wuzarā' wa-l-kuttāb*," *Arabica* 62, no. 4 (2015): 503-520; Luke Yarbrough, *Friends of the Emir*.

[191] Khalek, "Some Notes on the Representation of Non-Muslim Officials," 507. This reading parallels several other studies on the literary characteristics *adab al-kuttāb* literature; see Dominique Sourdel, "La valeur littéraire et documentaire du "Livre des vizirs" d'al-Ǧahšiyārī, d'après le chapitre consacré au califat de Hārūn al-Rašīd," *Arabica* 2, no. 2 (May, 1955): 193-210; Michael Carter, "The *Kātib* in Fact and Fiction," *Abr-Nahrain* 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1971): 42-55; András Hámori, "Exemplum, Anecdote, and the Gentle Heart in a Text by al-Jahshiyārī," *Asiatische Studien* 50, n. 2 (1996): 363-370; Maaike Van Berkel, "A Well-Mannered man of Letters or a Cunning accountant: Al-Qalqashandī and the historical position of the *kātib,*" *Al-Masāq* 13 (2001): 87-96; Bruna Soravia, "Les manuels à l'usage des fonctionnaires de l'administration (*Adab al-Kātib*) dans l'Islam classique," *Arabica* 52, no. 3 (July 2005): 417-436; Maria Stasolla, "How a Tenth-Century Learned man Reads History: Al-Jahšiyārī (d.942) and the Barmakids," *Eurasian Studies* 10 (2012): 221-234.

"chronologically collapsing" longer accounts found in other renditions to make the "anecdotal exempla" more explicit. This literary strategy demonstrates the creative motive of al-Jahshiyārī and his text. According to Khalek, these negative tropes associated with non-Muslim officials "illustrate the anxieties felt by ʻAbbāsid-era authors who were struggling with the cultural implications of an asymmetry between Muslim political and non-Muslim knowledge-based power in the early Islamic state."[192] In short, Umayyad era tropes of non-Muslim arrogance and ineptness are rhetorical devices that reflect the ʻAbbāsid cultural and intellectual milieu and are not necessarily the relics of Umayyad era animosity.

Yarbrough echoes a similar conclusion, but also points to the "prescriptive" element of these texts; that is, the use of "overtly normative language to urge change in human affairs."[193] Based on traditions associated with the employment of non-Muslim officials, Yarbrough argues that the "prescriptive discourse" surrounding non-Muslims in the administration originated in second/eighth- or early third/ninth-century Iraq.[194] In this context, "literate Muslim elites produced and propagated disapproving parables that they ascribed to revered early authorities, notably the caliphs ʻUmar I and ʻUmar II."[195] The parables and anecdotes surrounding non-Muslims were the "natural product of vague discomfort with the transfer of resources to members of a competing out-group among the rhetorically fecund circles in which durable prescriptive views were enunciated in that period. But the isolated early fragments of the discourse stand out against the background in which the employment of non-Muslim officials remained widespread and was generally viewed, when it was noticed at all, with indifference or

[192] Khalek, "Some notes on the Representation of Non-Muslim Officials," 515-516.

[193] Yarbrough, *Friends of the Emir,* 4.

[194] Yarbrough, *Friends of the Emir*, 87.

[195] *Ibid*.

vague discomfort."[196] Taken together, Khalek and Yarbrough convincingly argue that it is problematic to claim that the representations of Christians in chancellery literature are accurate portrayals of seventh century events and attitudes; rather, they are literary devices in scribal hagiography employed in order to shape the archetypal Muslim scribe and propagate precedents for the prohibition of non-Muslims' employment.

Non-Muslim authors are not innocent of this tendency to shape the description of particular administrators to align with their own biases and objectives. Muriel Debié demonstrated that Christian authors glorified a particular family or confessional community by emphasizing an individual's exceptionalness and bureaucratic aptitude. Debié argued that Christian literature shared this hagiographical tendency to filter the representation of individual Christians through (later) confessional bias. [197] Palombo, in her recent dissertation, further expanded on this literary element in Christian literature by highlighting the relationship between the portrayal of Christian leaders and Islamic regional governments.[198] This identifies the flaw of prioritizing Christian sources as somehow less biased or more accurate—something particularly valuable for Islamists who may be less aware of the confessional rivalries and complexities of Christian communities. Christian sources are just as susceptible to bias and sectarianism as any other literary source. Whereas Muslim authors, often scribes themselves, were interested in highlighting the importance of the administrator in Islamic history in a way that was relevant to

[196] *Ibid*. The continued employment of non-Muslims in the Caliphal administration is well attested in the papyrological evidence.

[197] Muriel Debié, "Christians in the Service of the Caliph," 53.

[198] Cecilia Palombo, "The Christian Clergy's Islamic Local Government in Late Marwanid and Abbasid Egypt," (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2020), 241-311, see esp. 285-293.

their own current purposes, Christian authors likewise celebrated or denigrated contemporary families by demonstrating past individual's exceptionalness or ineptness.

All of this is to say that it is problematic to claim the representations of Christians in al-Jahshiyārī or other authors as accurate portrayals; rather, they are literary devices in scribal hagiography employed in order to shape the identity of the Muslim scribe and propagate precedents for the prohibition of non-Muslims' employment.[199] These observations are relevant for this study because they identify an important aspect of religious identity in both Christian and Islamic literature related the bureaucracy: namely, the negative (or positive) anecdotes surrounding non-Muslim officials are reflections of the social, political, and cultural climate of their authors rather than the preservation of the Umayyad-era realities

The portrayals of the Christians Sarjūn b. Manṣūr and Athanasius bar Gūmōyē illustrate the historiographical characteristics of literature related to Christians involved in the Umayyad administration.[200] Their careers, and the sources that preserve them, reveal the way later Muslim and Christian authors recorded their biographies in order to align with the objectives of the authors. Muslim authors employed the religious identity of non-Muslims in order to articulate the prestige of the Muslim scribe in Islamic history and establish the precedent for the exclusion of employing non-Muslim administrators. Likewise, Christian literature used individual Christian

[199] An idealized interpretation of the early Islamic past was not unique to scribes and their biographical literature; see the influential article by Wadād al-Qāḍī, "Biographical Dictionaries as the Scholars' Alternative History of the Muslim Community," in *Organizing Knowledge: Encyclopædic Activities in the Pre-Eighteenth Century Muslim World,* ed. Gerhard Endress (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 23-75; for Christian hagiographical element in Christian historical writing, see Muriel Debié, "Syriac Historiography and Identity Formation," *Church History and Religious Culture* 89, n.1 (2009): 83-114.

[200] Sarjūn is the son of the Manṣūr in Eutychious' *Annals* mentioned above.

administrators as a medium for simultaneously expressing and legitimizing the wealth, power, and influence of their family.

The Scribe in Christian Hagiography

According to the ninth-century Syriac chronicle by Dionysius of Telmaḥrē (d. 230/845), ‘Abd al-Malik was so impressed by the intelligence and scribal skills of Athanasius of Edessa that he commissioned him to Egypt as a guardian of his younger brother, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, who at the time was the governor of Egypt.[201] Dionysius states that Athanasius was not only ‘Abd al-‘Azīz's personal scribe and manager but that "actual authority (*pūqdānā*) and governing (*dūbārā*) belonged to Athanasius, and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ruled only in name (*shamā balḥūd d-malkūtā nehwe l-‘abd l-‘Azīz)*."[202] It is worth highlighting that Dionysius was a descendant of Athanasius and Dionysius himself was involved in the ‘Abbāsid caliphal politics and served as the patriarch of the Syrian Orthodox church.[203] Here the account of Athanasius and his importance is not only a way for Dionysius to record early Islamic history, but to articulate the hagiographical history of his own family's contemporary prestige in Edessa. Dionysius describes Athanasius as extremely wealthy and religiously devout, which both justify and complement the other. Athanasius retains powerful privileges from his administrative position and owned

[201] Dionysius of Telmaḥrē's chronicle survives in two different later Syriac chronicles: the anonymously authored *Chronicle 1234* and the *Chronicle* of Michael the Syrian. For the historiographical complications surrounding the preservation of Dionysius' chronicle, as well as the even earlier chronicle of Theophilus which Dionysius incorporated, see Robert Hoyland, *Theophilus of Edessa's Chronicle*, 7-29; for important revisions to the Theophilus model, see Mureil Debié, "Christians in the Service of the Caliph," 65-68; and Maria Conterno, "Theophilos, "The more likely Candidate?": Towards a reappraisal of the question of Theophanes' "Oriental source(s),"" *Travaux et Mémories* 19 (2015): 383-400. Athanasius' presence in Egypt is attested in a Greek papyri concerning the expenditures (δαπανης) of ‘Abd al-Azīz, *P.Lond* IV, 1447.

[202] *Chronicle 1234* (Syriac), 294, Palmer (trans.), *The Seventh Century in West-Syrian Chronicles*, 202; translations based on Palmer with some modifications. For the version preserved in Michael the Syrian, see *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d'Antioche, 1166-1199,* Vol. 4 (Syriac), 447-449, Vol. 2 (trans), 475-477.

[203] Dionysius and the Telmaḥrē family were related through marriage to the Gūmōyē family, Debie, "Christians in the Service of the Caliph," 55.

substantial properties in both Egypt and Edessa. Dionysius characterizes Athanasius as "strictly Orthodox," one who had "great respect for the hierarchy of the Church," "distributed alms to the orphans and the widows," and funded the building and renovation of churches both in Edessa and Fusṭāṭ.[204] By celebrating his successful career as an Umayyad era administrator, Dionysius directly ties Athanasius (and his family) to both Edessa and church.

Sarjūn, however, does not receive the same lauded treatment as his contemporary. Dionysius characterizes Sarjūn as the envious "Chalcedonian," which thinly veils the confessional bias of Dionysius. After the death of ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz in Egypt, Athanasius ignited the jealousy of Sarjūn when he stopped in Damascus on his way to Edessa with his wealth in tow.[205] According to Dionysius, this "Chalcedonian" (Sarjūn) was so envious that he insinuated to the Caliph ʻAbd al-Malik that Athanasius' wealth must have been accrued inappropriately from the Caliphate's coffers in Egypt. However, Dionysius comments that ʻAbd al-Malik gave Athanasius a "serene reception," but nevertheless told Athanasius that it was "unjust that all this wealth should belong to a Christian, so give us a part of it and keep a part for yourself."[206] Athanasius,

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[204] *Chronicle 1234* (Syriac), 295; Palmer (trans), *The Seventh-Century in West Syrian Chronicles,* 203.

[205] This timeline is consistent with the accounts in al-Jahshīyarī and Severus b. al-Muqaffaʻ; *Chronicle 1234* (Syriac)*,* 295; Palmer (trans.), *The Seventh Century in West-Syrian Chronicles,* 204; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 74; Severus ibn al-Muqaffaʻ, *Ta'rīkh baṭārikat al-Kanīsah al-Miṣīyah, The History of the Patriarch of the Coptic Church of Alexandria,* ed. and trans. B. Evetts (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1904-1915)*,* 54. Athanasius dismissal from his position in Egypt might have been a consequence of the Arabization of the *dīwān,* and is explicitly mention as the reason by al-Kindī; however the timeline is different. In al-Kindī, ʻAbdallāh b. ʻAbd al-Malik is installed as governor by his brother and new caliph, Walīd I, after the death of ʻAbd al-Malik. Athanasius (اشناس) is dismissed as part of ʻAbdallāh b. ʻAbd al-Malik's conversion of the *dīwān* from Coptic (*qibṭīya*) to Arabic, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt,* 58-59.

[206] Dionysius concludes, "So king took a great deal away from him, but what Athanasius was left with was more than enough." *Chronicle 1234* (Syriac), 295; Palmer (trans.), *The Seventh Century in West-Syrian Chronicles*, 204. A similar story is found in al-Jahshiyārī and Serveus b. Muqaffaʻ, but neither mention Sarjūn, nor any accusations of fraud. According to al-Jahshiyārī, after the death of ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz in Egypt, ʻAdb al-Malīk orders al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. ʻAbd al-Raḥman to divide ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz wealth between the two. Al-Ḍaḥḥāk initially only divides the copper objects (*nuḥās*) with Athanasius (Yanās b. Khumāyā), leaving out jewelry and gems to return to ʻAbd al-Malik. With the gems and jewelry spread before him, ʻAbd al-Malik sifts through the jewelry with a stick (*qaḍīb*), notices a necklace, and gives it to Athanasius. Al-Ḍaḥḥak remarks about ʻAbd al-Malik's apparent indifference to Athanasius, who in turn informs al-Ḍaḥḥak that a single bead (*ḥabba*) from the necklace is worth more than everything else, al-

as well as Dionysius, were members of the Syriac Orthodox Church, often called by the polemical term "Jacobite."[207] By framing Sarjūn's envy through this denominational lens, Dionysius is simultaneously carving out a communal identity of the Syrian Church that is distinct from their Chalcedonian rivals, as well as lionizing the wealth and power of the contemporary Gūmōyē/Telmaḥrē family in Edessa compared to Sarjūn's "envious" descendants in Damascus. In the near contemporary ninth-century chronicle by the Chalcedonian Theophanes the Confessor (d. 201/817), Sarjūn is referred to as "a good Christian who was treasurer and stood on close terms with Abimelch ('Abd al-Malik)."[208] These competing representations illustrate how the communal identity of Christian authors shape the presentation of individuals and history in their literature.

Additionally, there is a hagiographical element in the way that historical individuals are connected with places that coincide with the author's present. For example, Athanasius is lauded for his patronage in the city of Edessa by his descendent and active member of the city, Dionysius. Thus, Dionysius simultaneously celebrated the Athanasius of the past while legitimizing and extolling the continued affluence and influence of the family in Dionysius' own

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Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 74. Ibn al-Muqqafa' has a less generous portrayal of 'Abd al-Malik, and claims that 'Abd al-Malik arrested Athanasius, the "believer and lover of Christ," and "took from him all the grains that he had acquired in Egypt since the collection of taxes had been left to him," *History of the Patriarchs,* 54. Al-Kindī does not mention the encounter and places Athanasius departure from Egypt after the death of 'Abd al-Malik, see note above.

[207] Members of the Syriac Orthodox Church were called Jacobites by their adversaries in association with the efforts of Bishop Jacob Baradaeus (*ca.* 500-578) in Edessa to undermine efforts to propagate Chalcedonian Christology in the city. Sidney Griffith points out that even with the "currency of epithets such as Jacobite or even the more polemical Monophysite to describe them, there was not yet a full-fledge ecclesial community, a hierarchically separate and independent Jacobite church…Arguably, it was not until the late seventh century that political release from the control of the government of Byzantium provided the Syriac-speaking Jacobite communities now living under Arab government the opportunity to consolidate their denominational identity with their own fully independent hierarchical structures," Sidney Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 135.

[208] Cyril Mango and Roger Scott, trans., *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 282-813* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 510.

time. Likewise, Sarjūn's family would receive their own hagiographical treatment in the hagiography of the famous theologian John of Damascus.[209] Mirroring the presentation of Athanasius, Sarjūn's son, Manṣūr b. Sarjūn, is lauded for aptitude in the administration, intelligence, and faith in the *Arabica Vita* of John of Damascus.[210] Again, similar to the way Athanasius is connected to Edessa, the family of John of Damascus is connected with the monastery of St. Saba in Jerusalem.[211] Together these demonstrate that anecdotal representations of Christian administrators in the Umayyad Caliphate were components of larger narrative strategies that aimed at projecting a hagiographical interpretation of the past to serve the present purposes of the author.

The Christian in Scribal Hagiography

In Islamic literature, Sarjūn features more prominently than Athanasius and exemplifies the broader literary portrayal of Christians related to the administration.[212] Sarjūn served for multiple administrations in roles most commonly associated with the tax administration (*dīwān al-kharāj*) from the Caliphate of Muʿāwiya (r. 41-60/661-680) until ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 65-86/685-705). Sarjūn is documented in two ways. First, he is mentioned in lists of administrators and

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[209] Rocio Portillo, "The Arabic Life of St. John of Damascus," *Parole de l'Orient* 21 (1996): 157-188 (translation, 171-188).

[210] *Ibid*., 174. The *Arabica Vita* of John of Damascus incorrectly equates Ibn Sarjūn as John of Damascus' father—an association that was almost universally accepted in literature prior to Anthony's important reappraisal, "Fixing John Damascene's Biography," esp. 618-627.

[211] Steven Manṣūr (d.807), an additional relative in the family, is also connected to Mār Saba, and is the author of the *Twenty martyrs of Mār Saba;* see "Stephen Manṣūr" in eds. David Thomas and Barbara Roggema, *Christian-Muslim Relations 600-1500 Volume 1* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 388-396.

[212] As mentioned above, Athanasius is mentioned by both al-Kindī, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt,* 50, 58-59, and al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarāʾ,* 40. However, he does not receive the same attention as Sarjūn, nor is he connected with the Arabization of the *dīwān* besides the association that the reform led to Athanasius' dismissal; al-Kindī, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt,* 58-59.

khabar-narratives.[213] Administrative lists are exactly what they sound like—a list of administrators who served under a particular caliph or governor, and which lack any anecdotal or narrative detail.[214] The second is his inclusion in *khabar*-narratives, which deserves further attention. *Khabar*-narratives are similar to what I have been calling hagiography above; that is, anecdotes that are a component of broader narrative strategies employed in order to communicate an intentional message.[215] These narrative strategies are not restricted to literature on the administration, but their occurrence in accounts surrounding the bureaucracy is particularly relevant. Paul Heck notes that the chancellery literature (*adab al-kuttāb*) genre as a historical category is "marked by a didactic aspect, conveyed through anecdotes and stories of prominent state officials of the past as a way to demonstrate values and codes of conduct expected of administrative personal."[216] It is important to take Heck's point here seriously, as well as others who have applied literary readings of *adab al-kuttāb* literature. These scholars demonstrate that the authors were intentional concerning the content that they included and how they arranged it. It is in this way that I approach the two events that Sarjūn is the most associated with in Islamic literature: Yazīd I's connection to Karbalāʾ and the translation of the *dīwān* into

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[213] For Muʿāwiya: al-Yaʿqubī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:205; Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 228; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 59-68; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:208; *TMD*, 22:320; Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist,* 301; and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih*, al-ʿIqd al-farīd,* 4:252. For Yazīd I: al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 69-70; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 227, 239; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *al-ʿIqd al-farīd,* 4:247. For Muʿawiyā II: al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 71. For Marwān I: al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 72; Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 263; finally, for ʿAbd al-Malik: Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān,*193; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 73-89; *TMD* 22:320-321; and Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 299.

[214] These are common in chronicles particularly at the end of a caliphate, as well in other genres of literature (i.e. *al-ʿIqd al-farīd*). For example, at the end of Marwān I's life, Ibn Khayyāṭ lists: "Yaḥyā b. Qays al-Ghassānī was his chief of police, Sarjūn b. Manṣūr al-Rūmī was his scribe (*kātib*), and Abū Sahl al-Aswad, his *mawlā,* was his chamberlain (ḥājib)," (*kāna ʿalā shurṭatihi Yaḥyā b. Qays al-Ghassānī wa kātibuhu Sarjūn b. Manṣūr al-Rūmī wa ḥājibuhu Abū Sahl al-Aswad mawlāhu*), *Ta'rīkh,* 263.

[215] See also, Stefan Leder, "The Use of Composite Form in the Making of the Islamic Historical Tradition," in *On Fiction and* Adab *in Medieval Arabic Literature,* ed. Philip Kennedy (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 125-148.

[216] Paul Heck, *The Construction of Knowledge in Islamic Civilization: Qudāma b. Jaʿfar and his* Kitāb al-kharāj wa-ṣināʿat al-kitāba (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 33 n.21.

Arabic. These two narratives demonstrate how Sarjūn represented the category of Christian administrators and their inability to meet the expectations of the ideal scribe.

Sarjūn's advice to Yazīd I about killing Ḥusayn b. Ali, on the surface, serves to shift blame away from Yazīd I onto the Christian Sarjūn, and even Mu'āwiya (Yazīd I's father and the previous caliph). The general summary of the event is: Yazīd I asks Sarjūn whom he should send as the governor of Kūfa as a counter to Ḥusayn's growing influence in the city. Sarjūn recommends 'Ubaydallāh b. Ziyād, whom all the accounts remark that Yazīd I personally disliked. Yazīd asks for an alternative, to which Sarjūn asks Yazīd I if he would feel different if Mu'āwiya had recommended 'Ubaydallāh. Yazīd acquiesces that he would indeed heed his father's suggestion.[217] Sarjūn then produces a sealed contract (*'ahd*) from Mu'āwiya addressed to 'Ubaydallāh to serve as governor of Kūfa.[218] Sarjūn comments that he only withheld the letter because he knew of Yazīd's hatred for 'Ubaydallāh.[219] 'Ubaydallāh's governorship is associated most significantly with 'Ubaydallāh's forces killing Ḥusayn (the grandson of the Prophet) at Karbalā', as well as the execution of Muslim b. 'Aqīl (the cousin of Ḥusayn) and previous governor of Kūfa. The inference is for the reader to connect the implicit error of sending 'Ubaydallāh with the advice of the Christian Sarjūn.

For al-Jahshiyārī, the point is not as much to shift blame away from Yazīd I's responsibility in Karbalā' specifically but to emphasize Yazīd I's mistake of relying on a

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[217] The account in Ibn A'tham makes no mention of Mu'āwiya or contract recorded before his death; Ibn Atham, *Kitāb al-futūḥ*, 5:36. Similar, the first account in al-Ṭabarī includes Sarjūn asking Yazīd if he would accept Mu'āwiya's advice if he were alive; but rather than producing a letter or contract, Sarjūn only replies, "then accept it from me (*fa-qbal mannī*), *Ta'rīkh,* 2:228.

[218] Al-Ṭabarī's second account (Hishām > Uwāna) account does not mention that the letter was sealed with Mu'āwiya, but clarifies that it was written by Mu'āwiya prior to his death—this clarification, as well as the mention that the letter carried the sealed of Mu'āwiya, makes it clear that Sarjūn did not forge the letter.

[219] Only al-Jahshiyārī and al-Baladhurī mention Sarjūn's admitted reluctance.

Christian scribe in general. As Khalek points out, "Sarjūn having withheld information from the caliph also implies that there was an uncomfortable degree of power in the hands of the Christian advisor…it remains significant that portraying the caliph as subject to the persuasion of his Christian advisors is the means by which al-Ğahšiyārī chose to contaminate the caliph's character."[220] Here we see an example of what Yarbrough identifies as "prescriptive discourse." That is, for al-Jahshiyārī, the account does more than simply divert blame from Yazīd I for the killing of the Prophet's grandson—it demonstrates the deficiency of the Christian scribe and the consequences for their employment as a precedent for discouraging the employment of non-Muslims in the administration.

The prescriptive element is also witnessed in traditions relating Sarjūn's actions to the conversion of the bureaucracy from Greek into Arabic. The different versions share a similar outline of events.[221] 'Abd al-Malik requests Sarjūn to carry out some administrative function, which he nonchalantly delays in carrying out. This frustrates 'Abd al-Malik who vents to another administrator, Sulaymān b. Sa'd, and asks what could be done. Ultimately, the decision is made to convert the *dīwān* from Greek into Arabic, and Sulaymān b. Sa'd assumes Sarjūn's role. It is worth noting, however, that not all accounts attribute the conversion of the *dīwān* to the arrogance of Sarjūn and some others place the reform after his death. For example, in Baladhurī's *Futūḥ al-Buldān,* 'Abd al-Malik order the conversion as a reaction to witnessing a Greek official urinate in the inkstand. After the conversion, Sarjūn remarks to his fellow Greek (i.e. Christian) administrators, "Seek a livelihood from another profession, for God has cut it off

[220] Khalek, "Some Notes on the Representation of Non-Muslim Officials," 508.

[221] Al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist,* 301; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 81; al-Ṣulī, *Ādab al-kuttāb,* 192-193; *TMD*, 22:320-321. See Chapter 3 for further discussion about the translation of the *dīwān*.

from you."[222] Sarjūn's arrogance is explicit when his behavior is juxtaposed against the Muslim scribe Sulaymān b. Sa'd, as in al-Jahshiyārī account of the conversion of the *dīwān* and Sulaymān b. Sa'd's biography in Ibn 'Asākir.

In al-Jahshiyārī's rendering, Sarjūn's arrogance is illustrated by his dismissive demeanor to 'Abd al-Malik; first by his sluggish and delayed response to 'Abd al-Malik's request (*tathāqal 'anhu wa-tawānā fīhi*) and then his continued manner of not taking the request seriously (*tafrīṭan wa-taqṣīran*).[223] This arrogance and indifference is contrasted with the efficacy of Sulaymān b. Sa'd. When asked by 'Abd al-Malik for a solution to Sarjūn's arrogance, Sulaymān b. Sa'd replies, "If you desire, I will convert the registry (*al-ḥisāb*) to Arabic."[224] The sluggish pretentiousness of the Christian Sarjūn is sharply contrasted with the immediate action of his Muslim counterpart. Sarjūn's arrogance parallels another non-Muslim associated with the conversion of the *dīwān* in 'Iraq, Zādānfarrūkh.[225] According to al-Jahshiyārī, Zādānfarrūkh even brags to his fellow scribes that the governor al-Ḥajjāj could never remove him because they would be unable to convert the *dīwān* from Persian into Arabic.[226] Again, the diligent Muslim scribe provides the prompt response and translation of the *dīwān*—this time by the scribe Ṣāliḥ. In short, not only do these accounts contrast the arrogant Christian or Persian with the

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[222] Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān,* 193.

[223] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 81.

[224] Ibid.

[225] Zadānfarrūkh served under the governors Ziyād and al-Ḥajjāj; Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 212, 308; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 62, 79. See also, Martin Sprengling, "From Persian to Arabic," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 56, no. 2 (1939): 175-224 and Michael Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 51ff.

[226] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 81; there are similar accounts in al-Ṣulī, *Adab al-Kuttāb,* 192, and Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist,* 300.

industrious Muslim, they also credit the conversion of the *dīwān* to the hard work of the scribes themselves.

In Sulaymān b. Sa‘d's biography in Ibn ‘Asākir's history, the religious contrast between Sulaymān and Sarjūn is even more explicit. In Ibn ‘Asākir's history, ‘Abd al-Malik is not just frustrated with Sarjūn, but with the employment of Christians in high administrative positions in general.[227] In this account, ‘Abd al-Malik suggests the conversion of the *dīwān* and Sulaymān's replacement of Sarjūn. After overhearing ‘Abd al-Malik's request to Sulayman, Rawḥ b. Zinbā‘ (then governor of Jordan) urges Sulaymān to accept the request by lamenting that Christians will continue being appointed if Sulaymān refuses. This frames the conversion of the *dīwān* in a religious dimension, and not in Sarjūn's arrogance. The contrast is particularly interesting when we consider the fact that the account is only preserved in Sulaymān's entry in Ibn ‘Asākir's history and not within Sarjūn's own entry.[228]

These two accounts illustrate the hagiographical nature of Sarjūn's persona in the literature. In al-Jahshiyārī, Sarjūn serves as the lazy opposite for fashioning the diligent Sulaymān. Thus, the conversion of the *dīwān* is the result of the sage advice and industriousness of a scribe. In Ibn ‘Asākir's history, the religious contrast is magnified and Sarjūn's personal role is diminished; that is, ‘Abd al-Malik is frustrated with Christian administrators in general and not Sarjūn in particular.[229] Zādañfarrūkh and Sarjūn are both mentioned in several lists of

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[227] *TMD* 22:320.

[228] Sarjūn's entry is quite unique in Ibn ‘Asākir which claims that Sarjūn converted to Islam, 20:161. This is unique to Ibn ‘Asākir and Antony has suggested that this was could be based on the assumption that Sarjūn converted when he became a *mawlā* of Mu‘āwiya, "Fixing John Damascene's Biography," 615, n. 25.

[229] Yarbrough argues that this account bears signs of authenticity, since it is absent of topoi and places the reforms after the death of Sarjūn, Yarbrough, *Friends of the Emir,* 74-75. However, I am unconvinced. For one, it frames ‘Abd al-Malik's decision as a reaction to Christian authority and reflects a broader tendency for scholars to default to interpretations that ‘Abd al-Malik was motivated by the need to legitimize himself to Christians. Examining early Islamic tombstones, I have criticized elsewhere scholarships tendency to interpret Islamic culture production as a

administrators, but it is only when they are juxtaposed with their Muslim counterparts that negative anecdotes are attributed to the individuals.

Where do we go from here?

In the end, Khalek's and Yarbrough's recognition of the role of the Umayyad era Christian official in ʿAbbāsid-era discourse actually tells us quite little about the Umayyad period since they are narrative constructs motivated by ʿAbbāsid era concerns and not the preservation of Umayyad realities. Khalek and Yarbrough highlight how *adab al-kuttāb* literature retains many of the same historiographical hurdles found in other genres of literary material for the early Islamic period.[230] Debié's argument about confessional bias expands this concern to Christian literature as well, even those written during the Umayyad period.[231] These scholars draw our attention to an unfortunate, and long recognized, characteristic of early Islamic historiography: the difficulty of discovering the "kernel" of truth from later revisions.[232]

However, rather than attempting to devise a particular filter to discover the earliest layers of the "historiographical onion," I argue that this historiographical skepticism needs to be expanded to additional tropes about the bureaucracy in general.[233] Scholars continue to accept

reaction to Christians, "Script or Scripture: The Earliest Arabic Tombstones in Light of Jewish and Christian Epitaphs," in *Script and Scripture: Writing and Religion in Arabia, ca. 500-700 CE,* ed. Fred Donner and Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 2022).

[230] See also Chapter 1.

[231] For example, the late 7th century Chronicle of John of Nikiū discussed below.

[232] For an overview of the different approaches to this early Islamic historiography, see Fred Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1998), 1-31, and the more recent, Aziz al-Azmeh, *The Arabs and Islam in Late Antiquity: A Critique of Approaches to Arabic Sources* (Berlin: Gerlach Press, 2014), 1-14.

[233] For historical kernels, onions and *filtres*, see respectively: Albrecht Noth, *The Early Islamic Historical Tradition* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994); Lawrence Conrad, "Al-ʿAzdī's History of the Arab Conquest in Balad al-Sham: Some Historiographical Observations," Muḥammad Bakhīt and Iḥsān ʿAbbās eds., *Bilād al-Shām fī Ṣadr al-Islām* (ʿAmmān: al-Jāmiʿa al-Urdunīya, 1987); and Antoine Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir: L'espace syrien sous les deniers Omeyyades et les premiers Abbassides (v.72-193/692-809*), 61-103.

some aspects related to employment in the administration while acknowledging that others are literary devices. For example, Yarbrough argues that "In the first generations after the conquests, a literally cavalier attitude to the acquisition of writing, arithmetic, and other administrative skills was not uncommon among the conquerors… In fact, some were persuaded that bureaucratic pen work (*al-kitābah*) was beneath their dignity…Like landholding and agriculture, scribing for the state—particularly when the state was seen as unholy—could seem to be kind of sedentary subservience, at odds with the martial prowess, unfettered independence, and limitless generosity that had been cardinal virtues of Arabian tribal culture."[234] However, for an approach grounded in deconstructing tropes related to Christians in the administration, Yarbrough here seems to contend that animosity towards bureaucratic positions attributed to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869) or Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (d.139/756) could reflect dispositions to the early administration and are not likewise narrative constructs reflecting the milieu of their authors.[235] Rather than attempt to argue that administrative positions were or were not unappealing or unholy, the point I want to make is that anecdotal representations of the administration are all suspect, not just those applied to non-Muslims.

This results in a reading of bureaucrats in literary sources in a manner that is much closer to approaches to documentary sources. That is, paying particular attention to social networks and economic backgrounds while treating anecdotes about piety, ineptness, or exceptionalism with suspicion.[236] Within this framework, we are able to examine the employment of administrators as

[234] Yarbrough, *Friends of the Emir,* 81-82. While not analogous, this position perpetuates the idea of a "tribal hostility to settled life" as an interpretive framework for the early Islamic caliphate; Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 26 and 62.

[235] Yarbrough, *Friends of the Emir,* 81-82.

[236] For example, papyri often include pious introduction and religious vocabulary, however Late Antique historians seem hesitant to extrapolate from these phrases assessments of individual faith, rather than cultural vocabularies or status symbols. However, for the Islamic period, there is the tendency frame individuals or a regime by gauging the

part of the Umayyad political economy and as a window into the larger social world of late antiquity. The earliest Christian administrators and their pre-Islamic predecessors not only help frame the social space of elites in the pre-reforms period of the Umayyad caliphate, but they also provide a useful starting point for interpreting the consequences of administrative appointments and reforms in the early Islamic bureaucracy beyond changes in the confessional membership of bureaucrats.

Between Hagiography & Documentary

In April 22/643, ʿAbdallāh b. Jābir (Ἀβδέλλας), the commander of the Islamic forces in Egypt, sent a bilingual (Greek and Arabic) receipt to two pagarchs in the Herakleopolis district, Christophoros and Theodorakios.[237] The receipt identifies Christophoros and Theodorakios as the two sons of a certain Apa Kyros (*Abū Qīr*).[238] Apa Kyros was the previous pagarch of Herakleopolis, and is also attested in documentary sources.[239] Much like Manṣūr, Apa Kyros and

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authenticity of their "faith" or "piousness;" for example: Marshal Hodgson's "piety-minded" opposition to the Marwānids, *The Venture of Islam Volume 1: The Classical Age of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 247ff., and the more recent Steven Judd, *Religious Scholars and the Umayyads: Piety-Minded Supporters of the Marwanid Caliphate* (London: Rutledge, 2014).

