

# The Administration under the Umayyads: An Analysis

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## Abstract

The period of Umayyads started after the completion of the period of pious Caliphs in 661 A.D. Hazrat Amir Muawivah was the founder of Umayyad's rule. The Umayyad dynasty lasted for 90 years. This article discusses the administration of Umayyads in detail. It presents an overall analysis of merits and demerits of the Umayyad's reign. Secondary sources have been used for this research while historical comparative analysis method has been adopted to analyze the Muslim rule under the Umayyads. The article finds that despite modification introduced by the Umayyads in the very nature of the Caliphate system they inherited, the Muslim empire expanded to Europe, Asia and Africa. The article also finds that the Umayyads introduced the administrative measures which were unknown to the western civilization and concludes that contribution of the Umayyads in terms of formulating administrative organs is significant.

**Keywords:** Umayyads, the Caliphate, Shura, Civilization, Muslim Rule

## Introduction:

The Umayyad regime is considered to be the inception of a new era. It was the innovation of a new political and administrative order that was quite different from that of the pious caliphate. Actually the great diversion from the right path started soon after the change of capital to Damascus.<sup>1</sup> With the environmental change the Umayyad adopted several un-Islamic customs and rules of etiquette which were previously in vogue among the Persian and Byzantine kings. At the same time, the de facto caliphate of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was changed into a worldly empire with unlimited powers over its subjects. In the words of Husaini, the Umayyads deliberately converted the great successorship of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) into a form of government which was closer to monarchy. According to him, Hazrat Amir Muawiyah (661 to 680 A.D) became the first ruler over the Arabs.<sup>2</sup> While S.M. Imamuddin notes that with all its worldly characteristics, the whole Umayyad reign is called the kingship (Mulk) with the exception of the rule of Ūmār bin Ābdul Aziz (717-720 A.D). Most of the innovations were carried by Muawiyah personally. For example, he erected a throne for himself and sat on it like a monarch.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, a veritable royal court had already arranged for him at Damascus.<sup>4</sup> The appointment of *Hajib* at the entrance of the court was another step that was quite contrary to the spirit of *Shariah*. He was in charge of the public audience and arranged the visitors in accordance with their status. These arrangements were adopted to have a check and monitor the visitors. Its main purpose

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<sup>1</sup>Syed Ameer Ali, *A Short History of the Saracens*, (Karachi: National Book Foundation, 1975), 198.

<sup>2</sup>S.A.Q. Husaini, *Arab Administration*, (Delhi: Idarah-i-Adabiyat-i-Delli, 1949), 81.

<sup>3</sup>Amir Hasan Siddiqi, *Caliphate and Sultanate*, (Karachi: Jamiyat-ul- Falah, 1963), 16.

<sup>4</sup>Husaini, op. cit., 82.

was to protect the caliph from the mischievous designs of the *Kharjites*. Hajib presented the visitor's bio-data to the caliph. After being accorded permission by the Caliph, they were granted interview one by one. Under the early Umayyads no one was reproved or driven out except the persona non grata.

Amir Muawiyah instituted a guard (al-haras), and even in the mosque he constructed a strong room (hujrah) to protect himself from the assassins.<sup>5</sup> According to Von-kremer, Walid II (743-744 A.D) was the first Umayyad Caliph who borrowed the harem system from the Byzantines. He also employed eunuchs for secret service and to guard the honour of royal ladies. These eunuchs ever played a conspicuous role in the oriental court.<sup>6</sup> The basic change that was innovated by the Umayyads was the principle of hereditary *Khilafat*.<sup>7</sup> They changed the institution of caliphate into a hereditary kingdom.<sup>8</sup> In the matter of succession, Muawiyah followed the policy of Persian and Byzantine kings by nominating his son Yazid as his heir-apparent.<sup>9</sup> However, Ali Ibrahim justifies Muawiyah's step that he decided to nominate his successors during his life time to avoid dispersion.<sup>10</sup> Till Sufyandis, a single successor was nominated, but the Marwanids nominated two successors. This practice gave rise to a new kind of evil. Many elder members of the senior branch were ignored and therefore, in the long run, it created rivalries among the ruling family and resulted in chaos.

