

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE JOB OF THE SECRETARIES OF STATE AND THEIR ROLE IN THE EARLY PERIOD OF ISLAM

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Abstract

This study tried to shed light on the circumstances which led to the rise of writing and the role of secretaries of State from the beginning of the Islamic State at the age of the Prophet (peace may be upon him), the Orthodox Age till the end of the Umayyad Age. This study aimed at revealing the importance of secretaries of state in developing the administration of the Arabic-Islamic State, spreading out its culture and generalizing its political address to reveal the job gradual advance of the secretary of state from an administrative employee to a person who spread out the culture of his age in a way that made him a thinker of the state and its spokesman.

Keywords: Development, secretaries, Islam, history

Introduction:

Writing is considered as one of the most important symbols and manifestations of civilization. It is a historical phenomenon which was known by people and civilized nations. They took it as a way of embodying and eternizing their cultures. Pre-Islamic Arabs knew and practiced writing, but it did not reach the standard of profession or "trade" as expressed by Ibn Khaldoun⁽¹⁾. It seems that writing was known by the Arabs before Islam. Some studies stated the development of Arabic script which was associated with a linguistic, literary and cultural renaissance that the Arabic region witnessed. Its marks appeared in some cities and civilization centres like Mecca, Al-Tayif, Al-Hirah and some cities of Syria and Yemen⁽²⁾. When Islam appeared, it urged people to learn and praised reading and writing starting from the first verse of the Holy Koran "Read in the name of your Lord who has created..."⁽³⁾. The noble verses mentioned the instruments of writing like the pen⁽⁴⁾, the book⁽⁵⁾, the papers⁽⁶⁾ and the board⁽⁷⁾. They became necessary instruments for writing and knowledge, by which the

words of God were recorded and the principles of religion, narratives, biographies and historical events were registered⁽⁸⁾.

From the beginning of the Revelation, the Prophet (peace may be upon him) began to teach his early companions and they learnt the verses of the Holy Koran by heart. After the Hejirah and the institution of the Islamic State, the Prophet (pmuh) urged the Muslims to teach their families reading and writing. One of the aspects of his call was that he made the teaching of the Muslims as a ransom of some prisoners of Badr Battle (623 AD) with the aim of spreading out writing and teaching in Al Madinah⁽⁹⁾.

With the progress of the Islamic call and successive revelations of the Holy Koran, the Prophet (pmuh) needed some of his companions to write the verses and administrative items such as agreements, peace treaties and epistles. The companions who mastered writing took the responsibility of these tasks and they were known as Revelation writers like Ali Bin Abi Talib, Othman Bin Affan, Aubei Bin Ka'b, Zeid Bin Thabit and Mu'eiqeeb Bin Abi Fatimah A-Dawsi⁽¹⁰⁾, The personalities of some of them were characterized by writing like Handhalah Bin Al-Rebee' Al-Tameemi who carried the stamp of the Prophet (pmuh), and this gave him the title of the secretary of state⁽¹¹⁾. This was an indicator of the beginning of the profession of writing and taking it as a trade in Islam.

The task of Revelation writer was important and dangerous because it required high precision and feeling of responsibility. When Abdullah Bin Abi Al-Sarh (656 AD), who was nominated temporarily as a writer by the Prophet (pmuh), deformed what he was asked to write, his attempt was considered as a treason and a crime for Islam and Muslims⁽¹²⁾. Later, the secretary of state was conditioned for some manners like truth, honesty and loyalty because he was entrusted with the secrets of the state and its important affairs⁽¹³⁾.

It can be noticed that writing spread widely after Islam. It was a necessity for the Islamic call and state. And this granted the secretaries of state their importance and stimulated the continuity and development of their job in subsequent periods.

The Role of The Secretaries of State in The Orthodox Period:

The position of the secretaries of state was reinforced and their role was expanded after the establishment of the Caliphate. Abu Bakr nominated (632-634 AD) secretaries of state from the companions such as Othman Bin Affan, Zeid Bin Thabit, Handhalah Bin Al-Rabee' and Abdullah Bin Al-Arkam who were Revelation writers⁽¹⁴⁾.