[237] Adolf Grohmann, *From the World of Arabic Papyri* (Cairo: Al-Maaref Press, 1952), 113-115. ʿAdbdalāh b. Jābir was the commander of the Caliphal troops in Egypt from 641-643; there is an additional Greek papyrus from ʿAbdallah from December 642, Grohmann, *Études de Papyrologie* I, 45-46.

[238] *T-dh-r-q ibn Abū Qīr al-aṣghar… a-ṣ-ṭ-f-n ibn Abū Qīr al-akbar, ibid*. We also have two additional papyri (both in Greek) of the communication between ʿAbdallāh b. Jābir and Christophoros and Theodorakios; one from January 643, Grohman, *Études de Papyrologie* I*,* 44, and the other from June 644, Grohmann, *Études de Papyrologie* VIII (Cairo: Imprierie de l'institute Français d'archéologie orientale, 1957), 19-20.

[239] For papyri from Apa Kyros: *Études de Papyrologie* VIII 2, 3, and 8. Both Joseph Karabacek and Grohman includes *PREF* 550 as from Apa Kyros prior to the Caliphal presence in Egypt (21 December, 638); Joseph Karabacek, *Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer: Führer durch die Ausstellung* (*PERF*) (Wein, 1894), 137; Grohmann, *Études de Papyrologie* VIII, 30. This has recently been challenged by Federico Morelli publication of *PERF* 550*,* who questions if this Apa Kyros is in fact the same Kyros and thus if *PERF* 550 even belongs in the archive of Apa Kyros and his two sons, "Per o contro il nemico? Le razionoi di un carpentiere e la cronologia dell 'invasione araa secondo P.Vindob. G 39718 = PERF 550," in eds., Thomas Corsten, et al., *Tyche: Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 32 (Wein: Holzhausen, 2017), 119-129. See also, Roberta Mazza, "Ricerche sul pagarca nell'Egitto tardoantico e bizantino," *Aegyptus* 75, no.1 (1995): 169-242.

his two sons were able to withstand regime change in Egypt and maintain a certain level of administrative privilege.

However, our understanding of Manṣūr's family participation in the bureaucracy is drastically different from the sons of Apa Kyros. Neither Theodorakios, Christophoros, or Apa Kyros are mentioned in any Arabic Chronicle or *adab al-kuttāb* literature, or even Christian literature in Arabic, Coptic, Greek, or Syriac. For Apa Kyros and his two sons, their existence is recorded in a source grounded to the time of its composition, one that is free of the interpretive layers of later authors. This is drastically different from Sarjūn b. Manṣūr whose literary existence transcends his physical career in the Umayyad administration, but from whom we have no documents. We, unfortunately, do not know specifics concerning Sarjūn's family economic wealth; however, when we consider the economic resources of lower-level administrators, we are able to extrapolate additional details about what it meant to be a "Christian" bureaucrat in the early Islamic period.

Landed pagarchs of late antiquity and the Pre-Reform Umayyad Caliphate (ca. 11-81/632-700)

The papyri tied to Apa Kyros and his two sons provide information about the socio-economic background of administrators straddling the period before and after the Islamic conquests of Egypt. As pointed out by several scholars, much of the local elite retained their positions and even land ownership after the Caliphal conquests.[240] Landownership, especially in

[240] For example, Bell, "The Administration of Egypt under the Umayyad Khalifs," 280; Sijpesteijn, "New Rule over Old Structures: Egypt after the Muslim Conquest," 183; *ibid*., "Landholding Patterns in Early Islamic Egypt," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 9, no. 1 (2009): 122-123; *ibid*., *Shaping a Muslim State,* 64-65. This position is also recognized by scholars primarily working with literary sources, for example the continued employment of leading Persians in Iraq under the governorship of Ziyād; Martin Sprengling, "From Persian to Arabic" *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 56, no. 2 (April 1939), 187; Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest,* 53. For further evidence of Persian's continued use in the early Islamic bureaucracy, see Wadād al-Qāḍī, "The Names of Estates in State Registers before and After the Arabization of the *'Dīwāns*,'" in *Umayyad Legacies: Medieval Memories from Syria to Spain,* eds. Antoine Borrut and Paul Cobb, (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 255-280.

Egypt, has largely defined pre-Islamic late antique elites and their relationship to political and administrative structures.[241] The Sassanian conquest of Egypt, followed by the Byzantine (re)conquest, and finally Islamic conquest, has made it difficult to fully understand the degree to which these Egyptian landholdings survived (or did not survive) the successive military campaigns and political changes.[242] Nevertheless, the early Umayyad caliphate continued to employ administrators from the same pool of elites as had the previous Byzantine and Sassanian regimes. This is particularly well attested in the office of the pagarch, a position in charge of collecting local taxes from their districts and staffed primarily by elite landholders in the pre-Islamic period.[243] Combining the papyri from Apa Kyros and his sons with papyri from other pagarchs of the early Caliphal period, we are able to recognize two common characteristics of the Christian pagarchs: familial succession and land ownership.

First, Christophoros and Theodorakios inherited the position of pagarch of Herakleopolis from their father, Apa Kyros, who is identified as pagarch in two papyri from 642.[244] They are not the only seventh century pagarchs recorded in papyri with family ties to their position. First, there is Papas the mid/late seventh-century pagarch of Apollonos, who is likely the most well-

[241] Jean Gascou, "Les grands domaines, la cité et l'état en Égypte byzantine," *Travaux et Mémories* 9 (1985): 1-90; Jairus Banaji, *Agrarian Change in Late Antiquity* (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2001), Todd Hickey, "Aristocratic Landowning and the Economy of Byzantine Egypt, in *Egypt in the Byzantine World 450-700,* ed. Roger Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 288-308.

[242] For the debate about the continuation of landholding elites into the early Islamic period, see, Banaji, *Agrarian Change,* 153; Sijpesteijn, "Landholding patterns in Early Islamic Egypt," 124; and Marie Legendre, "Landowners, Caliphs and State Policy over Landholdings in the Egyptian Countryside: Theory and Practice," in. *Authority and Control in the Countryside: From Antiquity to Islam in the Mediterranean and Near East (6th-10th Century),* eds. Alain Delattre, et. al (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 393-394.

[243] For example, six of the nine known pagarchs of the seventh-century Fayum come from after the conquest, Banaji, *Agrarian Change*, 153; see also, Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State,* 33-42.

[244] Grohmann, *Études de papyrology* VIII 2, 8.

known pagarch of the period due to the survival of an archive of his letters.[245] Papas was the son of Liberios who likely can be identified as the pagarch of Apollonos in 649.[246] Flavius Petterios, the pagarch of Arsinoe, did not immediately inherit the position from his father, but did marry Marous, the daughter of Menas who was the pagarch in the early seventh-century.[247] These examples demonstrate the continued tendency of familial succession for employment of a position and the value of this form of social capital both prior and at the beginning of the Umayyad Caliphate.

Second, landownership and substantial wealth is a common characteristic of those who survived the regime changes of the early seventh century. Again, the papyri from the archive of Flavius Papas provides a great deal of insight into the wealth of a pagarch.[248] Papas' estate produced wheat, barley, wine, meat, and even had grain set aside for workers, transport, and donations to the church.[249] Likewise, Marous, the daughter of Menas, inherited the estate of her father after his passing, likely before her marriage to Petterios.[250] Later papyri that mention both

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[245] The collection includes over 100 Greek and an unknown number of Coptic papyri excavated in Edfu, Clive Foss, "Egypt Under Muʻāwiya Part I," 4.

[246] *Koptisches Sammelbuch* I (Vienna, 1993), 232, as cited in Foss, "Egypt Under Muʻāwiya Part I," 5 n.19.

[247] According to Foss, Petterios took over pagarch from Johannes (also attested in the papyri, but we do not know anything about Johannes background), "Egypt under Muʻāwiya II," 261. Both Petterios and Marous are mentioned in *SPP* VIII 869 and 877. For the career of Menas, see Palme *CPR* XXIV 177-181. See also, Pieter Sijpesteijn, "Der Pagarch Petterios," *Jahrbuch der Österreichische Byzantinische Gesellschaft* 30 (1981): 57-61.

[248] For the papyri of Flavius Papas in early Islamic history, see Clive Foss, "Egypt Under Muʻāwiya Part I: Flavius Papas and Upper Egypt," 1-24; Anne Boud'hors, Alain Delattre, et al., "Un nouveau depart pour les archives de Papas. Papyrus coptes et grecs de la jarred d'Edfou," *Bulletin de l'institut français d'archéologie orientale* 117 (2018): 87-124; *ibid*., "Papyrus coptes et grecs de la jarred d'Edfou (suite)," *Bulletin de l'institut français d'archéologie orientale* 118 (2019): 1-46. For the revised dating of the archive, see Jean Gascou and Klass Worp, "Problèmes de documentation apollinopolite," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 49 (1982): 83-95.

[249] For references, see Foss, "Foss Egypt under Muʻāwiya Part I," 7.

[250] *SB* I 4659. "The *endoxotatē* Fl. Marous is identified as the daughter of Menas *endoxou mnēmēs* ("of glorious memory"), Foss, "Egypt under Muʻāwiya II, 263. Since this papyrus only mentions Marous and not both Marous and Petterios, Foss has suggested that she had control of her father's estate prior to her marriage to Petterios; Foss, "Egypt under Muʻāwiya II," 263.

Marous and Petterios together includes references to their estate.[251] Finally, there is another Theodorakios who was pagarch of Krokodilopolis in the early and middle seventh-century.[252] This Theodorakios was son of Gennadius, a scholar (*scolastikos*), but like the sons of Kyros, he is associated with a landownership.[253]

This selection of early papyri illustrates two important factors for constructing the social space of administrators of the period. First, the social networks of individuals, be it immediate family or through marriage, was a common trait in their employment within the administration and their position as pagarch. Second, these families and individuals are associated with landownership and wealth. Religious devotion may very well have been a component of their identity and many of the papyri include "pious" phrases for describing individuals and in the introductory formula and records for donations to the church.[254] Greek language education was likely also a factor for employment, as it would be necessary to facilitate the aspects of the administration conducted in Greek.[255] However, this language would still largely be subordinate to existing family wealth and social networks, especially since wealth likely financed Greek education and not the other way around. All the pagarchs discussed are directly related to landed elites, previous holders of the position, or both. This is not to say that forms of cultural capital

[251] *SPP* VIII 869; Foss, "Egypt under Mu'āwiya II," 263;.

[252] *CPR* XXIV 32 is the last dated papyri, to May 651. *CPR* VII 51 has the possible dating of April 629 or 644.

[253] *CPR* VII 51. Banaji seems to combine both Theodorakios in his "Appendix 4: A Brief Update on the Aristocracy," *Agrarian Change,* 256. However, the Theodorakios of *CPR* VII 51 and *CPR* XXIV 32 is Theodorakios son of Gennadius ([υἱῳ] [Γε]ννάδίου) and the pagarch of Krokodilopolis, not the son of Kyros and pagarch of Herakleopolis in *CPR* XXII 4.

[254] Such as introductory formula: ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου καὶ δεσπότου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν. Additionally, a papyrus from 672 suggest that Peterios's son, Georgios, held some form of an ecclesiastical position even as he continued management of his deceased father's estate. Georgios is identified as a "Godfearing arch deacon" (*theosebestatou arxidiakonou*) and son of Petterios the pagarch "of glorious memory" (*endoxou mnēnēs*), *SPP* III 324; Foss, "Egypt under Mu'āwiya II," 264.

[255] Sijpesteijn notes that Greek continued to be used for roughly150 years after the conquest with the last dated Greek papyrus dating to 796/797 (*CPR* XXII 21), "Landholding Patterns I Early Islamic Egypt," 125.

were not important, such as Greek language proficiency, confessional membership, etc. It is only to suggest that these factors are components of the superstructure based on their socio-economic power. There is no evidence that they were simply hard workers who climbed the social ladder; rather they were already members within the local administrative and economic elite. The papyrological evidence for the combination of successive generations of landownership (economic capital) and networks (social capital) are the defining characteristics of these individuals for the early Islamic period.

As will be discussed in Chapter 3, it is not until the beginning of the eighth century that we see sizable settlements of migrant Arab Muslims and Muslim landowners in Egypt during the caliphate of Ḥishām b. ʻAbd al-Malik (r. 105-125/724-743).[256] As pointed out by Marie Legendre, the lack of substantial landownership in Egypt did not mean political elites did not own large estates in other regions of the caliphate.[257] For example, the first governor of Egypt, ʻAmr b. al-ʻĀṣ (served from 20-25/641-646 and 39/43659-663), is said to have owned property in Palestine.[258] Thus, for the early Umayyad period (*ca*. . 41-80/661-700), Christian administrators were economically wealthy individuals in their region and they served in the administration for this very reason and not because they were members of a particular religious confession.

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[256] Koseï Morimoto, "Land Tenure in Egypt during the Early Islamic Period," *Orient* 11 (1975): 109-153; Sijpesteijn, "Landholding Patterns in Early Islamic Egypt" and Legendre, "Landowners, Caliphs and Sate Policy over Landholdings in the Egyptian Countryside." The influx of Arab Muslims into the Egypt is associated with the financial director of Egypt, ʻUbaydallāh b. Al-Ḥabḥāb, Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam*, Futūh Miṣr,* 143; al-Kindī*, The Governors and Judges of Egypt*, 76-77*;* Ibn al-Muqaffa', *History of the Patriarchs,* 101.

[257] Legendre, "Landowners, Caliphs and the State Policy over Landholdings," 401. See also, Sijpesteijn, "Landholding Patterns in Early Islamic Egypt."

[258] Michael Lecker, "The estates of ʻAmr b. al-ʻĀṣ in Palestine," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 52, no. 1 (1989):24-37. Legendre also points out a undated register from Aphrodito (*P.Lond* IV 1414, 81, 151 as cited in Legendre) that mentions "workers sent to the estate of the governor of Egypt in Damascus at the beginning of the eight century," "Landowners, Caliphs and State Policy over Landholdings," 401.

A documentary approach to Christians in literature

Whereas papyrological evidence is grounded in the time of its writing, Christian administrators recorded in both Christian and Islamic literature are subject to an indefinite literary lifespan—one that can drastically differ depending on the confessional identity or intentions of the author. For these authors, the religious identity of the individual was stressed to communicate broader categorical insights that extended beyond the individual. However, it is not required to prioritize the religious affiliation of individual bureaucrats just because authors of scribal hagiography emphasized their religious identity. If we are interested in understanding the social history of the Umayyad period, and not that of the later authors, then this means we need to find a different approach to the literature. Looking beyond these literary anecdotes, we are, nevertheless, still able to identify many of the same characteristics that correspond with traits in the papyrological evidence. After filtering out the anecdotal representations of the administrators, sparse data reflecting family and social networks of the individuals remain. With this approach, I derive data as I would from documentary sources and, similar to papyri, when enough data is combined, patterns of change over time emerge.

While rare, there is at least one instance of a Christian administrator of the early Caliphal period mentioned in both literary and documentary sources in addition to the above discussed Athanasius.[259] Philoxenus, the dux of Arcadia, is mentioned in the very same receipt to Apa Kyros discussed above, as well as the in the seventh-century chronicle by John of Nikiū.[260] John

[259] For the pre-Islamic period, there is also the dossier of Theodosios who is mentioned in John of Nikiu as dux of Arcadia and military commander, John of Nikiū, *Chronicle,* CXI. However, he is killed in the battle of Heliopolis in 640 and does not serve in the Islamic administration. See Nikolaos Gonis, "Notes on the Aristocracy of Byzantine Fayum", *Zietschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 166 (2008): 206-207 for references.

[260] Philoxenos is identified as the dux of the Arcadian eparchy (δουκὶ τῆς Ἀρκαδ(ί)ω(ν) ἐπαρχ(ίας)), Grohmann, *Études de papyrology* VIII, 9-14. John was the late seventh century bishop of Nikiū who wrote a chronicle originally in Coptic. It was later translated into Arabic and finally into Ethiopic, which is the only language in which it has

of Nikiū mentions Philoxenus amongst other administrators who retained their position after the Islamic conquest.[261] Menas who Heraclius had appointed as dux of Lower Egypt, and John, who was Menas' replacement and had served as dux Alexandria under the Byzantines.[262] Sijpesteijn has also surmised that the Sīnōdā in John of Nikiū is the Sanūtīs (sp?) in the *The History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church Alexandria* by Sāwīrus b. al-Muqaffa'.[263] Combining the two accounts we are able to glean that Sīnōdā was appointed dux of Rīf after the conquest and that he held a similar position in Alexandria under the Byzantines.[264] However, we know nothing else about this Philoxenus or the others, such as their descendants or personal backgrounds. However, since these individuals hold the position of dux, which is confirmed for Philoxenus in a papyrus, these individuals held a superior position to Apa Kyros and other pagarchs. We can therefore surmise that they were also wealthy and likely landowners similar to other late antique elites in Egypt. This fortuitous record of papyrological evidence between two members of the bureaucracy indicate that aspects related to employment can be accepted in literary sources, even while retaining a healthy skepticism about the portrayals of such individuals.[265]

survived; Robert Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: a Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on early Islam* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997), 152; R.H. Charles trans, *John, Bishop of Nikiu: Translated from Zotenberg's Ethoiopic Text* (Oxford: Oxford University press, 1916). See also, Grohmann, "Greek Papyri of the Early Islamic Period," 13, and Sijpesteijn, *Shaping the Muslim State,* 87.

[261] John of Nikiū, *Chronicle,* CXX 29.

[262] John of Nikiū, *Chronicle*, CXX 29 and CXXXI 6. Later, John of Nikiū mentions another John "the Chalcedonian" abandoning his life as a monk, converting to Islam, and persecuting Christians—an example of an author's confessional lens influencing his portrayal of events, as described by Debié.

[263] Sijpesteijn, "New Rule over Old Structures," 190.

[264] John of Nikiū, *Chronicle* CXX 29; Ibn al-Muqaffa', *History of the Patriarchs,* 495.

[265] Several of the figures mentioned above by John of Nikiū and Serverus b. al-Muqaffa' are couched in religious overtones similar to those of Sarjūn and Athanasius; for example, Menas was a "presumptuous man, unlettered, and a deep hater of the Egyptians…(who) loved the heathen but hated the Christians," and John had "compassion on to the poor," CXXX 29.

For most of the early Christian administrators there is evidence of generational or family employment in both Muslim and Christian literary sources. First, the eldest Manṣūr is identified as a high-level bureaucrat under the Byzantines and Sassanians.[266] His son, Sarjūn b. Manṣūr is recorded extensively in both Christian and Islamic sources as an administrator for the Umayyad caliphate. Finally, both Manṣūr b. Sarjūn and his son, the famous theologian John of Damascus, served in the Umayyad administration.[267] Likewise, both of Athanasius's sons enjoyed positions of employment in the administration.[268] Another Christian administrator, Ibn Awthāl, served as the secretary of the *dīwān* of taxation (*kharāj*) in Ḥims during the administration of Mu'āwiya, as well as his personal physician.[269] However, we do not know anything else about Ibn Awthāl's descendants or his ancestors and if they likewise served in the administration.[270]

The papyrological record provides evidence of landownership and some insight into the details concerning the economic wealth of administrators; however, it is much more difficult to

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[266] According to Eutychius, Heraclius complained to Manṣūr about the remitted taxes of Damascus during the Sassanians occupation and even threatened Manṣūr with force for repayment. This is alluded to as an explanation for Manṣūr's capitulation of the city of Damascus, *Das Annalenwerk Des Eutychios Von Alexander,* 127, 135; Griffith, "The Manṣūr Family and Saint John of Damascus," 29.

[267] Manṣūr Ibn Sarjūn: al-Mas'ūdī*, Tanbīh,* 269; John of Damascus: *Arabica Vita,* 177.

[268] *Chronicle 1234* (Syriac)*,* 294; Palmer (trans.), *The Seventh Century in West-Syrian Chronicles,* 202; Ibn al-Muqaffa' also includes another administrator, Isaac, and his two sons who were natives of Shubrā Tani, *The History of the Patriarchs,* 12.

[269] In al-Jashiyārī, Ibn Awthāl is credited with the poisoning of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khālid b. al-Walīd, the then governor of Ḥimṣ, at the request of Mu'āwiya. When word of Ibn Awthāl's boasting for having killed 'Abd al-Raḥmān reached al-Muhājir b. Khālid b. al-Walīd, 'Abd al-Raḥmān's brother, he lured Ibn Awthāl into an alley in Damascus and killed him. The account shares similar tropes against employing Christian administrators discussed above, see discussion in Khalek, "Some Notes on the Representation of non-Muslim Officials," 509-510. Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 63-64, Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, *'Uyūn al-Anbā' fī Tabaqāt al-Aṭibbā',* 7.5; Sezgin, *GAS* III, 204-205.

[270] If we consider Ibn Awthāl within the profession of physicians, and not just scribes, perhaps his descendants followed his career in medicine similar to the Christian physician Abū al-Ḥakam and his sons, al-Ḥakam al-Dimasqhī and 'Īsā' b. al-Ḥakam; Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, '*Uyūn al-Anbā'*, 7.6, 7.7, and 7.8 respectively. Abū Ḥakam also has a quite sparse entry in Ibn 'Asākir, *TMD* 66:101. See also Sezgin, *GAS* III, 205, 227. Īsā (Masīḥ al-Dimashqī) likewise receives a sparse entry in Ibn al-Nadīm, "He was Abū al-Ḥasan. Nothing other than this is known about him. Among his books were...," *al-Fihrist,* 358.

pry details about economic capital from literary sources without suspicion of exaggeration. For example, Dionysius claims that Athanasius was paid one dinar (*dinārā*) per solider in an army of 30,000 each year over the course of his twenty-one-year career in Egypt.[271] It is problematic to extract an actual salary from this account in the same way as a papyrus receipt. Nevertheless, even in Islamic sources, Sarjūn, Athanasius and Ibn Awthāl are associated with estates of some sort. Al-Jahshiyārī mentions that the Egyptian governor ʻAbd al-Azīz built a palace (*qaṣr*) for Athanasius, and Christian sources likewise associate him with property.[272] In Sarjūn's biographical entry, Ibn ʻAsākir cites the lost *Tasmiyyat kuttāb umarā' Dimashq* by Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī (d. 347/958) that connects Sarjūn with a residence ("*khayr (ibn) Sarjūn*") near *Bab Kīsān* in Damascus.[273] Finally, al-Jahshiyarārī mentions that Ibn Awthāl had a palace (*qaṣr*) in Ḥimṣ where he was in charge of the land-taxation (*dīwān al-kharāj*).[274] Therefore, the association of property with Christian administrators is found in literature as well as in papyri.

Between Exploited & Exceptional: Non-Muslim & *Mawālī* Administrators

By foregrounding the socioeconomic backgrounds of Christian administrators in the Umayyad bureaucracy, I also suggest that these characteristics can likewise be applied to the those who converted to Islam (*mawālī*, sg. *mawlā*) and served in the administration. This category, typically referred to as clientage (*walā'*), in the early Islamic period is based primarily on its later legal definition and associated social connotations—either those reflected in our

[271] *Chronicle 1234* (Syriac), 294-295, Palmer (trans.), *The Seventh-Century in West Syrian Chronicles,* 202.

[272] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 74; *Chronicle 1234* (Syriac), 295, Palmer (trans.), *The Seventh-Century in West Syrian Chronicles,* 203.

[273] The text reads ينسب إليه جبر بن سرون عن باب كيسان. Anthony proposed that جبر is corrupt and should be read as either خير سرون or خير ابن سرون, "Fixing John damascene's Biography," 614, n.22.

[274] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 63.

sources or prescribed by scholars.[275] Based on these interpretations, clientage not only defined one's legal standing in society but was the means through which non-Arabs would become members of the Muslim community and faith. As Patricia Crone defines it, "Throughout the Umayyad period (661-750) all non-Arabs who wished to join the ranks of the conquerors had to find an Arab (or, as the Arab character of Muslim society receded, Muslim) patron, who, upon their declaration of conversion or allegiance, obtained very much the same rights and duties *vis-à-vis* them as the manumitter *vis-à-vis* his former slave."[276]

However, scholars typically associate this process as one of inferiority and not strictly full access to the rights and privileges of other non-client members of the tribe. These models frame clientage mainly as a one-way street—that is, the way in which non-Arabs were incorporated into Muslim society, often from the perspective of disenfranchised poorer members of society who accept clientage as a means of modest social advancement. For example, Richard Bulliet, in his *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period*, opines that, "one must conclude that those who converted to Islam during the period when the mawālī were so heavily stigmatized must have been people for whom being second-class Arabs was superior to any other options."[277] Thus, scholars, if they accept the strong social barriers and stigmas associated with clientage, are

[275] For example, Richard Bulliet references a poem in al-Jāḥiz's *Kitāb al-qawl fī al-bighāl,* that equates breeding between Arabs and non-Arabs with Arab women fornicating with donkeys and mules, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period,* 146. For legal precepts, see Patricia Crone, *Roman, Provincial and Islamic Law: the Origins of the Islamic Patronate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)*,* 36-42. Using 'prescribed" to describe the scholarly approach(es) to the topic should not be in any way misunderstood as a slight to the exceptional scholarship on the subject; I am contending, however, in this chapter that scholarship's affinity for groups identified by social/cultural markers, such as one's identity as a *mawlā* in this case, overlooks the important economic factors of identity that significantly informed one's access to power (economic, social, or political).

[276] Crone, *Roman, Provincial and Islamic Law*, 36. See also, "Mawlā" *EI2.*

[277] Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period,* 41.

faced with a perplexing conundrum for why *mawālī* staffed important positions across the administrations.

One popular solution is to consider the *mawālī*, along with their non-Muslim colleagues, as vulnerable instruments of the state and a means of fulfilling the desires of their patrons. For example, Elizabeth Urban, in her important recent *Conquered Populations,* contends that "'Abd al-Malik (r. 65-86/685-705) instituted a stronger socio-political hierarchy that rendered enslaved and freed persons subalterns whose ties to the non-Arab, non-Muslim world needed to be controlled. In this hierarchical, imperial setting, enslaved people could gain power by mastering Arabic, but they had to use their linguistic expertise in ways that pleased their masters."[278] For Urban, the hardening socioeconomic opportunities of *mawālī* was the outcome of 'Abd al-Malik's and later Marwānid policy to instill a greater distinction in the social hierarchy between Muslim and non-Muslim, free and unfree, conqueror and conquered, Arab and non-Arab. Daniel Dennett, likewise, recognized the economic status of *mawlā* administrators while also acknowledging the perceived social stigmas attached to their status. According to Dennett, "both legally and in fact, the convert was placed in an inferior status. If he were a man of intelligence and ability, if he were literate, if he had belonged to the aristocracy of his own people, his lot was not unpleasant, and both and wealth and a distinguished career might reward him."[279]

Thus, for Bulliet, Dennett, and Urban, social and cultural connotations defined a *mawlā'*'s place in society. These approaches can be understood as part of a broader scholarly approach that

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[278] Urban, *Conquered Populations,* 2. It is worthwhile to point out that this interpretation is predicated on her understanding that the Umayyad Caliphate "became increasingly centralized, identity categories hardened, in particular the boundary between subaltern conquered populations and the free conquerors became more rigid," 3. Further, this is even more explicit with scribes who, according to Urban, "were always in a precarious position, for they had to use their linguistic mastery in ways that pleased their imperial masters. If they did something to upset the balance of power, they could be dismissed or even killed without a second thought," 140.

[279] Dennett, *Conversion and the Poll Tax*, 39.

defines groups based on social and cultural characteristics, rather than economic power. For example, John Nawas in his study on the phenomenon of *mawālī* of *mawālī* explicitly states that "Islam was born into a society that was Arab and tribal. An individual's place in society was determined by his or her affiliation to an Arab tribe."[280] This is not to say that no scholars have highlighted the economic diversity of *mawālī,* which is discussed most notably in the work of Jamal Juda;[281] nor am I suggesting that these scholars would presume that preexisting economic wealth was inconsequential to one's standing in society. These studies treated *mawālī* as an abstract group and not as specific individuals employed over a relatively limited period.

Several administrators were the *mawālī* of caliphs and fellow members of the upper echelons of the political elite. One explanation for the pervasiveness of *mawālī* connected to elites is simply that political elites wanted to have more influence on administrative infrastructures and employed their own *mawālī* to facilitate this ambition. There are examples of this process from the beginning of the Umayyad caliphate, when Mu'āwiya employed two of his *mawālī*, 'Ubaydallāh and 'Abd al-Raḥman b. Darrāj.[282] 'Ubaydallāh served over taxation (*kharāj*) in Iraq with 'Abd al-Raḥman b. Umm Ḥakam while 'Abd al-Raḥman served as Mu'āwiya's administrator of correspondence (*rasā'il*).[283] Likewise, even the Christian Sarjūn b.

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[280] John Nawas, "A Client's Client" The Process of Islamization in Early and Classical Islam," *Journal of Abbasid Studies* 1 (2014), 143.

[281] Jamal Juda, "Die sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Aspekte der Mawālī in früislamischer Zeit," PhD diss., Universität Tübingen, 1983; *ibid*., "The Economic Status of the *Mawālī* in Early Islam," in *Patronate and Patronage in Early and Classical Islam,* eds. Monique Bernards and John Nawas (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 263-277.

[282] It is possible that the two were originally from Egypt. Under the biography of a certain Darrāj b. Sam'ān (SP?) Abū al-Raḥman in Ibn 'Asākir, Darrāj 'was originally from Egypt and a client of 'Abdallāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ or 'Amr himself, the son of the famed general who conquered Egypt, *TMD* 17:218, 220, 221. However, this Darrāj is also referred to as Abū al-Samaḥ and neither of the two son's biographies attribute transmitting *hadīth* from Darrāj specifically, or any *hadīth* at all for that. Additionally, neither son is mentioned in the transmitters of *hadīdh* from Darrāj, thus it is not possible to confirm that he is in fact their father and they too were originally from Egypt.

[283] *TMD* 37:426 and 28:35 respectively.

Manṣūr in one instance is identified as Mu'āwiya's *mawlā.*[284] This attestation is unique to Balādhurī, but his biography in Ibn 'Asākir does suggest that Sarjūn converted under the auspices of Mu'āwiya; however, this seems highly unlikely given that his descendants, including his grandson John of Damascus, remained Christian.[285] The rest of Mu'āwiya's administrative staff were not clients but were important and influential figures within society.[286] This even included 'Amr b. Sa'īd b. al-'Aṣ al-Ashdaq who was the son of Umm al-Banin bt. al-Hakam, the sister of Marwān and thus the cousin of future Caliph 'Abd al-Malik. Al-Ashdaq was a potential rival to the caliphate and was ultimately beheaded by 'Abd al-Malik following a failed *coup* during the Second Islamic Civil War.[287] The inclusion of al-Ashdaq in the administration highlights that administrators were not subaltern functionaries, but were influential and powerful members of society.

In short, I suggest that early *mawālī* administrators shared a similar socioeconomic background as their Christian/non-Muslim coworkers. That is, they were members of the pre-Islamic elite who now served in the Islamic administration. The clients mentioned above were

[284] Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf,* 4A:159. Sarjūn b. Manṣūr, the Christian administrator discussed at length in Chapter 2, served for multiple administrations in roles most commonly associated with the tax administration (*dīwān al-kharāj*) from the Caliphate of Mu'āwiya (r. 661-680) until 'Abd al-Malik (r.685-705).

[285] *TMD* 20:161. This account is cited from the not lost but oft referenced *Tasmiyyat kuttāb umarā' Dimashq* by Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī. Sean Anthony has opined that this reference to Sarjūn's conversion is likely a result of the inference that Sarjūn was Mu'āwiya's *mawlā,* "Fixing John Damascene's Biography," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 23, n.4 (2015), n. 25, 615. However, it is worth pointing out that neither Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī nor Ibn 'Asākir identity Sarjūn as a *mawlā*. Further, Sarjūn is not equated as Mu'āwiya's *mawlā* is absent in other chronicles and works of *adab al-kuttāb,* and references to Christian *mawālī* are uncommon, if not non-existent. For example, in John Nawas quantitative study on *mawālī* of *mawālī* he states, "While collecting data from the biographical dictions…we did not come across one singe non-Muslim *mawlā;* if the category existed in reality, it did not make it to the biographical dictionaries," "A Client's Client," n.4, 144.

[286] It is difficult to deduce the exact number of administrators for individual caliphs, as the sources at times seem to get individuals confused. For example, al-Jahshiyārī mentions that a certain Ḥabīb b. 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān served as secretary over the *dīwān* in Medina; however, 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān did not have a son named Ḥabīb, Werner Caskel, *Ǧamharat an-Nasab*, 1:10.

[287] K.V. Zettestéen, "'Amr b. Sa'īd b. al-'Aṣ b. Umayya al-Umawī, known as al-Ashdak," *EI2; TMD* 46:29.

the clients of the caliph Muʿāwiya; as such, one would expect they were not poor peasants who happened to come across the single most powerful person in the region and request membership into the Arabian tribal system under the caliph's auspices. Rather, very likely the two sons of Darrāj could be considered analogues to Sarjūn, who came from a prominent and powerful family in the region—just that they, or their ancestors, had converted to Islam whereas Sarjūn and his family had not.[288] For example, Rawḥ b. Zinbā' (d.84/703) owned property in Tyre (Sūr in modern Lebanon) and his family had facilitated trade between the Byzantines and Ghassanids under the Ghassanid Phylarch al-Harith b. Abī Shamir in the pre-Islamic period.[289] When we again include Sarjūn, who was also from Damascus, we are able to recognize that members of the administration who were not direct descendants of Arabian elite families came from pre-Islamic elite families. As such, I contend, they functioned not as exploited employees, but members of the Umayyad elite based on their pre-Islamic economic wealth and connections to new and old social networks.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has argued that despite their literary representations, non-Muslim bureaucrats (and likely *mawālī* administrators as well) should be considered analogous to other pre-Islamic administrators recorded in the papyrological record. Christian administrators were the remnant of pre-Islamic privilege and wealth. As evident from papyri and literary

[288] Again, unfortunately we do not know the details of their pre-Islamic past beyond a potential connection to a certain Darrāj from Egypt in *TMD*; but when we consider the reasons for Sarjūn's employment (coming from a notable family already connected to the administrative infrastructure of Syria) we can surmise that they too were employed for a similar reason. Additionally, this does not end the practice of Caliph's employing their own *mawālī* within the administration, for example Janāh the *mawlā* of al-Walīd I who served as his secretary of corresponded and the seal; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 78; Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 312; *TMD* 11:284.