The principle of hereditary succession adopted by Muawiyah was alien to Arabs to be readily accepted. In the first instance the decision was taken by the caliph and the Shura of Damascus. Then it was confirmed by holding consultation with the tribes through delegates, and then it was promulgated. The opposition was, however, overcome less by force than by persuasion and monetary help.<sup>11</sup> With all their shortcomings the earlier Umayyad rulers behaved like great Arab chiefs. They even managed to retain the elective character of the caliphate through the institution of *baiyaat*. In the first instance, the grandees and generals took the oath of allegiance in the royal presence. In the provinces the oath was taken by the governor on behalf of the presumptive caliph. In this way the whole Muslim community gave its consent directly or indirectly. The document of succession had its own importance. It was kept in the treasury, Kabah or with a trustee.<sup>12</sup>

The Umayyads also changed the elective and representative character of the institution of Shura.<sup>13</sup> The council was now comprised of the members of the caliph's family, the important officials and courtiers which did not reflect its representative nature. However, Úmār bin Ábdul Aziz endeavored to establish a regular council

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 198.

<sup>7</sup> S.M. Imamuddin, Arab Muslim Administration, (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, paperback edition, 1984), 44.

<sup>8</sup> A.S. Tritton, Islam: Belief and Practices, (Oxon: Routledge Library Edition, 2008), 109.

<sup>9</sup> Syed Ameer Ali, op. cit., 185.

<sup>10</sup> Ali Ibrahim Hassan, An Nazam ul Islamia (Delhi: urdu translation by Malwi Aleem ullah Siddiqi, 1947), 550.

<sup>11</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History*, (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1958), 66.

<sup>12</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 80.

<sup>13</sup> Husaini, op. cit. 80.

representing the people of reliable veracity of the Muslim community at the time of his accession. He constituted the Shura during the period of his governorship of Hijaz. As a Caliph, he consulted a council of advisers to discuss and decide important issues. Dr. Siddiqui explains that in a true sense, Úmār bin Ábdul Aziz too could not realize this objective as he could neither bring together all the Ulema from the various territories to Damascus nor could he shift his capital from Damascus to Madina. After the demise of Úmār bin Ábdul Aziz, no effort was made by any Umayyad caliph to retain the advisory council purely on basis of merit. Under the later Umayyads, the central council again became a royal council consisting of members of the royal family and the staunch supporters of the Umayyad caliph.<sup>14</sup> The institution of *Shura* was there but the spirit had disappeared.<sup>15</sup>

The Umayyads also altered the institution of pensions which was established by Hazrat Úmār. There was a pay office called *Dīwān* to support the Arab warriors. Amir Muawiyah reduced its size and deleted the names of many registered persons especially names of those persons, who were not loyal to the caliph, were struck down. While the names of his choice were inserted in the pension register although they had never contributed to defense of the state.<sup>16</sup> Loyalty and relationship with the ruling family was, therefore, the basic qualification for receiving annuities and other benefits. However, Hisham (724-743 A.D) scoffed the abuse of granting pensions as a benefice (living). He codified that no one could claim it, not even an Umayyad prince, who had not either joined war service himself or sent a substitute.<sup>17</sup> The social, economic and political conditions of the *Mawali* (new foreign converts of Islam) were badly affected.<sup>18</sup> Their mass settlements were in garrisons.<sup>19</sup> They constituted a discontented urban population, whose main grievance was economic. Despite being Muslims they were required to pay *Jizyah* and *Kharaj*.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, thousands of them had to fight in the ranks of the Muslim army without receiving any pension.<sup>21</sup> Úmār bin Ábdul Aziz cancelled this unjust practice. He forbade the payment of *Jizyah* by the *Mawalis* and granted them similar rights and privileges which were being enjoyed by other Muslims.<sup>22</sup> However, this generous policy did not last long.<sup>23</sup> Consequently, such oppressive policy against the *Mawalis* brought explosive results. The *Ajamis* or *Mawalis*, therefore, actively joined the secretive movements that were being launched against the Arab domination. Finally the Abbasids succeeded in achieving their full support in establishing their domination.<sup>24</sup> With all their vices and drawbacks, the Umayyads remained associated with some sacred duties attached to institution of the caliphate. For example, Muawiyah constantly continued his campaign against the Byzantines which enabled him to pose as the champion of Islam and leader in the holy wars (*Jihād*) that enabled him to receive the

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<sup>14</sup> Amir Hasan Siddiqui, *Caliphate and Sultanate*, (Karachi: Jamiyat-ul- Falah, 1963), 15.

