

# The Influence of the Ancient Persian Administration Structure on Post-Islamic Governmental Bureaus

Mansoor Haidari

PhD of History, Assistant Professor, Department of Maaref, School of Medicine, Hamadan University of Medical Sciences, Hamadan, Iran

## To Cite this Article

Mansoor Haidari, "The Influence of the Ancient Persian Administration Structure on Post-Islamic Governmental Bureaus", *International Journal for Modern Trends in Science and Technology*, Vol. 04, Issue 04, August 2018, pp.-16-26.

## ABSTRACT

*Edarat (administrative institutions) or in its old term Divanha (courts) form the administrative tools of a government. Flourishing nations have possessed an orderly and efficient bureaucracy. Islamic civilization used to have a prevailing and disciplined bureaucracy during the first several centuries after the advent of Islam. In view of the post record of Muslim Arabs prior Islam in whose society civility had not much of a flourishing, and the tribal people lived in a primary state; the question arises of the pattern on which the Islamic bureaucracy took shape. This article holds that Muslims followed the Persian administrative institutions. And reproducing it, they were able to adapt it new to values to be the founder of a modern civilization.*

Copyright © 2018 *International Journal for Modern Trends in Science and Technology*  
All rights reserved.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Iran is one of the oldest civilizations of human civilization and it passed many ups and downs in the history. The integration and length of Persian civilization have been cut many times by the attack of aliens, but on account of the skill, ingenuity, and long record of Iranian bureaucrats of controlling and statecraft and the weakness of the attacking countries, once again, it was Iranian institutions that rule and control.

After the invasion of Alexander the Macedonian, the Muslim Arabs' invasion of Persia can be considered as the biggest political and social change until that time. The arrival of Islam in Iran is a significant historic juncture and it changed the whole political, social, and cultural structures. Muslim Arabs, as they admitted (Sir Percy Sykes, 2001, 685), had not a good experience in the science, art, and statecraft. So they can use nothing to rule the conquered lands but sword and blood! In other words, now that the Arabs conquered the

land, they should control it. But the Arabs did not have the required intellectual and cultural infrastructures to do this. Hence, the caliphs decided to imitate Persian and partly Roman customs. Accordingly, governmental bureaus formed one after the other and based on the new needs. Persians had a significant role in suggesting the idea of establishing such institutions in pre-Islam (and their control after the sixth century). This article is to assess the process of Islamic governments' inspiration by Persian custom and culture using historical evidence, and it answers to this question that what effect pre-Islam Iranian administration structure had on post-Islam governmental bureaus? For this purpose, first in the introduction, the role of administration bureaucracy is discussed in the advancement of the goals of governments. Then Iranian bureaus before Islam and the political and social conditions in Jahiliyyah (age of ignorance) is reviewed. After that, the spread of Islam and the need for new bureaus is analyzed. Finally, the

post-Islam governmental bureaus and their specific task are reviewed in the following centuries of Islam.

Today, the administrative system is an important tool of development progress. No country is needless of this important and effective tool for development and advancement called bureaucracy. In other words, the executive sector of the administration system forms the spinal cord of a government. Today, bureaucracy plays a significant role in political unity and integration (Ghavam, 1994, 92). This administrative role and governmental bureaucracy have more diversity and function than before. But the nature of the bureau and its inseparable relationship with the country's political and social system is not much different from the past. Hence, the knowledge of Muslims' administrative organization in the first Islamic centuries can be helpful even for today. In particular, before the establishment of the Safavid dynasty in Iran and its contemporary governments, in other countries, the only significant administrative system was Muslims' and that was affected by the administrative system of the pre-Islam Persia. The first Muslims were the Arabs of Hejaz who, before Islam, were unfamiliar with culture and civilization, court and administrative system, and generally with central government that its requirement is the possession of wide administration. The only known system in the Arab community was the traditional tribal system. With the demise of the prophet of Islam and the selection of the first caliph, and after the so-called Radeh wars, all over the Arabia Peninsula was under the control of Muslims. The spread of Islam outside the Arabia Peninsula and the extent of Islamic empire, which its requirement was the possession of a disciplined administration for controlling, in one hand, and the Muslims' inspiration by other nations such as Iran on the other hand caused the Muslims' administration and courts to be developed based on circumstance and requirements.

## II. THE LEXICAL MEANING AND CONCEPT OF COURT

About the etymology of Divan, there is a consensus among scholars. Some scholars, due to the existence of disciplined administration in pre-Islam Iran –which will be discussed in the following –know its etymon as Persian. Iranian philologists know this word as Persian and know the used form of the word in Arabic language which its plural is “Davavin” as Arabicized Persian

(Velayati, 2005, 125). Some other also said that the word Divan is formed by the components “dip” or “dib” which means writing and suffix and the plural form “an” the letter b turned into w over time. The etymon “dip” almost exists in all subcategories of Sumerian language, which is the main field of Semitic language, such as Elamite and Akkadian (Velayati, 2005, 125). Some other scholars know the word Divan from the Arabic word “Dovan” which means to record and to take note. Hence, Divan can be referred to a set of documents and in its wider meaning administration. This term was used for registering soldiers and later its meaning expanded and included any type of registration and then it found a general meaning for administrative system. Thus, one of the famous meanings of Divan is admiration.