[289] Rawḥ b. Zinbāʿ, *TMD* 18:240. The biography of his father, Zinbāʿ mentions that the family owned property in Ṣūr, *TMD* 19:82. See also, Isaac Hasson, "Le chef judhāmite Rawḥ ibn Zinbāʿ," in *Studia Islamica* 77 (1993): 95-122; Crone, *Slaves on Horses,* 99-101; and Gerald Hawting, *Rawḥ b. Zinbāʿ,* EI2.

sources, the individuals staffing the bureaucracy shared a social space based on landownership and family, not a particular religious disposition or capacity for piety. This challenges the tendency to describe social interactions in the early Islamic period as ones based primarily on religious identity. That is, when society is framed as Muslim and non-Muslim relations, scholars unintentionally reduce the social world and group membership to one based primarily on religious identity. Based on this, I argue that we should recognize administrators as a group sharing a social space that transcends membership to a particular faith community.

Chapter 3
Death & Taxes:
The Politics & Pragmatics of ‘Abd al-Malik’s Administration

One would be hard pressed to find an Umayyad Caliph who has received as much scholarly attention as ‘Abd al-Malik (d. 86/705). The timeline for ‘Abd al-Malik’s caliphate, as well as the civil war itself, is complex and at times contradictory.[290] Nevertheless, in modern historiography, attempts to articulate the period into a coherent narrative have led to three themes standing out: Islamization, Arabization, and centralization. These processes often overlap and are both complemented and complicated by the level of scholarly attention on the architectural, administrative, and numismatic accomplishments credited to ‘Abd al-Malik. This chapter examines the administrative reforms associated with the Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik and demonstrates that administrative appointments challenge broad historiographical interpretations of Arabization, Islamization, and centralization. I argue that rather than centralizing the administration or exerting control from the capital over provincial administration, bureaucratic reforms coexisted with the further consolidation of regional powers within their local administration. As such, dichotomies between centralize or decentralized overlook the way new Muslim elites integrated themselves with existing social, economic, and administrative networks.

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[290] For a summary of the career and political history surrounding ‘Abd al-Malik, see Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam,* 46-71 and Chase Robinson, *‘Abd al-Malik* (London: Oneworld, 2005).

***Arabization*, *Islamization*, and Centralization in Historiography**

For the early Islamic period, scholars often distinguish Arabization from Islamization as many non-Muslim communities would adopt the Arabic language in both the secular and religious domains.[291] Hawting considers Arabization as the "spread of a culture characterized above all by its use of the Arabic language in the area which had become subject to Arab Muslim rule. Although associated with the process of islamisation, arabisation is a distinct movement as can be seen from the fact that important communities of Jews and Christians survived in the Islamic Middle East into modern times."[292] Chase Robinson, likewise, considers Arabization the spread of Arabic as the *lingua franca* of North Africa and the Middle East as well as the cultural influence of the on the vocabularies and alphabets of other languages, in particular Persian.[293] This distinction is useful since it includes a religiously diverse adoption of the Arabic language, but has its shortcomings as well. Namely, the isolation of the Arabic language or culture from Islamization means that Islamization comes to refer more narrowly to religious conversion, confessional demographics, and/or political/military control.[294]

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[291] There are notable exceptions; for example, Robert Hoyland considers Islamization as both "the spread of the religion of Islam and the evolution and dissemination of a distinctively Islamic way of doing things—not just in the field of religion, but also in art, literature, politics, and so on;" *In God's Path,* 219. For a broader disciplinary approach to the topic and its use in scholarship, see, Andrew Peacock, "Introduction: Comparative Perspectives on Islamisation" in *Islamisation: Comparative Perspectives from History,* ed. Andrew Peacock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 1-18, and Marc Baer, "History and Religious Conversion" in, *Oxford Handbook of Religious conversion,* eds. Lewis Rambo and Charles Farhadian (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2018).

[292] Hawting, *The First Islamic Dynasty,* 9. Robinson adopts a similar understanding: "By Arabization, I mean two kinds of linguistic change: how Arabic became the lingua franca of North Africa, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, replacing and /or complementing a number of languages, most importantly Aramaic, and also how it imprinted itself upon other languages, especially Persian, by exporting the Arabic alphabet and much of its vocabulary;" Robinson, *'Abd al-Malik,* 124.

[293] Robinson, *'Abd al-Malik*, 124.

[294] Robinson, *'Abd al-Malik,* 126. Hawting, *The First Islamic Dynasty,* 1. Hawting continues by highlighting what even exactly Islam was a religion at that time is complicated—which is a historiographical question that has received substantial scholarly attention, i.e. Talal Asad's influential, "Toward an Anthropology of Islam," *Qui Parle* 17, no. 2 (2009):1-30, and the more recent Shahab Ahmed, *What Is Islam?: The Importance of Being Islamic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016). Likewise, Peter Webb has drawn attention to the question of what

At this point, it is worth asking if Islamization and Arabization describe the late seventh/early eighth century Middle East or explain it?[295] For the period surrounding ʻAbd al-Malik, scholarship often interprets Arabization and Islamization as components in ʻAbd al-Malik's effort of centralization, a similarly vague but vogue term. Chase Robinson emphasizes that Arabization and Islamization were aspects of ʻAbd al-Malik's vision for an "administratively centralizing theocracy ruled by God's Caliph."[296] This process was the consequence of the intentional policy of ʻAbd al-Malik and other members of the political elite to "transform the language of God into the language of empire"—a decision that Robinson describes as "radical."[297] The administrative reform was not just about administrative infrastructure, it was "a token of cultural and religious superiority."[298] Hawting summarizes that, "Taken together, the innovations of the early Marwānid period in the field of administration and coinage help to strengthen the impression of an administration becoming more centralized and uniform. Furthermore, they add to the evidence provided by the new monumental buildings—not only the Dome of the Rock but also the mosque of the Prophet in Medina and the mosque in Damascus which incorporated the former church of St John, both built by al-Walid—of the emergence of a new and distinctive Arab Muslim state and culture from what begun (sic?) as, in some ways, a

exactly Arab meant as well; Peter Webb, *Imagining the Arabs* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press: 2016); see also, Robert Hoyland, "Reflection on the Identity of the Arabian Conquerors of the Seventh-Century Middle East," *al-ʻUṣūr al-Wusṭā* 25 (2017): 113-140.

[295] As John Haldon remarks, "history is, if anything, about explaining change, not merely describing the fact that it happened;" *The State and the Tributary Mode of Production* (New York: Verso, 1993), 13.

[296] Robinson, *ʻAbd al-Malik*, 124.

[297] "Christians and Jews alike had gotten along fine as linguistic schizophrenics, reading, writing and speaking a variety of languages and scripts, translating (as it suited them) scripture from one language to the next. Muslims were altogether more ambitious; they were hardly the first linguistic imperialists, but they were the first to insist that the language spoken by God and those delegated by Him (caliphs, governors, commanders, etc) should be the language of the mundane job of ruling—the language of receipts, bills, orders, contracts, coins, weights, measures, passports, sealings and the like." *Ibid*., 125.

[298] *Ibid*., 126.

Byzantine or Sasanid successor state."[299] Hugh Kennedy likewise, interprets ʻAbd al-Malik as reconsidering the "decentralized system" of Muʻāwiya and the Sufyānids.[300] Kennedy interprets that at ʻAbd al-Malik's death "he had established, in place of the decentralized Sufyanid system, a centralized, bureaucratic empire, dependent in the last resort on the power of the Syrian army."[301] Based on coinciding of administrative oversight as preserved on papyri (i.e. lists of soldiers eligible for stipends, land surveys, and poll and land tax records and receipts from the 60's-70's/680's-690's), the construction of the Dome of the Rock and numismatic reforms, Jeremy Johns argues that the drastic uptick in public declarations of Islam coincided with ʻAbd al-Malik's centralization policies and a break from the polity of a "loose confederation of Arab tribes."[302] Luke Treadwell, likewise, interprets the convergence of the Arabization of the bureaucracy and coinage reforms as "efforts to create the centralized state which replaced the looser structures of the government favored by their predecessors."[303] Thus, for Treadwell, "the coinage and language reforms supplied the administrative mechanisms required for the operation of centralized rule—effective communication across immense distances by means of a

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[299] Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam,* 65-66.

[300] Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates,* 98.

[301] *Ibid*., 103.

[302] Jeremy Johns, "Archaeology and the History of Early Islam," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 46, no.4 (2003): 418. Specifically, Johns refences a Greek register of Arab soldiers (n. 92) dated to the year 685, requests for public service (n. 74), an undated tax receipt following a land survey (γηωμετρίας τõν Σαρακινõν) (n. 58), a census of tax payers (n.76) dated to 687-689, tax receipts from the 680's (n. 55, n. 59, n.70), and a letter organizing a tax protest from the late seventh century (n.75), which Johns suggest reflects the earliest stages of Nessana's inclusion in the broader administrative and military jurisdiction of the Palestinian *jund*; *ibid*., 422. All these papyri are in Greek and almost all are firmly dated prior to the end of the Second Islamic Civil in 692, Casper Kraemer, *Excavations at Nessana Volume 3 Non-Literary Papyri* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958). However, the dating of these papyri is not without its detractors, especially Robert Hoyland, see below. For administrative evolution and professionalism as reflected in papyri for Egypt at the end of the seventh century, see Kosei Morimoto, *The Fiscal Administration of Egypt in the Early Islamic Period* (Kyoto: Dohosha 1981), 113ff and Petra Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State.*

[303] Treadwell, "ʻAbd al-Malik's Coinage Reforms: The Role of the Damascus Mint," *Revue numismatique* (2009): 1.

monolingual bureaucracy and efficient distribution of resources from a single imperial centre."[304] In short, scholarship may very well be elusive in its definition of Arabization and Islamization, but interpreting them as signs of a broader centralizing movement is a common and pervasive explanation.

The narrative "decentralized to centralized" is not without its objectors. First there are scholars critical of the scholarly portrayal of a loose or weak Sufyānid state. Focusing on the monetary policy of Muʿāwiya, Clive Foss and, more recently, Mehdy Shaddel have argued for a more centralized, or at least more sophisticated, state under the Sufyānids.[305] Robert Hoyland likewise criticized the scholarly portrayal of the pre-ʿAbd al-Malik caliphate as a "weak" state by highlighting a number of inconstancies in scholarly readings of material and documentary sources during the caliphates of Muʿāwiya and ʿAbd al-Malik.[306]

Next there are scholars who suggest a more nuanced framework or stress the regional nature of the caliphate. Paul Cobb suggests that "one should properly speak of Marwānid *centralising* rather than Marwānid centralization, as the direct power of the caliph over provincial matters was at no time a *fait accompli*."[307] Focusing on the movement of literal money, Kenney and Wickham emphasis the regional nature of fiscal administration. Kennedy points out that the "system was not, however, highly centralized and the collection and payment of monies took place at a provincial level rather than through bureaucratic system centered on

[304] *Ibid*., 2.

[305] Clive Foss, "A Syrian Coinage of Muʿāwiya?," *Revue numismatique* 158 (2002): 353-365; Mehdy Shaddel, "Monetary Reform under the Suyānids: the Papyrological Evidence, *Bulletin of SOAS* 84, no. 2 (2021): 263-293. See Chapter 1 for an overview of the administration during Muʿāwiya.

[306] Hoyland, "New Documentary Texts and the Early Islamic State," *Bulletin of SOAS* 69, n.3 (2006): 395-416.

[307] Paul Cobb, "The Empire in Syria, 705-763," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam* Vol 1, 241.

Madīna, Damascus or Baghdad."[308] Wickham is reluctant to recognize any centralization at all for the Umayyads, at least as it pertains to the fiscal structures of the state.[309] Wickham argues that no tax papyri from Egypt record evidence for monies being sent to Damascus—only building supplies for the construction of al-Aqṣā mosque in Jerusalem and the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus—suggesting a much more regional organization of administrative and fiscal infrastructure.[310] Arietta Papaconstantinou, likewise, similarly warns against reading historiographical models into our interpretation of documentary sources.[311] Finally, Joshua Mabra indirectly challenges the notion of 'Abd al-Malik's centralizing policies by highlighting how 'Abd al-'Azīz, the governor in Egypt and 'Abd al-Malik's brother, did not participate in centralizing endeavors.[312] However, for Mabra, 'Abd al-'Azīz is an exception to the centralization of the empire, not a challenge to its validity as an interpretive category.[313]

Nothing has challenged the utility of a centralized versus decentralized framework, at least for early Islamic Egypt, as much as the works of Petra Sijpesteijn and Marie Legendre.

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[308] Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs,* 59.

[309] Chris Wickham summarizes his position as, "If we were to assume that the Umayyad caliphate's central administration was funded almost exclusively from Syria and Palestine, we would not go far wrong. This region was divided into several relatively small provinces, which might not have been able to maintain full fiscal autonomy from nearby Damascus. The fragments of a *dīwān* register of c.685 that survive among the Nessana papyri from the Negev seem to indicate that Arabs from three separate provinces were collecting their pay there, apparently directly, that is to say that the boundaries between provinces were here more permeable than elsewhere. But the region was essentially dependent on its own resources. Only with the 'Abbāsid period, from 750 onwards, were the caliphs able to force taxation out of their local officials on any scale: the first century of 'Abbāsid rule marks the only period of full financial centralization of the caliphate." *Framing the Early Middle Ages,* 132.

[310] *Ibid*., 132. These papyri are: al-Aqsa Mosque: *P.Lond* IV 1403, 1435; *CPR* XXII 43; Umayyad Mosque: *P.Lond* IV 1341, 1368, 1411; *CPR* XXII 53.

[311] Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Administering the Early Islamic Empire: Insights from the Papyri, in *Money, Power and Politics in Early Islamic Syria,* ed. John Haldon (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 57-74, see esp. 69-70.

[312] Joshua Mabra, *Princely Authority in the Early Marwānid State: The Life of 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Marwān (d. 86/705)* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2017).

[313] *Ibid*., 11. See also the important forthcoming review of Mabra by Marie Legendre, "Lignées féminines et dynamiques Égypte-Syrie-Iraq au début de l'époque marwanide: A propos de: MABRA Joshua, 2017, *Princely Authority in the Early Marwānid State: The life of 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Marwān (d.86/705),* Piscataway, NJ, Gorgias Press," *forthcoming* in *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée.*

Sijpesteijn summarizes the interpretation of a centralized early Islamic Egypt as a departure from the dissemination of Byzantine administrative power and influence. Specifically, "Their interpretation of Muslim rule depended on the then-current interpretation of late-Byzantine Egyptian history as a period during which civic responsibilities, such as tax collection, defense, and the responsibilities for other public works, had been wrested from the hands of the central state by an agriculturally based elite, which had resulted in decentralization and a 'generally weak' Byzantine polity. This view of late Byzantine Egyptian history has since been revised, leading to a more positive interpretation. Rather than breaking down social and economic order in competition with late Byzantine civil government, the large estate-holders that were so important in late antique Egypt are now considered to have become responsible for the fulfilling of civic duties through a fusion of private and official power and in cooperation with and delegated by the central authorities."[314] Legendre has likewise convincingly criticized the scholarly emphasis on ruptures (between Byzantine and Islamic or Sufyānid and Marwānid) by arguing that early Islamic state building was a continuous process from the beginning of the conquest of Egypt. [315] Therefore, the "centralization" framework is not only flawed, but causes scholars to overlook other aspects of a changing society. In Sijpesteijn's own words, "the emphasis on centralization has conditioned the interpretation of administrative documents from this period leading to misunderstandings. Most significantly, while certain administrative functions exhibit signs of centralization, this by no means applies to the whole government system during the entire period of the Umayyad rule in Egypt."[316]

[314] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State,* 200.

[315] Marie Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic? The Duke of the Thebaid and the Formation of the Umayyad state," *Historical Research* 89 n.243 (2016): 3-18; and "Aspects of Umayyad Administration," 145-146.

[316] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*., 201.

Taking these observations as a point of departure, I likewise suggest that centralization and Arabization are based on misconceptions about the makeup and role of the administration during the period. I argue that the administrative reforms of the period suggest the evolution of regional bureaucratic control and the progressive incorporation of regional elites within the administration—not the expansion of the capital's administrative presence in the providences of the caliphate. Just as Sijpesteijn argues that this "centralized versus decentralized" framework obscures other changes in society, I argue that the dichotomy likewise underappreciates complex social relations between the capital and the regions as well as the relations between migrant Arab elites and pre-Islamic social and economic networks.[317]

In short, if the Arabization expanded the bureaucracy in order to exercise control of the regions from the capital in Damascus, we would expect to see members from the capital staff administrative positions in a manner similar to the way governors were appointed to the regions. However, we do not see this with the makeup of the bureaucracy; in fact, we shall see quite the opposite. The first half of this chapter examines the literary explanations for the administration of the bureaucracy in order to highlight how centralization and Arabization are largely historiographical models imposed on the sources, not explanations derived from them. Ultimately, I suggest that administrative reforms and employment was a means for local elites—not Damascus—to have more control over local extraction and distribution of surplus.

Money Talks: the "Arabization" of the *Dīwān*

[317] For example, see the *polycentrique* model proposed by Nef and Tiller; Annlise, Nef and Mathieu Tillier, "Introduction: les voies de l'innovation dans un empire islamique polycentrique," *Annales Islamogiques* 45 (2011): 1-16.

The administrative structure of the early caliphate originated in meeting the practical goals of an expanding community and—most importantly—the distribution of revenues to eligible members in the community. This process, and its later development, was centered in the office of the *dīwān* (pl. *dawāwīn*). According to tradition, the *dīwān* originated as a register or record (*sijill*) of those eligible for a stipend (*'aṭā'*) from the revenues of the conquests (*fay'*) in the year 20/640-641 by the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d.23/ 644 C.E.).[318] This came to be known as the *dīwān al-jund* and coincided with the formal establishment of military districts (*jund* pl. *ajnād*) and garrison cities (*miṣr* pl. *amṣār*) from which these funds would be collected and distributed as a stipend (*'aṭā'*).[319] The revenues or booty (*fay'* or *ghanā'im*) extracted during the conquest were stored and distributed from the treasury (*bayt al-māl*) in addition to revenue from taxation (*jizyah, kharāj* and *ṣadaqa*).[320] The stipend amount was paid at *amṣār* in cash most often, but also possibly in kind.[321] Those eligible for the stipend (*'aṭā'*) were paid in monthly rations (*rizq*) and a yearly stipend.[322] Narrative sources suggest that the *dīwān*s *al-jund* in Syria and Iraq were written in Arabic from the beginning, although this is not universally accepted in scholarship.[323]

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[318] Balādhurī, *Futūḥ* 449-451, al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:175, and al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',*47 give the date of year 20; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 1:2411 however dates it to 15 AH; see Duri, "Dīwān*," EI2* and Duri, *Early Islamic Institutions,* 161-167.

[319] According to al-Ya'qūbī, the *amṣar* were Medina, al-Sha'm (Syria/Damascus), Jazīra, Kufa, Basra, followed by a lacuna in the text. The editors surmise that the other *amṣār* were likely Egypt (Fusṭāṭ) and al-Yamāma or Yemen; Al-Ya'qūbī *The Works of Ibn Wāḍiḥ al-Ya'qūbī: an English Translation*, 785 n.1032. The *ajnād* were Palestine, Jazīra, Mosul, and Qinnasrīn; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:175-177. See Chapter 1 for the history of the *dīwān* as well as the difficulty reconciling its description in literary sources with the papyrological record.

[320] Duri, *Early Islamic Institutions*, 167.

[321] Kosei Morimoto, "The *Dīwāns* as Registers of the Arab Stipendiaries in Early Islamic Egypt," in Fred Donner (ed.), *The Articulation of Early Islamic State Structures* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 227-239.

[322] Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs,* 72-73; see also notes 88 and 89 about varying literary accounts concerning the timing of the yearly *'aṭā'* payment.

[323] al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 78; Morimoto has challenged the notion that this *dīwān* was written in Arabic from the beginning. Morimoto has argued that *P.Lond* IV 1447 is an example of a register recorded also in Greek;

As discussed in Chapter 1, the convergence of military interest, geographical location, and regional finance was a prominent characterisitics of the *dīwān* over the course of the Umayyad Caliphate. The original *diwān* was only in Medina, but later *dīwān*s would operate out of regional garrison towns (*miṣr* pl. *amṣār*).[324] It is important to emphasize that the distribution of the stipend was most commonly in cash (*dirhams* in the east and *dīnārs* in the Egypt and Syria) from various *amṣar,* where taxation was both collected and distributed.[325] That is, the caliphate's monetary liquidity (i.e. the ability to produce and circulate cash as payment for military service) went hand in hand with the administrative infrastructure, one which was largely organized to facilitate this very transaction.[326] This meant that each *miṣr* had a certain level of required bookkeeping in order to calculate incoming revenue, to make sure it met the immediate needs of funding the military, and to distribute shares to eligible members of the community. This was an important step and monies were not unlimited.[327] The utility of one without the other is quite diminished, if not worthless. As a result, regional and local administrative infrastructure was vital for the collection and distribution of revenues.[328]

Morimoto, "The *Dīwāns* as Registers of the Arab Stipendiaries in Early Islamic Egypt," 238-239. However, is not universally accepted. Sijpesteijn considers it to be more likely a list of regular tax payments, Sijpesteijn, "Army Economics," 256 n.27. Kennedy's position is a bit equivocal; on the one hand, he considers *P.Lond* IV 1447 not necessarily a "*dīwān* as such;" but later he cites Morimoto's article as evidence that the "registers were kept in Greek rather than Arabic;" Kennedy, *Armies of the Caliphs,* 66, 72.

[324] See Chapter 1 for an overview of the *dīwān* and its evolution, as well as the difficulties of reconstructing its chronology from later literary sources.

[325] Kennedy, *Armies of the Caliphs*, 61.

[326] Kennedy surmises that likely over eighty percent of the total revenue was to finance the military, "Military Pay and the Economy of the Early Islamic State," *Historical Research* 75 no. 188 (2002): 160; see also, Kennedy, *Armies of the Caliphs,* 74-76.

[327] For example, the papyrus *P.Michaelides* Q16 urges the recipient to receive their stipend while they still can, Sijpesteijn, "Army Economics," 248.

[328] *Ibid*.

Following the Second Islamic Civil War (62/681-2 – 73/692), several administrative and monetary reforms are associated with ‘Abd al-Malik; namely, the conversion of the *dīwān* into Arabic and the transition from Byzantine/Sasanian imitation coins to aniconic epigraphical "Islamic" coinage. In the scholarly tradition discussed above, these reforms are often considered part of ‘Abd al-Malik's post-civil war policy to centralize the caliphate and project his legitimacy as the single ruler of a united Muslim community and empire. However, this is predicated on seeing the bureaucratic reforms as ruptures from past policy and employment, rather than, as I argue, the evolution of local control by new Muslim elites. It is first worthwhile to highlight the difficulty of deducting explanations for administrative change from literary sources before turning to how the makeup of the highest echelons of the bureaucracy sheds light into administration's evolution following the Second Islamic Civil War.

TABLE 1: POLITICAL, MONETARY, AND ADMINISTRATIVE EVENTS DURING ‘ABD AL-MALIK'S CALIPHATE	
Conflict	**Dates**
Second Islamic Civil War	62/681-2 – 73/692
Khārijite Challenge in the East	68/687 – 78/697
Gold Monetary Reforms (Syria) [329]	**Dates (approx.)**
Experimental	72/691-77/696
Epigraphic	Starting 77/696

[329] Scholarly nomenclature for this phase varies, as well as the number of phases. For an overview of the phases and nomenclature of various scholars, see Luke Treadwell, "'Abd al-Malik Coinage Reforms: the Role of the Damascus Mint," *RN* (2009):1-23 and Stefan Heidemann, "The Evolving Representation of the Early Islamic Empire and its Religion on Coin Imagery," in *The Qur'an in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu,* ed. Angelika Neuwirth, et. al. (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 149-195. It is important to highlight both the chronological overlap between stages of reforms and to emphasize that these reforms were far from uniform across the caliphate, especially in terms of their chronological implementation. For example, Bishapūr continued to mint "pre-reform" coins into the year 83AH—well after reforms were implemented in Damascus and elsewhere in Irāq, Hodge Mehdi Malek, *Arab-Sasanian Numismatics and History during he Early Islamic Period in Iran and Iraq,* Vol. 2 (London: Royal Numismatic society, 2019), 486.

Silver Monetary Reforms (Iraq)	**Dates (approx.)**
Including references to Muhammad	Starting 66/685
Experimental	73/692-79/698-9
Epigraphic	Starting 78/697-8
***Dīwān* "translation"**	**Dates (approx.)**
Syria (ʻAbd al-Malik/Walid I)	*ca.* 81/700
Egypt (ʻAbdallāh b. ʻAbd al-Malik)	*ca.* 86/705
Iraq (al-Ḥajjāj)	78/697 (or 701)

Dramatis Personae: Literary Accounts for the Translation of the Dīwān

According to Balādhurī's *Futūḥ al-Buldān*,"Greek remained the language of the state registers (*dīwān*) in Syria until the reign of ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān, who in the year 81 ordered it changed. The reason was that a Greek clerk (*rajūl min kuttāb al-rūm*) wanted to write something and finding no ink, he urined in the inkstand. When ʻAbd al-Malik heard this, ʻAbd al-Malik punished the man and ordered Sulaymān b. Saʻd to change the language of the registers."[330] This account, unsurprisingly, has not been taken seriously for explaining the conversion of the administration from Greek into Arabic by scholars. The fact that scholars do not accept that a urinating clerk inadvertently initiated a series of major administrative reforms points out an important aspect about our interpretations for the "conversion of the *dīwān*:" namely, scholarly explanations are largely based on our own historiographical preferences and models (my own included) and not a direct deduction of explicit and consistent source material. Literary accounts for the translation of the *dīwān* differ drastically in details, timing, and

[330] Translation adapted from Philip Ḥitti, *The Origins of the Islamic State,* 301; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 271. A version of this same account occurs also in al-Māwardī, *The Ordinances of Government,* 286.

length.[331] The translation, or Arabization, of the *dīwān* is reported to have taken place in the early eighth century at the end of ‘Abd al-Malik’s caliphate in Syria (*ca*. 80’s/700s), during the governorship of al-Ḥajjāj in Iraq in 78/697 or 701, 87/705 in Egypt, and not until 124/741-742 in Khurasan.[332] Untangling this web of intertwining accounts is best done by treating accounts associated with the different regions separately, that is the “Arabization” of *dīwān* in Iraq, Syria, and Egypt.

Iraq: al-Ḥajjāj, Zadhanfarrūk, and Saliḥ b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman

The earliest account for the conversion of the *dīwān* into Arabic is in Iraq under the direction of the Umayyad governor, al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf in the year 78/697 or 81-82/701.[333] Literary accounts vary in length, from the terse statements of Ibn ‘Abd al-Rabbih (d. 328/940),[334] Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 571/1175),[335] al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418),[336] to the extended narratives of al-Jahshiyārī (d.331/942),[337] Balādhurī (d. 279/892),[338] al-Ṣūlī (d. between 329-336/941-948),[339] Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 385 or 388/995 or 998),[340] and Miskawayh (d. 421/1030).[341] These accounts focus on three individuals: the governor of Iraq, al-Ḥajjāj, and two scribes, Zādhānfarrūkh and

[331] Al-Ṭabarī does not even mention the conversion.

[332] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 115.

[333] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 79. To date, the most through exploration of the process is still Martin Sprengling’s “From Persian to Arabic” *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 56, no. 2 (1939): 175-230, 325-336.

[334] Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, *al-‘Iqd al-farīd*, 4:252.

[335] *TMD* 23:343-345.

[336] Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubh al-a‘shā fī sinā‘at al-inshā,* 1:423.

[337] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 79.

[338] Balādhurī, *Futuḥ*, 300-301

[339] Al-Ṣūlī, *Adab al-kuttāb,* 192-193.

[340] Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist,* 303; Eng. 581-583.

[341] Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-Umam* 2:257-258.

Ṣālih b. al-Raḥman.[342] Shorter accounts simply mention that the conversion of the *dīwān* from Persian into Arabic occurred during the time of al-Ḥajjāj by Ṣāliḥ b ‘Abd al-Raḥman. Longer accounts present the translation as an outcome of Zādhānfarrūkh’s hubris and/or negligence and the diligence of Ṣāliḥ. Similar to the juxtaposition in other narratives of the negligent non-Muslim scribe and diligent Muslim scribe discussed in Chapter Two, these longer accounts likely reflect literary embellishments aimed at demonstrating the astute Muslim scribe rather than preservations of historical events.[343]

The longer narrative accounts feature a similar course of events. Ṣāliḥ is the apprentice of al-Ḥajjāj’s secretary Zādhānfarrūkh, who was originally appointed by the governor Ziyād b. Abīhi.[344] Sāliḥ mentions to Zādhānfarrūkh (his superior) that al-Ḥajjāj has taken a liking to Ṣāliḥ and even surmises that al-Ḥajjāj may promote himself over Zādhānfarrūkh. Seemingly unconcerned, Zādhānfarrūkh replies that al-Ḥajjāj is in need of him more than he is of al-Ḥajjāj as no one else is capable of keeping the books which are in Persian at this time.[345] Ṣāliḥ replies that if he wanted, he could, in fact, translate the register into Arabic, which prompts Zādhānfarrūkh to challenge Ṣāliḥ to translate some lines which Ṣāliḥ does.[346] After this,

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[342] With the notable exception of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih who associates the conversion with the scribe Qaḥdham, *al-‘Iqd al-farīd,* 252.

[343] See Chapter 2.

[344] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 62.

[345] Nancy Khalek considers al-Ṣulī’s account less polemical than Balādhurī’s version, and that the conversion was more related to al-Ḥajjāj’s noticing the cleverness (*dhakā‘*) of Ṣāliḥ, “Some Notes on the Representation of Non-Muslim Officials in al-Ǧahšiyārī’s (d.331/942) *Kitāb al-Wuzarā’ wa-l-kuttāb*,” 512; however, even in al-Ṣulī Zādhānfarrūkh responds that al-Ḥajjāj would not be able to find anyone to keep the books other than himself, al-Ṣulī, *Adab al-Kuttāb,* 192.

[346] In the accounts preserved in Ibn al-Nadīm and al-Balādhurī, Zādhānfarrūkh goes on to request Ṣāliḥ to feign illness, likely out of concern that al-Ḥajjāj will replace him. Ṣāliḥ does so and al-Ḥajjāj sends him to his physician (named Theodorus in Ibn al-Nadīm تيادورس) who finds nothing wrong with Ṣāliḥ; Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 303; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 300.

according to al-Jahshiyārī and al-Sulī, Ṣālih announces to his fellow (Persian) companions, "seek a living (*maksab*) elsewhere!"[347]

In the version preserved in al-Jahshiyārī, al-Ṣulī, and Miskawayh, the conversion of the bureaucracy then occurs after this challenge in the year 78/697.[348] However, in Balādhurī and Ibn al-Nadīm it is not until after the death of Zādhānfarrūkh in 81-82/701 during the revolt of Ibn al-Ash'ath that Ṣāliḥ officially becomes al-Ḥajjāj's secretary of the *dīwān* when Ṣāliḥ recounts the conversation between himself and Zādhānfarrūkh to al-Ḥajjāj who, subsequently, orders Ṣāliḥ to translate the *dīwān* into Arabic.[349] In Ibn al-Nadīm and Balādhurī, this is followed by another conversation, this time with Zādhānfarrūkh's son, Mardānshāh, who inquires how Ṣāliḥ will treat a series of Persian numerical terminology.[350] When Ṣāliḥ is able to resolve Mardāshāh's philological queries, Mardāshāh responds with a similar response as Zādhānfarrūkh had, "May God cut off your lineage (*aṣlaka*) from the earth just as you have cut the foundation (*aṣl*) of the Persians." The play on words here is explicit: the conversion of the *dīwān* is portrayed as a direct threat to the employment of Persian bureaucrats and their status within the caliphate.[351] As such, the conversion of the *dīwān* is portrayed as a conversion in employment as much as the *linga franca*.

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[347] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 79; al-Ṣūlī, *Adab al-Kuttāb,* 192; Miskawayh contains the same response, *Tajārib al-umam*, 2:258.

[348] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 79; al-Ṣūlī, *Adab al-Kuttāb,* 192; Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-Umam,* 2:258.

[349] Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist,* 303; Eng 582, Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 300-301.

[350] Specifically, *dahwīya, shashwīya, and al-wīd,* Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist* 303; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 301. Ṣāliḥ's biography in Ibn 'Asākir mentions this attempted bribe in a truncated account of the conversion, *TMD* 23: 344. A similar exchange is found in Miskawayh's version, except Mardāshah is never mentioned and it is just an exchange between Ṣāliḥ an anonymous Persian scribe, *Tajārib al-umam,* 2:258.

[351] This is made even more explicit in Ibn al-Nadīm and al-Balādhurī where Persian officials attempt to bribe Ṣāliḥ into feigning that he is unable to translate the *dīwān* into Arabic, Ibn al-Nadīm*, al-Fihrist,* 303; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 422.