<sup>15</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 46.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 83.

<sup>18</sup> Siddiqui, op. cit., 17.

<sup>19</sup> Lewis op. cit., 70.

<sup>20</sup> Siddiqui, op. cit., 18.

<sup>21</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 71.

<sup>22</sup> Siddiqui, op. cit., 18.

<sup>23</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 71.

<sup>24</sup> Khawaja, Ibdullah, *Khilafat-e-Islamia*, (Lahore, 1951), 14-15.

religious loyalty of most of the Arabs.<sup>25</sup> By virtue of jihād Muawiyah's reign witnessed the conquest of North Africa, Khorasan, Bukhara and Turkestan.<sup>26</sup> Walid (705-715 A.D) also continued jihād. His main interest was the resumption of conquest and expansion.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, Friday *Khutbah* (sermon) and presiding over the daily prayers was considered obligatory for the caliph. This duty was trustworthily observed by Muawiyah, Abdul Malik and Ūmār bin Ābdul Aziz. In addition to these religious duties, the caliph functioned as a High court of appeal and received in his audience the grandees of the state and the envoys of neighbouring countries. The reception were either public (*aam*), or private (*khas*).<sup>28</sup> In short, the Umayyads started to act as authoritarian rules like Byzantine kings.<sup>29</sup> Lewis is of the view that the sovereignty exercised by Muawiyah was neither religious nor monarchic, rather it was the extension of the pre-Islamic rule of the Byzantine rulers with Arab characteristic.<sup>30</sup> The system, therefore, combined the vices of authoritarianism and despotism without the advantages of either.<sup>31</sup>

Soon after the establishment of the Umayyads caliphate (Arab Empire), the process of centralization was considered necessary for its existence. In this regard, certain steps were taken by the new regime. The first one was the transfer of the capital to Syria which remained the metropolitan province of the empire throughout the Umayyad regime. The founder of the dynasty, Amir Muawiyah established himself in Damascus where his central position and the old cultural and administrative traditions of the city interrelated to the formulation of a government able to control the remote provinces.<sup>32</sup> According to Shaukat Ali, the administration under the Umayyads was excessively centralized and paternalistic, but it was efficient. It inducted the Arabs into the complexities of centralized administration, and trained them for shouldering political and administrative responsibilities in various parts of the world. Moreover, these officers were considered to be the servants of the rulers and not the employees of the state. They had very little discretionary powers and for each act of omission or commission they were personally accountable to the ruler whose authority in all matters was indisputable.<sup>33</sup> For stopping centrifugal tendencies bureaucratic decisions were also centralized. The Umayyads adopted the Byzantine model of administration and decided to retain its administrative structure and gave state-functionaries the choice to settle in areas which were still under Roman rule or accept jobs under the Muslims. Many of them decided to stay under the Arab rule and obtained position of respect and distinction in the Umayyad hierarchy.<sup>34</sup> According to Lewis, the early Umayyads also employed Christians.<sup>35</sup> Yazid, son of Muawiyah followed his father's policy and appointed some

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<sup>25</sup> Lewis, op. cit., 65.

<sup>26</sup> Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, (London: Macmillan, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 1949), 184.

<sup>27</sup> Lewis, op. cit., 76.

<sup>28</sup> Ameer Ali, op. cit., 195-196

<sup>29</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 40.

<sup>30</sup> Ameer Ali, op. cit., 185.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Lewis, op. cit., 65.

<sup>33</sup> Shaukat Ali, *Administrative Ethics in A Muslim State*, (Lahore: Publishers United, 1975), 17.

<sup>34</sup> Hamilton A.R. Gibb, *Studies on the Civilization of Islam*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1962), 15.

<sup>35</sup> Lewis, op. cit., p.66.