It seems that they practiced great writing activities as the Caliphate required the writing of epistles and messages to valis, military leaders and chiefs of Arabic tribes when

confronting the apostasy movement and dispatching conquest armies. The sources⁽¹⁵⁾ kept texts of epistles and messages as well as the deed of entrusting the Caliphate to Omar Bin Al-Khattab and documents written by Othman Bin Affan⁽¹⁶⁾.

The religious and cultural role of the secretaries of state appeared when collecting and preserving the Holy Koran. Abu Bakr formed a large committee of seventy-five writers who were assigned the responsibility of writing the Holy Koran which was in scattered records⁽¹⁷⁾.

At the time of Omar Bin Al-Khattab (634-643 AD), the domains of writing expanded with the expansion of the state, development of its administration and diversity of its specializations. Omar reinstated it and this was evident in his military, administrative and financial organizations, at the top of which was the institution of the account books of the treasury in Al-Madinah and the centres of big cities (conquered countries)⁽¹⁸⁾.

Omar instituted two bureaus: the first- the bureau of soldiers or offers which was instituted in (640 AD)⁽¹⁹⁾, whose task was the registration of the fighters' names, their families, amounts of their offers and their salaries. It was managed and supervised by Arab Muslim writers⁽²⁰⁾. The other bureau was for Kharaj (land tax)⁽²¹⁾. It was one of the most important bureaus in Islam because it was the basic financial source in the state⁽²²⁾. Its task was the collection of the land tax money owned by non-Muslim people living in a Muslim country⁽²³⁾. It was managed by writers from the people of conquered countries who knew Arabic and local languages in which the bureau records were written such as Persian in Iraq and the East, Greek in Syria and Coptic and Greek in Egypt and Morocco⁽²⁴⁾.

It seems that the records of Kharaj (land tax) bureaus were written in dual languages which comprised the three languages; Arabic, Persian and Greek as well as Coptic in Egypt⁽²⁵⁾.

This is an indicator that Arabic spread out in the conquered countries, people learned it and a lot of writers mastered it.

Omar observed the functions of bureaus and directed the valis to the necessity for choosing competent writers to manage them⁽²⁶⁾. There were many prominent secretaries of State who were known for their writing and management capabilities such as Ziad Bin Abeeh (672 AD), who was well-known for his eloquence, rhetoric, arithmetic, good handwriting, arrangement and order⁽²⁷⁾. Al-Balathri stated that Ziad Bin Abeeh instituted and organized Al-Basrah bureau⁽²⁸⁾ and remained supervising it during the Orthodox Period. His proficiency in writing and his multi-talents made it possible for him to hold the highest administrative positions in the State⁽²⁹⁾.

Omar employed many secretaries of State to manage the central bureau in Al-Madinah and write his deeds like Zeid Bin Thabit and Abdullah Bin Al-Arkam. He advised them to accomplish their daily actions lest they should not accumulate⁽³⁰⁾, and he dictated his deeds without allowing them to make any change⁽³¹⁾.

During the period of Othman Bin Affan (644-655 AD), the needs of the Caliphate expanded after the increase of its problems, especially in the last years of his rule. So, he employed several secretaries of State like Marwan Bin Al-Hakam, Abi Ghatfan Bin Tareef Al-Merri and others from his companions⁽³²⁾ and gave them authorities to read the epistles sent to the Caliphate and make summaries to be read to him⁽³³⁾. It seems that the lots of epistles required the establishment of a special place for storing sheets of paper⁽³⁴⁾. He gave his stamp to one of his secretaries of State to stamp epistles⁽³⁵⁾, the fact which showed the expansion of the activities of secretaries of State and their role in running the Caliphate's affairs.

It seems that Marwan Bin Al-Hakam was as an advisor for Othman who expressed his opinions in politics and rule. So, he was accused of provoking the killing of the leaders of the protest movement during the intrigue crisis⁽³⁶⁾. Regardless of the accuracy of this charge, his job as a secretary of State and being a relative of the Caliphate gave him the opportunity to interfere in the political affair, and circumstances served him later when he managed Al-Hijaz more than once during the Period of Mu'awiyah and the Caliphate in (683 AD)⁽³⁷⁾.