Before turning to accounts in different regions, it is useful to point out a number of observations that will arise in other accounts, notably in the conversion in Syria. First, these reforms, if we take the chronology reflected in the literary tradition seriously, come *after* monetary reforms, and long after al-Ḥajjāj began his personal numismatic iconographical experiments and reforms (72/691-692 – 79/698-699).[352] This is important because it is datable evidence of monetary reforms during this period and suggests that the caliphate was indeed experimenting with fiscal and monetary policies. Second, it's important to recognize that Ṣāliḥ must have been bilingual, in the sense that he knew both Persian and Arabic. This too is important because it highlights that that the administrative reforms did not introduce individuals who were "excluded" from the administration. Likewise, Ṣāliḥ, and his notable students, were not Damascene members of the Umayyad political elite, but local elites already prominent in the region. Therefore, the literary sources provide no indication that the conversion was an endeavor at the haste of ʻAbd al-Malik for the capital's direct control of the administration; nor is there any evidence of this with the actual makeup of the bureaucracy which remained local. In short, Arabic was not introduced in the Iraq administration to make it easier for the caliphate in Damascus to oversee administrative infrastructure but was an outcome of regional "new" Muslim elites adopting their own *lingua franca* and personnel for administration.[353]

Syria: ʻAbd al-Malik, Sarjūn b. Manṣūr, and Sulaymān b. Saʻd

[352] Hodge Malek, *Arab-Sasanian Numismatics and History during the Early Islamic Period in Iran and Iraq Volume 1* (London: Royal Numismatic Society, 2019), 278. Al-Balādhuri claims that al-Ḥajjāj began minting epigraphic coins in the year 75, however, as pointed out by Walker, there is no evidence for aniconic coins at this time; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 468; John Walker, *A Catalogue of the Arab-Sassanian Coins in the British Museum Volume 2* (London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1956), lxii.

[353] For example, see chapter 4 for the employment of Ṣāliḥ's students and successors in Iraq.

Turning attention to Syria, again, the chronology is complex (if not contradictory) but the *dramatis personae* are relatively consistent, at least pertaining to the administrators: Sarjūn b. Manṣūr and Sulaymān b. Saʻd al-Khushanī.[354] Similar to Iraq, we are again presented with narratives ranging from the matter of fact statements to narrative explanations. Terse reports associate the conversion during the career of ʻAbd al-Malik or his son and successor, al-Walīd I; these include the one of the two version in Ibn ʻAbd Rabbih,[355] al Qalqashandī,[356] the *Tasmiyat kuttāb umarāʼ Dimashq* by Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī,[357] Ibn al-Nadīm (who mentions that there are accounts that the conversion occurred under Hishām and ʻAbd al-Malik),[358] and in the Christian historiographical tradition associated with Theophilus of Edessa (who attributes it to Walīd I, not ʻAbd al-Malik).[359] There are two versions of longer narratives, excluding al-Balādhurī and the uriniating clerk, which present a similar course of events. First there is the account in al-Jahshiyārī,[360] Ibn ʻAbd al-Rabbih,[361] and al-Ṣulī.[362] In this version, ʻAbd al-Malik requests Sarjūn b. Manṣūr to carry out a task which he does not seem overly concerned with carrying out and delays. This frustrates ʻAbd al-Malik who remarks to Sulaymān b. Saʻd about Sarjūn's

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[354] In numerous accounts, Sulaymān is identified as the *mawlā* of *al-Ḥusayn* (i.e. al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubh al-aʼshā,* 1:423, older editions of al-Jahshiyārī's *kitāb al-wuzarāʼ*). *TMD* provides the correct "nomenclature" al-Khūshanī—which is reflected in more contemporary publications of al-Jahshiyārī (2010) and discussed at length by Sprengling, "From Persian to Arabic," 212-213.

[355] Ibn ʻAbd Rabbih, *al-ʻIqd al-farīd*, 5:148.

[356] Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubh al-aʻshā fī sināʻāt al-inshā,* 1:423.

[357] Al-Razī's text does not survive but is cited frequently in Ibn ʻAsākir, as here in Sulaymān b. Saʻd biography in *TMD*, 22:317; see note above.

[358] Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist,* 303; Eng. 583.

[359] Robert Hoyland, *Theophilus of Edessa's Chronicle*, 199-200.

[360] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarāʼ,* 81.

[361] Ibn ʻAbd Rabbih, *al-ʻIqd al-farīd*, 4:252.

[362] Al-Ṣulī, *Adab al-Kuttāb,* 192-193.

cavalier attitude towards them, as if they were more in need of Sarjūn than he is of them.[363] ‘Abd al-Malik inquires with Sulaymān if he has any solution, which he replies to translate the *dīwān* from Greek into Arabic, and thus render Sarjūn obsolete.[364] Finally, there is a unique account recorded in Sulaymān’s biography in Ibn ‘Asākir.[365] In this account, the frustration is directed more at Christians in general than Sarjūn in particular.[366]

This account provides more details than others and, according to its *isnad,* goes back to Sulaymān himself.[367] It begins with Sulaymān serving over the *dīwān* of al-Urdunn and Sarjūn b. Manṣūr was over the *diwān*s of both the “Arabs and non-Arabs.” ‘Abd al-Malik summons Sulaymān to Ṣinnabra and complains that authority Christians exercise over the affairs of Muslims has continued to annoy him since his youth during the time of Mu‘āwiya, and that ‘Abd al-Malik even considered bringing up the issue with his predecessor, Marwān, but something prevented him from ever doing so.[368] ‘Abd al-Malik goes on to suggest that Sulaymān should replace Sarjūn but Sulaymān pleads inexperience which ‘Abd al-Malik disregards and reiterates his confidence in Sulaymān. At this point in the account, we are introduced to another

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[363] Recall the similar portrayal of Zādhānfarrūkh’s attitude and even explicit response that al-Ḥajjāj was more in need of him than the other way around.

[364] Ibn al-Nadīm says the records were translated during the time of Hishām, but that it has also been reported it occurred during the time of ‘Abd al-Malik after which he presents a truncated version of the above-mentioned account of the apathetic Sarjūn, *al-Fihrist,* 303; Eng., 583.

[365] It is worth pointing out that Sulaymān’s biography in Ibn ‘Asākir’s *TMD* has two versions. Interestingly, the first from the now lost but oft citied by Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tasmiyat kuttāb umarā‘ Dimashq* by Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī only has an abbreviated account of the conversion that simply reports that the conversion was undertaken by Sulaymān and that he owned property in Damascus; *TMD,* 22:317.

[366] Although, as argued by Khalek, the account in al-Jahshiyārī, compared to al-Sulī and Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, also has religious undertones; i.e. al-Jahshiyārī’s version has “the same heightened tone and formula as the Ṣāliḥ/Zādān exchange…In sum, in the *Kitāb al-Wuzarā’ wa-l-kuttāb,* changes in “policy” as constructed by these anecdotes are linked to feelings of resentment at the undue arrogance of non-Muslim officials, which itself is seen as the central cause for the decline in non-Muslim Persian and Byzantine officials status,” “Some Notes,” 514.

[367] *TMD*, 22:320.

[368] *Ibid*.

administrators, Rawḥ b. Zinbāʿ, who clears his throat nearby, causing ʿAbd al-Malik to pause and complain to Sulaymān that Rawḥ cannot keep a secret. However, ʿAbd al-Malik nevertheless repeats to Rawḥ what he told to Sulaymān who it seems was serving under Rawḥ in the *jund* of al-Urdunn.[369] ʿAbd al-Malik then leaves Sulaymān and Rawḥ who then turns to Sulaymān and urges him to accept ʿAbd al-Malik's offer lest the Christians continue to get administrative appointments. The story then jumps ahead chronologically to an ailing Sarjūn who is now approaching death. ʿAbd al-Malik asks Sarjūn who should take his place to which Sarjūn replies, "If from the Muslims, then Sulaymān b. Saʿd; if from the Christians, then so-and-so (*fulān*), a man from the people of Baʿlabakk (بعلبك)."[370] Then after Sarjūn passes away, ʿAbd al-Malik appoints Sulaymān over both *dīwān*s (i.e. of both the "Arabs and non-Arabs" mentioned earlier in the account) and converts them into Arabic.

In short, in addition to succinct statements, we essentially have three explanations for the conversion: the urinating clerk in Balādhurī's *Futūḥ,* the lackadaisical Sarjūn in al-Jahshiyārī, Ibn ʿAbd al-Rabbih, and al-Ṣulī, and the account preserved in Sulaymān b. Saʿd's biography. The three versions not only contradict one another but also the terse accounts mentioned above. For example, Ibn al-Nadīm places the translation of the *dīwān* to the period of Hishām rather than ʿAbd al-Malik and even seems to suggest that Sarjūn's son, Manṣūr, replaces Sarjūn and not Sulaymān in one of the two versions preserved in Ibn al-Nadīm.[371] The accounts in al-Ṣulī, al-Jahshiyārī, and Ibn ʿAbd al-Rabbih have Sulaymān suggesting translating the *dīwān,* where it is ʿAbd al-Malik's suggestion in Sulaymān's biography. For Luke Yarbrough, this timeline seems

[369] "*Qāla li-Rawh, Innī kalamtu kātib jundikum hadhā wa Rawḥ yawma'idhan ʿalā al-Urdan*," *ibid*.

[370] *Ibid*., 320-321.

[371] Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist,* 303, Eng 583. This, however, is unique as most account credit Sulaymān as Sarjūn's successor.

more realistic. Yarbrough highlights that the account in Sulaymān's biography in Ibn 'Asākir's *Ta'rīkh madinat Dimashq* "lacks a pervasive parabolic tone and contains several details that tether it to its setting, such as the names of Sulaymān, Rawḥ, the *jund* of al-Urdunn, and al-Ṣinnabrah. It also preserves several "blanks"—narrative junctures that call for detail, such as the reason that 'Abd al-Malik did not confront Marwān or the name of the Christian from Ba'labakk—that are left unfilled, suggesting that it was transmitted intact rather than embellished."[372] Further, this account places the reforms after the death of Sarjūn, in contrast to the accounts mentioned in al-Ṣulī, al-Jahshiyārī, and Ibn 'Abd al-Rabbih, which all seem to suggest that Sulaymān's appointment and conversion of the *dīwān* was during the lifetime of Sarjūn (al-Ṣulī even explicitly mentions that Sarjūn was dismissed).[373] Nevertheless, similar to the account for the conversion in Iraq, we are able to make two important observations. First, numismatic evidence does suggest monetary reforms and experiments for the period, and these numismatic reforms most likely occurred prior to administrative reforms around 700.[374] Second, there is no reason to believe Sulaymān was not bilingual and competent in Greek just as Ṣāliḥ was in Persian. Sulaymān was from Jordan, and it is hard to understand how he could work in the "pre-reform" bureaucracy if he was illiterate in Greek and/or unfamiliar with the existing administrative infrastructure of the region.[375]

[372] Yarbrough, *Friends of the Emirs,* 74. It is important to point out that Yarbrough is not strictly concerned with the *historicity* of the account, as much as he is concerned about whether or not it reflects attitudes of the period, which he suggests it does, *ibid*., 73.

[373] Yarbrough again takes these as evidence of early sentiments and not later narrative liberties, "Because it lacks obvious topoi, depicts Sarjūn as deceased at the time of the reforms, and avoids implying that they occurred overnight, it is happily incompatible with most other accounts of those reforms, most of which are dubious," *Ibid*., 74-75.

[374] Heidemann, "The Evolving Imagery," 171ff.

[375] *TMD* 22:317.

Egypt: ʻAbdallāh b. ʻAbd al-Malik, ʻAbd al-Malik, Athanasius, and Ibn Yarbūʻ al-Fuzarī

As with Syria and Iraq, the accounts for the conversion of the *dīwān* are not consistent. First, Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam (d. 257/871) places the conversion after ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz's death and during the subsequent governorship of ʻAbdallāh b. ʻAbd al-Malik (86-90/705-709).[376] Al-Kindī (d.350/961) has the conversion occur after Walīd I was recognized as Caliph and, thus, after the death of ʻAbd al-Malik in 86/705.[377] Finally, al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) places the conversion of the *dīwān* the earliest of the three and at the direction of ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz b. Marwān (d. 86/705), the Caliph ʻAbd al-Malik's brother and governor of Egypt.[378] Only al-Kindī provides additional details concerning the individual administrators; that is, before ʻAbdallāh b. ʻAbd al-Malik, the *dīwān* was recorded in Coptic(!) (*al-qibṭayya*) and that ʻAbdallāh dismissed Athanasius and replaced him with Ibn Yarbūʻ al-Fazārī.[379] This additional detail, especially since Athanasius is recorded as an administrator in Egypt elsewhere, would make this account seem to be the most credible of the three.[380] However, al-Kindī has this during the reign of al-Walīd I, but ʻAbd al-Malik is suggested to be alive when Athanasius is replaced in both Muslim and non-Muslim sources. Specifically, this would be inconsistent with the timeline of Athanasius Bar Gūmōyē's return from Egypt in the Syriac account by Dionysius of Telmahrē in (preserved in the

[376] Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futuḥ miṣr,* 122.

[377] Al-Kindī, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt*, 58-59.

[378] Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubh al-aʼshā fī sināʻāt al-inshā*, 1:423.

[379] Al-Kindī, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt*, 59. It is worth pointing out that Athanasius is supposedly from Edessa in Syria and was appointed to Egypt under the direction of ʻAbd al-Malik; so Coptic as the language of administration and not Greek is odd and possibly an anachronism by the author.

[380] Not only is Athanasius included in several literary accounts about early Egyptian administration, he is also mentioned in a papyrus concerning the expenditures (δαπάνη) of ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz, *P.Lond* IV 1447.

anonymous *Chronicle 1234* and *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*),[381] al-Jahshiyārī,[382] and Severus b. Muqaffa‘'s *History of the Coptic Patriarchs of Alexandria*.[383] Therefore, again, we are at an impasse in which accounts are contradictory for the timeline of events. That said, multiple accounts report that Athanasius was appointed under ‘Abd al-‘Azīz—even if the Christian chronicles may very well embellish the degree of his influence.[384]

It is interesting to point out that Athanasius was from Edessa—not Egypt; and, at least according to Christian sources was appointed by ‘Abd al-Malik to aid his younger brother. According to the tenth-century historian al-Kindī (d. 350/961) when ‘Abd al-Malik appointed his son, ‘Abdallāh as the new governor of Egypt, ‘Abd al-Malik ordered his son to remove all traces of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz by replacing his administrators and companions.[385] However, unlike Ṣāliḥ and Sulaymān, we do not know anything else about Ibn Yarbū‘ al-Fazārī other than that he was from Ḥims and possibly worked with ‘Abdallāh in Ḥims before ‘Abdallāh was appointed as governor of Egypt.[386] In short, we are again left with a series of accounts with different timelines, but, nevertheless, have a similar post-numismatic reform setting.

The Historiography of the Arabization

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[381] *Chronicle 1234* (Syriac), 294, Palmer (trans.), *The Seventh Century in West-Syrian Chronicles*, 202; *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d'Antioche, 1166-1199,* Vol. 4 (Syriac), 447-449, Vol. 2 (trans), 475-477. See also, Chapter 2 for further discussion of Athanasius.

[382] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 74.

[383] Severus b. Muqaffa‘, *History of the Coptic Patriarchs of Alexandra,* 54.

[384] As discussed in Chapter 2, according to the Syriac tradition related to Dionysius of Telmaḥrē (d.845) preserved in the anonymously authored *Chronicle 1234* and *Chronique de Michel le Syrien,* Athanasius was not only ‘Abd al-‘Azīz's scribe and manager, but "actual authority (*puqdānā*) and governing *(dūbārāl*) belonged to Athanasius, and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ruled only in name (*shamā balḥūd d-malkūtā newe l-‘Abd l-‘Azīz*)," *Chronicle 1234* (Syriac), 294, Palmer (trans.), *The Seventh Century in West-Syrian Chronicles*, 202; see also, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d'Antioche, 1166-1199,* Vol. 4 (Syriac), 447-449, Vol. 2 (trans), 475-477.

[385] Al-Kindi, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt*, 58.

[386] I appreciate Legendre drawing my attention to this overlap; Legendre, "The Translation of the *dīwān* and the making of the Marwanid ‘language reform," *forthcoming.*

The most glaring issue with the literary accounts is the contradictory chronologies. However, the internal structure has also attracted the suspicion of scholars. Noth and Conrad cite the urinating clerk in Balādhurī as an example of a "pseudo-cause," that is when a "pseudo-cause replaces the genuine reason behind a crucial historical development."[387] This concept of a pseudo-cause could likewise be applied to other accounts that explain the conversion as the result of a particular discussion between individuals. Duri shares a similar disposition toward the accounts, and advises that, "We cannot accept the trivial reasons offered by historians for this change, such as the annoyance of a particular *kātib* or a quarrel between two of the *kuttāb*."[388] Nancy Khalek, likewise, emphasizes the broader literary devices of al-Jahshiyārī and *adab al-kuttab* literature in general found in many of these accounts.[389] For Khalek, as well as Luke Yarbrough, these accounts reflect the anxieties of later scribes and are efforts to illustrate the industrious Muslim scribe who astutely and effortlessly translates the *dīwān* to the chagrin of their non-Muslim coworkers.[390] For these scholars, the portrayal of these accounts functioned as part of literary strategies prevalent during the authors' milieu, and, as such, they should caution historians against extrapolating the details in a particular account as evidence for 'Abd al-Malik's broader interests and motivations.

However, nothing has undermined a reductive understanding of the Arabization of the bureaucracy more than papyrological evidence of the continued use of non-Arabic within the

[387] Noth and Conrand do not believe there ever was such an order to convert the *dīwān*; Albrecht Noth and Lawrence Conrad, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994), 189.

[388] His explanation is that "The Arab policy followed by the Umayyads, the stability of the state and the affirmation of its edifice, as well as the supremacy of the Arabic language, demanded this Arabicisation;" Duri, *Early Islamic Institutions,* 170.

[389] Khalek, "Some Notes on the Representation of Non-Muslim Officials."

[390] Yarbrough, however, does consider the unique account in Sulaymāns biography in *TMD* as possibly historically reliable due to its level of detail, chronology, and lack of embellishment, *Friends of the Emirs,* 74.

administration.[391] As summed up recently by Marie Legendre's overview of the Umayyad administration: "Papyrus documents from Palestine and Egypt clearly show that on one side, Arabic was used in administrative documents before 'Abd al-Malik and, on the other side, that Greek and Coptic were dominant administrative languages in the Nile Valley until the end of the Umayyad period. Arabic documents are a small minority in the available corpus of an administrative texts (correspondence, tax demand notes and receipts, petitions, etc.)…only the highest echelons of the administrative hierarchy, in the cities, were drawing up documents in Arabic."[392] Papyri in Greek and Coptic from throughout the seventh (and even into the ninth) century illustrates that the administrative reform remembered in literary text should not be interpreted as a historical rupture in which non-Muslims were universally excluded or the use of Arabic mandatory across the administration. To take this point even further, recent studies by Jennifer Cromwell and Cecilia Palombo have demonstrated the increase in the use of Coptic as well as certain Christian administrators, in this case monks, over the course of the early eighth century.[393] The point is not to simply undermine the Arabization narrative but to highlight how "centralizing" models overlook the evolution of the administration and its role within society.

Everything is Negotiable: Loyalty & Administration

In this section, I argue that administrative reforms did not attempt to replace regional control but represent the further integration of regional elites within the administrative

[391] For example, Lajos Berkes, "The Latest Identified Greek Documentary Text from Egypt: A Papyrus from 825 AD (*SPP* III 577 reconsidered)," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 209 (2019): 242-244.

[392] Marie Legendre, "Aspects of the Umayyad Administration," 141.

[393] Jennifer Cromwell, *Recording Village Life: A Coptic Scribe in Early Islamic Egypt* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017); Cecilia Palombo, "The Christian Clergy's Islamic Local Government in Late Marwanid and Abbasid Egypt" (PhD diss, Princeton University, 2020); see also Tonio Sebastian Richter, "Language Choice in the Qurra Dossier," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids,* ed. Arietta Papconstantinou (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 189-220.

infrastructure. ‘Abd al-Malik did not attempt to install Damascene administrators as Mu‘āwiya had attempted when he appointed his own *mawlā,* ‘Abdallāh/‘Ubaydallāh b. Darraj, over the *kharāj* of Iraq.[394] Rather, the administrative evolution witnessed increase participation of local elite and, as I argue, an understood degree of autonomy in exchange for loyalty towards the Caliph in Damascus. This is important because it highlights an important observation of Sijpesteijn's papyrological study of early Islamic Egypt. Sijpesteijn argues that "Pagarchs such as Nājid, who stood in direct communication with the governor and were subject to his rule, had been entrusted with the collection of revenue, the jurisdiction over registration of tenure conditions in their paparchies, not as concessions from a weak state, but because this was the most efficient way to rule. With one significant difference: their loyalty lay with their Arab Muslim colleagues, not with the local agricultural estate."[395] This priority on pragmatism and new networks is important to point out. As Sijpesteijn continues, "The key contrast, therefore, is not between the Byzantine and the Islamic pagarchy, a decentralized versus centralized state, but between Christian versus Muslim pagarchs. This shift in the religious and social-economic background of the administrators at the level of the pagarch was as much the result of a professionalization of the administration as it was of a conscious ideological programme to Islamicize and Arabicize the administration."[396] On the surface, this emphasis on Christian verses Muslim pagarchs would seem to be in direct contradiction to the argument of Chapter Two; however, Sijpesteijn is saying, as I interpret it, that the change in "religious identity"

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[394] Al-Ya‘qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:258, al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 59. ‘Abdallāh/‘Ubaydallāh has two biographies in *TMD* under the two spellings; the biography under ‘Abdallāh mention that he was included in Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī's *Tasmiyat kuttāb umrā' Dimashq* and served as Mu‘āwiya's secretary of correspondence (*risā'l*) and owned property in Dimascus, *TMD* 34:340. Under ‘Ubaydallāh, his biography says that he was appointed by Mu‘āwiya over the *kharāj* in Kūfa along with ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Umm al-Ḥakam, *TMD* 37:426.

[395] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State,* 210.

[396] *Ibid*.

reflected the change in socioeconomic backgrounds of new Muslim administrators, not simply their confessional membership.

It is here that an additional historiographical framework is applicable that is overlooked by focusing on a debate between centralized versus decentralized framework. Namely, the way the administration allowed emerging Muslim elites vying for control of the regional administration the ability to maintain and reproduce their status. Thus, the heterogenous implementation of reforms is not the staggered fulfillment or failure of centralizing reforms, but the continued integration of new regional elites for control of local surplus.[397] Reforms did not undermine regional powers as much they incorporated them within a political and economic entity in which membership within benefited one more than separation. As argued by John Haldon, this is a key characteristic of tributary/feudal mode in medieval state formation. Haldon summarizes two key aspects of pre-modern state formation:

> "(1) that whatever the degree of autonomy a state structure and the elite personnel which staff it may appear to show, however extended their institutionalized power may be, both in ideological terms and in real terms, its historical development and its potential for transformation are determined by economic relations, by the social relations of production which breathe life into it, and which represent the specific modal determinants and constraints (through the infinity of possible culture-specific institutional forms) operating upon it; (2) state can only act autonomously from the ruling class of their social formation for a limited period and under certain ideological-political conditions. When they oppose the interests of a ruling class in such a way as to endanger the potential for that class to reproduce itself and maintain its accustomed position (as it perceives it), a political and structural crisis may follow; where they are successful in promoting an independent line which is antagonistic to the interests of a dominate class, the result is usually the collapse or fragmentation of the state."[398]

[397] This does not, however, suggest that 'Abd al-Malik initiated a series of "failed" policies of centralization, but, perhaps, considers that the regionalization of the empire's administration could actually be interpreted as a reason for his hereditary success, i.e. Haldon, *The State and the Tributary Mode of Production* (New York: Verso, 1993).

[398] Haldon, *The State and the Tributary Mode of Production,* 68.

A more accessible summary is that "the success or failure of states to survive over a longer or shorter period depends ultimately upon the relationship between other actual or potential centers of social power (spatially or socially) and the rulers and their dependent elite, for control over the appropriation and distribution of resources (whether economic or ideological—it is important to stress that ideological power is just as functionally important here)."[399] Importantly for this chapter, as well as Haldon, the administration often served as a means for elites to carry out the very process of maintaining and reproducing their status.[400] I argue that administrative reforms allowed members of the ruling class (i.e. Marwānid loyalist—at least at the time when the war finally ended) a means to maintain their status, which was done, at least partly, through control over the extraction and distribution of surplus (taxation, booty, etc.).[401]

Arab Administrators & Political Loyalty Prior to the "Translation of the Dīwān*"*

The employment of Arabic speakers was not something new with the conversion of the administration or any reforms enacted by ʻAbd al-Malik or his governors nor was Arabic exclusively used after said reforms. As pointed out by Morony, there was "nothing unusual about the employment of those who could write Arabic by early Islamic rulers, governors, or generals since it clearly reflects pre-Islamic Arab, Persian, and Byzantine practices."[402] ʻAbī b. Zayd of

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[399] *Ibid*., 142.

[400] *Ibid*,141.

[401] It important to point out that Haldon does not consider the Umayyads as successful at implementing what has been described above. Rather, according to Haldon, it was the Umayyad's "conflicts of interests between centre, tribal military support (fragmented by inherited ideological rivalries), underprivileged converts to Islam, and the remnants of traditional bureaucratic elites among the conquered urban populations (all four elements overdetermined by deep-seated religious ideological factionalism) combined to produce a situation in which the ruling Arab family and its clan support proved unable to mobilize the resources to fend of serious and ideologically well-motivated attack," Haldon, *The State & the Tributary Mode of Production,* 142.

[402] Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest,* 64.

Hira (d. ca 590) is credited in tradition as the first to write in Arabic for the Sasanian chancellery. A six-century inscription from Umm al-Jimal which mentions Ulayh b. ‘Ubayda the scribe (*al-kātib*) of al-Khulayd, the chief of the Banū ‘Amr.[403] Further, *mawālī* for Ṭā’if and Iraqi Arabs are associated with the administration already in the 20’s/640’s.[404] Moreover, ‘Abd al-Malik’s bureaucracy consisted of several members who were proficient in Arabic before literary sources attribute translation of the *dīwān*; for example, Qabīṣa b. Dhu’ayb, ‘Abd al-Malik’s milk brother and secretary of the seal (*khātim*), was originally from Medina.[405] Further evidence of Arabic proficiency amongst the bureaucratic elite is that almost every administrator is credited with transmitting *ḥadīth*—a quite difficult task if one was not competent in Arabic. Geoffery Khan has also demonstrated the pre-Islamic Arabic heritage with aspects of the administration.[406] In short, the Arabization of the bureaucracy, at this level at least, did not introduce Arabic speaking administrators for the first time nor was it even the first time the Umayyad dynasty took administration seriously or introduced/adapted their own linguistic procedures; there were plenty of administrators with Arabic competence prior to and throughout ‘Abd al-Malik’s administration.

It is helpful, then, to identify other aspects about these individuals beyond “did they or did they not know Arabic.” First, several pre-reform administrators for ‘Abd al-Malik had social

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[403] Combe, Sauvaget, and Weit, *Repertoire chronologique d’epigraphie arabe* Vol 1 (Cairo: Imprimerie de l’institute français d’archéologie orientale, 1931), 4-5; Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquests,* 64-65.

[404] These are al-Ḥuṣayn b. Abī al-Ḥurr al-‘Anbarī and Bajāla b. ‘Abda al-‘Anbarī. Bajāla was the scribe for Ja’z b. Mu‘āwiya and was in charge of taxation for the districts of Manadhir and Dast- Maysan near Basra; Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest,* 65; Abū Yūsuf, *Kharāj,* 199; Eng., 88. Al-Ḥuṣayn was secretary for Abū Mūsā in Basra; Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*, 65.

[405] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 73, 78; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl,* 23:476; *TMD* 49:650. We can also include those who know Arabic in Sufyānid administration discussed in Chapter 1.

[406] Geoffrey Khan, “The Opening Formula and Witness Clauses in Arabic Legal Documents from the Early Islamic Period,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 139 n. 1 (2019): 23-39.

or economic ties to the region before the emergence of Islam, particularly those who served as the secretary of taxation (*al-kharāj*).[407] These include the Christian Sarjūn b. Manṣur mentioned above, as well as Sālim (Abū al-Zu‘ayzi‘a), Rawḥ b. Zinbā’, and Qabīṣa b. Dhu’ayb. As discussed at length in chapter two, Sarjūn b. Manṣūr was the son of the Byzantine/Sasanian/Early Islamic administrator, Manṣūr, whom the Christian Arabic *Annales of Eutychios* credits with negotiating the terms of surrender for the city of Damascus.[408] Sālim also had connections with pre-Islamic Syria. Sālim was the *mawlā* of Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, and served in the administration of both Marwān and ‘Abd al-Malik.[409] From the biography of his son, we know he was from Adra‘at (Dar‘a on the modern Jordan Syria boarder).[410] Rawḥ b. Zinbā’ was likewise from the region and owned property in Tyre (Ṣūr in modern Lebanon).[411] Additionally, his family had trade connections between the Byzantines and Ghassanids and Rawḥ was under the Ghassanid Phylarch al-Harith b. Abī Shamir.[412] Rawḥ was originally governor of Palestine before being ousted by the rival caliphate of Ibn al-Zubayr, after which he served as a secretary for ‘Abd al-Malik during the Second Civil War.[413]

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[407] As noted in Chapter 1, this term is anachronistic and was not used in contemporary papyri.

[408] *Eutychii patriarchae Alexandrini annales* II, *CSCO scr. Arabici* 7 (Lueven: Peeters, 1909), 15. See also Chapter Two for more on Manṣūr and his family in the Umayyad administration.

[409] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 72, 74, 75; *TMD* 20:88. Sālim’s service during Marwān I’s caliphate is definitive evidence that he served prior to the Arabization of the bureaucracy.

[410] His son was Muhammad b. Abī al-Zu’ayzi’a, *TMD* 53:43-45.

[411] Rawḥ b. Zinbā‘, *TMD* 18:240. The biography of his father, Zinbā‘ mentions that the family owned property in Ṣūr, *TMD* 19:82. See also, Isaac Hasson, “Le chef judhāmite Rawḥ ibn Zinbā‘,” in *Studia Islamica* 77 (1993): 95-122; Crone, *Slaves on Horses,* 99-101; and Gerald Hawting, “Rawḥ b. Zinbā‘,” in *EI2.*

[412] Hasson, “Le chef judhāmite Rawḥ ibn Zinbā‘,” 99-100.

[413] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 75; According to al-Ya‘qūbī, Rawḥ was the person who “exercised the most influence upon “Abd al-Malik,” *Ta’rīkh,* 2:335.

TABLE 2: REGIONAL AND POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS IN ‘ABD AL-MALIK’S ADMINISTRATION		
Name	Pre-Islamic Regional Affiliation	Marwānid/Umayyad Political Ties
Qabiṣa b. Dhu’ayb		Milk brother to ‘Abd al-Malik Fought at the Battle of Ḥarra
Sālim / Abū al-Zu‘ayzi‘a	Jordan	
Rawḥ b. Zinbā‘	Father owned property in Tyre (Ṣūr) From the *Banū Judhām,* who had settled in Palestine before the conquest	Appointed Governor of Palestine by Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiya Sided with Mu‘āwiya at Ṣiffīn Fought in the Battle of Marj Raḥiṭ
Sarjūn b. Manṣūr	Damascus/Syria	
Rabī‘a al-Jurashī		Died at the battle of Marj Rāḥiṭ
‘Amr b. Sa‘īd al-‘Āṣ (al-Ashdaq)	Cousin to ‘Abd al-Malik	Served as administrator of the *jund* for Mu‘āwiya Killed by ‘Abd al-Malik following a coup led by ‘Amr in Damascus

To sum up, Sālim, Rawḥ, and Ṣarjūn all had pre-Islamic connections to the economic and geographical landscape of Syria. Second, there are explicit political ties between ‘Abd al-Malik, Qabīṣa b. Dhu’ayb, and Rawḥ b. Zinbā‘. Qabīṣa was not only the scribe of ‘Abd al-Malik, but he was his milk brother as well. He fought for Yazīd I and even lost an eye at the battle of al-Ḥarra

in 63/683.[414] Rawḥ b. Zanbāʻ also served in the military and even led the Judhāmite tribe into battle in support of Muʻāwiya at Siffīn—support that likely lead to his appointment as governor of Palestine.[415] At the outset of the Second Civil War, Rawḥ b. Zanbāʻ was part of an expedition of *ashrāf* sent by Yazīd I to negotiate with Ibn al-Zubayr.[416] During the civil war, Rawḥ was engaged in a rivalry for leadership of Judhām with Nātil b. Ḳays who sided with Ibn al-Zubayr in the Second Civil War.[417] Finally, another scribe, Rabīʻa al-Jurashī also partook in military matters and died at the battle of Marj Raḥiṭ in 64/684.[418] In short, these administrators had political ties to the caliphate and both Muslim and non-Muslim (as is the case of Ṣarjūn b. Manṣūr and likely Shamʻīl as well[419]) administrators had pre-Islamic connections to the area, suggesting a familiarity with the economic and administrative networks. This is explicit in the career of Ṣarjūn and highly likely with Rawḥ b. Zinbāʻ whose father is said to have facilitated trade between the Byzantine and Ghasānids under the Ghasānid phylarch al-Ḥarith b. Abī Shamir.[420] Thus, even before any initiation of administrative or numismatic reforms, the administrative makeup had a balance of pragmatic leadership and political ties, and plenty of administrators who knew Arabic and were Muslims.