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Christians on important posts.<sup>36</sup> Lewis adds that Muawiyah and his successors emphasized upon political and economic aspects of government while the religious factor was relegated to a secondary place.<sup>37</sup> The Umayyads, according to Imamuddin, deliberately tried to divert Ummah's attention from Makkah to Jerusalem. For that purpose Abdul Malik constructed the Qubbat-al-sakhah (dome of the Rock)<sup>38</sup> at the second place from where the Holy prophet had ascended the heaven. Muawiyah established an Arab monarchy on the basis of dominant Arab ethnicity so that newly emerged caliphate could be made as cohesive one. The Umayyads created an Arab state but for administrative purposes it borrowed Persian and Byzantine characteristics and institutions.<sup>39</sup> During the reign of Abdul Malik, a process known to the Arab historians as "organization and adjustment" was initiated. In fact, it was considered as inevitable to centralize the authority based on military power of the Syrian Army. Abdul Malik can be credited to replace the old Byzantine and Persian administrative system by a new imperial system with Arabic as official language of administration and accountancy. It indicated a clear change in administrative tendencies along with centralization of monarchy by Arab traditions. Abdul Malik initiated a forward step towards fiscal rationalization that crystalized into a new and specified Islamic system of taxation.<sup>40</sup> Walid I (705-715) also patronized the same policy. According to Shaukat Ali, during the period of Abdul Malik, racial and religious frictions started simmering in the administration. And, the caliph found it necessary to nationalize the whole Islamic realm. But main challenge was that, the Muslims were not yet trained sufficiently to replace the Christians in offices.<sup>41</sup> Consequently, nationalization of the state began with the changing of the official language from Greek to Arabic in the northern region, Pahlavi to Arabic in the eastern provinces, while Greek and Latin to Arabic in the western area under Abdul Malik and al-Walid.<sup>42</sup> According to Syed Ameer Ali, before Abdul Malik the state accounts were kept either in Persian, Greek or Syric, which encouraged alteration<sup>43</sup> of accounts. Now, the public registers were ordered to be maintained in Arabic. Resultantly, the whole record of governmental departments was translated into Arabic; which became the medium of administration across the Muslim empire.<sup>44</sup> Consequently, it brought additional benefits. Now, it became possible for the Arab administration to monitor the corrupt non-Muslim officials who previously were enjoying full opportunities of corruption and forgery. On the other side, being an official language, Arabic was enriched by absorbing Persian and Roman terminology.<sup>45</sup> Above all Arabic language became the medium of instruction across the Muslim Empire. Another impact of the language reforms was that the understanding of the Qur'an spread among the foreigners. According to Siddiqi, with the use of the vowels and the diacritical marks, the Qur'an became understandable to a large number of foreigners who learned Arabic.<sup>46</sup> In other

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<sup>36</sup> Hitti, op. cit., 196.

<sup>37</sup> Lewis, op. cit., 65.

<sup>38</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 45.

<sup>39</sup> Lewis, op. cit., 64.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 75.

<sup>41</sup> Shaukat Ali, op. cit., 16.

<sup>42</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 57.

<sup>43</sup> Syed Ameer Ali, op. cit., 190.

<sup>44</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 93.

<sup>45</sup> Ali Ibrahim, op. cit., 218.

<sup>46</sup> Siddiqi, op. cit., 106.

words, it became easy to convey the message of Islam in its own text i.e. the Holy Qur'ān and the Sunnah. So, the linguistic policy also benefitted the spreading of Islam. In spite of this change, the Persians, the Greeks and the Copts were not completely excluded from the administrative departments.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, certain non-Arab officials who by this time had mastered the Arabic language were retained.<sup>48</sup> Another process for nationalization of the whole Empire undertaken by Abdul Malik, was the adoption of Arab currency. The survival of a number of coins from the early caliphate confirms the evidence that the mints taken over from the Persian and Byzantine administration continued to produce gold and silver coins in adequate quantities and these were allowed to remain in circulation. Baladhuri confirms that the imported Roman's dinars also remained in use till the reign of Abdul Malik.<sup>49</sup> In the reign of Abdul Malik the first Arabic gold dinars and silver dirhams were struck at Damascus in 695 AD. His viceroy Hajjaj struck Arabic silver dirham in Kufah Arabic silver dirham in 696 AD.<sup>50</sup> This attempt succeeded in introducing uniformity of weight, size and artistic beauty. The ratio between the dinar and the dirham in weight was 10:1. Islamic currency under Abdul Malik was more valuable because he added two percent more gold in his dinars to make them attractive to the Romans and others.<sup>51</sup> The Umayyads established powerful central agencies.<sup>52</sup> The founder of the dynasty, Amir Muawiyah was endowed with immense administrative capabilities. His focus was on the creation of a powerful central machinery which could effectively and efficiently administer with the governmental affairs. Abdul Malik was the ablest caliph who bequeathed to his successors a peaceful and powerful central administrative system. It was enriched by great efforts undertaken in public works and their reconstruction.<sup>53</sup> According to Ameer Ali, the whole administrative machinery under the Umayyads was of a primitive character. The practical work of administration was conducted by five principal departments<sup>54</sup> as underlined below.