## III. THE RECORD OF DIVAN IN ANCIENT IRAN

Iran as one of the ancient and original civilizations, which has ruled at least half of the world for centuries, possessed a great organization and a vast bureaucracy to rule the vast territory. In the first years of the first millennium, Persian people entered the scene of history. At the end of the seventh century BC, with the overthrow of the Assyria government, they found a major role in the history of that age. 50 years later, with the leadership of Cyrus II, they played the first role in the scene of Persian history. Cyrus the Great created a bright future for all the civilized societies of that age with executing a system which its principles were peace, security, and toleration (Francois dubluar, 2005, 10). Since one of the most important ways of government revenue was taxation, thus the facilities of collecting taxes and maintaining its related records and accounts were prepared in the Achaemenian, Parthian and Sassanid governments. In that age, Persia was considered as one of the most important agricultural centers. Thus, all the arable lands were regularly measured and their crops were estimated. Obviously, certain equipment was required for this matter and that prepared over time. By the time of Darius empire, road construction, cutting taxes, and country divisions were implemented in the form of a regular plan all over the kingdom. Fars province was exempted from tax, but twenty other provinces had their own satraps (provincial governors) and beside them, a commander of military forces in the province and treasury and tax affairs managed by a “treasurer” (Roman Ghrishman, 21-22). This structure continued in the next ages, especially in

the Sassanid era. Darius the Great built a road between Susa to Sardis called the Royal Road, which its length was 2500 miles. Chapar traveled this road during fifteen days and ordinary passengers during three months (Sir Percy Sykes, 2001, 215). Darius realized that every successful government must have a sustainable economic base and the first requirement of having such an economy is to have a monetary system and an acceptable method for its measurement. Hence, exact scales were determined for weight and this weight system was called the Royal Stone and it propagated all over the country (Roman Ghoshman, 23). The military power was the backbone of the governments of the old world. So Khosrow Anushirwan established a department that covered the regular and fixed army with certain salaries (Sir Percy Sykes, 2001, 630). The payment of soldiers' salary was extremely disciplined so that if any soldier did not observe the personal discipline, his salary would not be paid until his issue is solved. It was said that one day parade and paying taxes, Khosrow Anushirwan himself did not have one of the instruments of war with himself. So he was asked to return and present more readily in the parade. And he obeyed and came with full weapon; despite he was the king and the highest military rank (Sir Percy Sykes, 2001, 630)! He also observed the payment of his salary, in addition, to observe the payment of the salary of the troops. Darius was so enlightened in governmental structure so he concerned that this huge country will be in danger only under the control of one person. So he appointed a satrap (a governor) for every province and also a commander and a secretary. These three positions were independent of each other and were directly connected to the central government (Sir Percy Sykes, 2001, 211). Darius organized the kingdom and the administrative system that had been followed as a great example until the collapse of the Roman Empire. The western Asia was under the shadow of an order and peace that had no example unit that time, all thanks to the great discipline and peace that Darius the Great was created in his huge kingdom (Nouri, 1998, 499). Therefore, the Muslims largely sampled the social and political system of the Persians. The code of Islamic governance is highly affected by the code of Persian pre-Islamic governance, but it had some changes over time.

#### **IV. POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF ARAB SOCIETY IN THE AGE OF IGNORANCE AND IN THE THRESHOLD OF ISLAM EMERGENCE**

The Arab society, before the revelation, had a specific structure that was the "tribal" structure. Geographically, this land is a barren and dry land, with 2500 kilometers width and located in the southwest of Asia. The people of this area, at the mentioned era, except its southern area, were immigrating people and this area had never witnessed any civilization and government (Shahidi, 1996, 38). Some valid historians only spoke about an assembly called "Darolandooh", at the threshold of the revelation. If an important issue occurred to people of Mecca, they would consult and discuss there, and the people who were less than forty years were not allowed (Majlesi, 318). The age before the revelation of Prophet Muhammad, about 150-200 years, is called the age of ignorance. This name is attributed to that age by Quran (Jafarian, 2006, 153). It was normal for the people of that age to raid other groups and loot what the enemy owned. There were many conflicts and bloodsheds among them and they composed poems about them and sang them to boast. The Arabs ridiculed living in the cities and their customs (Shahidi, 1996, 27). The most important tribes in the social construction of Arabia include Quraysh in Mecca, Khazraj and Aws in Medina, Taif in Seghif and so forth. Quraysh is considered as the most powerful tribe because this tribe had the key of Kaaba (Barzegar, 2004, 94) and as it has said, tribe was the most basic political and social unit in Arabia peninsula and at the threshold of the dawn of Islam. In tribal system, the most important rules and provisions were the ancestral traditions and disrespecting to them was unforgivable (Zargari Nejad, 1999, 34). Therefore, before the dawn of Islam, there were no organized political departments except tribes. This land was deprived of knowledge and the only knowledge that the Arabs boasted about was genealogy. At the very era, Persia was at a very high level of knowledge, in any field, so that it ruled a major part of the world and was economically a cultivated and high-income land. Hence, the cities of Persia tempted the Arabs. At the same time when the Arabs had nothing to present but wars, bloodsheds and versifying \_ that was the sign of humility, meanness and inhumanity (Jafarian, 2006, 215)\_ Persia owned the most important center of producing science called "Gundeshapur". The dawn of Islam in such a society, with the global slogans, was the rare events of the human history. Prophet Muhammad began

slow and gradual changes to skip this community establish modern Islamic civilization. After the Hegira, the first central government established in the Medina. Therefore, there were major and incomparable differences between the life of the Arabs of Arabia and the life of Persian people. The central government of Sassanid united all aspects of the society, in terms of law and practice in law and forcing all to obey the law so that the presence of the government could feel anywhere (Jafarian, 2006, 156). But the Arabs were dispersed and scattered by different reasons. Nobody could evolve this society but the Prophet Muhammad. The base of this evolution started with the Hegira of Muhammad and was completed with the patterning of the next caliphs from Persia and other governments.