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[414] *TMD* 49 :259. Qabīṣa's son, Isḥaq, would also become influential in the Umayyad administration. He is mentioned in a mosaic at the Umayyad market in Bet Shean/Bays, Moshe Sharon, *CIAP* Vol 2, 207. See further discussion on generational employment in Chapter 4.

[415] Hasson, "Le chef judhāmite," 97.

[416] Crone, *Slaves on Horses,* 100; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb* 4:53.

[417] *Ibid.,* 34, 100. Rawḥ reportedly may have upset members of his tribe when he attempted to recast the genealogy of Judhām and connect the tribe to the "northern" (Maʻaddī) tribe rather than the "southern" (Qaḥṭānī) clan; Hawting, *Rawḥ b. Zinbāʻ,* in *EI2*.

[418] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 77; *MTMD* 8:280. Marj Rāḥit was a definitive battel between the Zubayrids and Marwānids during the Second Civil War;"Marj Rahit," in *EI2.*

[419] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 82.

[420] Hasson, "Le Chef Judhamite," 99.

Administrators as Elites

Umayyad administrators, including clients and non-Muslims, were powerful, economically, socially, and even militarily. Administrators are often associated with property ownership, either in Damascus or the geographical area they govern, as well as evidence of intergenerational wealth, including the continued employment of descendants in the government or attestations of estates attached to the descendants of bureaucrats. A career in the administration very likely was not the ideal, or preferred, means of becoming affluent or wealthy; yet, especially in premodern states, control and influence over administrative surplus was an important component of maintaining and reproducing status.[421] The lucrative consequences of administrative influence are not merely a theoretical construct projected onto our interpretation, but are reflected in our source material. Likewise, this illustrates the broader socioeconomic standing of administrators whose privilege transcended their ethnic or religious identity as an Arab Muslim, non-Arab Muslim, or even non-Muslim.

Maintaining & Reproducing Status: Generational Employment & Wealth

Precision is elusive when attempting to define, measure, and track economic capital when our evidence is limited. Information about administrators is far from consistent. While we, or at least those of us chasing the shadow of Chris Wickham, wish that biographical dictionaries provided details about the economic wealth of individuals or their ancestors, this usually is not the case. Further, references to estates or property ownership, which are relatively common in biographical dictionaries, provide limited details about the extent of the property or its role in the

[421] See above discussion on Haldon. It goes without saying that here are many examples of individuals, including clients, who were wealthy individuals and were not members of the administration; see for example, Juda, "The Economic Status of the *Mawālī* in Early Islam."

local economy (i.e., was it simply a sizable residence or was it intended to generate income for the owner). However, as discussed in Chapter 2, approaches to literary sources can still provide insight into the social and economic background of individuals, even if the exact details are vague. Thus, below, I discuss a series of case studies demonstrating intergenerational employment, some of which are even supported by material evidence.

These case studies demonstrate two important characteristics about the socioeconomic makeup of administrators and their ability to maintain and reproduce their status in society. First, these administrators, including *mawālī,* were members of a powerful class of fellow elites. Second, there is a pattern of *mawālī* administrators connected to powerful and influential tribes in the region where they served, which, I suggest, can be understood as a merging of networks between new Arab elites and pre-existing social and economic networks. In short, these individuals were more than mere functionaries or subalterns, they were powerful and influential members of the caliphate and society.

Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb al-Khuzāʿī & Isḥāq b. Qabīṣa

Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb b. Ḥalḥala al-Khuzāʿī provides some of our best attested evidence of into the generational privilege of administrators. Qabīṣa lived in Damascus but was originally from Medina, where he is also reported to own property.[422] Qabīṣa served as secretary of the seal for ʿAbd al-Malik, with whom he was a milk brother, and fought in his support at the battle of al-Ḥarra between Muʿāwiya's son Yazīd I and the Medinese coalition opposing Yazid I's claim to the Caliphate. Qabīsa's son, Isḥāq b. Qabīṣa also served in the administration as secretary for Walīd I and Hishām, with some sources claiming that he was even a governor of the *jund al-*

[422] According to his biography, he owned a "considerable" (*mughtabara*) home/estate in Damascus, *TMD* 49:65.

Urdunn.[423] His biography in Ibn ʻAsākir reports that he lived in Jordan.[424] Isḥaq was originally appointed under al-Walīd I over the *dīwān* of health (*al-zamnā*) and later over the diwan of charitable matters (*al-sadaqāt*) by Hishām.[425] Al-Jahshiyārī mentions in his chapter on the administrators of Hishām that Isḥāq b. Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb was over Hishām's properties (*ḍiyāʻ*) in Jordan and that his name is written in a mosaic (*ismuhu maktub bi-l-fusayfisā'*) at a castle (*qaṣr*) in ʻAkā.[426] This specific inscription, does not seem to have survived; however, there is a mosaic inscription in the Umayyad Market at Bet Shean/Baysān that does mention Isḥāq.[427]

Isḥāq's name is part of two mosaics that are located on either side of the arched gate leading to the Umayyad Market in Bet Shean/Baysan (Byzantine Scythopolis).[428] The mosaic featured gilded glass tesserae in Kufic angular script against a backdrop of deep blue and green. Composed of approximately 130 glass pieces (10 centimeters each), the two mosaics were roughly one square meter each and framed by ornamental stuccoed frames.[429] The inscriptions on the right reads: "In the name of Allāh, the Compassionate, the Merciful, there is no God but Allāh; He has no companion. Muhammad is the messenger of Allāh." The inscription on the left

[423] Al-Jahshiyārī says he was only in charge of Hishām's properties in Jordan, *kitāb al-wuzarā'*, 106; other sources, however, suggest that he was governor, *e.g. TMD* 8:271-272. Elias Khamis surmises that Isḥāq became governor in 736 C.E., following the death of ʻUbāda b. Nussay al-Kindī, who was a *qādī* in Jordan under ʻAbd al-Malik and then appointed as governor by ʻUmar II, "Two Wall Mosaic Inscriptions," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 64 n.2 (2001): 169.

[424] *TMD* 8:270.

[425] *TMD* 8:270.

[426] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 106.

[427] Moshe Sharon, *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palestainae (CIAP)*, Vol 2 (Brill: Leiden, 1999), 207ff. See also, Elias Khamis, "Two Wall Mosaic Inscriptions from the Umayyad Marketplace in Bet Shean/Baysān," 159-176. For the inscription mentioned in al-Jahshiyārī, see *RCEA* 1, 26 note 32.

[428] Bet Shean was located a trade crossroads in Jordan and was part of Hisham's economic investments in the region during his caliphate; see Elias Khamis, "Two Wall Mosaic Inscriptions," 173-176.

[429] Sharon surmises that the two may have been the exact same size, but it does appear that the left inscription was wider (1.20x1.35m) than the one on the right (.84x1.16m), *CIAP* 2:207.

reads, “In the name of Allāh, the Compassionate, the Merciful. The servant of Allāh Hishām, commander of the believers (*mu’minīn*), ordered this building to be built by *(‘alā yaday*) the governor (*al-amīr*) Isḥaq (اسحق) b. Qabīṣa in (?) the year (….) and one hundred.”[430] The inscription is quite remarkable and a rare example of Umayyad era mosaics;[431] while not the same inscription as the one mentioned in Acre by al-Jahishyārī, it nevertheless provides a useful verification of employment—which we almost always lack beyond what is recorded in literary sources.

The importance of Isḥāq should not be understated; gold mosaics were rare and, at least in literary sources, are often associated with mosques.[432] Even in more humble imperial inscriptions, such as a mile marker from the time of ‘Abd al-Malik, the name of the individual in charge of its construction was no humble laborer, but the uncle of ‘Abd al-Malik.[433] Therefore, Isḥāq’s important standing and influence within the city and region is clear, especially if he was involved with Hishām’s patronage of Acre, and the possible taxes levied on economic transactions in marketplaces.[434] Additionally, and more importantly, the inscription identifies Isḥāq as Hishām’s governor (*al-amīr*) which highlights the influence of Isḥāq within the administration and region.[435]

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[430] *CIAP* 2:207.

[431] Khamis remarks that the Dome of the Rock is the only other “surviving example of a major Umayyad wall mosaic inscription,” since mosaic inscriptions from the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus al-Aqṣā in Jerusalem, and the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina have unfortunately not survived; “Two Wall Mosaic Inscriptions,” 171.

[432] See note above. Additionally, Khamis mentions several literary accounts of mosaics; for references, see *ibid.,* 171.

[433] In the case of ‘Abd al-Malik’s mile marker, it is Yaḥyā b. al-Ḥakam, ‘Abd al-Malik’s uncle, who carried out the project; Moshe Sharon, “An Arabic Inscription from the Time of the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 29, no. 2 (1966): 371.

[434] Acre was possibly the most important port city for Jordan, and, as pointed out by Khamis, likely had commercial relations with Bet Shean to the north, Khamis, “Two Wall Mosaic Inscriptions, 170.

[435] Sharon points out that the term *amīr,* however, should not necessarily be equated with “governor” in inscriptions, *CPR* II, 211. My appreciation for Yaara Perlman for drawing my attention to Sharon’s comment on the term. In

Al-Qaʻqāʻ b. Khulayd al-ʻAbsī

Al-Qaʻqāʻ b. Khulayd al-ʻAbsī and his descendants demonstrate how employment did not entail a sense of total dependance on the caliph or the governor under whom they were employed. Rather one was able to maintain a certain level of influence in a region even after losing favor with a particular caliph or governor, which is evident in the volatile relationship between the caliphate in Damascus and al-Qaʻqāʻ and his sons. On the one hand, al-Qaʻqāʻʻs family were prominent members of the Banū ʻAbs of Ghaṭafān; his brother, al-Ḥusayn b. Khulayd is referred to as a *sayyid* from the leaders of ʻAbs in Syria[436] and his cousin, Wallāda, married the Caliph ʻAbd al-Malik and was the mother of the two future caliphs, al-Walīd I and Sulaymān.[437] Al-Qaʻqāʻʻs relationship with the caliphate was a fortuitous one, as he named two of his sons after Marwānid royalty (ʻAbd al-Malik and al-Walīd b. al-Qaʻqāʻ) and ʻAbd al-Malik granted sizable estates outside of Qinnasrīn to both him as well as his uncle, al-ʻAbbas (Wallāda's father and ʻAbd al-Malik's father in law).[438] It is here, in Qinnasrīn that al-Qaʻqāʻʻs family would have its legacy, even though he is credited with additional estates in Damascus.[439] Al-Walīd b. al-Qaʻqāʻ served as a general for the Umayyads and was ultimately appointed governor of Qinnasrīn by Hishām while his brother, ʻAbd al-Malik b. al-Qaʻqāʻ served as

papyri, the term *amīr* is also much more ambiguous in terms of its official responsibilities compared to its later literary use, Federico Morelli, "Consiglieri e comandanti: I titoli del governatore arabo d'Egitto *symboulos e amîr,*" *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik,* clxxiii (2010): 158-166; Marie Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic?," 7.

[436] *TMD* 14: 373.

[437] Baladhurī, *Futūḥ,* 146.

[438] The *Ḥiyār banī al-Qaʻqā;* according to Baladhurī, the property was exempt from the *kharāj* (land) tax; *Futūḥ,* 146; Yaqūt, *Muʻjam,* 2:325.

[439] *TMD* 49:347

governor of Ḥims.[440] While al-Qaʻqāʻ's loyalty with the caliphate was one of serendipity, the two sons ultimately found themselves on the wrong side of the succession dispute by supporting Hishām's effort to install his own son as successor, Maslama, rather than his nephew al-Walīd II.[441] This decision proved fatal for the two brothers, yet the influential and powerful presence of the family in the region did not disappear.[442] Al-Qaʻqā's grandson, Thumāma b. al-Walīd b. al-Qaʻqāʻ survived the ʻAbbāsid revolution and served as a general for the ʻAbbāsids against the Byzantines[443] and his great grandson, ʻUthmān b. Thumāma, is attested as a notable in Qinnasrīn by both Muslim and Christian sources.[444]

The marital ties to the Caliphate certainly bolstered al-Qaʻqāʻ's position. However, his family demonstrates how regional power, economic as well as administrative, could maintain and reproduce privileged status even with drastic consequences such as the death of both of al-Qaʻqāʻ's sons. Thus, one cannot purely view their position as completely dependent on the caliphate as the family was able to maintain its status across several generations including over the course of civil wars and revolutions. To put it in explicitly Bourdieusian vocabulary, their socioeconomic position likely was generated through social capital, exemplified in al-Qaʻqāʻ's cousin's marriage to ʻAbd al-Malik and ʻAbd al-Malik's subsequent allocation of estates surrounding Qinnasrīn. However, the family would go on to depend on more than social capital

[440] *TMD* 63:252-253; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1593; Amikam Elad, points out that Baladhurī's *Futūh* reports that al-Walīd b. al-Qaʻqaʻ as governor of al-Balaqa', and not Qinnarsrīn, "The Southern Golan in the Early Muslim Period: The Significance of Two Newly Discovered Milestones of ʻAbd al-Malik," *Der Islam* 76 (1999): 61.

[441] Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʻrīkh*, 2:1783-1784.

[442] Following al-Walīd II ascension, he sent Yazīd b. ʻUmar b. Hubayra to replace al-Walīd b. al-Qaʻqāʻ as governor of Qinnasrīn, who upon doing so, tortured and killed both brothers along with other members of the family of al-Qaʻqāʻ, *TMD* 63:253, *TMD* 37:90; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1783; Crone, *Slaves,*105-106.

[443] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 3:447, 485; Yaʻqūbī, *Ta'rīkh* 2:486.

[444] Yaʻqubī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:541; Michael the Syrian, *IV* 494, 507, 510 = III 27, 49, 53.

alone as they were able to maintain a degree of regional influence well after the deaths of al-Qaʻqāʻs two sons and even collapse of the Umayyad Caliphate. The point is that their social space was dictated not by social networks (read capital) alone but was informed by their economic presence in Qinnasrīn as well.

Like father like son: the Administration of al-Walīd I (86-96/705-715)

Al-Walīd I's administration was in many ways a continuation of his father's, both in terms of administrative makeup as well as his relationship with al-Ḥajjāj in Iraq. Al-Walīd I became caliph in 86/705 and would reign until 96/715. Al-Hajjāj would remain the governor of Iraq until his death in 85/714, and nothing about al-Hajjāj's administration suggests that al-Walīd I attempted to wrestle power away from al-Ḥajjāj in Iraq. When al-Ḥajjāj died, he was replaced by Yazīd b. Abī Kabsha, who served over the *shurta* for both ʻAbd al-Malik and al-Ḥajjāj in Wāsiṭ.[445] It was only with the caliphate of Sulaymān, al-Walīd I's successor, that the Caliphate in Damascus seems to have made a serious effort to curb al-Ḥajjāj's legacy in the region by naming Yazīd b. al-Muhallab as governor and replacing al-Ḥajjāj's chosen successor,, Yazīd b. Abī Muslim, as administrator of taxation in Iraq.[446]

Three administrators, Sulaymān b. Saʻd, ʻAmr b. al-Ḥarith, and al-Qaʻqāʻ b. Khulayd, served in al-Walīd I's administration as they had his father's. Several sons of these administrators, likewise, would follow the example of their fathers and go on to serve in the Umayyad government. Sulaymān b. Saʻd's son, Thābit, served as over the *dīwān al-rasā'il* for

[445] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1258.

[446] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 85; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1282; Yaʻqūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:354-355, *TMD* 65:390-392. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʻyān,* 6:309-310.

the Caliph Yazīd III.[447] ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Amr b. al-Ḥarith served over the *bayt al-māl* concurrently to his father, ‘Amr b. al-Ḥarith, in al-Walīd I’s administration. [448] Finally, the above mentioned al-Qa‘qā‘ b. Khulayd’s son, al-Walīd, was appointed governor of Qinnasrīn by the Caliph Hishām[449] and another son, ‘Abd al-Malik, was governor of Ḥims.[450]

To recap, administrative positions were not strictly hereditary and the majority of administrators were not succeed by their sons, at least at the highest echelons of the administration.[451] Nevertheless, there are additional generational administrators about whom our evidence is much more limited, at least as it pertains to material evidence.[452] Sālim (‘Abd al-Rahman)[453] was succeed by his son, ‘Abdallāh b. Sālim in the administration of al-Walīd II. [454] While not strictly members of the administration, we can also include the two sons of Janāh (the

[447] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 119.

[448] ‘Abdallāh also served in Sulaymān’s and Hishām’s administrations; Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 92; *TMD* 31:236. ‘Amr b. al-Hārith served as administrator of the seal (*khātim*) for ‘Abd al-Malik and Walīd I, al-Jahshiyārī, *kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 78; *TMD* 45:452. Ibn ‘Asākir, citing Ibn Khayyāṭ, clarifies that the ‘Amr b. al-Ḥārith served until his death, after which he was replaced by Janāḥ, the *mawlā* of al-Walīd I, *TMD* 45:455. However, al-Jahshiyari does not include ‘Amr, or his son ‘Abdallāh, among the administrators of al-Walīd I and only mentions that he served under ‘Abd al-Malik until his death, after which he was replaced by Janāh, al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 78. Janāh is identified as in charge of correspondence and the seal; *TMD* 11: 284, 286; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh,* 2:839; Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta’rīkh,* 312. Dates for the death of Qabīṣa b. Dhu’ayb vary between 86/87/88, al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a’lām al-nubalā’,* 3080.

[449] *TMD* 63: 253; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh,* 2:1784

[450] *TMD* 63: 253; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh,* 2:1784.

[451] There is also the case of Yazīd b ‘Abdallāh b. Mawhid who served as a judge (*qaḍī*) before (or after) his appointment in the administration, and his father, ‘Abdallāh b. Mahid was also a judge in Palestine; *TMD* 65:272 and *TMD* 33:242. It is unclear if ‘Abdallāh was an administrator too as it is unclear if his biography is referring that he is from among the scribes of the people of Palestine or if it is referring to his son, *TMD* 33:242.

[452] There’s is also the administrator and *mawlā* of al-Walīd I, Janāh and his two sons, Marwān and Rawḥ who while not administrators are referred to as *sha‘khs* in Marwān b. Janāh’s biography, *TMD* 57:222; and Rawḥ b. Zinbā’s son, Sa‘īd, and grandson, Ḍab‘ān b. Rawḥ, and great grandsons, Ḥakam b. Ḍab‘ān and ‘Abdallah b. Yazīd b. Rawh, Crone, *Slaves on Horses,* 99-100.

[453] Sālim served as secretary of correspondence (*rasa‘il*) for Hishām (as attested in Ibn Khayyāṭ) and/or al-Walīd II; Ibn Khayyat, *Ta’rīkh* 361; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 117.

[454] Ibn Sālim replaced his father as secretary of correspondence for al-Walīd II; *TMD* 29:3.

mawlā and administrators for al-Walīd I), Marwān and Rawḥ who are referred to as *shaykh*s[455] and the many descendants of Rawḥ b. Zanbā‘: his two sons, Sa‘īd and Ḍab‘ān, and grandson, Ḥakam b. Ḍaba‘ān who served in various governing positions.[456] There are even those who one would imagine would find themselves on the outside looking in after bureaucratic reforms: Zadhanfarrūkh, his son, Mardānshāh who served after him, followed possibly by Bahrām[457] and finally Māhgashnasp who served under Sulaymān b. Habīb b. al-Muhallab during the time of Marwān II and, the Christian family of Mansūr: Sarjūn b. Mansūr, Manṣūr b. Sarjūn, and later John of Damascus.[458] When we combine this information with additional evidence of wealth in literary or documentary sources, we are able to recognize administrators not as functionaries but as elites.

Additionally, many of these administrators were affiliated with the political and administrative structures of the Umayyad caliphate prior to any of the ‘reforms’ associated with the period, which I argue demonstrates two important aspects about administration and administrative culture. First, there is no evidence that religious identity or the language of the administration prevented their employment. That is to say, “Islamizing” or “Arabizing” the bureaucracy did not open new career paths that had been sequestered from them before the reforms. At the same time, it is not farfetched to consider that they would prioritize the language and culture(s) most familiar to themselves and a growing body of elites. This, I argue, is reflected in the employment of administrators’ sons whose path to employment rested largely on

[455] *TMD* 57:222.

[456] For a summary and citation for the biography of Raḥw and his descendants, see Crone, *Slaves on Horses,* 99-101.

[457] I have yet to find an explicit attestation of Bahrām serving, but since his father and son both served, it is at least a possibility.

[458] See Chapter 2 for references.

their social capital (as directly affiliated with the political elite) rather than their particular mastery of the Arabic language (cultural capital).

Clients, Migration, & Centralization

Another factor that likely influences scholars' tendency to equate the period with greater centralization is the scholarly understanding of clientage in the period as well as the uptick of *mawālī* administrators who are recognized by scholars as exploited members of a subordinate second class. However, in Chapter Two, I argued that these administrators should be recognized as analogous with their non-Muslim coworkers; that is, members of the pre-Islamic elite who happened to have converted to Islam while their non-Muslim colleagues had not. Thus, while scholars like Elizabeth Urban interpret the employment of *mawālī* administrators as a consequence of the centralization efforts of the Umayyad Caliphate, I argue the opposite.[459] Namely, that the employment of *mawālī* who were connected to specific regions suggest the further integration of regional elites and not their removal from provincial politics and control of local surplus.

It is only beginning with the caliphate of ʻAbd al-Malik that we begin to see *mawālī* connected to individuals who are not the caliph himself.[460] This is concurrent to the administrative and numismatic reforms discussed above and I argue reflect the continued evolution of regional elites ingraining themselves within regional social, economic, and administrative infrastructures. The appearance of *mawālī* connected to members outside the

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[459] Elizabeth Urban, *Conquered Populations in Early Islam: non-Arabs, Slaves, and the Sons of Slave Mothers* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 140.

[460] See Chapter 2; Muʻāwiya's clients in the administration were ʻUbaydallāh and ʻAbd al-Raḥman b. Darrāj, al-Jahshiyārī, 59, *TMD* 37:426 and 28:35 respectively; Marwān b. al-Ḥakam also employed his own *mawlā,* Sālim Abū al-Zuʻayzīʻa; al-Jahshiyārī, 72; *TMD* 20:88, 66:249.

caliphal family, in a sense, reflects the expanding class of those included within bureaucratic elite and was not a centralizing campaign aimed at more direct control and influence across the caliphate. To recap briefly, members of ʻAbd al-Malik's administration, along with al-Ḥajjāj's, had social and economic ties to the region (especially those employed in the bureau of taxation) as well as political loyalties tied to the caliph. For example, Rawḥ b. Zinbā' owned property in Tyre (Sūr in modern Lebanon) and before Islam his family had facilitated trade between the Byzantines and Ghassānids under the Ghassānid Phylarch al-Harith b. Abī Shamir.[461] Likewise Sālim who was the *mawlā* of Marwān b. al-Ḥakam and served in the administration of both Marwān and ʻAbd al-Malik, was from Adraʻat (Darʻa on the modern Jordan Syria boarder).[462] When we again include Sarjūn, who was also from Damascus, we are able to recognize that members of the administration who were not direct descendants of early Arabian elite families had geographical connections to the region in which they were governing. As such, I contend, they functioned not as an exploited employee, but an additional member of the Umayyad elite and a way to merge both new and old elites within an expanding economic and administrative infrastructure. This process seems to have been mutually beneficial, as many *mawālī* administrators were economically wealthy individuals. This is particularly evident in Baṣra with the family of Abū Bakra in the growing administration in Iraq.

Merging the Old & New: Administrators & the Dīwān *in Iraq*

The connection between early Muslim and pre-Islamic administrative networks did not begin with the Arabization of the bureaucracy but can be seen going back to the very earliest

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[461] Rawḥ b. Zinbāʻ, *TMD* 18:240. The biography of his father, Zinbāʻ mentions that the family owned property in Ṣūr, *TMD* 19:82. See also, Isaac Hasson, "Le chef judhāmite Rawḥ ibn Zinbāʻ," in *Studia Islamica* 77 (1993): 95-122; Crone, *Slaves on Horses,* 99-101; and Gerald Hawting, *Rawḥ b. Zinbāʻ,* EI2

[462] Al-Jahshiyārī, 72, 74,75; *TMD* 66:249. His son was Muhammad b. Abī al-Zu'ayzi'a, *TMD* 53:43-45.

stages of the bureaucracy in Iraq. Zādhānfarrūkh, one of the *dramatis personae* in literary accounts for the conversion of the administration to Arabic discussed above, was closely connected with the Umayyad governor Ziyād b. Abīhi (d. 53/673).[463] According to al-Ya'qūbī, Ziyād was even explicit that the secretary over the *kharāj* should come from "among the chiefs of the non-Arabs who are knowledgeable about matters of the *kharāj*.[464] Thus, from the caliphate's earliest presence in Iraq, the administrative structure functioned as a means to connect new elites with influence over the extraction and distribution of surplus.[465] These administrators, with some exceptions, therefore, share this combination of pre-Islamic socioeconomic geographical connections as well as association with prominent families of the new Muslim elite.

As was the case with the administration of Syria, many administrators in Iraq had territorial connections, and likely familiarity with its economic and administrative infrastructure. Sārzādh was the secretary for Mu'ṣab b. al-Zubayr (the Zubayrid governor of Baṣra from 67-72/686-691) and is said to have been from Badhibīn, a large village south of Wāsiṭ.[466] The two *dramatis personae* from the account of the conversion of the *dīwān* under al-Ḥajjāj likewise were from the area. Sāliḥ b. 'Abd al-Raḥman's father had been captured by 'Abd al-Raḥman during the conquest of Sijistan.[467] His parents were purchased by a woman named 'Abda of the Banū

[463] Sprengling, "From Persian to Arabic," 184-190; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 62.

[464] Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:279.

[465] Even before the Marwānids, Ziyād's son, Salm, was appointed by Yazīd I as governor of Khurāsān, al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:300.

[466] Sārzādh was secretary of taxation (*al-kharāj*), al-Jahshiyārī, 86, note 1 mentions that the manuscript has باذين instead of باذبين. Badhibīn was large village below Wāsiṭ on the Tigris; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān* 1:318.

[467] Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 393.

Tamīm.[468] Around the period of the "conversion" of the *dīwān* in literary sources*,* an increasing number of administrators were drawn from a combination of Arabian migrant leaders in Baṣra and *mawālī* of local origin associated with these prominent families. I argue that this merging of networks was a means for emigrant Arabian families to have influence in regions where the administrative and economic infrastructure was unfamiliar to them; it was not, in other words, an effort of the capital in Damascus to have more control of or transparency concerning taxation and/or distribution of funds. This is particularly evident with Ziyād b. Abīhi and the family of Abū Bakra.

TABLE 3: ZIYĀD B. ABĪHI AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF IRAQ		
Name	Affiliation with Ziyād	Position
'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakra	Through the Banī Abī Bakra	Secretary for Ziyād
'Ubaydallāh b. Abī Bakra	Through the Banī Abī Bakra	Governor of Sīstān
Qaḥdham b. Sulaymān (*mawlā* of Āl Abī Bakra)	Through Banī Abī Bakra	Scribe for Yūsuf b. 'Umar, the governor in Iraq from 738-744

Ziyād b. Abīhi was appointed over the taxation of Baṣra by 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and later became governor of Iraq for the Umayyad Caliph Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufaȳn.[469] However, Ziyād's career in the administration and presence in Baṣra began even earlier, possibly beginning at the age of 14.[470] Ziyād, along with his half-brothers Nāfi' and Abū Bakra were all early settlers in

[468] Specifically, Banū Murrah b. 'Ubayd b. Muqā'is b. 'Amr b. Ka'b b. Sa'd b. Zayd Manāh b. Tamīm, al-Balādhurī, *Futūh.,* 393.

[469] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 57; al-Ṭabari 1:3229. Following Ziyād's lack of participation in at the Battle of Camel, he reportedly hid from 'Alī when 'Alī visited Basra; 'Alī ultimately accepts his apology and appoints Ziyād over the *khāraj* in Basra. Al-Ya'qūbī stats that Ziyād was actually 'Alīs governor over Iraq (Fārs), al-Ya'qūbī, 2:259, Eng 888. According to Balādhurī, Ziyād's mother, Sumayya, was from Kaskar (where Wāsiṭ was bult); and his Persian background is alluded to his reply to a letter from Mu'āwiya in which Ziyād responds, "He will find that I am a Persian(warrior)," Naṣr b. Muzāhim, *wak'at Ṣiffīn;* Hasson, "Ziyād b. Abīhi," in *EI2*.

[470] Al-Ṭabarī 2: 2388; Hasson, "Ziyād b. Abīhi," in *EI2*; *TMD* 22:169.

Baṣra from al-Ta'if and they would become prominent members in the governing and administration of the city and region.[471] Ziyād would serve as scribe for Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, 'Abdallāh b. 'Āmir, 'Abdallāh b. 'Abbās and Mughīra b. Sha'ba.[472] According to Balādhurī, his competency under Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī was so remarkable that the caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭab summoned him to Medina and subjected him to a test. Ziyād's performance was so exceptional that 'Umar awarded him 1,000 dirhams, which he used to manumit either his father or mother, depending on the account.[473] Ziyād would continue to govern under 'Alī and then Mu'āwiya, who would officially recognize Ziyād as his half-brother and fellow son of Abū Sufyañ through *istilḥaq*.[474] *Istilḥāq* was a "creative" way for Mu'āwiya to unite Ziyād into his family and clan since Ziyād's mother was a slave. Regardless of opposition or authenticity, Ziyād would continue to play a major role in the administration and governance of the region. Following the death of al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba (d. between 48-51/668-671) who was governor of Kūfa, Mu'āwiya appointed Ziyād as governor of both Kūfa and Baṣra—the first to have governed the two together.[475]

As we saw, the family of Ziyād b. Abīhi (or now, Ziyād b. Abī Sufyān) already had ties with Zādhanfarrūkh and was recognized as the step brother of the Caliph Mu'āwiya, but it is his connections with the family of Abū Bakra al-Thaqafī that demonstrates the extent to which local

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[471] Al-Qāḍī points out the numerous references to estates related to these members in Balādhurī, "The Names of the Estates in State Registers," 262.

[472] *TMD*, 19:169.

[473] Balādhurī states he freed his father, 'Ubayd, *Ansāb* ivA:164-65.

[474] Hasson, "Ziyād b. Abīhi" in *EI2.* For the *istilḥaq* with Mu'āwiya, see *TMD* 19:172-173.

[475] During his time as governor Ziyād is credited with initiating a series of reforms for reorganizing the region; he reorganized the community into large divisions by creating five groups (*khums* pl. *akhmās*) in Baṣra and four groups (*rub',* pl. *arbā'*) in Kūfa rather than the seven groups (*sub',* pl. *asba'*) that were initiated under 'Umar (d. 644), he updated the *dīwān,* and is said to have distributed stipends regularly; Hasson, "Ziyād b. Abīhi," in *EI2*.

elites in Baṣra were connected with the regional administration. Like Ziyād, Abū Bakra was an early settler in Baṣra and became an influential and wealthy member in the city.[476] His mother, Sumayya, was also the mother of Ziyād, making the two half-brothers.[477] Two brothers, born supposedly to the same slave woman, had now become important players well *before* any reforms of ʻAbd al-Malik/al-Ḥajjāj. Two of Abū Bakra's sons and a *mawlā* from his family, Qaḥdham, would all serve in the administration. This is important because it demonstrates how the administrative reforms associated with al-Ḥajjāj and ʻAbd al-Malik were not ruptures opening up new careers for social climbers, rather they were the progressive takeover of regional administration by established elites.

After al-Jahshiyārī describes Ṣāliḥ's role in the conversion of the *dīwān* into Arabic, al-Jahshiyārī lists several students or pupils (*talāmidha*) of Ṣāliḥ who would go on to be secretaries under regional governors. One of these was Qaḥdham b. Abī Sulayman, a *mawlā* of the family of Abū Bakra.[478] Qaḥdham b. Abī Sulayman was the descendant of a prisoner captured during the conquest of Iṣfahān in 8/629.[479] While his father and grandfather are not mentioned in source material, Qaḥdham became one of a number of apprentices (*talāmidha*) under Ṣāliḥ.[480] Balādhurī

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[476] Abū Bakra was a slave of the Thaqafīs in al-Ṭā'if and was emancipated by the Prophet after the siege of the city. According to tradition, Abū Bakra descended from the city from a pully and joined forces with the Muslims; Houstsma and Pellet, "Abū Bakra" in *EI2*; Ibn Saʻd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr,* 9:15. Badlāhdhurī's *Futūḥ* lists extensive properties associated with Abū Bakra and his family in Baṣra' see Al-Qāḍī, "The Names of Estates in State Registers," 262-263 n.28 for references.

[477] Houstma and Pellat, "Abū Bakra," *EI2. TMD* 19: 165; Ibn Saʻd tells us his father was Abyssinaian, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr,* 9:16. According to Ibn Qutayba, his mother was originally given by Khusrau (II?) to Abī al-Khayr, a king from Yaman (اليمن) who got sick returning to Yemen and was nursed by al-Ḥarith in al-Ṭạ'if, and thus the Yamanī king then gave her to al-Ḥarith, from which Abū Bakra took his name sake, *al-Maʻārif*, 288. This story, however, is likely apocryphal, as al-Ḥarith b. al-Kalada, the famous "physician of the Arabs," never had any children. See also, Hawting, "The Development of the biography of al-Ḥārith ibn Kalada and the relationship between medicine and Islam," 131-132.

[478] Al-Jahsiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 80.

[479] Al-Qāḍī, "Names of the Estates," 262; Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 162.