#### **I) Dīwānial-Rasail (The Board of Correspondence):**

Imamudin describes it as the chief secretariat of the Umayyads. This board dealt with all correspondence, issuance of circulars and pamphlets. It also coordinated the work of all other boards.<sup>55</sup> It issued state missives and circulars to the central and provincial officers.<sup>56</sup>

#### **II) Dīwān' Al-Khatam (Board of The Signet):**

Muawiyah established a chancery board. Every order issued from the caliph's office was registered by this board; and then the original was properly sealed and dispatched. Before dispatching any orders, its office copies were kept. The provincial

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<sup>47</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 93.

<sup>48</sup> Hitti, op. cit., 212.

<sup>49</sup> Siddiqi, op. cit., 105.

<sup>50</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 57.

<sup>51</sup> Siddiqi, op. cit., 106.

<sup>52</sup> Shaukat Ali, op. cit., 16.

<sup>53</sup> Lewis, op. cit., 76.

<sup>54</sup> Ameer Ali, op. cit., 190.

<sup>55</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 54.

<sup>56</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 56.

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governors also adopted the same system.<sup>57</sup> Thus, the Umayyads developed a state archive in Damascus.<sup>58</sup>

### III) *Dīwān'al – Baried (Postal Service):*

Muawiyah was the first Muslim caliph who established the postal system.<sup>59</sup> Abdul Malik developed it and extended it across his empire.<sup>60</sup> Walid made full use of the postal department. While Ūmār bin Ābdul Aziz expanded it further by building Caravanserais at specific along the Khorasan highway.<sup>61</sup> In Arabia and Syria camels were used for postal service. Thus, by a system of relay, the state carried from one part of the empire to another. Under Abdul Malik a regular postal service was started by using relay horses for the conveyance of travelers and dispatches between Damascus and the provincial capitals. The service was designed primarily to meet the needs of government officials in their correspondence with other agencies. The state officials also used the service for swift communication.<sup>62</sup> The Sahib ul Barid (postmasters) were also assigned with the task of keeping the Caliph well informed about the important happenings in their respective territories.<sup>63</sup>

### IV) *Dīwān'al Khirāj:*

It was the central finance board that administered the entire finance of the state.<sup>64</sup> Lewis notes that the economic administration under the Umayyads was not purely monetary.<sup>65</sup> Abdul Malik, with the help of his advisors, introduced the process of fiscal rationalization. Finally his successors crystallized it into a new system of taxation.<sup>66</sup> The sources of income under the Umayyads were as follows:-

- i. Al-zakāt.
- ii. Al-ushar on land (one of the items of al-zakat).
- iii. Al Jizyah
- iv. Al Kharaj
- v. Al ushr on merchandise.
- vi. Al Fay.
- vii. Al Khums, fifth of the booty of the products of mines and of treasure troves.
- viii. Tribute under treaties.
- ix. Additional imports in kind.
- x. Presents on occasion of festivals.
- xi. Child tribute from the Berbers.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Husaini, op.cit., 84.

<sup>58</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 58.

<sup>59</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 85.

<sup>60</sup> Hitti, op. cit., 216.

<sup>61</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 60.

<sup>62</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 85.

<sup>63</sup> Hitti, op. cit., 218.

<sup>64</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 83.

<sup>65</sup> Lewis, op. cit., 70.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 76.

<sup>67</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 111.