#### V. THE EVOLUTION IN THE MUHAMMAD'S ERA

Due to the gradual movement of the Prophet Muhammad, the structure of "tribe" was maintained and it was tried to replace the social and traditional unit within a larger container called "Ummah". Hence, the Prophet established the post called "Naghib" in order to create a commutation between the tribes, the government of Medina and Muhammad himself (Ahmadolali, 2002, 83). Muhammad's measures in appointing the city governors like the appointment of "Atabibn<sup>1</sup>Asid" for Mecca, after the conquest of this city, and appointing the writers of the letters and sending the messages to the rulers all over the world, tribal chiefs, and the writers of the revelations, who wrote the holy verses of Quran, were considered as Divan, but a first level one. But Divan for Prophet Muhammad's government was not in the form of a physical place, outside home, and having staff with certain salaries. But instead, masques were almost similar to Divans and it was a place for worshiping and political, educational, social, and economic affairs. Most of the dispatched boards from other tribes and countries were met in masques (Majlesi, 229). These boards that were called "Vofoud" came to Muhammad in a specific place of the masque. Moreover, Muhammad prepared specific places for the boards to stay (Jafari, 2005, 284). The arrival of the Prophet in Medina and establishing political, religious and social unity among immigrants, Ansar<sup>2</sup> and Jews around Medina were actually the first bricks of

constructing the Islamic State. This government, that was developing day by day, after the prophet Muhammad, decided to pattern after the administrative structure of Persia.

#### VI. THE SPREAD OF ISLAM AND THE NEED FOR NEW DIVANS

The vast Islamic empire that extended from the northern Africa to the borders of China was expanded during a short period and required complex administration to rule this vast territory. After the conquest of Persia, the Muslim Arabs knew that they gained the control of a beaten, but organized society. Thus, in the west of the Islamic country i.e. Syria and Levant, they adopted the Roman administrative system and in Persia, they used the Sassanid's. In 644 AD, by the time of the second caliph, following the import of a large amount of booties to Medina, with the offer of the great men of Sahabah<sup>3</sup> the Divan was established (Tabari, 2006, fifth volume, page 2047). So, it can be said that for the first time, Omar Ibn al-Khattab formed the administration related to record taxes with the offer of the Persians and after that it developed over time. The inspiration of Arabic governmental structure by Persia was so much that, until the caliphate of "Abdul Malik Marwan", the common coins were the Sassanid's. In Abdul Malik's era, Arab-orientation and special attention Arab ethnicity that was more intensified than the caliphate of Muawiyah was reinforced. The command of Arabicizing governmental Divans and their spoken and written language was issued and he even commanded to coin with Arabic phrases (Taghoosh, 2001, 110). Umayyad also at their inception instituted an administration for recording and collecting taxes called "Divan Al-kharaj<sup>4</sup>". The other Divans that instituted after this Divan include Divan Al-rasael<sup>5</sup>, Divan Al-jond<sup>6</sup>, and Divan Al-khatam<sup>7</sup>. In the first years of the conquest of Persia, the Pahlavi language and script was common in administrations. To rule and control, the vast Islamic land had to be divided. So, in the command of the second caliph, the Islamic lands divided into seven areas and a governor or vali was appointed for each area. These areas include Medina, Dinner, Jazireh, Kufa, Basra, Mosul and Egypt (Velayati, 2005, 125). After this division and appointment, a Divan was established

<sup>1</sup> Son of

<sup>2</sup> Ansar is an Islamic term for the local inhabitants of Medina who took the Islamic Prophet Muhammad and his followers into their homes when they emigrated from Mecca.

<sup>3</sup> Sahabah were the companions, disciples, scribes and family of the Islamic prophet Muhammad

<sup>4</sup> The bureau of tributes

<sup>5</sup> The bureau of letters and documents

<sup>6</sup> The bureau of registration

<sup>7</sup> The bureau of verifying and stamping

for each land and it consisted of a ruler and his men under the command.

## VII. THE ESTABLISHED DIVANS AFTER ISLAM

With the acceptance of Islam, the Arabic Bedouin community had greatly changed and the bases of the Islamic government solidified during the blessed life of Prophet Muhammad. After the demise of Muhammad, with his combination of Jihad and conquest spirit, the Roman Empire beat the Persian Kingdom. In that era, the Muslim Arabs owned a territory that was to its maximum extent. The rule of this vast territory does not fit the social background of the Arabs. With the contribution of the subordinate nations, and most importantly the Persians, a powerful bureaucracy formed is mentioned in the below.