It is important to refer to an issue which is closely related to the development of writing and the cultural and religious role of secretaries of State, namely, the collection of the Holy Koran and writing it in one volume. The main reason for this was that Othman and some companions noticed the difference among Muslims in the ways of reading the Holy Koran and they became controversial, the fact that made him realize its danger on the unity and future of Muslims. So, he formed a committee of twelve writers who learned the Holy Koran by heart and mastered language and writing like Aubei Bin Ka'b, Zeid Bin Thabit, Abdullah Bin Al-Zubeir, Sa'eed Bin Al-Aass and Abdullah Bin Abbass. The committee collected the sheets on which the Holy Koran was written during Abi Bakr's Period, rearranged the order of the verses and suras and wrote one volume in the language and dialect of Kureish, known as Othman's volume of the Holy Koran⁽³⁸⁾, which has been recited up till now.

After writing the new volume of the Holy Koran, Othman ordered its distribution to all countries and the burning of previous volumes⁽³⁹⁾. This action aroused different reactions when some individuals protested, but most Muslims accepted it willingly⁽⁴⁰⁾. The collection of

the Holy Koran in one volume was considered as one of Othman's achievements⁽⁴¹⁾. Al-Douri considered it as a decisive action in the cultural and political history of Islam⁽⁴²⁾.

Concerning Ali Bin Abi Talib (655-660 AD)⁽⁴³⁾, he employed several secretaries of State like Abdullah Bin Abi Rafi', Sa'eed Bin Nimran Al-Hamadani and Aubeidullah Bin Jubeir. He advised them to be accurate in writing and handwriting. He told one of them to lay his inkpot, lengthen his pen, leave spaces between lines and not to leave spaces between epistles⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Ali tried to control the jobs of bureaus by employing competent secretaries of State to run them. He appointed Ziad Bin Abeeh in Al-Basrah bureau and treasury as he had trust in his capability, experience and honesty⁽⁴⁵⁾. He directed his valis to the necessity for precision in their jobs, fairness and honesty in financial transaction to avoid imperfection and corruption⁽⁴⁶⁾.

It seems that writing epistles developed during his time for their great numbers of exchange with the leaders of political and military potentials, especially with his opponent Mu'awiyah Bin Abi Sufyan. Resources kept⁽⁴⁷⁾ most of these political epistles, which implied their vision about politics and rule and reflected their level of rhetoric and eloquence.

We can say that writing developed with the development of the State, its administration, spread of education and contacts with the cultures of other peoples. Secretaries of State practiced various writing tasks related to the affairs of management, money, war and culture. Writing during the Orthodox Period was characterized as being brief and simple without unnaturalness in words or elegance in speech⁽⁴⁸⁾.

The Role of Secretaries of State During The Umayyad Period

Writing developed and flourished during the Umayyad Period and the effect of secretaries of State was evident in all aspects of the State and its political and intellectual attitudes. From the beginning of Mu'awiya's rule (661 AD), he started to develop all the administrative systems of the State in order to be in conformity with its new attitudes of stability and expansion. He established three bureaus: epistles, stamp and mail⁽⁴⁹⁾.

When examining their jobs and tasks, we can conclude that their origins were already existing and they concentrated on writing and the efforts of secretaries of State. The first bureau wrote epistles and replied to them, the second one stamped them with the stamp of the Caliphate to avoid their forgery and the third sent them to the people concerned who were usually the employees of the State and heads of society⁽⁵⁰⁾.

Mu'awiyah employed a lot of secretaries of State to manage them such as Abdullah Bin Aws Al-Ghassani who was in charge of the bureau of epistles; Abdullah Bin Amr Al-Humeiri who was in charge of the bureau of stamp; Amr Sa'eed was in charge of the bureau of soldiers and Roman Sarjoun Bin Mansour was in charge of the bureau of Kharaj (land tax)⁽⁵¹⁾.