[480] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 80.

also suggests that Qaḥdham was versed in Persian as well, and would later become secretary for another member of Thaqīf, the governor Yūsūf b. Umar al-Thaqafī.[481] I argue that Qaḥdham's inclusion within Ṣāliḥ's administrative cohort suggests that Qaḥdham's family likely had pre-Islamic geographical and administrative connections to the region, as was the case with other *mawlā* administrators mentioned above. Regardless, Qaḥdham's connection with the family of Abū Bakrā in Basra demonstrates how a prominent family unfamiliar with the region was able to integrate himself with the regional administrative infrastructure through his client. Further, as mentioned above, Qaḥdham was likely fluent in Persian as well as Arabic, again illustrating that the Arabization of the bureaucracy did not create positions for Arabic speakers but should be understood as part of the evolution of the influence of local elites in regional administration.

Migration & Administration: 'Ubaydallāh b. al-Ḥabḥāb & Egypt

If we extend our chronology a bit, another administrator illustrates the overlap between tribal migration, clientage, and administration. 'Ubaydallāh b. al-Ḥabḥāb's career from scribe to governor demonstrates several important factors about the backgrounds of administrators and their connection to broader social networks. Ubaydallāh was a client of the Banī Salūl of the tribe Qays and served as a scribe for the Caliph Hishām (r.105-125/724-743) before being appointed governor of Egypt and later North Africa.[482] His grandfather became the client of the Banu Salūl through a little-known Salūlī named al-Ḥajjāj.[483] Likely because we do not know more about 'Ubaydallāh's family, Nabia Abbot describes 'Ubaydallāh as "a self-made man with

[481] *Ibid*.

[482] In contrast to his administrative collogues in the east, the chronology of 'Ubaydallāh's career is attested in papyri; see especially Nabia Abbott, "A New Papyrus and a Review of the Administrator of 'Ubaid Allāh b. al-Ḥabḥab," in *Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of Hamilton A.R. Gibb,* ed. George Makdisi (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 21-35.

[483] *Ibid*., 25.

no political connections or over-riding loyalties that could either speed or hinder a political career of his choice…The early stages of his secretarial career are not recorded. But, with his humble backgrounds, he must have had to go through them patiently and brilliantly, relying on his own qualities of mind and personality to raise him to such a high and coveted position."[484] However, this interpretation, in my opinion, is flawed in its understanding of the social background of administrators in general, and those as powerful as ʻUbaydallāh in particular. That is to say, ʻUbaydallāh's career trajectory is framed as based on his personal merits and aptitude, which, if accurate, would suggest a great deal of social mobility and meritocracy in Islamic late antiquity.

Papyri, glass weights, and literary sources provide a timeline of ʻUbaydallāh's career from secretary in Damascus to governor of Egypt and North Africa. From literary sources, ʻUbaydallāh began his career as a scribe for Hishām before being appointed as governor (*wallāhu imra miṣr*) of Egypt and later (North) Africa.[485] According to multiple sources, ʻUbadyallāh replaced controversial Usāma b. Zayd.[486] The Christian chronicle, *The History of the Patriarchs,* reports that ʻUbaydallāh was originally a welcomed respite from Usāma's harsh policies and even introduces ʻUbaydallāh by saying, "there was at his (Hishām's) court a Muslim who greatly loved the orthodox Churches…and when the prince Hishām saw him act so, he rejoiced greatly, and made him governor of Egypt, and commanded him to act with kindness towards all baptized Christians."[487] This disposition did not seem to last, as ʻUbaydallāh is credited with conducting a land survey, doubling taxes, taxing monasteries and, like Usāma b.

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[484] *Ibid*., 26.

[485] *TMD* 37:415; Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 362.

[486] Usāma, likewise, began his career as an administrator, see Chapter 4 for discussion.

[487] Severus b. Muqaffaʻ, *The History of the Patriarchs*, 174.

Zayd, is associated with harsh treatment in the extraction of taxation, including branding those who attempted to avoid taxation.[488]

The early and middle eighth century is an important period in the administrative evolution of Egypt, as well as our broader understanding of Umayyad society, in general. In *The Agrarian Administration of Egypt from the Arabs to the Ottomans,* Frantz-Murphy remarks that "By about the end of the first Islamic century, the central government had initiated placement of its own personnel even at the village level in an attempt to control agrarian assessment and collection. At the direction of the central government, *ca.* 99-101/717-720 Coptic village headmen began to be replaced by Muslims. However as attested by the example of the Coptic ostraca cited above [referring to Gascou, "Ostraca de Djémé, 78-79"], native Egyptians continued to function as village officials well into the 2nd/8th century."[489] What is important here is not the "centralizing of the empire" narrative—the historiographical model critiqued heavily in this chapter—but recognizing the chronological overlap between a growing presence of new local elites moving into a region (members of Qays migrating to Egypt in this case) and increased influence and control of the administrative surplus through a client of the tribe. 'Ubaydallāh was a client of Sulūl, who were members of Qays. Thus, Qaysī migration into Egypt overlapped with the promotion of an administrator affiliated with the tribe for regional administrative influence.[490] Therefore, Ubaydallāh's appointment, as diligent and astute as he

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[488] For land surveys and tax hikes, see *History of the Patriarchs* 167 and 174; see also, Robinson, "Neck Sealing in Early Islam," 428ff; *The History of the Patriarchs,* 175-176.

[489] Gladys Frantz-Murphy, *The Agrarian Administration of Egypt from the Arabs to the Ottomans* (Cairo: Institut Français D'Archéologie Orientale, 1986), 67.

[490] Abbott highlights Hishām's predicament with the growing precence of Qays in the region, "A New Papyrus and a Review of the Administrator of 'Ubaid Allāh b. al-Ḥabḥab," 27.

may have been, also served as a connection between the growing Qaysī presence in Egypt and the balance of power between the caliphate and regional administrations and elites.

Some are More Equal than Others: Power & Clientage

When al-Ḥajjāj was nearing death, he appointed his *mawlā* and scribe, Yazīd b. Abī Muslim, over the *kharāj*.[491] Yazīd was al-Ḥajjāj's milk brother (*akh min al-raḍā'a*) and either al-Ḥajjāj's own *mawlā* or at least a *mawlā* of al-Ḥajjāj's tribe, Thaqīf. It is interesting to point this out because as al-Ḥajjāj nears death, he does not turn over control of taxation to Ṣāliḥ, the administrator credited with converting the *dīwān* into Arabic, but instead attempts to place a member of his inner circle in this position. However, when Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik became caliph, he subsequently removed Yazīd b. Abī Muslim and replaced him with Ṣāliḥ, who would demonstrate the power of such a position.[492]

Ṣaliḥ's brother, Ādam, was accused of being sympathetic to Khārijite oppositional movements. These accusations were severe enough that members of the Abū 'Aqīl family (the very family of al-Ḥajjāj) killed Ādam.[493] Once Ṣāliḥ returned to power, he would exact revenge on members of the family of Abū 'Aqīl who had killed his brother, including killing the powerful cousin of al-Ḥajjāj, Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim.[494] To recap, at least in this scenario, Ṣāliḥ is not a

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[491] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 74-75. Yazīd had been severing as al-Ḥajjāj's secretary of correspondence (*rasā'il*). Yazīd would later be appointed governor of Wāsiṭ for a short period by the Caliph al-Walīd I before being replaced by Yazīd b. Abī Kabsha al-Saksakī by Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik, al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:348; al-Ṭabarī, 2:1269 and 1282. According to Ibn 'Asākir, he was brought before (arrested by?) the Caliph Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik, but then was later appointed governor of North Africa by the Caliph Yazīd I, *TMD* 65:388. His treatment at the hands of Sulaymān seems to be part of a larger initiative of Sulaymān to purge supporters of al-Ḥajjāj, or those connected to him, from Iraq; Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:353-354. He seems to have had a similar ruthless reputation in Africa as al-Ḥajjāj did in Iraq and apparently attempted to implement al-Ḥajjāj's tax policy of continuing the poll-tax even after conversion, something that was strongly opposed ultimately leading to his assassination, al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1435.

[492] Technically, arrested would be more accurate; see discussion in Chapter 4.

[493] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1282-1283; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 441.

[494] Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim was the conqueror of Sindh; see, Y. Friedmann, "Muḥammad b. al-Ḳāsim," in *EI2*.

subaltern at the whims of his Arab masters as a client, but an influential member of society who is able to invoke violence against fellow prominent members of society in pursuit of personal retribution. Another anecdote reflects this power associated with the position. According to al-Ṭabarī, when Yazīd b. al-Muhallab was appointed as governor of Iraq, Ṣālih did not go out to meet Yazīd with the troops of the city until Yazīd was near the city. It was only then that "Sāliḥ went out, wearing a tunic (*durrāʻah*) and carrying a small, yellow mace. He was leading four hundred men from the Syrian army. He met Yazīd and traveled along with him. When Yazīd entered the city, Ṣāliḥ pointed to a house, saying, "I have emptied this house for you." Yazīd dismounted and Ṣāliḥ went to his residence."[495] Al-Ṭabarī continues that Ṣāliḥ "placed severe restraints upon Yazīd, refusing to transfer any money to him."[496] The point being clear that Ṣāliḥ holds a great deal of power in Iraq independent of Yazīd, the governor!, and his status as *mawlā* did not preclude him for such a position of influence and power. One could even surmise that Ṣāliḥ's disposition to Yazīd was similar to the above-mentioned disposition of Zādhānfarrūkh's towards al-Ḥajjāj: "He is in more need of me than I of him." In short, Ṣāliḥ and other administrators demonstrate that appointments were not passive, subservient roles, but were lucrative, powerful, and influential positions.

Conclusion:

This chapter started by highlighting scholars' tendency to impose a centralizing narrative for understanding the reforms of the period. But it seems that administrative reforms, either in the capital or in provinces, were not ruptures but evolutions. Even in Egypt, where ʻAbd al-

[495] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1307.

[496] *Ibid*. The account goes on to describe Yazīd frustration that Ṣāliḥ refused to extend a line of credit for Yazīd's personal use when Yazīd tried to purchase things with checks (*ṣikāk*); these restrictions, according to al-Ṭabarī led to Yazīd's request to be moved to governor of Khurāsān, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1307.

Malik's own son served as governor, we see little evidence of direct oversight from the capital in surviving papyri.[497] Likewise, literary evidence is rife with references for the appointment and dismissal of governors, but this was typical both before and after ʿAbd al-Malik's career.[498] Thus, in contrast to understanding the growing administration as one more "centralized," I have argued that the reforms of the period reflect the evolution of emerging elites ingraining themselves within administrative structures. The make-up of the bureaucracy shows a continued evolution of regional participation within the bureaucracy was a way to maintain and reproduce one status, something evident amongst several administrators. This is especially important because new administrative elites combined aspects of their pre-Islamic predecessors' administrative acumen but were not the pre-Islamic landed elites of Egypt or Iraq. This provides nuance to our understanding of the post-reform era of the Umayyad Caliphate because it demonstrates the continued negation of power between the capital and the elites who benefited from and supported the Caliphate. Likewise, drawing attention to the economic privilege of *mawālī* administrators further illustrates the importance of recognizing one's position in society in relationship to economic structures and not only membership, or perceived membership, within a socially or culturally (il-)defined group. Therefore, our understanding of the administration, and reforms associated with it, moves beyond simply a mechanism for taxation

[497] "[R]eferences to places or event outside of Egypt, are *extremely* unusual in the papyri, especially these early ones from the first two centuries of Muslim rule…The caliph's authority over Egypt was limited to appointing and recalling of governors. The caliph's name appeared on Egyptian coins, glass weights and papyrus protocols, the earliest from Egypt dates to the caliphate of ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 65-86/705-717 [sic]), but these represent his symbolic or nominal power rather than a physical hands-on presence in Egypt;" Sijpesteijn, "Army Economics: An early Papyrus Letter Related to *ʿAtāʾ* Payments," 262-263; see also, Sijpesteijn, "An Early Umayyad Papyrus Invitation for the Ḥajj," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 73, no. 2 (2014): 179-190.

[498] For example, see the discussion of the careers of Usāma b. Zayd and ʿUbaydallāh b. al-Ḥabhāb in Chapter 4.

and distribution, but recognizes how administrative control functioned as a means of maintaining and reproducing status and loyalty in the Islamic late antiquity.

Nevertheless, it would be reductive to consider the administration simply as an apparatus of the state to maintain elites without acknowledging broader ideological factors and military challenges. The administration was largely organized around the collection of taxes for its distribution to members of the military. By taking a more active role in regional administration, governors and their administrators were taking an understandable step to ensure that funding for military expeditions would remain as constant as possible.[499] Further, control over administration was not the only, or even most influential, medium for articulating loyalty and legitimacy.[500] The saying goes that in life, one can be sure of two things: death and taxes; likewise, it is safe to assume that people also go to considerable lengths to avoid death and taxes. In the case of ʻAbd al-Malik, his priority for avoiding death in another civil war may very well have made him more than willing to delegate influence and control over taxation.

[499] Recall the papyri *P.Michaelides Q16* mentioned above that encouraged the recipient to come and collect their stipend before the treasury runs out of funding, Sijpesteijn, "Army Economics," 248.

[500] For example the recent work exploring the role of the oath allegiance (*bayʻa*) and orations in legitimacy and politics; Andrew Marsham, *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), Pamela Klasova, "Empire Through Language: Al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf al-Thaqafī and the Power of Oratory in Umayyad Iraq" (PhD Dissertation, Georgetown, 2018), and Tahera Qutbuddin, *Arabic Oration: Art and Function* (Leiden: Brill, 2019): 292-368.

Chapter 4
Piety, Prisoners, & Patronage:
Administration in the later Umayyad Caliphate (*ca*. 96-126/715-744 C.E.)

"Woe to you! We can be the spokesmen of any government!"
Wayḥakum, innā khuṭabā' kull dawla

-'Abd al-Ḥamīd while being tortured following the collapse of the Umayyad Caliphate[501]

Chris Wickham, in his comparative historical analysis of late antiquity, emphasized that "Aristocracies were largely defined and legitimized by their relationships to states, particularly strong states."[502] This sentence needs to be parsed out to fully appreciate how administrators were members of the aristocracy and the relevance of Wickham's insight for our understanding of the later Umayyad Caliphate. "Relationship to the state" means that ones' power and influence was not only tied to political relationships, but also to the structures that maintained the strength of the state (military power and taxation especially). For Umayyad administrators, while they do at times have military connections as well, this is most often manifested in their relationship to administrative structures. Likewise, states that relied on tax revenue, which the Umayyad

[501] Balādhurī, *al-Ansāb al-ashrāf,* 3:164; Wadad al-Qāḍī, "Identity Formation of the Bureaucracy of the Early Islamic State: 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's "Letter to the Secretaries,"" in *Mediterranean Identities in the Premodern Era: Entrepôts, islands, empires,* ed. John Watkins and Kathryn Reyerson (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2014), 153.

[502] Wickham, *Framing the Middle Ages,* 145.

caliphate certainly did, were rich and more powerful.[503] In this broader historiographical context, it should not come to our surprise—it should almost be expected—that Umayyad era elites would be concerned and interested in the collection of tax revenue. In short, we do not need any grand ideological campaign to explain why members of the political and military elite would become interested in the administration, nor why members of pre-Islamic families would likewise continue to exert influence over its collection and distribution. It is thus helpful to consider Umayyad administrators not as Christians, Jews, Muslims, Persians, Arabs etc., but as individuals who were a part of pre-modern "tax-raising structures," an analytical category that transcends empires and periods.

The chapters so far have taken pains to stress that administrators were not exploited functionaries, but influential and powerful individuals connect to a political apparatus that oversaw the extraction of wealth and its distribution. The extraction of taxes was not popular (nor was it divorced from violence) regardless of the religious and ethnic confession of the ruling party in antiquity. Likewise, its distribution was not solely motivated to meet the needs of those who paid the taxes (even if they may very well have benefited from its investment in civic, political, and economic projects) but to serve the ambitions of those who ultimately decided how to distribute it.[504] This distribution, and the locations of where it was distributed, had significant impact on the society and economy of late antiquity, beyond the transition in the language of administration or the ethnicity and/or religion of administrators.

[503] As summed up by Wickham, "tax, if it was collected with commitment, dwarfed other types of resource that rulers had access to. In general, tax-based states were therefore richer and more powerful than rent-based, land-based, states," *Framing the Early Middle Ages,* 144-145.

[504] For example, see the discussion below about the connection between caliphal patronage and their administrative makeup.

In this chapter, I will discuss the consequences of the negotiation of power as reflected in civic patronage, administrative linguistic, preferences, and the cultural symbols invoked to legitimize or challenge the concentration of power. To this end, I focus primarily on the way we can understand the administrators of first half of the 8th century as members of the aristocracy and how literature related to one aristocrat in particular, ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd, sheds light on the culture of the period. It has been a major ambition of the project to move beyond historiographic models specific to our field (Muslim and non-Muslim, Arab and non-Arab, client and patron, etc.)—models that our very own scholarship has taken pains to dismantle, yet never fully escaped. Admittedly, I too am unable completely to escape the field's proclivity for religious, tribal, and ethnic identities; nevertheless, recognizing the Umayyad caliphate as a "state" composed of "aristocrats" provides useful framework for understanding how the lives and livelihoods of people living across the caliphate changed with the emergence of the first Islamic empire.

The chapter concludes by addressing the Arabization of the caliphate; or, better put, offering an alternative explanation for the popularity of Arabic linguistic features and culture in light of my argument in Chapter 3. This section focuses on the "Letter to the Secretaries" by the most famous Umayyad secretary, ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib (d. 132/750). While ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd served primarily for the final Umayyad Caliph, Marwān II, whose administration is not discussed in the dissertation, his letters serve as a window into the culture of the period—or better put, how culture was put into action during the late Umayyad Caliphate. I argue that his letters were not a playbook for aspiring secretaries and administrators to follow in pursuit of bureaucratic employment but can be read as his attempt to articulate scribes within the cultural class of the

elites. The values and attitudes expressed in ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd’s letter, therefore, can be read as expressing the values, tastes, and preferences of the broader class with whom he was a member.

Piety & Prisoners: The Administrations of Sulaymān, ‘Umar II, & Yazīd II

The administration of Sulaymān marked a decided break from his older brother’s administrative practice of preserving the *status quo* of their father, ‘Abd al-Malik, and the governor al-Hajjāj. Likely because al-Ḥajjāj had already passed away in Iraq, Sulaymān, for the first time in 30 years, removed the regionally appointed tax administrator of Iraq and installed his own selection.[505] His appointee, however, was a native of the region and was the previous head administrator and supervisor of the “translation of the *dīwān*” in Iraq, Ṣāliḥ b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman.[506] Sulaymān’s move to remove al-Ḥajjāj’s appointed successor demonstrates the continued negotiation between the caliphate in Damascus and the regions for influence over administrative structures. The removal of a former caliph’s (or governor’s) administrative appointments characterizes the administration for the period between Sulaymān b. ‘Abd al-Malik and Yazīd II (96-105/715-724), with the pious ‘Umar II (r. 99-101/717-720) interrupting the policy of his cousins.

When Sulaymān passed away (d. 99/717), and apparently before Sulaymān had even been buried, ‘Umar II dismissed two of Sulymān’s administrators: Usāma b. Zayd and Yazīd b.

[505] As mentioned in Chapter 3, before his death, al-Hajjāj appointed his secretary of correspondence and *mawlā* (either his own or a client of his tribe, Thaqīf), Yazīd b. Abī Muslim, over taxation in Iraq; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 85; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh,* 2:1282; Ya‘qūbī, *Ta’rīkh,* 2:354-355, *TMD* 65:390-392. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-A‘yān,* 6:309-310.

[506] For Sāliḥ b. ‘Abī al-Raḥman, see Chapter 3. Later in al-Jahshiyārī, he states that Sulaymān originally removed Yazīd b. Abī Muslim from his leadership over taxes and war/armies (*ḥarb*) in the year 96/714-715, and appointed Yazīd b. al-Muhallab over war (*al-ḥarb*), prayers (*al-ṣalāh*) and taxation (*al-kharāj*), but Yazīd b. al-Muhallab was concerned that if he continued al-Ḥajjāj’s policies the people of Iraq would turn against him; so in order to avoid a reduction in tax revenue without jeopardizing his safety in Iraq , Yazīd b. al-Muhallab suggested to Sulaymān to appoint Ṣāliḥ in charge of taxes, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 92.

Abī Muslim.[507] When others complained that he had not even waited for former Caliph's funeral to finish, 'Umar II responded that he feared God and felt ashamed that they might remain governing over people while he was Caliph.[508] The two administrators who were dismissed by 'Umar II later found themselves re-instated into the administration of his successor, the Caliph Yazīd II (r. 101-105/720-724). The administrators who were a part of this round of bureaucratic musical chairs provide insight into the blurred lines between politics and piety. For much of this project, I have been hesitant (which is probably an understatement) to take seriously the character assessments of administrators in their literary representations. However, in the case of 'Umar II, the two of the members he removed—and those with whom he replaced them—do suggest that 'Umar II factored one's practice in determining their suitability for employment in the Islamic government.

Their removal from the administration, I argue, does more than reflect positively on 'Umar II's already pious reputation; these dismissals and replacements demonstrate the degree the Islamic community was continually engaged in a discourse about polity and the influence that administrators had in shaping the ethos of Islamic government. When Sulaymān became Caliph, he not only removed Yazīd b. Abī Muslim from his position as head of the *kharāj* in Iraq, but instructed that Yazīd be tortured and imprisoned.[509] Yazīd b. Abī Muslim's successor, Ṣālih b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān set out to kill the family of al-'Aqīl (the family of al-Ḥajjāj) in

[507] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā'*, 96. This account, however, seems confused because Sulaymān dismissed and jailed Yazīd b. Abī Muslim, so it's unclear how 'Umar could dismiss him again. The dismissal of Yazīd b. Abī Muslim by 'Umar, this time from a position in Africa, appears in 'Umar II's biography by Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Sīra 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz,* 37. Perhaps, the dismissal of Yazīd b. Abī Muslim by 'Umar II is meant to be understood as a reflection of his piety in contrast to the less than stellar reputations of Yazīd b. Abī Muslim and Usāma b. Zayd. Later in al-Jahsiyārī, it seems that 'Umar dismissed Sulaymān b. Sa'id as well, *Kitāb al-wuzarā'*, 101.

[508] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 96.

[509] Patricia Crone, "Yazīd b. Abī Muslim," in *EI2;* al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1282; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:354-355; *TMD* 65:390-392. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-A'yān,* 6:309-310.

vengeance of the killing of his own brother.[510] When ‘Umar II became Caliph, he jailed ‘Usāma b. Zayd following his dismissal from Sulaymān’s administration.[511] In short, the influence of administrators placed them at the nexus of politics, culture, economics, and social networks—a rewarding but precarious position.

Oscillating between Extremes: The Career of Yazīd b. Abī Muslim

Yazīd b. Abī Muslim was a *mawlā* of the tribe Thaqīf, the milk brother to al-Ḥajjāj (*akh min al-raḍā‘a*), and served as over his *dīwān al-rasā’il* during al-Ḥajjāj’s lifetime.[512] His relationship with al-Ḥajjāj must have been quite strong as al-Ḥajjāj even placed him in charge of taxation at his death and possibly even as governor of Wāsiṭ.[513] Yazīd also benefited economically from his position, which according to traditions caried a salary of 300 *dirhams* a month.[514] However, his reputation for being al-Ḥajjāj’s close companion (*ṣāḥib al-Ḥajjāj*) placed him in a precarious position in the eyes of al-Ḥajjāj’s opponents.[515] When Sulaymān became caliph he had his new governor of Iraq, Yazīd b. al-Muhallab, turn over to him “al-Ḥajjāj’s companions, Mūsa b. Naṣīr, Khālid b. ‘Abdallāh al-Qasrī, Yūsuf b. ‘Umar al-Thaqafī, al-Ḥakam b. Ayyūb, and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥayyān al-Murrīt” and ordered Yazīd b. al-Muhallab to

[510] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh,* 2:1282-1283; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 441.

[511] Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *Sira ‘Umar b. ‘Ab al-‘Azīz,* 37; *A History of the Patriarchs of Egypt,* 67, 72

[512] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Ktāb al-wuzarā’,* 84; *TMD,* 65:388.

[513] Baḥshal, *Ta’rīkh Wāsiṭ,* 38; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 85; *TMD,* 65:390-392. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-A‘yān,* 6: 309-310. According to al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Walīd I originally ratified Yazīd b. Abī Muslim but replaced him with Yazīd b. Abī Kabsha al-Saksaskī, in reference to his position as governor not his administrative position it would seem, al-Ya‘qūbī, *Ta’rīkh,* 2:248.

[514] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 84; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh,* 3:435. Al-Jahshiyārī’s account about Yazīd’s salary demonstrates the difficulty al-Jahshiyārī must have faced in attempting to portray administrators in a positive light. According to al-Jahshiyārī, Yazīd received 300 *dirhams* a month as head of the *dīwān al-rasā’il,* from which he would give to his wife, use to buy meat, wheat, rations, water, only sometimes to purchase luxury goods, and the rest he gave to the poor…but “he, in spite of this, used to kill people for al-Ḥajjāj,” *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 84-85.

[515] Al-Ya‘qūbī, *Ta’rīkh,* 2:353.

torture all of them until he had extracted the capital they had embezzled, at least in the eyes of Sulaymān.[516] This is a powerful cohort, including governors and relatives of al-Ḥajjāj, and we should not overlook Yazīd's inclusion in it.[517]

Yazīd b. Abī Muslim remained largely out of favor for the rest of Sulaymān's and 'Umar II's Caliphates,[518] but during the Caliphate of Yazīd II, he was appointed as governor of North Africa, quite a turn of events from being belittled before the Caliph and tortured.[519] However, his tenure in Africa ended harshly, to say the least. According to al-Ṭabarī, Yazīd attempted to apply the same tactics and policy in North Africa that al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf had in Iraq (namely, making converts pay the poll tax and expelling converts from the garrison towns in order that they continue working in the villages and lands they were originally from). This caused a revolt against Yazīd and his death, ending a quite tumultuous career.[520] This path, from administrator to prisoner, and finally to governor demonstrates two important facets. First, Yazīd's career illustrates influence and power of administrative positions considering that caliphs and governors would go to such extremes to curb their power and influence. Second, his career, particularly reflected in the reported animosity of 'Umar II towards him, illustrates that the discussion about how Islamic administration and governance should be carried out was not a set program but a continued dialogue between members of society. 'Umar II participated directly in this dialogue

[516] *Ibid*.

[517] Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik never had the opportunity to read my dissertation; but seeing that he arrested and removed several of al-Ḥajjāj's entourage, it would seem that he would agree with me that al-Ḥajjāj's and 'Abd al-Malik's relationship was mutually beneficial and al-Ḥajjāj's administration was not an altruistic effort to extend 'Abd al-Malik's or Damascus's "centralized" control of Iraq.

[518] According to Ibn Khayyāṭ, when 'Umar II became caliph, he ordered all of Sulaymān's prisoners to be released—except for Yazīd b. Abī Muslim, *Ta'rīkh,* 326.

[519] Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 231; Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rikh,* 334; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-A'yān,* 6:311; *TMD* 65:288.

[520] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1436. There are also accounts that he branded his Berber bodyguards who revolted against the practice and killed Yazīd, Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr,* 214.

by removing administrators whose administrative philosophy was in contradiction to his own expectations.

'Umar II's Piety & Polity

As mentioned above, before Sulaymān was even buried, 'Umar II is said to have ordered the dismissal of Usāma b. Zayd and Yazīd b. Abī Muslim. The controversial Usāma b. Zayd was a *mawlā* of Kalb and began his career serving in Damascus for al-Walīd I.[521] Usāma was then appointed over taxation in Egypt during the caliphate of Sulaymān before being removed by 'Umar II who did not approve of Usāma's harsh reputation and ordered Usāma to be imprisoned, where he remained until 'Umar II's death in 101/720.[522] Similar to Yazīd b. Abī Muslim, Usāma would be reinstated by Yazīd II (r. 101-105/720-724) who appointed him over taxation of Egypt.[523]

'Umar II's motivations for Usāma's removal were likely varied, however, it is seriously worth considering 'Umar II's motive to remove individuals that he believed failed to govern according to a particular standard. In the Egyptian Christian chronicle *The History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria,* Usāma is portrayed in a particularly harsh light.[524] This reputation must have extended beyond Christian circles in Egypt because al-Jahshiyārī even attempts to

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[521] It is unclear if he was appointed over taxation in Egypt before or after Sulaymān became caliph. Abū Ḥusayn al-Rāzī states that Usāmā b. Zayd originally was over the *dīwān al-jund* in Damascus during the time of Walīd before being appointed over taxation of Egypt, *TMD* 8:43-44. Nevertheless, his presence in Egypt is verified in surviving weights bearing his name, A.H. Morton, *A Catalogue of Early Islamic Glass Stamps in the British Museum* (London: British Museum Publications, 1985), 46-49.

[522] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 95; Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Sira 'Umar b. 'Ab al-'Azīz,* 37; *A History of the Patriarchs of Egypt,* 67, 72.

[523] Al-Jahshiyārī and his biography in *TMD* both mention that his influence and wealth in Egypt was enough to warrant a fortress/estate (*qaṣr*) in Egypt associated with his name (i.e. *qaṣr Usāma*). *TMD* 8:83; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',*101.

[524] *A History of the Patriarchs of Egypt,* 67, 72; See also, Chase Robinson, "Neck-Sealing in Early Islam," 428ff.

mitigate Usāma' harsh reputation by suggesting that it was in fact Sulaymān who was the harsh one, and Usāma was merely enacting Sulaymān's despotic policies, about which Usāma even complained to 'Umar II.[525] When we consider other administrators in 'Umar II's administration, it does seem that one's reputation was a factor for employment in 'Umar II's administration—not only evident in those 'Umar II removed, but by those he installed. That said, piety was not divorced from political loyalties. Two of these, Maymūn b. Mihrān and Rajā' b. Ḥaywa al-Kindī demonstrate that the administration continued to be staffed by political loyalist—even pious ones—whose contribution extended beyond administrative acumen.

Rajā' b. Ḥaywa al-Kindī

Rajā' b. Ḥaywa's family was originally from Maysān where his family originally became clients of the tribe Kinda.[526] It would seem that his family moved west and settled in the Palestine/Jordan region, which is reflected in the *nisba's* attached to Rajā' (al-Urdunnī and al-Filasṭīnī).[527] This migration was likely in concert with the tribe of Kinda who migrated after the conquest into the region of greater Syria and maintained an important component of the Sufyānid's military strength.[528] Bosworth suggests that "it must have been in Syria, and probably through the influence of those Kindīs high in the counsels of the Caliphs, that Rajā' came to the attention of the first Marwānids."[529] Early in his career, Rajā' served in diplomatic missions, such as when he accompanied al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf to northern Syria to negotiate terms with Zufar

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525 Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 95-96.

526 Clifford Bosworth, *Medieval Arabic Culture and Administration* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1982)*,* 37. See also, Clifford Bosworth, "Radja' b. Ḥaywa," in *EI2.*

527 *TMD*, 18:96; Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr,* 9:457.

528 Bosworth suggests that Rajā' may have moved to the Balqā region since Marwān granted the district to Kinda for them to settle; *Medieval Arabic Culture and Administration,* 38.

529 *Ibid*., 39.

b. al-Ḥārith al-Kilābī, who had supported the Zubayrids in the Second Islamic Civil War.[530] Rajā' is also said to have had a strong relationship with 'Abd al-Malik and supervised the construction of the Dome of the Rock.[531] His relationship with the Marwānids remained close as evident by his accompanying al-Walīd I on his pilgrimage in 90/709-91//710, where Bosworth suggests he may have first met the future Caliph (and his future employer), 'Umar II.[532]

On the one hand, a career pattern of an influential *mawlā* from an influential family has become a relatively common characteristic amongst administrators; but, on the other hand, Rajā''s career is unique in its own way: his combination of social connections with Kinda (social capital) and his pious reputation (cultural capital) may have played a significant catalysts for his appointment within 'Umar II's administration, his relationship with the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik, and his supervision over the construction of the Dome of the Rock. However, it is the end of the Caliphate of Sulaymān that Rajā''s influence is most evident. According to al-Ya'qūbī, Rajā' was one of three others with the "greatest influence (*al-ghālib 'alā*) over Sulaymān," and other sources suggest he might have served in the administration officially.[533] This influence had a major impact, as Rajā' is often credited as the individual who convinced Sulaymān to designate his cousin, 'Umar II, as his successor rather than one of his brothers or even his own sons.[534]

As a result, it is not surprising to see Rajā' appear in lists of 'Umar II's administrators given Rajā''s reputation as a pious individual, leading jurist, and his influence in securing 'Umar

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[530] Bosworth, *Medieval Arabic Culture and Administration*, 40; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf,* V, 305.

[531] Bosworth, *Medieval Arabic Culture and Administration*, 39-40; Mujīr al-Dīn, *Al-Uns al-jalīl bi-ta'rīkh al-Quds wa al-Khalīl* (Cairo: 1866)*,* 1:241-242.

[532] The pilgrimage seemed to have sparked controversy about the procures of a caliph to deliver a sermon (*khuṭba*) from the prophet's *minbar;* for references, see Bosworth, *Medieval Arabic Culture and Administration*, 41-42.

[533] Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:359; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:838.

[534] Bosworth, *Administration,* 48-52; see also Bosworth translation of the events according to Wāqidī and Madā'inī (with *isnads* going back to Rajā' himself) as well as a summary of other versions, 52-78.

II's own Caliphate.[535] Rajā' had a pious reputation and strong relationship with several Caliphs: 'Abd al-Malik, al-Walīd I, Sulaymān, and 'Umar II (under whom he served officially in his administration).[536] Likewise, his position (sometimes in official capacity and others an influential advisor) demonstrates the recurrent point that administrators were influential members of politics and were not passive civil servants blindly carrying out the will of their superior.