### 7.1 Divan Al-jond

The people of some regions have said that Divan Al-jond established in 644 AD. Divan Al-jond included all the people of Medina i.e. immigrants and Ansar and the troops participating in conquests. These people were sent to the camps of the provinces with their families of their name, and the name of their family was registered in the Divan. A group of different genealogists registered and recorded the names of these people based on their related tribe. The criterion of their salary was their services to Islam in the past and precedence in Islam. The registration of tribes continued to the era of Umayyad (Tabari, 2006, 154). In addition to Medina, Divan Al-jond also established in provincial capitals e.g. Kufa and Basra. As the time passed, and on account of the extension of the Islamic lands and occurrence of new issues, other Divans established in addition to Divan Al-jond that will be explained in the following.

By the change of Imamate to the caliphate and then to the kingdom, the military forces that were controlled by Divan Al-jond in fact served to Umayyad and then Abbasid caliphate. In the structure of Umayyad and Abbasid army, in fact, organizing the military forces was in order to protect the reign and the caliph himself. In Umayyad era, the non-Arab people, who were called Mawla, were not served as military forces. But after the collapse of Bani Umayyah and the reign of Bani Abbas 754-854, for a century, the Persian, in addition, to transfer the types of Divans to Abbasid government, they actually owned those Divans. The majority of the staff of the Divans was Persian (Sedighi, 1998, 72). Since then, an era emerged that was called the Turks' influence era (Barzegar, 2003, 65). In Abbasid government, the

main body of the army consisted of volunteers who were divided into infantry and cavalry. The soldiers must supply their own military equipment and the government was required to supply the provisions and the expenses of the army's horses.

At Umayyad era, every province had a tribute Divan that all the revenues would be sent there, a registration Divan, and a Divan for documents and will be separately discussed in the following.

### 7.2 Divan Al-rasael

Divan Al-rasael was established in the era of Muawiyah. This Divan established in order to monitor on documents and prevent their forgery. The caliph read all the documents and then issued the required commands. Then, the writer regulated the letters and the required documents (Yaghoubi, 2008, 255). At this time, the Divan of Al-khatam or Mohr established in where a version of each letter or document provided and maintained and the original version observed and then stamped and finally sent. Balazari said this Divan was first established by Ziyad ibn Abee the governor of Iraq and inspired by the Persians (Yaghoubi, 2008, 255).

In Abbasid caliphate, the Divan of Rasael was required to issue the rules and collect the governmental documents. Its headship always assigned to an expert person who was required to write the caliph's letters and send them to the countries around.

In Ghaznavid era, Divan of Rasael was called Divan of "Resalat" and it was used as a secretariat or scriptorium for the Sultan. This Divan, as some other Divans, was accompanied by the Sultan to his military travels. The letters and documents of Divan were carried by the four-footed animals. During stops, tents installed for the Divan members to stay and work there. Owing to the importance of Divan of Resalat, its tent installed close to the Sultan's tent (Yaghoubi, 2008, 259). Divan of Rasael was so important that even in the era of Sabuktakin, Khajeh Ahmad ibn Meymandi, before his position as the minister, was in charge of Divan of Rasael for so long. In fact, the owner of Divan of Rasael did not consider himself as the minister's subordinate, though he treated him with respect (WWW ghadeer / site / dowran / Iran / ejtama). In some Divans, Divan of Rasael was also called Divan of Enshae (writing).

### 7.3 The Divan of tributes or Estifae (vindication)

One of the other Islamic Divans was the Divan of tributes or Estifae. It was an administration that was in charge of a huge section of the financial affairs of the Islamic country. The list of

governmental properties was recorded in this Divan and it was fully responsible for financial affairs of the country of its provinces (WWW ghadeer / site / dowran / Iran / ejtama).

The purpose of the establishment of this Divan was to distribute the spoils that sent to Medina by Omar's conquests. But later, this Divan's duties become wider and it was in charge of the whole financial affairs of the country. Some of its duties included the manner of collecting taxes from the conquered lands and sending them the capital, the manner of its distribution among the Muslims, and the classification of the Muslims for receiving asalary. As the relationships among the conquered lands become more complicated, the tasks of the Divan become wider. Some duties were omitted including the evaluation of the public income, evaluation of costs, monitoring public expenses, listing the properties of noblemen (specially rulers and Sultans), and sending people for collecting taxes (Sherik Amin, 1988, 139).

The importance of Divan of tributes was intensified in the following centuries, i.e. the tenth and eleventh centuries, and this Divan was under the management of know-how and capable people (Bosworth, 1983, 65). In Umayyad era, tribute was the major matter of the government and it had taken from "Mawla" (Mawla were the non-Arab people who were somehow considered as the second-class citizens). Another part of the revenue was through Jizya, i.e. a tax that had taken from the people whom their lands were conquered by peace. Divan of Kharaj was responsible for collecting taxes, from both Arabs and non-Arabs (Jizya), and the spoils from the conquered lands. The lands that were allocated to the government were managed by this Divan and they planned for the manner of its utilization. One of the ways to consume the tributes was "Aqtae" (a land that was assigned to people to exploit). As we progressed toward the history of Islam, this approach became more common. The temporary assignment of lands was called "Aqtae" and the permanent assignment was called "Ziyah". Another term was used for the assignment of a part of properties or lands to others that was called "Taemeh". In historical references, the number of Taemeh and "Motaaman" or Motaams was mentioned differently. Taemeh continued until the Umayyad era, but in this era it was a governmental action and the Motaem was not an ordinary person, but he was governor and Taemeh was assigned by the caliph. The important point of this subject is that this matter was also under the control of Divan. In

Ghaznavid era, tribute had its own bureau. The Divan of tribute, as the economic base of the government, dealt with the regulation of revenues and the manner of spending it. It should be mentioned that there was some period that the Divan of tribute was called the Divan of Estifae. Its staff was called Mostoufi and its head was called Mostoufi Al-mamalek (the journal of Islam history, issue 12). In Umayyad era, the Divan of tribute was one of the important Divans and they used violence to gain taxes and tributes. Almost in the entire era of Umayyad, the issue of tributes was the main problem of Mawla.