Most of Mu'awiyah's secretaries of State kept their positions during the Sufyani period and the jobs of some of them extended to the beginning of Abdulmalik Bin Marwan's period (684-705 AD) such as Sarjoun who was an advisor for Mu'awiyah and his son Yazeed (679-683 AD). It is stated that he advised Yazeed to nominate Abdullah Bin Ziyad (686 AD) as a vali of Kufah for his ability to control it after the disorders which happened following the movement of Al-Hussein Bin Ali (680 AD). Yazeed praised his opinion and carried it out⁽⁵²⁾, which indicates the political role of secretaries of state and their effect on the Caliphs' attitudes.

Mu'awiyah's valis in cities were concerned about choosing their secretaries of State; Ziyad Bin Abeeh, the renowned vali of Iraq chose them very carefully as he spent his life in administration⁽⁵³⁾. He thought that a secretary of State should be well-educated and should have five qualities: deep thinking, flexibility, precision, not putting off till tomorrow what should be done today and being loyal to his boss⁽⁵⁴⁾, as well as proficiency in language, rhetoric and handwriting. In regard to Kharaj secretaries, it was preferable that they should be from the heads of non-Arab Muslims (Persian) who were knowledgeable about the matters of Kharaj with their experience and obedience⁽⁵⁵⁾.

During the period of Abdulmalik, secretaries of state had a high status and their role in political and cultural life was prominent, some of them contributed in supporting his rule and stability of the state, the most important of whom ⁽⁵⁶⁾ were Kubeisah Bin Thu'eib Al-Khuza'i (705 AD) and Rawh Bin Zinba' Al-Juthami (703 AD). They were in the position of advisors or (ministers) for Abdulmalik. He used to praise their role and capabilities; he said, "Rawh is truly Syrian in his obedience, Iraqi in his handwriting, Hijazi in jurisprudence in Islam and Persian in writing"⁽⁵⁷⁾. For his respect of Rawh, he used to seat him beside him and sometimes they slept in the Caliphate's residence⁽⁵⁸⁾. Abdulmalik even considered him as one of his family members⁽⁵⁹⁾ in recognition of his role in supporting his father's (Marwan) rule during Al-Jabiyah conference (683 AD)⁽⁶⁰⁾. He was assigned the job of an ambassador on important missions to observe the jobs of some valis⁽⁶¹⁾. He took the responsibility of the bureau of the stamp as a deputy for Kubeissah. He was familiar with the epistles and important correspondence sent to the Caliph⁽⁶²⁾. He gave his opinion about the nomination of

some valis like Al-Hajjaj (694-705 AD) in Iraq, and Al-Waleed Bin Abdulmalik as a successor to the throne instead of Abdulazeez Ibn Marwan⁽⁶³⁾.

In regard to Kubeissah, he was a jurisprudent⁽⁶⁴⁾ appointed by Abdulmalik for the bureau of epistles and was authorized to read the epistles sent to him. He ordered his gatekeepers to allow him in, at any time, day or night. He read the epistles before being read by Abdulmalik⁽⁶⁵⁾ and took part in giving judgments and advice in the important affairs of the rule and State⁽⁶⁶⁾.

Abdulmalik's Arabization policy had a clear effect on the role of secretaries of state in culture and public life which formed a decisive turning point in their life in regard to competition for work and development of writing talents. The bureaus started to be written in classical Arabic and became available for all people and no longer confined to masters⁽⁶⁷⁾. The two sides entered in a competition for jobs and later this was changed into a fierce conflict that was put under more than one title such as the movement of nations which refused to recognize the privileged position of the Arabs (Al-Shu'oubeih) and atheism⁽⁶⁸⁾.

There was a gradation of the Arabization process and its burden was on the shoulders of secretaries of state⁽⁶⁹⁾. The bureau of Iraq (697 AD) was arabized by Salih Bin Abdulrahman as ordered by Al-Hajjaj⁽⁷⁰⁾; the bureau of Syria (700 AD) was Arabized by the vali of Jordan Suleiman Bin Sa'd Al-Khashni as ordered by Abdulmalik and his assistant Rawh Bin Zinbaa who convinced Suleiman of the importance and necessity of Arabization⁽⁷¹⁾; the bureau of Egypt (705 AD) was arabized by its vali Abdullah Bin Abdulmalik⁽⁷²⁾ and Khurasan's bureau was Arabized by Issaac Bin Taleeq in (741 AD)⁽⁷³⁾.