The collection of revenue was entrusted to Amils, who also exercised the executive duties. Taxes were not levied according to one standard, but it varied in every province according to the conditions imposed, or privileges granted from time to time by the government. The revenue collected from each province was initially deposited into the respective provincial treasuries. After defraying all the expenditure of provincial administration, the balance was remitted to the imperial treasury at Damascus.<sup>68</sup> The procedure of payment and collection was both in kind and in cash.<sup>69</sup> Under the Umayyads, the revenue declined, because they violated Hazrat Ūmār's rule, by allowing the Muslims to purchase land in the conquered territories. Consequently, the born Arab conquerors including the members of the royal family acquired large estates. It resulted in revenue deficit because of the conversion of Kharaji land into Ushasi lands. The *Mawalis* (new converts) were also tamed under the Umayyad to pay *Jizya*. During the period of Marwan II (745-750), Nasar bin Sayyar, the governor of Khorasan, however, exempted the Mawalis from this payment. The same principle was adopted in other parts of the empire sooner or later. If this had been done earlier, many of the difficulties and injustices would have been avoided.<sup>70</sup>

#### V) **Dīwān'al Jund:**

According to Husaini, it was the same great Dīwān established by Hazrat Ūmār. Its function was to assign annuities to all Muslim soldiers. But, the Umayyads changed its nature. Now, the recipients began to regard the pension as a subsistence allowance rather than the salary given for military service. Hisham and Ūmār bin Ābdul Aziz tried their best to restore it in its original shape.<sup>71</sup> According to Hitti, as a military organizer Amir Muahwiyah was second to none of his contemporaries. He constituted his Syrian army into an ordered and disciplined force known in Islamic warfare.<sup>72</sup> The army was controlled by the commander in chief who was appointed by the caliph himself and came next to the caliph. The Umayyads established military stations and garrisons at strategic places. The most important of them were al-Kufah, al-Basrah, al-Fustat, Qarwan, al-

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<sup>68</sup> Ameer Ali, op. cit., 186.

<sup>69</sup> Lewis, op. cit., 70.

<sup>70</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 117.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 83.

<sup>72</sup> Hitti, op. cit., 194.



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Madina, al-Ahavaz, al Mansurah, al-Mahfuzah.<sup>73</sup> He also realized the importance of naval force.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, a powerful fleet of warships was created to meet the requirements of military strategy. The early Umayyads had about 40,000 armed persons and volunteers under their command. On the whole, there was vivid concept of Arab national army because military service was restricted for non- Arabs.<sup>75</sup>

#### **VI) Dīwān-Al Quḍāt (Judiciary):**

It seems that under the Umayyads the department of judiciary was transferred from center to provinces because the judges were now appointed and dismissed by the governors. However, the judges were continued to be appointed from amongst the theologians. These qazis were also required to administer *awqaf* (endowments) and estates of the orphans and the insane. The non-Muslims personal cases were decided by their own judges and Muslim law was not applicable to them in ordinary cases. However, in cases of extortion or complaints against the governments officials, the caliph Abdul-Malik took initiative and he reserved a day for hearing such appeals and complaints. Úmār bin Ábdul Aziz followed him rigidly. This practice was followed by the Abbasids also.

#### **VII) Police and Municipal Administration:**

The Sahib al-Ahdath or Shurtah was the police as well as municipal head of the city with its headquarters at Damascus. He was not only concerned with the secular side of law but also with the religious and moral side of it.<sup>76</sup>

#### **VIII) Wazarat (Ministry):**

For enforcing their administrative and political policies, the Umayyads felt the necessity of a minister. Therefore, they selected intelligent persons for these assignments whose authority and powers were not less than ministers but they were not given the titles of ministers. Among them, Ziyad bin Abihi was an exception who was regarded as the *Wazir* (prime minister) of Amir Muawiyah.

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<sup>73</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 132.

<sup>74</sup> Khawaja Ibadullah, op. cit., 129.

<sup>75</sup> Ali Ibrahim, op. cit., 320.

<sup>76</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 59.

**IX) Katib (Secretary):**

With the passage of time, the duties of minister were extended to their utmost extent, and it was very difficult for a minister to fulfill his responsibilities single handedly. Therefore, a *katib* was appointed to share the work of wazarat (ministry). The first *Katib* was appointed in foreign office. Later, with the expansion of the secretariat, five additional Katibs were posted.<sup>77</sup>

**The Provincial Administration:**

Under the Umayyads, the whole Muslim empire was divided into five main viceroyalties.