#### 7.4 The Divan of ministry

Ministry has a long history in Persian civilization. But in Islamic civilization, its origin is referred to Abbasids era. The role and the position for minister were vital for the kings and it was not possible to rule the country without this position. The minister appointed by the king and the brilliance and capability of the minister was depended on the brilliance and capability of the king. Sometimes a minister was appointed by the king merely in order to solve a crisis and they played a role as a shield for the king (Velayati, I bid, 130). Although the position of ministry was necessary for the king, it does not mean that the power is supposed to be equally distributed. But this appointment of power was one-sided and the power of minister was completely depended on the king. Before Safavid dynasty (at Abbasid era and eastern local governments of Persia), the minister was responsible for controlling the relationships among the governors and caliphs. In Iranian history, some minister were also responsible for commanding the army if required. Some ministers of the Buyid dynasty had such responsibilities and they were also responsible for appointing governmental court and taxation. In the tenth century, the position of ministry had an important role and he was also in charge of other Divans (Lambton, 1993, 138). In the next eras, especially Safavid era, the role of ministry became the important base of the governments. This position changed to prime ministry at the new constitutional and republic governments.

#### 7.5 Divan of Borid

Divan of "Borid" is one of the most important Divans in the Islamic governance. There were different opinions about the etymology of the word "Borid". Some experts know the etymon of this word as the old Semitic language which means the fast messengers and rapid horses (Beyhaqi, 2006, 320). In Iran, the etymon of this word refers to a department for fast sending the commands and

letters in the Achaemenid era and it continued in the following eras i.e. Parthian and Sassanian with slight alternations. The duties of this Divan were important and different in the Islamic era. Some of its duties included informing, sending governmental commands, and collecting information all over the Islamic empire and report it to the center of the caliphate (Shahbazi, 1975, 30). In post-Islam era, particularly in Umayyad era under the rule of Muawiyah, the Divans were more developed based on needs, especially Divan of Borid. Muawiyah spends enormous costs to improve this Divan. Some of these costs included providing horses and installing equipped and required stations for the transporters of news, very similar to the (Achaemenid era Taghoosh, 2001, 49). In this era, the mounted person who transferred the governmental letter was called a Borid. In addition, Muawiyah commanded to establish a Divan named "Khatam" for the letters not to be unstamped and nobody is informed for the content of the letter but the caliph (Velayati, 2005, 132). As it is mentioned, the task of the Divan of Borid, at the era of Umayyad caliphate and after Muawiyah, was not only transferring formal letters and governmental reports (Georgie Zidane, 2000, 185), but it was also responsible for spying and disclosing for the government.

Divan of Borid, in the next eras especially in Abbasid era, still had a special important. Basically, the ninth and tenth centuries are considered as the era of the development of Divan of Borid all over the world. In the caliphate of Al-Mansur, "Sahib Borid" i.e. the head of this Divan was considered as one of the important bases of the government (Georgie Zidane, 2000, 185). In this period, the agents of Borid were responsible for collecting and reporting hot and exact news from the behavior and the activities of people of different regions, the manner of ruling the provinces, and the amounts of gold and silver in the mints of each region to Baghdad.

The written reports of the central bureau of Sahib Borid were sent to Baghdad and he also summarized and edited the information, and sends it to the caliph with the daily condition of the country. For covering and collecting better the information, female spies and informants were also recruited in the Divan and outside it (Velayati, 2005, 132). Also in Ghaznavid era, eastern Iran, a special attention was drawn to the conditions of Divan of Borid. In this era, the importance of the Divan and system of informing was as much as Divan of ministry. In the Sultanate of Sultan

Mahmud and Sultan Mas'ud, Abu Nasr-e Mashkan was the head of the Divan. The employees that worked in this Divan must be honest in writing the letters as well as being completely proficient in the Persian and Arabic language. Collecting and sending the news to become little by little common by codes in order that if the messengers or their letters captured by enemies, they could not figure out. Another strategy was that the messengers dressed as other positions and impersonated themselves as merchants etc. (Soheil, 2001, 85). The Divan of Borid also existed in Ottoman Empire but it was called "Chapar" and the place of shifting the horses was called "Chaparkhaneh" (Clifford, 2006, 58). Regular distances were considered for shifting the horses and messengers beside the caravansaries.