No clear change in the job and role of secretaries of state happened during the period of Al-Waleed Bin Abdulmalik (705-714 AD) with the exception of his desire to magnify the sent and received epistles in the bureau of the Caliphate and to distinguish them in the instruments used⁽⁷⁴⁾. Secretaries of State exaggerated in writing expenses and that was considered a waste of public money. When Omar Bin Abdulazeez assumed his responsibilities as a Caliph (717 AD), he ordered his secretaries of State to be brief in words and instruments to control expenditure and spend money on necessary things⁽⁷⁵⁾.

During the period of Suleiman Bin Abdulmalik (714-717 AD), Al-Leith Bin Abi Rukyah was in charge of the bureau of epistles⁽⁷⁶⁾. He continued during the period of Omar Bin Abdulazeez with others, the most important of whom was Rajaa Bin Haywah Al-Kindi (730 AD) who was in the position of an advisor for both (Suleiman and Omar). He played a prominent role in reinforcing their reform attitudes and supporting the transfer of the Caliphate to Omar⁽⁷⁷⁾.

It seems that writing kept the simple style of its first origin until the reign of Hisham Bin Abdulmalik (723-742 AD). Ihsan Abbass stated that writing remained as a means of carrying the orders and regulations of the Caliphate and was not transferred to a higher artistic stage in regard to expression and composition⁽⁷⁸⁾. He justified his opinion by saying: "that the connection of the bureau of epistle with a certain artistic degree was not in the mind of the Caliph or his secretary of state.

The artistic degree is required for impact and it is not necessary for giving information or guidance⁽⁷⁹⁾. He added clarifying that moving to a new style in the bureau of epistles did not appear before the end of the Umayyad Period as it was badly needed for the State to convey its political and religious address to people after the many disorders and the events of disobedience and rebellion against it⁽⁸⁰⁾.

So, the practical needs imposed the change of writing type and style. Al-Douri⁽⁸¹⁾ stated that the transfer of the late Umayyad State toward centralization in administration required the existence of culturally qualified secretaries of state to help the Caliph manage the State.

Therefore, distinguished secretaries of state appeared such as Salim Bin Abdulrahman (called Abi Al-Alaa) and his student Abdulhameed Bin Yahya (called Al-Katib). By them writing developed and the position of secretaries of state elevated with them⁽⁸²⁾.

Here the following important question arises: who were to be considered distinguished secretaries of state? What were their roles in transferring the position of secretaries of state to the rank of ministers later? The first was one of the Umayyads' supporters, in particular, Sa'eed Bin Abdulmalik's supporter (749 AD) and it is said that he belonged to Hisham Bin Abdulmalik⁽⁸³⁾. His childhood was unknown, but some stories referred to his learning bureau writing in his early age during Abdulmalik's period⁽⁸⁴⁾. He might have been a student of Kubeisha or Rawh who worked for the bureaus of epistles and stamp, as we have previously mentioned.

After a period of time, Salim appeared a secretary of state in the bureau of epistles⁽⁸⁵⁾. It seems that he was so brilliant in writing that Hisham appointed him in charge of the bureau and had his trust. He kept his secrets and dealt with people's needs. People gathered around him and followed his movement in a way that seemed he was walking in a procession. This drew the attention of the Caliph who blamed him. So, he refrained from that behavior which was just for the Caliphs⁽⁸⁶⁾.

Salim remained a secretary for Hisham during the period of his Caliphate which was twenty years. In case of his absence, Basheer Bin Abi Duljah⁽⁸⁷⁾ did his job. For that, most of

the epistles issued during Hisham's period could be attributed to Salim's pen⁽⁸⁸⁾. When Hisham died (742 AD), Salim sent to his successor, Al-Waleed Bin Yazeed to inform him of his death and Al-Waleed's being the Caliph. He became a secretary of the bureau of epistles, but he did not continue for a long time because the Caliph was killed several months after his nomination. His son, Abdullah came after him⁽⁸⁹⁾.