- i. Hijaz and Yemen
- ii. Egypt
- iii. Iraq including Oman, Kabul, Khorasan, Sind and portion of the Punjab.
- iv. Mesopotamia.
- v. Africa including Spain, France and Sicily.<sup>78</sup>

At the end of the Umayyad period, the number of provinces (*al-iqlim*) were increased to 14 but having unequal size.<sup>79</sup> Each province was further divided into several large districts (*al-kurah*).<sup>80</sup>

**The Provincial Dīwāns:**

There were only three regular boards in the provinces.

- i. Dīwān' al-Jund (the military board).
- ii. Dīwān' al-Rasail (The board of correspondence)
- iii. Dīwān' al-Mustaghillat (The Finance).

**The Provincial officers:**

Under the Umayyads, the provincial officials were almost the same as they were under the pious caliphate.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Ibrahim Hassan, op. cit., 178.

<sup>78</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., 62.

<sup>79</sup> Husaini, op. cit., 102.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 105.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

**1. The Amir or Wali (Governor):**

The provincial secretariat had to function with its various departments under Amir or Wali. He acted as representative of the Caliph in the province and was in charge of civil and military administration.<sup>82</sup> Under the later Umayyad, princes of the ruling family were appointed governors. Most of them proved incompetent administrators. Some of them preferred to remain at the court appointing substitutes (an-naib) to administer their provinces for them, while their main concern was to enjoy fringe benefits attached to the office of the Wali.<sup>83</sup> According to Ameer Ali, before the accession of Yazid II (720-724 A.D), the provincial appointments were made chiefly for political or administrative reasons. Under Yazid II, the influence of favorites became the guiding principle for public posts. Hitherto, the governors of distant provinces were required to reside within their jurisdiction. Now, it was common practice of the members of the ruling family and even notables at court who obtained these appointments but preferred to reside at the capital, leaving the administration to a deputy, whose sole objective was to enrich his principal and himself with the income of the provinces.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, in key provinces, governors were authorized to appoint their subordinate as administrators. Officials like Katibs and Sahib al – Ahdad were appointed by the governors themselves.<sup>85</sup>

**2. The Āmil:**

The Āmil was in charge of the province. In case where the interest of the treasury was concerned, his opinion might even overrule that of the Amir or Wali.<sup>86</sup> Āmils were appointed in all major towns of the provinces.

**3. Sahib Al – Kharaj:**

The revenue department was administered by a special officer, called as Sahib'al Kharaj. According to Husaini, he was the in charge of the collection of land-tax.<sup>87</sup> He was independent of the viceroy and was responsible to the caliph directly.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Imamuddin, op. cit., p.63.

<sup>83</sup> Husaini, op. cit., p.105.

<sup>84</sup> Syed Ameer Ali, op. cit., p.190.

<sup>85</sup> Imamudin, op. cit., p.63.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, p.64.

<sup>87</sup> Husaini, op. cit., p.46.

<sup>88</sup> Imamudin, op. cit., p.63.

**4. The Kātib:**

He was the chief of the Dīwān and thus relieving the wali of a great amount of work.

**5. Sahib Al-Ahdāth:**

He was the chief police officer of the province and of the provincial towns. His duties were half military and half police. He was the officer responsible for the prevention of rebellion and daily life crimes such as theft. He had not only to purge crimes but also to be watchful and remove the causes thereof.

**6. The Qāzī:**

The position and the capabilities of the qazis under the Umayyads were not as good as they were during the era of the pious caliphs. As the law was not yet codified, there was lack of uniformity in its administration. Thus, a good deal depended on the discretion of the qazis.<sup>89</sup>

**Conclusion:**

The Umayyads are criticized for changing the institution of caliphate from its very nature. They are also accused of diverting from the path of their predecessors. But, with all their shortcomings, the Umayyads contributed to administrative development and socio-cultural awakenings and expanded territories extensively. The western authors affirm that when Europe was darkened in its utmost ignorance, the Muslim province of Spain under the Umayyads was enlightened with wisdom and knowledge.<sup>90</sup> This progress revealed that the Umayyads tried their best to develop the country, and introduced such administrative measures that were not familiar to the western civilization.

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<sup>89</sup> Husain, op. cit., 107.

<sup>90</sup> Ibadullah, op. cit., 136.