#### 7.6 Divan of Araz

Most of the bureaus that had established in the history of post-Islam were based on the needs that the governments felt. One of the bureaus that were established in Ghaznavid era and contemporary with the Abbasid caliphate was the Divan of Araz. This Divan was in charge of monitoring the conditions, grades, and the salaries of the army and it must directly respond to the Sultan. Although despite the Emirs and generals, the army of the Sultan had not a considerable power; its head was appointed among the capable people of other Divans. As Sultan Mas'ud-e Ghazni appointed Abu Sahl-e Zusanif for the headship of Divan of Araz with the offer of Meymandi the minister (Nozari, 2008, 96), this Divan, beside other Divans such as Divan of Estifae, Divan of Ashraf, Divan of Toqra etc. managed by the minister, the Divan of ministry, or Divan of Aala that had the highest position after the Sultan (gonagon.com www.).

#### 7.7 Divan of Ashraf or special inspection

Divan of Ashraf which its employee was called a Moshref was a Divan for inspecting the affairs of the Divans, especially financial. The head of this Divan was appointed among the very reliable people. The Divan of special inspection that was called Divan of Ashraf in Ghaznavid era, in other eras including Seljuq and Samanian existed with the very name or very task. As Sultan Mas'ud Ghazni dismissed Abu Sahl-e Hamdavi from the position of ministry and appointed Khajeh Ahmand ibn Hassan Meymandi, he appointed Hamdavi for the headship of Divan of Ashraf. It is obvious that the acceptance of this position was not deduction of prestige, even a favored ministry close to the Sultan (Nozari, 2008, 96). In addition to existence in the governments that received their legitimation from the caliph, the

Divan of Ashraf was active even in the system of the caliphate. In addition, to monitoring the circumstance of spending possessions in other Divans, this Divan also monitored other employees. The strategy of their collecting information was so complicated. For instance, the bondmen and the employees in the system and home got the considered people to inform them with presents and bribes (Ali ibn Hussein Masoudi, 2001, 262). The reports of foreign and domestic Moshrefs (i.e. the other governments' Moshrefs) were reported to Divan of Ashraf and the Divan reported them to the Sultan.

#### 7.8 Divan of Ghazae<sup>8</sup>

The subject of judgment has an old history in Islam and it refers to the era of the Prophet Muhammad. At the time, the disagreements among the Muslims in the small community of in Medina were mostly resolved by the Prophet Muhammad. Due to the nature of the Sahabah and the brotherhood control that the Prophet settled among them, the disagreements that someone needed to be sentenced were limited. Sometimes it occurred that Muhammad sends a person other cities to judge, as he sent Ali ibn Abi Talib to Yemen. At the time of the first caliph, Abu Bakr, the position of judgment was given to Omar ibn Al-khatib (Masoodi, 2001, 266). At the time of Omar's caliphate, this position was given to Abu Umayya Sharih ibn Harith (Shahidi, 2008, 85). However, in many occasions, Omar was contributed by Ali in judgment and the very complicated issues were solved in this way. In Uthman's caliphate, this position was assigned to Zeid ibn Sabet and a certain salary also was considered for him as a judge by the caliph. In the caliphate of Imam Ali, Shoraih, also known as Qazi<sup>9</sup> Shoraih was appointed for the title of judgeship. Judiciary in Ali's caliphate was so just. One day, a non-Muslim person complained Ali for taking his armor, while he knew that Ali is the owner of the armor. The judge asked Imam Ali, who was the caliphate of the whole Muslims and the judge himself was appointed by him, for a witness and Imam stated that he had no witness. Hence, the judge issued a verdict in the favor of the non-Muslim. That person, when realized that he is equal to the highest position of the government, confessed he was lying and after that converted to Islam. But this trend did not continue to the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates and the judiciary was a satellite for the caliph. In other words, the proportionality between crime and punishment

was not considered and the prescribed penalty was based on the caliph's issuance (WWW. hawzah. neb. com). In Ghaznavid era, the judiciary was more developed and the title of "Qazi Al-Ghozat" was appointed by the Sultan. The Sultan tried to show himself as religious and liable to the caliphate in Baghdad, at least in apparent. So he said that he would not interfere in matters of sentences and issuances and he would manage his judiciary based on Islamic limitations and the sentences and issuances of jurists.

#### 7.9 Divan of Mazalem<sup>10</sup>

Beside the post of judgeship, a new post was appointed with the title of taking care of the injustices of caliphs or emirs. He set a day in a week for this matter and he usually had more authorities for dealing with affairs than the judge. Gradually, the caliphs were no longer interfering in these issues and appointed a trustee of injustices and by its development, a Divan established called the Divan of Mazalem. As the Divan of Mazalem developed, it divided into three branches "Divan of Ghazae" was one of its three branches. Two other branches included "Divan of Sharteh<sup>11</sup>" and "Divan of Hisbah<sup>12</sup>". The heads of these three branches were called "Raees-e Ghazae", "Saheb-e Hisbah", and "Saheb Al-Sharteh". Saheb Al-Sharteh or Muhtasib was responsible for providing the internal security of the cities. In fact, it played the role of the police forces of nowadays. The owner of the Hisbah or Muhtasib was appointed to prevent moral corruptions.