Ihsan Abbass considered the rapid action of Salim by informing Al-Waleed about the death of Hisham as a kind of loyalty to Al-Waleed who was insulted by Hisham and may be by Salim's pen to turn him away from being a successor to the throne in a way that he was imprisoned and accused of atheism⁽⁹⁰⁾. Ihsan's opinion may be right, but this study confirms the idea that the concept of loyalty to Salim was far away from being to individuals because it extended to the ruling family or the State. The evidence may be found in the contents of Al-Waleed's epistles which were written by Salim, in which there was emphasis on the importance of the Caliphate as a ruling institution and a position of the Caliphs and the Umayyad family as a leadership. According to him, it is "the deputyship of God in leading people on the earth⁽⁹¹⁾". He considered the caliphs as "inheritors of the prophets"⁽⁹²⁾. We find emphasis for most vocabulary items of the Umayyad political address such as the unity of the nation, principle of obedience, fate and divine authorization in rule⁽⁹³⁾, as well as the importance of succession to the throne which Salim considered as a guaranty for the unity of the ruling family and continuation of the State⁽⁹⁴⁾.

Concerning Salim's education and talents, they were wide and versatile. He was well-known for eloquence and rhetoric⁽⁹⁵⁾. The source of his culture ranged between the Arabic-Islamic culture and ancient cultures (Persian and Greek)⁽⁹⁶⁾. The stories mentioned that he translated Aristotle's epistles into Arabic, and he had a group of them in a hundred pages that are still existing⁽⁹⁷⁾. To show his deep culture, Ihsan Abbass, quoting from Ibn Al-Adeem (1261 AD), stated that some educated people of his time imitated him such as Ibn Shihab Al-Zuhri (741 AD), the fact which confirmed his role in cultural life⁽⁹⁸⁾.

The other distinguished secretary of State was Abdulhameed Bin Yahya Bin Sa'd, Al-Alaa Bin Wahab Al-Aamiri's supporter⁽⁹⁹⁾. It is said that he was Persian or Nabatean (ancient people of Iraq). His grandfather was a captive of (Al-Kadisiyyah Battle (636 AD)⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. Al-Balathri⁽¹⁰¹⁾ stated that he was from Al-Anbar (west of Iraq), while Ibn Al-Nadeem⁽¹⁰²⁾ considered him from Syria as his people lived near Al-Rakkah (north-east Syria now), in a place called Al-Hamraa⁽¹⁰³⁾. Regardless of his origins, he was a supporter with Arabic indication within the frame of Islam who was brought up with the Umayyads and was greatly sincere to them⁽¹⁰⁴⁾.

It seems that Abdulhameed started his life as a teacher wandering between countries to earn his living⁽¹⁰⁵⁾. His movement might have been the reason for reaching Al-Rasafah (near Al-Rakkah), the centre of the caliphate during Hisham's period where he met Salim the secretary of the previously mentioned bureau, who took him as his assistant and they had close relationship and were connected with relationship by marriage when Abdulhameed married one of Salim's daughters or sisters⁽¹⁰⁶⁾.

Abdulhameed worked in the bureau of the Caliphate and practiced writing epistles and Ihsan Abbass⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ ascertained the arrival of some of his early epistles, but Abdulhameed's stay in Al-Rasafah was not long, because Marwan Bin Muhammad (744-749 AD) chose him as a secretary for him and asked him to help in the management of the affairs of Arminia and Athrabijan in (732 AD). They remained together until they were killed by the Abbasssids in the south of Egypt in (749 AD)⁽¹⁰⁸⁾.

After his death, Abdulhameed left a great literary heritage which kept him alive in the minds of people. He obtained the praise of educated people in general and political writers in particular. They praised his talents and characteristics and considered him as an example to be followed in writing, for his loyalty and sincerity⁽¹⁰⁹⁾.