Maymūn b. Mihrān

Maymūn b. Mihrān was another administrator for 'Umar II who had a pious reputation. Maymūn was a *mawlā* of either Hawāzin or Azd whose descendants were captives from Iṣṭakhr.[537] According to his biography, his father seems to have held some type of administrative position for the Banī Naṣr b. Mu'āwiya, of whom a member manumitted his father.[538] Maymūn grew up in Kūfa, where he remained until the battle of Dayr al-Jamājim in 83/702.[539] After which, Maymūn moved to the Jazīra where he became a prominent religious authority in al-Raqqa.[540] Maymūn's career in the Umayyad administration appears to begin with his service to Muḥammad b. Marwān, 'Abd al-Malik's brother and governor.[541] Thus, similar to Rajā'

[535] Rajā' died in the 112/730 and it is unclear if the served after 'Umar II—or to the degree that he influenced 'Umar's own administrative polity, such as his famous "Fiscal Rescript."

[536] For his position in 'Umar II's administration: al-Jashiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 97; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:838.

[537] Fred Donner, "Maymūn b. Mihran," in *EI2.* He appears to have been either a *mawlā* of Hawāzin or Azd, *TMD* 61:336, 342-343.

[538] "Kāna abī mukātiban li-banī Naṣr b. Mu'āwiya fa-'ataqa," Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr,* 9:473; *TMD* 61:343.

[539] Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr,* 9:473. Dayr al-Jamājim was the site of a battle between al-Ḥajjāj b. Yusūf, supported by Syrian troops, and 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ash'ath outside of Kufā; A. Saleh, "Dayr al-Djamādjim," in *EI2.*

[540] Donner, "Maymūn b. Mihrān." As an example of his reputation, Donner provides the quote attributed to Sulaymān b. Mūsā (d.115/733-734 or 119/737), "If knowledge (*'ilm*) came to us from the Ḥidjāz on the authority of al-Zuhrī, or from Syria on the authority of Makḥūl, or from 'Irāḳ on the authority of al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī), of from the Djazīra on the authority of Maymūn (b. Mihrān), we accept it," Abū Zur'a, *Ta'rīkh,* 315; similar pious antidotes are found in his biography in *TMD,* i.e. 61:347ff.

[541] Donner, "Maymūn b. Mihrān."

discussed above, Maymūn's career in ʻUmar II's administration was predated by relationships with members of the Umayyad political elite. According to his biography in Ibn Saʻd, Maymūn was first appointed by ʻUmar II over taxation (*kharāj*) in the Jazīra while his son, ʻAmr b. Maymūn, was over the *dīwān* for ʻUmar II.[542] In al-Jahshiyārī, Maymūn's authority would expand to cover all of the Jazīra, demonstrating his prominence in the administration of ʻUmar II.[543]

Summary

These administrators provide some validity to ʻUmar II's pious reputation and how it may have influenced his administrative approach. Without even discussing the possible motivations for ʻUmar II's "Fiscal Rescript," which delved into issues of taxation and payment for members of the Islamic community, ʻUmar II removed from the Umayyad administration two individuals with unjust and harsh reputations. What makes these dismissals particularly telling is that both administrators were re-instated under ʻUmar II's successor, the Caliph Yazīd II.[544] This tells us that ʻUmar II's decisions were intentional, which helps us recognize that administrative appointments were not passive acknowledgement of previous appointees and were, in a sense, members of a Caliph's trusted entourage.

Whether Sulaymān b. Saʻd was likewise dismissed because of a poor reputation that has not survived in our sources is unclear. Likewise, it is tenuous to propose that the administrators who served across administrations, such as al-Layth b. Abī Ruqayya and Nuʻaym b. Salāmah,

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[542] Ibn Saʻd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr,* 9:473; al-Jahshiyārī likewise states that Maymūn b. Mihrān served over the *kharāj* of the Jazīra and the treasury of Ḥarān, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 98.

[543] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 98.

[544] *Ibid.,* 101.

were more “pious” than others. Nevertheless, the caliphates of Sulaymān, ‘Umar II, and Yazīd II demonstrate the degree that Caliphs were in fact willing to go to attempt to curb administrative power and authority according to their perceived standards for Muslim bureaucrats. That said, the administrators that ‘Umar II selected and I have discussed specifically (Maymūn and Rajā’) were already highly influential members of the Umayyad polity and were not bankrupt of social capital. Rather, I argue their inclusion in the administration further demonstrates the breadth of those involved in conversations about the distribution of power and the ethos of Islamic administration.

Before turning to the final administrators discussed, it is worth again restating that in no way is there any evidence that either Rajā’ or Maymūn were able to secure administrative positions due to a particular “Arabization” or “Islamization” of the bureaucracy. Likewise, both were *mawālī* and again there is no evidence that a cultural/social connotation associated with clientage prevented them for having influential and prosperous careers.[545] Their membership in the Umayyad administration remained largely based on personal political connections (i.e. social capital); however, their status as pious individuals (i.e. cultural capital) without a doubt played a role as well, which may be two examples of which anecdotes about piety are worth seriously considering as accurate.

Polity, Patronage, & Property:
The Blurred Boundary between Private & Public Interests

[545] I would point out again that Maymūn’s father is said to have been an administrator for the early Islamic government (specifically an administrator or scribe for the Banī Naṣr b. Mu‘āwiya)—which, depending the degree that one’s agrees with my interpretation of *mawālī* administrators, may indicate that he came from a privileged pre-Islamic family and, as such, is further evidence for how pre-Islamic non-Arab families were incorporated into (and became influential members within) the Islamic community.

Several of ‘Abd al-Malik’s sons are attached to properties in the greater Syria region. Jere Bacharach suggested that this was an intentional outcome of ‘Abd al-Malik’s policy of assigning his sons various lands in greater Syria.[546] Their presence in these territories, the logic follows, was the main impetus for several of ‘Abd al-Malik’s sons’ respective patronage of building projects throughout the region: al-Walīd I in Jerusalem, Sulaymān in al-Ramla, Yazīd II in Jordan, and Hishām in Syria, and Maslama in Aleppo and Qinnasrin.[547] In this section, I highlight the administrators whose careers’ demonstrate the overlap between governance, patronage, and the economic investment. Since it is impossible to fully recover the economic backgrounds of administrators, identifying this connection between economics and politics is important—especially accounts that demonstrate the mutual interests of administrators and caliphal policy. This illustrates the blurred nature of personal economics and administration and, I argue, provides additional context to al-Ḥajjāj’s establishment of the city Wāsiṭ.

Al-Walīd I, Polity, & Property

Al-Walīd I’s patronage focused on the expansion of the Damascus Mosque as well as projects in Jerusalem around the Ḥaram al-Sharīf.[548] Two of his administrators, who were his own *mawālī,* were explicitly connected to his patronage and demonstrate the overlap between public and private interests.[549] First, Nufay‘ b. Dhu‘ayb was in charge of income generating

[546] Jere Bacharach, “Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities: Speculations on Patronage,” *Muqarnas* 13 (1996): 28.

[547] *Ibid*., 28, 34, 35-36.

[548] He also patronized building projects in the Hijaz, notably the Prophet’s Mosque in Medina and rebuilding the Ka‘ba; Bacharach, “Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities,” 31-34.

[549] Shu‘ayb al-‘Umānī , another one of his *mawālī,* also served in his administration; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 90; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh* 2:837; according to Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī, Shu‘ayb was secretary of the minor seal (*al-khātim al-ṣagīr*), *TMD* 23:121.

properties (*al-mustaghallāt*) of al-Walīd I in Damascus.[550] It is unclear exactly what these responsibilities included, but the connection between commerce and trade is reflected by al-Jahshiyārī's claim that Nufay''s name was written on a plaque (*lawḥ*) in the saddle market (*sūq al-sarrājīn*) in Damascus.[551] The second example is Janāḥ Abū Marwān whose biography indicates that he supervised al-Walīd I's patronage for the construction of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus.[552] These administrators were not divorced from the economic interests of the Caliphs which, I argue, was an fundamental factor for their employment in administrations more so than bureaucratic efficacy.

Sulaymān & al-Ramla

During the Caliphate of Sulaymān, the Christian administrator Ibn Batrīq is said to have supervised Sulaymān's patronage of the city of al-Ramla.[553] Ibn Batrīq's role in this patronage demonstrates how shared economic interests could be more important than shared religious identity. Sulaymān founded the city of al-Ramla at the beginning of the eighth century to serve as the provincial capital of Jund Filasṭīn.[554] According to the medieval geographer Yāqūt al-

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[550] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 90; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:838. Because Nufay' b. Dhu'ayb is identified as the *mawlā* of al-Walīd I, it is highly unlikely that was the brother of the administrator Qabiṣa b. Dhu'ayb who came from an established family in Arabia; likewise, Nufay' is not mentioned in Dhu'ayb's lineage in Caskel nor have I found anything about him anywhere else; Caskel, *Ğamharat an-nasab,* 1:199, 2:237.

[551] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 90.

[552] *TMD* 21:285. Al-Jashiyārī, seems to suggest that Janāḥ was 'Abd al-Malik's *mawlā,* and that he ('Abd al-Malik) appointed him as secretary of the seal following 'Amr b. al-Ḥārith, *Kitāb al-wuzarā'*, 78. However, Janāh's biography, as well as his sons', states that he was the *mawlā* of al-Walīd I, which is likely more accurate as 'Amr b. al-Ḥarith survived the reign of 'Abd al-Malik to serve in al-Walīd I's administration, *TMD* 11:284-286, 57:221, 18:229; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 21:215; *TMD* 45:452. *TMD* 11:285. As mentioned in Chapter 3, two of Janāḥ's sons, Rawḥ and Marwān, are referred to as *shaykhs* in Damascus, *TMD* 57:222. Marwān appears to have found the mosque a fitting surrounding as he is referred to as "from the notables of the people of the *masjid*" (*min a'yān ahl al-masjid*), *TMD* 57:223. Rawḥ likewise transmitted *ḥadith, TMD* 18:229-234. Janāḥ's grandson, Janāḥ b. Rawḥ b. Janāh was a poet, *TMD* 11:283.

[553] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 91-92; Yaqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, 3:69-70; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 143.

[554] Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 143. Some Islamic sources suggest that al-Ramla existed prior to the Umayyad caliphate, but according to Nimrod Luz this is likely misidentifying the nearby Ludd with al-Ramla, "The Construction of an

Ḥamawī (d.626/1229), Ibn Batrīq relinquished pillars from a nearby church in Ludd for the construction of Sulaymān's mosque in al-Ramla—apparently as a retribution to the local Christian community who refused to provide the Christian Ibn Batrīq with a prime residence in the city.[555]

The founding of al-Ramla, similar to the properties and patronage of al-Raqqa by Hishām discussed below, had significant economic and administrative consequences. Examining the road networks around al-Ramla, Nimrod Luz comments that "Al-Ramla became an important way-station in the chief longitudinal channel serving the Muslim state communications, from Damascus to al-Fusṭāṭ (future Cairo). Ibn Khuradādhbih even stresses al-Ramla's position on the road taken by Rhādhānite merchants on their way to Andalus. Even at the local-regional level, al-Ramla served as a central junction between the various towns of the province, e.g. the main road from Jerusalem to Jaffa."[556] Its role as an administrative and economic center is reflected in priorities of Sulymān's patronage in the city. According to Balādhurī, Sulaymān first built his palace and the house known as *Dār al-ṣabbāghīn* (the house of the dyers)—then followed by the construction of a mosque.[557] To Sulaymān's credit, the mosque is the famed White Mosque, but this priority of economic development should not go understated.[558] Balādhurī continues that Sulaymān invested in the construction of canals and dug wells which apparently were funded

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Islamic City in Palestine: The Case of Umayyad al-Ramla," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 7, no. 1 (1997): 27-28; see also, Ernst Honigmann, "Al-Ramla," in *EI2.*

[555] Yaqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*. According to al-Muqddasī, Hishām himself threatened the people of Lud, al-Muqaddasī, *Kitāb Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aqālīm* (Leiden: Brill, 1906) 3:164-165; Ernst Honigmann, "al-Ramala," in *EI2*.

[556] Luz, "Umayyad al-Ramla," 33.

[557] Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 143.

[558] The famed White Mosque was originally started by Sulyamān but completed by ʿUmar II who, according to Balādhurī, reduced its scale, *ibid*; for a recent summary on the archeological history of Ramla, see Myriam Rosen-Ayalon, "The White Mosque of Ramla: Retracing its History," *Israel Exploration Journal* 56, no. 1 (2006): 67-83.

directly by the Umayyads (*ma' amwāl banī Umayya*) to support his efforts to populate the city of al-Ramla with residents of nearby Ludd.[559] The most lavish residences were near the center of town and had elaborate geometric mosaic floors.[560] In short, the archeological evidence suggests that al-Ramla benefited from its status as an economic and administrative hub. It is thus not surprising that Ibn Batrīq would be a willing participant in such investments, regardless of the religious community of the patron.

Ibn Batrīq, however, was not the only administrator attached to Sulaymān's presence in al-Ramla. Nu'aym b. Salāma likely began his administrative career during Sulaymān's time as governor and served as secretary of the seal (*al-khātim*) for Sulaymān and 'Umar II.[561] According to his biography, Nu'aym was a client of Ḥimyar but was originally from Palestine/Jordan, and was possibly even a member of the Ghassānids.[562] There is another client of Ḥimyār who also served in Sulaymān's administration: a certain Sulaymān b. Nu'aym al-Ḥimyarī.[563] These two administrators attachmed to Ḥimyar should not come as a surprise, as members of Ḥimyar were early settlers in the area around Ḥimṣ.[564] Thus, we have another set of examples of administrators attached to tribal units who had settled in the region; further, as I argued in Chapter 3, the combination of being both a *mawlā* and a member of the administration

[559] Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 143; Yāqūt, *Buldān*, 3:69.

[560] Myriam Rosen-Ayalon, "The first Mosaic Discovered in Ramla," *Israel Exploration Journal* 26, no.2/3 (1976):104-119.

[561] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 91; *TMD* 62:171; in Ibn Khayyāt, his name is listed as Nu'aym b. Abī Salāma, *Ta'rīkh,* 312, 324; al-Jahshiyārī only has Nu'aym serving for Sulaymān, KITAB, 91; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh* 2:838. There is also a certain Sulaymān b. Nu'aym al-Himyarī listed a secretary for Sulaymān, but it is unclear if he is the son of Nu'aym b. Salāma or not; I have been unable to find him in a biographical dictionary, so there is also the possibility that his name is a corruption of Nu'aym b. Salama; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:838.

[562] *TMD* 62:171-174; *MTMD* 26:174.

[563] Al-Jahshiyārī has سُلَيم; *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 91; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:838.

[564] N. Elisséeff, "Ḥimṣ," in *EI2.*

suggests that they came from pre-Islamic established families, likely similar to our above mentioned Ibn Batrīq. Their careers, and connections to economic ventures in the region, demonstrates how members with pre-Islamic connections continued to exert influence in the region and, again, highlights the range of actors (including non-Muslims) who were instrumental in shaping Islamic administration and governance.

Yazīd II & Jordan

At least one member of Yazīd's administration was explicitly connected to the Jordan region where Yazīd II had spent his pre-Caliphate career and patronized two "desert castles" on the Jordan river near Amman.[565] Al-Jahshiyāri mentions a certain Yazīd b. ʻAbdallāh b. Mawhid who served Yazīd II before his Caliphate (i.e. during his time in Jordan).[566] His father's biography in Ibn ʻAsākir provides two pieces of useful information about Yazīd b. ʻAbdallāh and his connection to Yazīd II's administration. First, one of the *nisba*s attached to his father was Filasṭīnī (i.e. ʻAbdallāh b. Mawhib al-Hamdanī al-Filasṭīnī) and elsewhere it is explicitly stated that he was from greater Palestine.[567] Second, in the list of those from whom ʻAbdallāh b. Mawhib transmitted *ḥadīth,* it mentions Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb.[568] Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb was an administrator for ʻAbd al-Malik and his son, Isḥāq b. Qabīṣa, served for Hishām.[569] This would suggest, admittedly indirectly, that Yazīd b. ʻAbdallāh b. Mawhib's father had connections to members of the Umayyad administration in addition to a presence in the region. Since other

[565] Bacharach, "Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities," 36. Usāma b. Zayd was likewise from the region (specifically Tanukh), but since he served in the administration of Walīd I before Yazīd II, his connection to Yazīd II's patronage is less clear.

[566] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 101; *TMD* 65: 272.

[567] *TMD* 33: 231, 242; Yazīd b. ʻAbdallāh's biography likewise says he was from Palestine, *TMD* 65:273.

[568] *TMD*, 33:231.

[569] For references for Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb and his son, Isḥāq, see below and Chapter 3.

administrators are directly tied to the patronage of a site or city, it is worth considering if ʿAbdallāh b. Mawhid was a part of Yazīd II's patronage of his desert castle in al-Muwaqqar, which was founded before his ascension to the Caliphate.[570] Thus, Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh b. Mawhid's membership in the administration of Yazīd II from his pre-caliphal period in Jordan demonstrates again the regional connections between administrators, caliphs, polity, and investments.

Hishām & al-Ruṣāfa

Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik reigned for nearly 20 years (r. 105-124/724-743) and the size of his administration reflects this longevity. In many respects, his administration is the culmination of early Islamic state building and its relationship to the makeup of administrators. Kevin Blankinship, in his extensive study on the period of Hishām, emphasized the fiscal issues that Hishām faced during his Caliphate—fiscal issues that, according to Blankinship ultimately instigated the collapse of the Umayyad Caliphate.[571] I have argued, however, that the administrative makeup rarely—if ever—prioritized efficacy above all. Thus, even in this context, I argue that Hishām's administration reflects a polity of employing elite members in society who were connected with Hishām's economic ventures, and not necessarily attempts to resolve the fiscal issues facing the caliphate. I do want to be clear; I am not saying that Hishām's caliphate did not face fiscal issues nor that he did not attempt to curtail them. What I am arguing for is that the administrative makeup reflects a convergence of economic and political interest and not necessarily bureaucratic efficiency.

[570] Bacharach, "Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities," 36.

[571] Khalid Blankinship, *The End of the Jihâd State: The Reign of Hishām ibn Malik and the Collapse of the Umayyads* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

According to Blankinship, Hishām's Caliphate faced a fiscal crisis resulting from the expense of supporting the military as well as the extravagant building projects (and lifestyles) of individual caliphs.[572] Blankinship summarizes the period as one in which "the new wealth under al-Walīd I certainly provided the caliphs with an opportunity to show off their unstinting generosity toward their relatives, while at the same time fulfilling the requirement of both Arab custom and Islamic practice to help or take care of the less fortunate among them. Also, the steadily increasing numbers of young princes growing up with expectations of enjoying the same wealth as their fathers meant that there were ever more prospective recipients of such generosity, contributing to an increasing drain on the treasury."[573] It is difficult to quantify the degree that the lifestyles of individual caliphs or the royal family could actually drain the treasury, but evidence for building projects during the period is heavily attested in the archeological record, and especially so in the famed "Desert Castles" of the period.[574]

These expenses were compounded by the continued expense of supporting the military.[575] In particular, Blankinship emphasizes the expensive and failed expedition to capture Constantinople in 98-99/717-718 on the eve of Hishām's caliphate. According to literary sources, the conquest of Sind by Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim was said to have cost sixty million *dirhams* (it also is said to have brought in one hundred twenty million *dirhams*); thus, since the effort to capture Constantinople was a more ambitious—and thus more expensive—effort,

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572 Blankinship, *The End of the Jihâd State,* 83.

573 *Ibid*.

574 For a recent overview of the study of Umayyad desert castles, see Denis Genequand, "Desert Castles, Umayyad" in *Encyclopedia of Ancient History* and *ibid.,* "Elites in the Countryside: The Economic and Political Factors behind the Umayyad "Desert Castles," in *The Umayyad World,* ed. Marsham, 240-266.

575 Blankinship likewise seems to qualify the impact of the lifestyles of caliphs had on the treasury and acknowledges that the largest expensive was supporting the military, *The End of the Jihâd State,* 84.

Blankinship emphasizes just how costly military expeditions could be, or at least the ones which did not recoup their investments.[576] The fiscal issues are magnified since the military was the primary expenditure of the caliphate and spoils of war was a major (if not the major) means of funding the military. In short, a military loss was financially costly on two levels: first, its own expense to fund the endeavor and, second, the loss of potential revenue from immediate booty or future tax surplus.

'Umar II attempted to curb the emerging military and fiscal crisis by curtailing military expenditures and the lifestyles of elites.[577] As discussed above, 'Umar II made changes to the makeup of the administration that do in fact suggest that he held a competing view for how the Umayyad government should conduct itself. Efforts to disconnect the private endeavors of individuals from the treasury of the caliphate demonstrate the degree that individuals in control of surplus or fiscal reserves were able to employ resources for their own benefit. 'Umar II's policies, regardless of degree they were ever implemented, were largely abandoned by his successors. Thus, Hishām faced a similar fiscal issue but, according to Blankenship, attempted to

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[576] Blankinship, *The End of the Jihâd State,* 84.

[577] Blankinship, *The End of the Jihâd State,* 85; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:1365; Gibb, "The Fiscal Rescript of 'Umar II," *Arabica* 2 (1955): 3-5. For additional citations, see Blankinship notes 68 and 69, 304. Jere Bacharach comments that 'Umar II was a break for the patronage practices of his fellow Marwanids as no major building activities seem to have been funded by 'Umar the II, "Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities: Speculations on Patronage," *Muqarnas* 13 (1996): 28. For more specific studies, see Oleg Grabr, "City in the Desert: Qasr al-Hayr East (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978); Alastair Northedege, "Archaeology and New Urban Settlement in Early Islamic Syria and Iraq," in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East Volume 2: Land Use and Settlement Patterns,* ed. King and Cameron (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994), 235-; Garth Fowden, *Qusayr 'Amra: Art and the Umayyad Elite in Late Antique Syria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Denis Genequand, "Some Thoughts on Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi, its Dam, its Monastery and the Ghassanids," *Levant* 38 (2006): 63-83; ibid., "The New Urban Settlement at Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi: Components and Development in Early Islamic Period, in *Residences, Castles, Settlements: Transformation Processes Between Late Antiquity and Early Islam in Bilad al-Sham,* ed. Karin Bartl and Abd al-Razzaq Moaz (Rahden: Verlage Marie Leidorf, 2008), 261-285.

mediate it through more efficient administration and increasing the flow of revenue from the provinces back to the capital in Damascus.[578]

According to Blankinship, Hishām attempted to combat the province's hesitancy to send the "fifth" of surplus back to Damascus by installing governors who would forward this revenue back to the treasury.[579] Because of the duration of Hishām's Caliphate and the elusive nature of our source material, it is not quite clear if the administration of Hishām was as abrupt a change from that of his brother Yazīd II as the source material may suggest. Administrative lists and his chapter in al-Jahshiyārī suggest that Hishām did not employ any of the administrators of his predecessors.[580] While the turnover between administrations was likely not as immediate as the source material may indicate, it is interesting to observe an important characteristic of many of Hishām's administrators: they were connected to Hishām's private estates and business ventures.

Junāda b. Abī Khalid was from Urfa (Edessa) and served was over the *ṭirāz* for Hishām.[581] According to al-Jahsiyārī, Junāda's name could even be found on Hāshimī textiles (*ismuhu mawjūd 'alā al-thidyāb al-Hāshimīya)*, possibly referring to Hishām's textile workshops mentioned in al-Ya'qūbī.[582] Another administrator was likewise related to Hishām's business

[578] Blankinship, *The End of the Jihâd State,* 87.

[579] Ibid., 87. The appointment and replacement of governors and sub-governors, including attention on their tribal identities, has already been discussed at length elsewhere by Patrica Crone; see, *Slaves on Horses* and "Were the Qays and Yemem of the Umayyad Period Political Parties?," *Der Islam* 71, no. 1 (1994): 1-57.

[580] It is unlikely that there was no continuation of several high-ranking administrators but is more likely a consequence of our source material that often lists administrators at the end of caliph's caliphate. For example, in Ibn Khayyāṭ's list of Hishām's administrators of the *kharāj* and *jund,* he says "Usama b. Zayd, then he dismissed him, and appointed 'Ubayda b. al-Habḥāb the *mawlā* of Banū Salūl, then he appointed him over Egypt, and installed in his place, Sa'īd b. 'Utba, the *mawlā* of Banū al-Ḥarith b. Ka'b," *Ta'rīkh,* 362. Thus, the absence of previous administrators in the source material is likely a result of the length of his caliphate (one that had turnover multiple times) and not the result of a mass exodus of administrators.

[581] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 107; *TMD* 11:287.

[582] My appreciation to Mehdy Shaddell for pointing this out to me. Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 107; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh* 2:393-394; see also, Y.K. Stillman and P. Sanders, "Ṭirāz," in *EI2.*

ventures: Isḥāq b. Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb was the head the bureau of the *ṣadaqa* tax and was also responsible for Hishām's estates (*ḍiyā'*) in Jordan.[583] Isḥāq was the administrator discussed in Chapter 3 whose name is preserved on a mosaic at the Umayyad market in Bet Shean/Bayāsn and was the son of Qabīṣa b. Dhu'ayb, an administrator for 'Abd al-Malik.[584] While the recurring employment of administrators across generations is noteworthy in itself (and certainly not unique to Isḥāq), it is actually Isḥāq's relationship to Hishām's personal property that is a prominent characteristic amongst Hishām's administrators, including those related to his patronage and economic activity in al-Ruṣāfa.[585]

According to tradition, Hishām moved to al-Ruṣāfa in order to escape a plague and would continue to spend time there rather than in Damascus.[586] According to archeological evidence, Hishām patronized budlings inside and outside of the city of al-Ruṣāfa. His personal residences and gardens were located south of the city, but his mosque was built within the city of al-Ruṣāfa.[587] Shu'ayb b. Dīnar was a *mawlā* of the Banū Umayya, originally from Ḥimṣ, and served as scribe for Hishām during his period in al-Ruṣāfa.[588] Another administrator, Stephen (Iṣṭafānūs) was a *mawlā* of the Caliph Marwān b. al-Ḥakam and headed Hishām's private coffers (*kazā'in kāṣṣa*) and also possibly could have connections to the city of Ruṣāfa.[589]

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[583] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 106.

[584] See Chapter 3 for citations. Moshe Sharon, *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palestainae*, Vol 2 (Brill: Leiden, 1999), 207ff. See also, Elias Khamis, "Two Wall Mosaic Inscriptions from the Umayyad Marketplace in Bet Shean/Baysān," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 64 n.2 (2001):159-176. For the inscription mentioned in al-Jahshiyārī, see *RCEA* 1, 26 note 32.

[585] Bacharach, "Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities," 30.

[586] Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2: 1737-1738; Bacharach, "Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities," 30; see also C. Haase, "al-Ruṣāfa," in *EI2.*

[587] Bacharach, "Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities," 30.

[588] *TMD* 23:89-91; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* 2:838.

[589] *TMD* 9:185. According to his biography, Hisham dunked him in water until he converted to Islam. While likely fabricated, it is curious to consider if Stephen became the *mawlā* of Marwān without converting to Islam since in

It is unclear when or where Stephen first started serving Hishām, but it is worth considering if he was connected to al-Ruṣāfa and its large Christian population. Pre-Islamic (as well as early Islamic) al-Ruṣāfa had a large Christian community with the Church of St. Sergius serving as a major pilgrimage site.[590] It is not unreasonable to consider a Christian aiding in such regional economic investments as seen in the example of Ibn Batrīq and Sulaymān's patronage of al-Ramla. Another Christian, Tādharī b. Asṭīn al-Naṣrānī (evident explicitly in his *nisba* "the Christian") served over taxation in Ḥimṣ.[591]

Up to this point I have stressed the overlap between the caliphs' property and the makeup of the administration. It is worth repeating, however, that the administrators themselves benefitted from this relationship as well. Several administrators were associated with property ownership during the period.[592] Additionally, Hishām's administrator Sa'īd b 'Uqbā would even go on to serve as governor of Egypt.[593] These administrators demonstrate how the caliph's political and personal ambitions came to a head in the makeup of their administration. The point being that the composition of the bureaucracy demonstrates the way members of the elite were ingrained in governance and polity. This is an important point because it adds voices to the discussion about investments and patronage. Hishām was intentional in his building and economic activities, and the makeup of his administration demonstrates how influence over fiscal structures was connected to the interests of elites. As summarized by Bacharach, "The

one place the Christian Sarjūn is said to have been the *mawlā* of Mu'āwiya, Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf,* 4A 159. That said, the "forced conversion" narrative does not seem to have been a particular administrative polity of Hishām, as he employed Tādharī b. 'Asṭīn al-Ṣarānī over taxation in Ḥimṣ, al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 108.

590 *Ibid*., for pilgrim to al-Ruṣāfa and the cult of Sergius, see Elizabeth Fowden, *The Barbarian Plan: Saint Sergius between Rome and Iran* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1999).

591 Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitab al-wuzarā',* 107.

592 For example, Athansius: *TMD* 9:175; Junāda: *TMD* 11:287-290.

593 Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rīkh,* 362; *TMD* 21:236.

location of Hisham's Syrian complexes demonstrates an awareness of what the major communication and trade routes in the region were. Hisham's "palaces" served as caravan stops for traffic between the central Euphrates and al-Jazira regions and western Bilad al-Sham. In addition to its amenities there were possible pleasures in residing in the various locations—Wasit al-Raqqa, Rusafa, Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi, Palmyra/Tadmur, and Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi—and benefiting from the local agricultural and grazing activities surrounding them."[594] The fact that many members of his administration were connected to said building and economic activities demonstrates the extent that the line between public and private investments were blurred.

Al-Ḥajjāj and Wāsiṭ

Finally, with the connection between the sons of 'Abd al-Malik and their respective patronage in mind, it is beneficial to consider al-Ḥajjāj's founding of Wāsiṭ in a similar light. The administrative reforms discussed in Chapter 3 are most associated with the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik; however, one can make a strong case that his governor of Iraq, the general al-Ḥajjāj b. Yusūf, held a comparable degree of political power. Pamala Klasova, in her study on al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf, has suggested that the underappreciation of the influence of al-Ḥajjāj results from the "geographic reductionism" in modern scholarship which has emphasized the Hijāz for Islam's origins, Syria for the Umayyads, and Iraq for the 'Abbasids.[595] Thus al-Ḥajjāj, with his appropriately named provincial capital of Wāṣit, finds himself in an historiographical middle ground in Umayyad scholarship.

[594] Bacharach, "Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities," 31.

[595] Klasova, "Empire through Language," 8.

The city of Wāsiṭ was founded roughly in the middle of the Iraqī *amsār*: Kūfa and Baṣra, hence the name Wāsiṭ "Middle."[596] After a revolt led by ʻAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. al-Ashʻath in 80-82/699-701, al-Ḥajjāj established the city as a permeant garrison for the Syrian army in Iraq.[597] From then on, Wāsiṭ served as al-Ḥajjāj's regional capital. Its role as an administrative center is reflected in numismatic evidence, in which Wāsiṭ served as the near exclusive location of mint activity in Iraq.[598] These observations have led to scholars to interpret al-Hajjāj's expenditure in Wāsiṭ as militarily and socially motivated, and possibly even part of the "centralizing" campaign attached to himself and ʻAbd al-Malik.[599] However, I suggest that al-Hajjāj's patronage of Wāsiṭ, which included economic activities, can be understood as analogous to the patronage undertaken by several of ʻAbd al-Malik's sons.

First, al-Ḥajjāj is credited with building both a *qasr* for himself as well as mosque, again similar to the practices of the Marwānid princes and their famed "desert castles."[600] Not only did he dig wells and canals as investments for the city, al-Ḥajjāj also appropriated the lands of the former Caliph Muʻāwiya and incorporated them within the properties of ʻAbd al-Malik.[601] Second, Klasova, in her impressive and important study on al-Ḥajjāj, has pointed to the religious connotations associated with the geographical space where Wāṣiṭ was established in order to argue that its founding was not only a pragmatic administrative location but was motivated by its symbolic value, as well. In Klasova's own words, "The founding of his own city in a location

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596 Baḥshal, *Ta'rīkh Wāsiṭ,* 38; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 290; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam,* 347.

597 Kennedy, *Armies of the Caliphs,* 34. Sources differ on the dating between 694/697-705, N. Lowick, "Wāsiṭ," in *EI2*.

598 John Walker, *A Catalogue of the Arab-Byzantine* (London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1956), lxiii.

599 See Chapter 3.

600 Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 290; Bacharach, "Marwanid Umayyad Building Activates."

601 Balādhurī, *Futūh.,* 290.

imbued with Sasanian and Christian legacy must have been understood for its symbolic value that targeted both Muslim and non-Muslim populations of Iraq…In this light, the records that al-Ḥajjāj built Wāsiṭ for the Syrian troops and expelled all non-Arabs from the city become even more significant. They point to the politics of appropriation of past cultural symbols and their subordination to the new regime."[602] The patronage of a religiously significant site is analogous to Hishām's patronage of al-Ruṣāfa and al-Walīd I in Jerusalem. Together, this indicates that al-Ḥajjāj's building projects can be understood as another example of a high-ranking member of the elite combining administrative and economic investments.

'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib & Islamic Cultural Capital

This final section examines the cultural values expressed in the writings of likely the most famous of Umayyad administrators, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Yāḥyā (d. 132/750). Widely considered, both in contemporary historiography and by medieval authors, as the father of the Arabic epistolary genre, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's writings have been studied and examined over centuries and around the world.[603] In this dissertation, I have argued that the negotiation of power between new and old elites influenced the changes in administrative linguistic preferences and not the other way around. In other words, the primacy placed on Arabic (rather than Greek or Persian) was a consequence of the emergence of new elites who shared this preference, and not a result of ideological policy. Likewise, I have argued that administrators and secretaries should be recognized as members of the elite, and not exceptional or exploited functionaries. The

[602] Klasova, "Empire through Language," 105-106.