#### 7.10 Divan of Bayt al-mal<sup>13</sup>

In the first Islamic centuries, the Divan of Bayt al-mal was a place to maintain movable properties including the money that was taken from different revenues such as tributes, taxes or Jizya and distributed among the Muslims. Currently, in the Great Mosque of Damascus, there is a small room that has built on six pillars and it has said that at Umayyad era, it was the place of maintaining properties and cash money. In other words, it was considered as governmental treasury. Divan of Bayt al-mal has evolved during the history and changed from a place for maintaining the Muslims' possessions to a department for reforming financial affairs of the whole Muslims. The first person in Islam who established such place was the first caliph Abu Bakr ibn Abi Quhafa and he appointed Omar as its administrator. Divan of Bayt al-mal

<sup>10</sup> Injustices

<sup>11</sup> Police

<sup>12</sup> Accountability

<sup>13</sup> Treasury

<sup>8</sup> Judgment

<sup>9</sup> The judge



gradually developed and its importance increased and the head of this Divan was named “the Master of Treasury” and he was responsible for supervising the Divan. The lower ranks were Mobasheran<sup>14</sup>, Motevalian<sup>15</sup>, and Mostofian<sup>16</sup> and each one of them was responsible for a part of supervising Bayt al-mal. This Divan was gradually established all over the Islamic government (Barzegar, 2003, 132). The revenue of Divan of Bayt al-mal was supplied from a number of sources which some sources were that they gained in the Jihad<sup>17</sup> with infidels. Another part of the revenue was supplied by Khums<sup>18</sup>, Zakat<sup>19</sup>, and Anfal<sup>20</sup>. The wealth existed in the treasury during Muhammad’s era and when the immigrants and Ansar were in financial crisis had spent for increasing the Muslims’ level of life. Therefore, its stock distributed among the Muslims. Purchasing and providing weapons for Jihad, paying the wages and salaries of soldiers, providing for poor Muslims and sometimes even for people of the dhimmah<sup>21</sup> were placed in the next priorities of the wealth of Bayt al-mal. As it has mentioned before, there is a consensus that the second caliph is the first person who established the Divan of Bayt al-mal (Mousavi, 1991, 75). This administration became the sample of the next Divans which established based on needs (Barzegar, 2003, 132). If we consider Omar’s Divan as an administration for distributing the wealth among the whole Muslims, not only as the determinant of the military men, hence, it was commanded to register the names of the whole Muslims with the separation of tribes and based on rank and every one of them were included to receive a monthly or annual grant (Lambton, 1993, 111). Ibn Khaldun believes that the establishment of a Divan in the era of the second caliph which had huge responsibilities was the first pillar of bureaucracy (Ibn Khaldun, 1984, 391). It is said that even infants received grants from Bayt al-mal when they were born. Finally, this Divan was responsible for supervising the census and migration of Muslims.

<sup>14</sup> Overseers

<sup>15</sup> Custodians

<sup>16</sup> Exchequers

<sup>17</sup> (Among Muslims) a war or struggle against unbelievers.

<sup>18</sup> In Islamic tradition, khums refers to the historically required religious obligation of any Muslim army to pay one-fifth of the spoils of war, the booty collected from non-believers after a military campaign; this tax was paid to the caliph or sultan, representing the state of Islam.

<sup>19</sup> Obligatory payment made annually under Islamic law on certain kinds of property and used for charitable and religious purposes.

<sup>20</sup> Public possessions

<sup>21</sup> A dhimmī is a historical term referring to non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic state.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

No civilization and society can continue without organizing and administration. Iranian civilization has long been one of the most brilliant human civilizations in the world. Persian Empire, with its unique extent required a regular administrative system to control that huge land. If we consider the Achaemenian government as the starting point of Iranian history, the dynasties Achaemenian, Parthian, and Sassanid have ruled until the conquest of the Muslims. However, this trend had a gap with the invasion of Alexander the Macedonian. But in each three dynasties, the governments were one of the world’s superpowers. It is clear that no country can continue without a regular bureaucracy. After the conquest of the Muslims and the collapse of Sassanid Empire, this huge country was given up to the Arabs who were strange with civilization and statecraft. Thus, inevitably, they tried to adopt the Persian administrative system and recruit the Persian staff. In fact, Islamic civilization rose from Hejaz and it was inevitable to establish structures for controlling the expanding Islamic society based on need and destiny. So they decided to follow Persian administrative system for developing the Islamic civilization. The need for this felt more than ever following the great victories of Muslims from the east in Iran to the west in Rome, gaining a lot of spoils, and expand the Islamic borders. Therefore, the first Islamic establishments namely Divan were established during the era of the second caliph (between 637- 642 AD) and by consulting the great men of Sahabah including the Persians. With the increasing development of Islam, the tasks of the first Divan were distributed among the new-established Divans such as Divan of tribute, Divan of the army, or Divan of registration and each one of these Divans was responsible for specific tasks.

In Umayyad government, other new Divans were established including Divan of writing and it was responsible for recording letters, editing them, and maintaining a version of them. The possibility of forging governmental letters and documents and caused the establishment of a Divan called the Divan of verifying and stamping. The task of this Divan was to produce governmental stamps and the concordances and letters for preventing the forgery of and abuses. The tasks of these Divans were changeable in different governments, but these changes were growing, especially Divan of Rasael that had a great importance at Ghaznavid era.