We can divide what has been said about him into two parts: the first has been about his favor on writing and its methods because he introduced methods, expressions and traditions that were not known in Arabic prose such as precise brevity in epistles, lengthening in praises and referring to political and ethical concepts⁽¹¹⁰⁾. Sayings were told about him; it was said, "epistles started by Abdulhameed and they were finished by Ibn Al-Ameed"⁽¹¹¹⁾. Ibn Al-Nadeem⁽¹¹²⁾ said: "from him the correspondents took and his way they followed", Ibn Khalikan described him saying: "he is an example of rhetoric in writing and other sayings".

The other section was about his manners which made him a man of the state and a high status writer, who expressed the vision of the state and its political thought. That was the real interpretation of the Abbassid Caliph Abu Ja'far Al-Mansour (753-774 AD)⁽¹¹³⁾ when he said: "Banou Marwan were better than us in three people: Al-Hajjaj, Abdulhameed Al-Kattib and the caller for prayer, Al-Ba'labki"⁽¹¹⁴⁾. Perhaps he wished he had an honest and loyal secretary of state who was capable of expressing his vision about the concept of the caliphate and the right of his Abbassid family to lead it, who were based on the principle of divine right in rule, stemming from the fact of their being sacred⁽¹¹⁵⁾. It was a principle adopted by Abdulhameed (in regard to the Umayyad family) and he defended it with all possible brilliance of forming the late Umayyad political address. His brilliance or may be his genius was manifested in the formation of the political address for Marwan Bin Muhammad when

the Umayyad State was undergoing its weakest stage as a result of the great number of enemies. In spite of the powerful personality of the Caliph and his leading quantities⁽¹¹⁶⁾, the State's address could be considered as a crisis one, through which Abdulhameed regained most of the intellectual bases which were adopted by the Umayyads to prove the legitimacy of their State since the beginning of their rule, like unity of the nation, necessity for obedience, refusal of the principle of revolt and accusation of insurgents of atheism.

He added a sacred religious glory to the Caliphate and Caliph⁽¹¹⁷⁾. He emphasized the principle of divine deputyship in confronting the opposition which employed these slogans⁽¹¹⁸⁾. In a epistle to Al-Waleed Bin Yazeed sent by Marwan in which he congratulated him the caliphate, Abdulhameed wrote: "May God bless the chief of believers for the guardianship of people and inheritance of the state... he did what pleased God and shouldered his responsibilities as God decreed...⁽¹¹⁹⁾". He confirmed that the Caliph was chosen by God to be his deputy on the Earth...⁽¹²⁰⁾.

After the assassination of Al-Waleed by Yazeed Bin Al-Waleed, Marwan refused the idea of revolt and condemned Yazeed's action. Abdulhameed wrote emphasizing the right of the Caliph and the position of the Caliphate⁽¹²¹⁾, which was to him from God who honored the Caliphs by it. After the seizure of power by Marwan in (744 AD)⁽¹²²⁾, Abdulhameed confirmed in his epistle the principle of the unity of the nation, obedience and refusal of revolt against the state. He said: "obeying chiefs is a blessing and revolt against them is disobedience...⁽¹²³⁾.

So, we find that Abdulhameed emphasized obedience to the Caliphs⁽¹²⁴⁾ who were chosen by God to govern the nation. He made them protectors of his religion; "whoever prefers his religion to his worldly existence, becomes loyal to his God and nation⁽¹²⁵⁾. Abdulhameed's role was not confined to writing epistles, but he gave his advice in administrative affairs and in the nomination of right people to shoulder responsibilities and defend the state⁽¹²⁶⁾. He expressed sound opinions about wars and their conditions of success. His opinions are considered a reference in military sciences⁽¹²⁷⁾ which shows his wide education that was based on practical experiences. He was the first to spend most of his life as an escort to Marwan Bin Muhammad in a lot of his external and internal wars⁽¹²⁸⁾.

This may explain his role in directing the policy of the Caliph and the state because he considered himself as responsible for protecting and defending the state.

Abdulhameed and his epistles had a great effect on culture and educated people, especially secretaries of state. His epistle to the secretaries⁽¹²⁹⁾ was considered as a reference or "constitution"⁽¹³⁰⁾ for secretaries after him. It was distinguished in its style and content as

secretaries were influenced by its ethics and culture which were closely connected with the state and people's lives.