[603] Wadād al-Qāḍī lists Ibn al-Faqīh, Ibn al-Nadīm, al-Tha'ālibī, al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī al-Wazīr al-Maghribī, Ibn Khīra al-Mawā'īnī, al-Qalqashandī, al-Jāḥiẓ and al-Mas'ūdī, as examples of early authorities acknowledging 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's influence; for references, see Wadād al-Qāḍ̄ī, "Early Islamic State Letters: The Question of Authenticity," in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East I: Problems in the Literary Source Material,* ed. Averil Cameron and Lawrence Conrad (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1992), 223.

letters of ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd, and his "Letter to the Secretaries" (*risāla ilā al-kuttāb*) in particular, reflect both of these broader trends.

My analysis focuses on ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd's effort to articulate the scribe as a member of the elite and the methods he employs to do so. ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd does this in two ways: first, he emphasizes the scribe's proximity to—and influence over—power. Second, he prioritizes an etiquette and education that extended beyond the scribal profession. When we turn to likely the most famous of ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd's writings, "Letter to the Secretaries" (*risāla ilā al-kuttāb*), we have a unique window into the broader culture of elites in the late Umayyad period, and not only an educational blueprint for aspiring secretaries.

Finally, I conclude by reflecting on this culture in "action" by recognizing instances of the culture, values, and educational priorities espoused in ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd's private letters that are mobilized in his letters intended for public audiences. The connection between abstract educational maxims and concrete examples of the scribal craft in action demonstrates an important aspect about the late Umayyad "elite" culture: namely, that it was neither hegemonic nor exclusive. Rather, ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd's emphasis on studying the Qur'ān and Arabic was not simply an effort to legitimize the privileged position of administrators in society—they had real world application, which is evident in ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd's public letters. Thus, in this final section we are able both to recognize administrators as members of the elite and at the same time to better appreciate the wide range of actors in Umayyad society that helped shape the cultural and political ethos of the period.

ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd's Biography & Late Antique Educational Context

‘Abd al-Ḥamīd was a third generation Muslim born likely in al-Anbār in the year 688.[604] Probably of Persian descent, ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd was educated in Kūfa and worked as a tutor before becoming employed as a secretary within the Umayyad administration, possibly even before the death of ‘Abd al-Malik.[605] Little is known about his socioeconomic background; however, his access to education should tell us something about this background. First, throughout the period covered in this dissertation, members who staffed positions of bureaucracy were influential and economically powerful individuals. Likewise, in late antiquity, those who had access to education were largely from economically privileged backgrounds. Robert Kaster, in his *Guardians of Language*, argued that education and rhetoric in late antiquity was just as much about social standing as it was about “linguistic and literary attainments.”[606] This is not in any way to dimmish the influence of ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, but simply to highlight that access to education in late antiquity—as well as access into the bureaucracy—was not a universal opportunity for all members of society. As Peter Brown, the father of late antique studies, has remarked, “Education, therefore, controlled “unstructured” social mobility.”[607]

Second, ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd ended up marrying the daughter (or sister) of his teacher Sālim Abū al-‘Alā, who in addition to being ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd’s mentor was an administrator for Hishām

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[604] The most useful biographies of ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd are Wadād al-Qāḍī, “‘Abd al-Ḥamīd,” in *EI3*; *ibid*., “‘Abd al-Hamid al-Katib,” in *Arabic Literary Culture,* 500-925 (Detroit: Thomas Gate, 2005), 3-11; and Iḥsān ‘Abbās’ *‘Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā al-Kātib wa mā tabaqqā min rasā’ilihi wa rasā’il Sālim Abī al-‘Alā* (Amman: 1988)*,* 25-60. Unless a specific source is mentioned, forthcoming citations will be to his article in *EI3* as it is the most up to date in terms of its content and bibliography.

[605] *Ibid*.

[606] Robert Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 23.

[607] Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 39. Brown, himself, goes on to qualify that “At the same time, it offered an acceptable avenue of promotion to a few men of talent from less-privileged backgrounds,” citing Augustine as an example of someone whose father was merely a “petty notable,” *ibid.* Thus, efforts to not project our observations about the inequitable structures of society onto the personal acumen of individuals seems to be a common one, and very likely a well-deserved one in the cases of Augustine and ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd.

and supposedly translated passages from Aristotle.[608] By the end of Hishām's caliphate, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd had reached a high enough position within the chancellery administration to write letters of behalf of the Caliph Hishām.[609] In 114/732, 'Abd al-Ḥamid was appointed as scribe for the future caliph Marwān II, who had recently been appointed as governor of Armenia and Azerbaijan.[610] 'Abd al-Ḥamīd served Marwān II for twelve years in Armenia until the assassination of al-Walīd II (d. 126/744) and Marwān II's subsequent assumption of the title Caliph and the beginning of the Third Islamic Civil War (126-129/132 /744-747/750). At this point, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, after serving the future Caliph for years abroad, became the head of the chancery bureau for the caliphate in Damascus.[611] According to Ibn al-Nadīm, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's letters filled a thousand folios!—however, only forty authentic letters have survived.[612] These letters were both private and public in nature and ranged in topics from prohibitions for playing chess, celebrating the birth of a colleague's child, offering condolences, purchasing a slave woman from North Africa, describing a flood, celebrating military victories, commemorating the Caliph's performance of religious rituals, letters addressed to quell rebellions, as well as 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's famous "Letter to the Secretaries." [613]

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[608] Al-Jahsiyarī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',*109; Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist,* 1092. Sālim was likewise an influential figure in the history of Arabic literature and possibly the translator of the letters of Aristotle to Alexander the Great; Wadād al-Qāḍī, "Sālim Abū al-'Alā'," in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature Volume 2,* ed. Julie Meisami and Paul Starkey (London: Routledge, 1998), 681-682; see also, Mario Grignaschi, "Les "rasā'il arisṭāṭlīssa ilā-l-Iskandar" de Salim Abū-l-'Alū et l'activité Culturelle à l'époque Omayyade," *Le Museon* 80 (1967): 211-264.

[609] *Ibid*., for example, letter number 29 is addressed from Hishām to the governor Yūsuf b. 'Umar; 'Abbās,*'Abd al-Ḥamīd,* 275-276.

[610] Al-Qāḍī, "'Abd al-Ḥamīd," in *EI3.*

[611] *Ibid*.; al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 123.

[612] Wadād al-Qāḍī, "The Impact of the Qur'an on the Qur'an and the Epistolography of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd," in *The Qur'an and Adab: The Shaping of Literary Traditions in Classical Islam,* ed, Nuha Alshaar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 343; Ibn al-Nadīm, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm,* 1:257. For discussion about the authenticity of his letters, see "Early Islamic State Letters: The Question of Authenticity," 232-270.

[613] References to the letter number in 'Abbās, *'Abd al-Ḥamīd*; chess: letter 23; birth of child: letter 9; offering condolences: letters 4, 5, 28, and 33; purchasing a slave: 15; describing a flood: letter 6; celebrating military

Analysis of "The Letter to Secretaries"[614]

'Abd al-Ḥamid opens his letter by addressing his audience as specifically members of his secretarial professorship (*yā ahl hādhā al-ṣinā'a*) but, as I argue, simultaneously members of a broader community of Umayyad era Islamic elites.[615] Wadād al-Qāḍī has examined the literary corpus of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd as a window into the broader political ideology of the Umayyads, (Hishām and Marwān II in particular) as well as the letter's attempt to articulate an identity for the secretarial profession.[616] Al-Qāḍī argued that the letters provide scholars with valuable insight into the contemporary politics and ideology of their period, insight that is not afforded in poetry, chronicles, and even documentary resources.[617] Since the caliphs would have approved of the content, as well as how it was articulated, in the letters, the corpus of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's letters are not merely his personal political ideology, but representative of the Umayyads—or at least as they envisioned themselves.[618] It is again important to highlight the politically precarious position of the Umayyad Caliphate, which is an understatement when one considers that the Umayyad Caliphate collapsed mere years (if not months) after some of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's

victories: letters 25 and 26; religious rituals: 11 and 12; against rebellions: letters 16, 17, 18, 19, and 34; "Letter to the Secretaries:" letter 35.

[614] For the versions of the *Letter to the Secretaries,* I am working from the version in al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 125-131 and 'Abbās, *'Abd al-Ḥamīd,* 281-288. There is also a version of the "Letter to the Secretaries" in Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddama*, of which has an English translation in *The Muqaddamah,* 29-35; however, as pointed out by al-Qāḍī, version in Ibn Khaldun is not the closest to the original, which is actually the version preserved al-Jahshiyārī, al-Qāḍī, "Early Islamic State Letters," 260. For an overview about the question of authenticity of the letter and its various versions, see *ibid*. 249-269. The following citations are from 'Abbās's critical edition in *'Abd al-Ḥamīd.*

[615] 'Abbās, *'Abd al-Ḥamīd,* 281.

[616] Wadād Al-Qāḍī, "The Religious Foundation of Late Umayyad Ideology and Practice," in *Saber Religioso y Poder Político en el Islam* (Madrid: Agencia Española de cooperación internacional, 1994), 231-273 and "Identify Formation of the Bureaucracy of the Early Islamic State: 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's "Letter to the Secretaries," 141-154.

[617] Al-Qāḍī*,* "The Religious Foundation of Late Umayyad Ideology and Practice," 230.

[618] *Ibid*., 235-237.

letters.[619] This observation, I argue, allows us to read ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's "Letter to the Secretaries" as window into the culture of elites beyond the scribal profession.[620] ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's epistle emphasizes qualities that transcended the scribal profession and the scribe's proximity to power. Likewise, when we consider "The Letter to the Secretaries" within the broader corpus of his surviving letters, "The Letter to Secretaries" serves as a window into late Umayyad religio-political culture and demonstrates the range of actors who helped shape it.

Proximity to Power

ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd delineates an order of men or classes: prophets, kings, and then the rest of mankind. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd emphasizes that God gave these various classes of society the abilities necessary to be able to make a livelihood. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd asserts that God had especially singled out the secretarial class, and "placed you, the class of scribes, among the most renowned of professions" (*fa-jaʿalakum maʿshar al-kuttāb fī asharihā ṣināʾatan*).[621] God had, thus, bestowed on the scribes that they should be people of culture/education (*al-adab*), chivalry (*al-murūʾa*), discernment (*al-ḥilm*), and reflection (*al-rawīya*).[622] Kings are able govern justly and well through the secretary who is endowed with the above qualities (*bi-kum yantaẓimu al-muluku wa tastaqīmu li-l-muluk umūruhum*).[623] Likewise, it is through the secretaries' direction

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[619] For example, letter 38 warns of the growing presence of political opposition, a letter in which ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd encourages the "*al-dawla al-ʿArabīya"* (the Umayyad army) against the "*al-fiʾa al-ʿajamīya*" (expectedly, the ʿAbbasid forces); ʿAbbās, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd*, 289; al-Qāḍī, "The Religious Foundation," 241. See also letters 16-19, ʿAbbā, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd.*

[620] This is a point that I believe al-Qāḍī̄ would likewise agree, if she has not already stated so in one of her several articles on ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd.

[621] ʿAbbās, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd*, 281.

[622] The translations of *al-adab* and *al-murūʾa* are a more nuanced than a single English word; rather, both adjectives suggest the embodiment of a broader set of cultural attitudes, such as culture, education, and "manliness."

[623] ʿAbbās, ʿ*Abd al-Ḥamīd,* 281.

and management that God brings prosperity to both kings and their countries (*bi-tadbīrikum wa-siyāsatikum yuṣliḥu Allāhu sulṭānahum wa yajtami'u fay'uhum wa ta'muru bilāduhum*).[624]

The secretaries' influence over Caliphs should not go underappreciated. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's emphasis on the literal proximity to power is important considering the broader political philosophy espoused by 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. Al-Qāḍī in her exceptional study about the religious foundation of Umayyad polity in 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's letters, comments that "The death of the seal of the prophets, the letters implicitly conclude, just marked the end of one stage in the history of man on earth, the prophetic stage. A new stage emerged after it, succeeding it. This is the caliphal stage. And with this, the letters give the caliphate a naturally legitimate place in the history of mankind, and a religious one for that matter, for they make the point of reference for it the quintessentially religious institution of prophethood."[625] That is to say, the hierarchy atop which the Caliph stands is not a 'first among equals' horizontal claim of power, but a divinely ordained vertical hierarchy of power extending from Allāh to the Prophet and, finally, to the Caliph. In the words of al-Qāḍī, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's political message is "absolute political power…clad in a religious garb."[626]

Again, this is important not only for our understanding of early Islamic religiopolitical theory but for us to recognize how 'Abd al-Ḥamīd is articulating an important facet of the administrators' identity as a fellow elite: proximity to this power and, importantly, influence about how power would be distributed. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd expressed this by equating obedience to the caliphate with adherence to God's will, both explicitly and implicitly. For example, the

[624] *Ibid*.

[625] Al-Qāḍī, "The Religious Foundation of late Umayyad Ideology and Practice," 244.

[626] *Ibid.,* 241.

Caliph (Marwān II in this case) is referred to as the *khalifat Allāh* and the Caliph's armies are the *jund Allāh.*[627] The enemies of the Umayyad Caliphate are called the enemy of God (*'adūw Allāh*).[628] Likewise, 'Abd al-Ḥamid makes this connection implicit when urges for obedience to the caliphate are juxtaposed with accounts of opposition to none other than the Prophet in the Qur'ān.[629]

If we are to take seriously the political philosophy evident in 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's letters, then we should not understate the significance of his emphasis on the scribe's proximity to and influence over this divinely endowed power. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd even states that it is the Caliph and governors who need the secretary because the secretaries are "their ears through which they hear, their eyes (*abṣār*) through which they see, their togues through which they speak, and their hands through which they touch."[630] The secretaries were an extension—and a vital component—of the caliph's power. As a result, scribes and administrators were in a privileged position of proximity to divinely endowed power and authority. It is likely for this reason that 'Abd al-Ḥamīd supplicates, "May God give you enjoyment in what he has bestowed on you from the superiority of your profession and may He not strip away from you the garment of prosperity upon you (*fa-amta'akum Allāhu bi-mā khaṣṣakum min faḍl ṣinā'atikum wa-lā naza'a 'ankum sirbāl al-ni'ma 'alakum*).[631]

[627] Letters 16 and 19 respectively, 'Abbas, *'Abd al-Ḥamīd,* 210, 214; al-Qāḍī, "The Religious Foundation of late Umayyad Ideology and Practice," 239.

[628] 'Abbas, *'Abd al-Ḥamīd,* 215.

[629] For example, letter 17; 'Abbas, *'Abd al-Ḥamīd,* 210-213. The letter even includes quotations from the Qur'ān, 13:31, "As for the disbelievers, because of their misdeeds, disaster will not cease to afflict them or fall close to their homes until God's promise is fulfilled: God never fails to keep his promise," *The Qur'an,* trans. M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[630] 'Abbās, *'Abd al-Ḥamīd.,* 281-282.

[631] *Ibid*., 282.

‘Abd al-Ḥamīd’s emphasis on the scribe’s proximity to power represents an important means of leveraging his social capital; that is, the social networks that one could leverage for personal ambitions.[632] Social networks, as we have seen, have been an important characteristic throughout the dissertation. We have seen that at the end of the Umayyad caliphate, there were a number of individuals connected to important networks that had formed over the course of the Umayyad Caliphate. This even included those affiliated with members of the Sufyānid period of the Umayyads (ca. 41-64/661-684). Al-Layth b. Abī Ruqayya al-Thaqafī was the *mawlā* of Umm al-Ḥakam bt. Abī Sufyān. and served in Sulaymān and ‘Umar II’s administrations.[633] Umm al-Ḥakam was the sister of Caliph Mu‘āwiya and her sister, Umm Ḥabība, had even married the Prophet Muhammad.[634] At the end of ‘Umar II’s Caliphate, the Chronicle of Michael the Syrian mentions that one of the governors of Qinnasrīn was a certain Layth (ܠܝܬ); it is unclear if this is the same person but possibly could allude to his post-administrative career.[635] What is clear is that his affiliation with the Umayyad administration was through his connection with the

[632] “Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership with a groups—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a “credential” which entitles them to credit, in the various sense of the word…The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected.” Bourdieu, “Forms of Capital,” 21.

[633] Al-Jahsiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā’,* 91, 97; *TMD* 50:339.

[634] *TMD* 70: 219. It is unclear when al-Layth became Umm al-Ḥakam’s client. Her biography states that she lived in Damascus and was married twice: first to ‘Iyād b. Gahm b. Zuayr and then to ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Uthmān al-Thaqafī, with whom she bore ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Umm al-Ḥakam, *TMD* 70: 219-221. ‘Iyād b. Gahm b. Zuhayr was a major figure in the conquest and later government of Syria, but it was during her second marriage that al-Layth likely became her *mawlā* and possibly joined the administration. First, al-Layth is given the *nisba* al-Thaqafī, which would tie him to the house of ‘Abdallāh (a Thaqafī) and not ‘Iyād b. Gahm (a member of the Fihrī clan of the Quraysh), *TMD* 50:339. Second, al-Layth’s biography in Ibn ‘Asākr states that some said al-Layth was ‘Abd al-Raḥman’s *mawlā* and not the *mawlā* of Umm al-Ḥakam, again linking him to the period of her second marriage, *TMD*, 50:39. Abū Ḥusayn al-Rāzī, in al-Layth’s biography in Ibn ‘Asākir, says he was the *mawlā* of her father, ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Umm Ḥakam. This is likely a misreading of ابنها forابيها, since ‘Abd al-Raḥman was her son and not her father; meaning “some say he was the *mawlā* of her son, ‘Abd al-Raḥman,” *TMD* 50: 449.

[635] Michael the Syrian, 11 XIX:456-457, 489 (translation). Robert Hoyland points out that these governors are unknown other than this list, *Theophilus of Edessa’s Chronicle,* 218, note 610.

noteworthy family of Umm al-Ḥakam. Her son, ‘Abd al-Raḥman, was the nephew of Mu‘āwiya and served as governor for the cities of Kūfa, Jazīra, Moṣul, and Egypt during his career.[636] Intimate connection with upper members of the Umayyad elite is likewise reflected in the career of Sālim b. ‘Abd al-Rahmān who, in addition to his son ‘Abdallāh, served in the administration of al-Walīd II.[637] Sālim b.‘Abd al-Rahmān was the *mawlā* of Sa‘īd the son of the Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik.[638] Finally, al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf's own grandson, ‘Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad, likewise was employed over the *dīwān al-jund* for the caliph al-Walīd II.[639] It is thus worth considering that when ‘Abd al-Ḥamid emphasized the secretaries' proximity to power, he was highlighting a valuable commodity amongst members of the late Umayyad political elite.

The Etiquette of the Elite?

In this section, I argue that the qualities endorsed by ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd were the qualities of broader elite culture and not simply the professional qualifications for an aspiring scribe. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd even says so himself when he notes that no profession has greater need to embody these virtuous and praiseworthy characteristics (*aḥwaja ilā-stakhrāj kilāl al-khayr al-maḥūda*) than the secretarial class.[640] With this reading, one can substitute "member of the elite" in instances that ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd is addressing scribes. Members of the elite—and not just scribes—are to be mild-tempered in situations that warrant mild-temperedness (*an yakun… ḥalīmān fī*

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[636] For references, see Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 124-125.

[637] Al-Jashiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 118.

[638] *Ibid*.; *TMD*: 20:79 and 29:3. Sa'īd b. ‘Abd ‘Abd al-Malik served as governor "*jund"* Filasṭīn, Elias Khamis, "A Bronze Weight of Sa‘îd b. ‘Abd al-Malik from Bet Shean/Baysân," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 12, no. 2 (2002): 143-154. Some biographies, including *TMD,* seem to equate Sālim b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman (the *mawlā* of Sa‘īd b. ‘Abd al-Malik) with Sālim Abū ‘Alā' (the *mawlā* of Hishām). If they are in fact references to the same person, then the connection between client and patron from an important family remains nevertheless, just in the case of a client of a caliph rather than the son of a caliph.

[639] Al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wuzarā',* 118; *TMD* 37:95.

[640] ‘Abbās, *‘Abd al-Ḥamīd,* 282.

mawḍiʿ al-ḥilm), knowledgeable when wisdom is needed (*faqīhān fī mawdiʿ al-ḥukm*), courageous when necessary (*miqdāmān fī mawḍiʿ al-iqdām*), and restrained in times that call for restraint (*muḥjimān fī mawḍiʿ al-iḥjām*).[641]

The idea that these characteristics transcend the scribal profession is explicitly emphasized in another of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's letters, the "Letter to the Crown Prince." ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's "Letter to the Crown Prince," the longest of his surviving letters, is addressed to ʿUbaydallāh (ʿAbdallāh) b. Marwān II, the heir and son of the final Umayyad Caliph in greater Syria.[642] In the letter, Marwān II addresses his son ʿUbaydallāh as he is sent out against the enemy of God (*ʿadūw Allāh*): "the uncivilized and brutish Bedouin (*aʿrābī*) who aimlessly wanders in the confusion of *jahāla* (*fī ḥayra jahāla*)."[643] It has been suggested that the allusion to this "meandering uncivilized brute" is in reference to the leader of a Khārijite oppositional movement, al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Qays, placing the date of the letter to around 745.[644] Thus, while the letter was a private one, the desire to distinguish the two leaders, al-Ḍaḥḥāk and ʿUbaydallāh, had a political element, one that provides insight into what characteristics a leader should embody.

The juxtaposition between illegitimate and legitimate leader highlights the desirable characteristics and qualities in the late Umayyad period. Al-Ḍaḥḥāk wanders aimlessly in *jahāla,*

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641 *Ibid*.

642 The letter spans 50 pages in the ʿAbbās edition, ʿAbbās, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd,* 215-265. There is also a German translation of the letter, Hannelore Schönig, *Das Sendschreiben des ʿAbdalḥamīd b. Yaḥyā (gest. 132/750) an den Kronprinzen ʿAbdallāh b. Marwān II* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1985).

643 ʿAbbās, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd,* 215-216.

644 J.D. Latham, "The Beginnings of Arabic Prose Literature: The Epistolary Genre," in *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period,* ed. Alfred Beetson, T.M. Johnstone, et. al., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 167. Al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Qays was a Khārijite leader who rose to power during the civil war between Marwān II and Ibrāhīm b. al-Wālīd I and ultimately seized control of Kūfa and later Mosul. Even though Marwān II's letter to his son directs him to march against al-Ḍaḥḥāk, it was ultimately Marwān II who defeated al-Ḍaḥḥāk at the battle of al-Ghazz in 746; Laura Vaglieri, "al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Ḳays al-Shaybānī," in *EI2.*

referencing the pre-Islamic period of ignorance (*jāhilīya*).[645] ʻUbaydallāh, in contrast, has been chosen by God as the heir apparent.[646] As heir apparent, his speech should register authority with his audience. This is important because Marwān II, through ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd, is making a distinction between the "Bedouin Arabian" (*aʻrābī*) identity versus Arabic culture manifested in ʻ*adab,* which is intimately connected with the Qur'ān and the religion of Islam, at least in the context of this letter. Al-Ḍaḥḥāk and his followers, labeled a mob (*raʻāʻ*) in the letter, are the ones who immorally cause havoc to the country, contempt violate the sacredness of Islam, out of disbelief desire to change the excellence of God (*niʻam Allāh),* and ignorantly delight in the shedding the blood of the people of their own religion.[647] ʻUbaydallāh, rather than mindlessly wandering in ignorance as al-Daḥḥāk, is instructed to read sections of the Qur'ān—not only for moral guidance, but for ʻUbaydallāh to be able to "adorn your speech (*lafẓaka)* through its recitation."[648]

ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd's "Letter to the Secretary" reflects this prioritization in his delineation of the educational hierarchy: the secretaries should start with study of the Qu'rān and one's religious obligations.[649] I argue, however, that the study of the Qur'ān should not be understood as part of the scribal curriculum alone but alludes to a broader conception of elite culture and expectations. Al-Qāḍī, in her study on the use of the Qur'ān in the writings of ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd,

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[645] Like other terms, concepts, and even identities, *jāhiliyya*'s definition and meaning was discursive; as such its meaning was subject to back projections of later conceptions and "semantic shifts;" see, Peter Webb, "*Al-Jāhiliyya*: Uncertain Times of Uncertain Meanings," *Der Islam* 91, no. 1 (2014): 69-94 and "Cry me a *Jāhiliyya*: Muslim Reconstructions of Pre-Islamic Arabian Culture—A Case Study," in *Islam at 250: Studies in Memory of G.H.A Juynboll,* eds. Petra Sijpesteijn and Camilla Adang (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 235-280. Nevertheless, it is clear in the case that the Marwān II is clearly identifying al-Ḍaḥḥāk as willfully ignorant of God's precepts.

[646] ʻAbbās, *ʻAbd al-Ḥamīd,* 216.

[647] *Ibid*., 216.

[648] *Ibid.,* 219.

[649] *Ibid*., 283.

stressed the literary value, not just the moral benefit, of the Qur'ān for 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, the crown prince, as well as all Muslims.[650] For al-Qāḍī, the literary value was particularly important for 'Abd al-Ḥamīd and his fellow scribes. In her own words, "If we consider the superior position which 'Abd al-Ḥamīd assigns to the secretaries vis-à-vis their masters in his 'Letter to the Secretaries', we must assume that what he considers 'useful' of the crown prince with regard to the Qur'an he must consider 'necessary' for the secretary. And with that we come to a clear understanding of what 'Abd al-Ḥamīd has asked the secretaries to master of the Qur'an: not merely its contents (for this is, after all, what all Muslims should know), but above all its literary formulations."[651] The connection between advice to a member of the Umayyad elite outside the secretarial profession sheds light on the value of this form of cultural capital in the late Umayyad period.

Administrative Culture in Action[652]

As pointed out by al-Qāḍī, the use of Qur'ānic phrases, allusions, and even syntaxial structures featured prominently in 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's public letters, especially those aimed at quelling rebellious movements.[653] These letters were written during a period in which Umayyad authority was being challenged and 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's epistles were read out loud in order to encourage support for and loyalty to the Umayyads (or at least their particular branch of the Umayyads). The allusion is explicit in a letter celebrating a military victory in which we read "He (Allāh) chose for the inheritance of his prophethood (*li-mawārīthi nubuwwatihī*) what he

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[650] Al-Qāḍī, "The Qur'an and the Epistolography of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd," 344.

[651] *Ibid*., 344-345.

[652] "Culture in Action" is the title of Ann Swidler's influential article on how culture informs one's "tool kit" of skills and styles employed in response to a particular situation—and not a determinative predictor of action, "Culture in Acton: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 2 (1986): 273-286.

[653] Al-Qāḍī, "The Impact of the Qur'an on the Epistolography of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd," 372-375.

gave to the Commander of the Faithful."[654] This echoes the use of the Qur'ān in 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's letters celebrating the caliph's performance of religious duties, most notably the *hajj* and Ramadan.[655] Therefore, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's articulation of the education, cultural values, and characteristics of the scribe can be understood as those representing the ideal characteristics of elites, of whom 'Abd al-Ḥamīd goes to pain to stress that secretaries are members. This, as a result, allows us to read the letter as about society and culture in the late Umayyad period beyond administrative history.

One would not invoke this language unless it held a certain amount of value amongst the audience. The letters were not instances of cultural hegemony imposed on the audience to legitimize their privileged positions in society; they were in fact the opposite, almost pleas for loyalty in the face of growing opposition. I argued that the changing values and tastes of elites across society was one of the major driving factors behind the changes in linguistic preferences across bureaucracy, more so than an ideologically and ethnically motivated campaign instigated by a particular caliph or governor. As the culture of the elites continued to change (or to become institutionalized in Bourdieu's terms), the positions that elites staffed within the bureaucracy reflected these cultural changes. When we consider scribal culture "in action," such as in public letters, we can likewise better appreciate how members beyond the political and administrative elite contributed to attaching cultural value to Arabic linguistic proficiency and Qur'ānic allusions and syntactical styles.

Conclusion

[654] 'Abbas, *'Abd al-Ḥamīd*, 272; al-Qāḍī, "The Religious Foundation," 245.

[655] *Ibid*., 283; letter 11 which proclaims the caliph's performance of the pilgrimage and letter 12 which discusses the ritual of Ramadan, 'Abbas, *'Abd al-Ḥamīd* 205-206.

The chapter opened by proposing that administrators should be understood as aristocrats who were connected to various economic and political structures. I argued that bureaucrats were influential members of society whose politics and administrative philosophy could be at odds with the caliphate. Next, by examining administrators' relationship with the economic and civic investments of caliphs, the chapter highlighted the blurred nature of personal and public interests and provided further evidence for the intimate connection between Umayyad administration and economic interests. Members of the Umayyad Caliphate patronized civic and monumental projects that benefited themselves in the process.

The chapter ended by reconsidering the privileged status of Arabic and Arabic-Islamic culture in the administration since I have argued that administrative appointments (and reforms) were predominately economically and socially motivated. I emphasized the methods 'Abd al-Ḥamīd employed to articulate a place for scribes as members of the elite in order to argue that changes in the cultural preferences of elites was the result of broader changes in society and not the consequence of the policy of a particular caliph or governor. This, in my opinion, ends on a more encouraging note because it demonstrates that Umayyad era elites were attempting to appropriate broader values in society rather than dictate them. Thus, while the dissertation has provided a rather cynical appreciation of the relationship between state building and the interests of elites, it ends by emphasizing the cultural influence of those unrecoverable voices who heard 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's public letters and whose values and tastes 'Abd al-Ḥamīd attempted to mobilize.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is worth returning to our fable of the sapient ass with which I introduced Chapter 2. The fable, in its original intention as well as its interpretation by de St. Croix, was about how regime change meant little more for the poor than a change in the "name of their masters."[656] The fable, and its underlying message, has been a driving current throughout my research as I contemplated how the emergence of the first Islamic empire impacted society. The project emphasized the importance of recognizing administrators as members of the elite, members of a privileged group in society that had access to resources and opportunities that were not universally accessible. On the surface, the continued employment of economically and politically powerful individuals, many of whom came from even economically and politically powerful pre-Islamic families, suggests a degree of validity to Phaedrus' adage that for the poor "nothing changes but the name of their masters."

At the same time, by recognizing administrators as members of the elite, the project also demonstrated the range of individuals who participated in early Islamic state building. By foregrounding socioeconomic backgrounds, we can recognize *mawālī* and non-Muslim administrators as fellow members of the emerging Islamic elite. This provides an interesting context for exploring how members of pre-Islamic Mediterranean and Middle East responded to the emergence of a new faith and empire by participating in its formation, structure, and

[656] *Babrius and Phaedrus*, 211; de Ste Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World,* 444.

investments. This observation fits well with recent trends in scholarship, notably by Legendre and Palombo, which has drawn attention to how members of various religious communities participated in and helped shape Islamic administration.[657] It is thus worth concluding by considering how this dissertation contributes to discussion about Islamic administration, society, and culture.

First, the project demonstrated the value of social and economic capital in late antiquity. Many early members of the administration had pre-Islamic connections to wealth and power, resources that they continued to be able to leverage during the Umayyad Caliphate. Social networks remained an important commodity for access to the administration and influence of its distribution. In many respects, social capital may have been the most valuable form of capital for employment in the administration and possibly why ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's emphasized the scribe's proximity to power. The social networks may have changed over the course of the Umayyad Caliphate, but the commodity itself and one's ability to leverage social capital remained an important form of capital in society. As a result, I argue that access or restriction to resources was heavily influenced by who you knew—not necessarily to whom you prayed.

Furthermore, I argued that changes in the cultural or linguistical preferences of the administration was an organic process. A particular bureaucratic reform to change the administrative language or religion of administrators did not, I have argued, initiate a set of historical events that predicated Islamic-Arabic culture becoming a valued commodity in late Umayyad society and culture. This argument paints the rather cynical portrait of Umayyad administration (i.e. that it was staffed by and largely for elites) in a new light, one that recognizes

[657] Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic?," and Palombo, "The Christian Clergy's Islamic Local Government"

that the cultural preferences of administrative elites were the consequences of changing attitudes in society not the outcome of the policy of a handful of influential individuals. This, much like my interpretation of Umayyad state building, again emphasizes the range of actors who participated in creating an Islamic late antique society—an observation that should not go underappreciated for a period that is often defined by the careers of individual caliphs and governors.

Second, if the dissertation contributes anything, it is my hope that it is urges us to consider economic and social backgrounds more fully as factors when we discuss early Islamic society. The dissertation demonstrated the shortcomings of several historiographical models and analytical categories popular for the period. This approach, admittedly, did not mean I necessarily better incorporated subaltern voices or those excluded from dialogues about early Islamic society. If anything, after this project, I am even more cynical about the relationship between elites, the state, and everyone else. Nevertheless, on a methodological level, I hope to have demonstrated the need—and utility—for paradigms that transcend ethnicity, tribe, and religion. I am sure that many will not agree with the social space/forms of capital framework or with my conclusions. However, I am more than willing to (attempt to) mimic the early accomplishment of Patricia Crone, whose earliest work, while controversial, has been appreciated for its ability to identify a historiographical problem while not necessarily providing the ideal solution to overcome said problem. That is not to say that I anticipate this project to have the impact anywhere near that of Crone's and Cook's *Hagarism*;[658] but it nevertheless identifies an important shortcoming in early Islamic historiography and the need to continue to

[658] Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

push the field forward through the further utilization of contemporary sources (papyri, numismatics, and archeology) in conjunction with a willingness to look beyond field specific analytical categories.

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