Divan of Kharaj or Estifae was in charge of the tax affairs of the country. Since the first decades of Islam until the next centuries, it was one of the important bases of the governments and its importance increased. The Divan of Vezarat (ministry) formed during Abbasid era and in the direction of this increase of governmental tasks and the more complicated control of the government and the minister was the second highest position after the king. However, he had not much power before the king. Communications in a society are as important as the vessels in the body of a creature. Divan of Borid was responsible for collecting information and sending the governmental orders to the Divan and it somehow played the role of intelligence systems of the nowadays governments. Divan of Ghazae and Divan of Mazalem were established for judicial matters. Judgment has been a very important matter in Islam. Thus, the matter of solving disputes among the Muslims was important since the Hijra of the Prophet Muhammad and the prophet himself was the head of judicial matters. But after the demise of the Prophet Muhammad, during the time of caliphs and according to the qualitative and quantitative development of the society, the society felt the need for establishing a Divan for judicial matters besides other Divans. Each one of the caliphs had a chief justice who the judges of other cities were appointed by him as well the caliph.

Another effective Divan was Divan of Bayt al-mal that was one of the important pillars of the government since the seventh century AD until the end of the caliphate and after that. The important point is that after the era of the Prophet Muhammad, the two first caliphs, and Imam Ali, Bayt al-mal turned into the personal treasury of the caliphs and it exited from the public mode that Imam Ali considered. In this study, it has tried to review the circumstance of establishment and transformation of governmental Divans during Islamic era. According to the limitations of time and references, the names of the whole Divans have not included in the study but we tried to name and explain the important cases briefly. It is clear that investigating each one of the Divans required a transferred research work which is outside the scope of this article.

#### REFERENCE

- [1] Ibn Khaldun (1984). *Al-Abar*, translated by Abdol-Muhammad Ayati, Tehran cultural studies.
- [2] Ahmed Ali, Saleh (2002). *The government of the Prophet Muhammad*, translated by Hadi Ansari, Seminary and University of Qom.
- [3] Barzegar, Ebrahim (2003). *The history of transformation in Islam*, SEMAT, Tehran.
- [4] Beyhaqi, Mohammad ibn Hassan (2003). Edited by Ali Akbar Fayaz, Tehran center publication.
- [5] Zarhari Nejad, Gholamreza (1999). *The history of Islam in the age of prophecy*. SEMAT, Tehran.
- [6] Roman Grishman (n.d). *Iran before Islam*, translated by Muhammad Moein, Tehran, Iran Azad University.
- [7] Georgie Zidane (2000). *The history of Islam's civilization*, translated by Ali Javaherkalam, ninth edition, Amir Kabir, Tehran.
- [8] Jafarian, Rasoul (2006). *The political history of Islam*, first Vol. fourth edition, Dalil-e Ma, Qom.
- [9] Jafari, Yaghoob (2005). *History of Islam according to the Quran*, Maaref, Qom.
- [10] Sir Percy Sykes (2001). *History of Iran*, translated by Mohammad Taghi Fakhr Daei Gilani, seventh edition, Afsoun, Tehran.
- [11] Soheil, Mohammad (2001). *Umayyad government*, Hojatolah Jouraki, Seminary and University of Qom.
- [12] Sherik Amin Shams (1978). *The Divan terms at Mongol era*, Bina, Tehran.
- [13] Shahidi, Seyed Jafar (2009) *Analytical History of Islam*, University Press, Tehran.
- [14] Shahbazi, Shapur (1975), *Achaemenid researches*, Achaemenid Research Institute, Tehran.
- [15] Sedighi, Gholamhossein (1988); *Islamic religious movement*, Pazhang, Tehran.
- [16] Tabari Jarir, M. (2006), *History of princes and kings*, translated by Abolqasem Payandeh, mythology, Tehran.
- [17] Taghoosh, Mohammad Soheil (2001). *Umayyad government*, translated by H. Joodaki, Seminary and University of Qom.
- [18] Francois Doblo (2005). *Sicence in Iran and ancient east*, collection of articles, translated by Homayoun Sanati Zadeh, Ghatreh publication, Tehran.
- [19] Clifford Bosworth (2006). *Ghaznawidshistory*, translated by Hassan A. Amir Kabir, Tehran.
- [20] Lambton, N. K., (1993), *the continuation and development of Iran Middle Age history*, translated by Yagoob Azhand, Ney Publishing Tehran.
- [21] Majlesi, Mohammad Baqer Allameh (n.d). *The History of the Prophets*, Javidan, Tehran.
- [22] Masudi Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Hussein (2001), *At-Tanbihwa-l-'Ishraf*, translated by Abolqasem Payandeh, second edition, cultural science publication, Tehran.
- [23] Nozari, Ezatollah (2008). *Social history of Iran from the beginning to the Constitution*, Khjasteh, Tehran.
- [24] Nir Nouri Abdul Hamid (1998). *Iran's invaluable contribution to world culture*, volume 2, Ershad, Tehran.

[25] Yaghoobi, Ahmad IbnIshaq (2008) History of Yaghoobi, translated by Ahmad Aieni, Scientific and Cultural Tehran.

[26] Velayati, Ali Akbar (2005). Dynamic Iranian culture and civilization, Volume II, fourth edition, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Tehran.

#### Journals

[1] Journal of Islamic history, No. 12, quoted by IbnHisham and Muhammad ibn Umar al-Waqidi.

[2] Mousavi J. (1991) The primary duties of Divan in the Islamic establishment, magazine articles and reviews, Issue 75, Winter