In the area of education which should be available to secretaries, he thought that it should be versatile to include the sciences of the Holy Koran, jurisprudence, language, poetry, history, arithmetic and excellence of writing and handwriting⁽¹³¹⁾, for the secretary to be able to deal with all circumstances and occasions. It seems that comprehensive education became a necessity as a result of the multispecializations of the administration and bureaus. Each bureau required specific qualifications⁽¹³²⁾. Examples of these were:

- 1- Secretaries of the bureau of epistles were the most important ones as being in direct contact with the Caliphs and Valis⁽¹³³⁾. The secretary needed to master language, rhetoric, writing and hand- writing, be familiar with the Holy Koran, Prophetic Tradition, be familiar with sayings, oration, stories and poetry⁽¹³⁴⁾.
- 2- The secretaries of Al-Kharaj bureau were familiar with the basics of arithmetic processes, financial affairs, types of land, taxes, fields, crops, measures, weight, space and prices⁽¹³⁵⁾.
- 3- The secretaries of the bureau of soldiers and offers were familiar with the amounts of offers, provisions, soldiers ranks and everything related to the affairs of soldiers and financial affairs⁽¹³⁶⁾.
- 4- The secretaries of other jobs such as the secretaries of valis, judges, policemen and others. The secretary's duty was to be familiar with the nature and requirements of the job. All of them required specific knowledge and general education, in order to carry out the tasks precisely, as well as competence and moral qualities⁽¹³⁷⁾.

Concerning the secretary's qualities that should be available, may be summarized as follows:

- 1- Taking great care of the job of secretary because it is one of the most decent professions which ensures living and decent life and simultaneously plays a great role toward the state and nation⁽¹³⁸⁾.
- 2- Developing his knowledge in order to accomplish his job in the administration of state which governs people and safeguards their interests. Therefore, he should have good manners, manliness, forbearance and deliberation because the secretary is the spokesman of the Caliph, his source of information and is closer to him than his family and sons⁽¹³⁹⁾.

- 3- Having the qualities of intrepidity, justice, fairness, secrecy, cleverness, vigilance and he should have the qualities of the politician such as friendliness, flexibility and deep sightedness in dealing with people in general and people in charge in particular⁽¹⁴⁰⁾.
- 4- Taking care of his good appearance because the secretary should be elegant in his clothes, means of transport and house, but on condition that it should not reach the degree of wastefulness. Moreover, he should be brief and precise in his speech and should support his opinion with argument and evidence before expressing it⁽¹⁴¹⁾.

The qualities suggested by Abdulhameed seemed ideal and they were in contrast with what Al-Jahiz (868 AD)⁽¹⁴²⁾ reported later in his epistle "Dispraise of Secretaries".

This means that the Jahiz's speech reflected qualities which were not known in the early period of Islam.

Finally, the job of secretaries of state was constant and accomplished by the end of the Umayyad State to start a new stage in the lives of secretaries and their role during the Abbassid State to become ministers who took the responsibilities of administrating the state, together with the Caliphs in a state of competition.

Conclusion:

After this historical investigation of the origin of writing and the development of the job of secretaries of state and their role in the early Islam, we can conclude the following:

- 1- Writing in the Prophetic Period was an institutional stage which developed later with the development of the Islamic State, education movement and openness on other cultures. The beginnings of the secretaries' activities started with the documentation of the Holy Koran, agreements, treaties and Prophetic correspondence, the fact which made the secretaries of state support the call and state.
- 2- During the Orthodox period, writing developed in its instruments and ways and the secretaries of state practiced different writing tasks which were closely connected with the affairs of administration, finance, army and education by clear and brief methods.
- 3- During the Umayyad Period, writing developed and comprised all aspects of life and secretaries of state extended their writing and cultural activities to include the political domains which had to do with the affairs of the Caliphate and rule.

Two models were prominent: Salim Abi Al-Alaa and Abdulhameed Al-Katib who elevated writing and its purposes and arts to form the political address of the Caliphs. They were the most effective in drawing the general lines of writing and secretaries of state after them.

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