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***Social Classification and the Arabs in Early Islamic
History:Its Credit and Debit Aspects***

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Abstract

The expansion of the Islamic polity brought in its wake the cosmopolitisation of society due to the interaction with the diversified strata of the other civilisations, Empires, states, ethnic and racial communities, and the bearers of different cultures like the Byzantines, the Persians, the Africans, the Indians, the Soghdanians of Central Asians, the Magians, the Zoarastrians and the Azeries, etc. Due to the newly emerged multifaceted society and culture, the social fabric and classification took a new turn, giving birth to new and novel issues and questions. But those at the helm of affairs addressed them meticulously and very shrewdly through an effective administrative network of plans, policies, and programmes affecting the social, political, and economic setup of the newly conquered territories having both positive and negative implications with far-reaching consequences.

Key Words: *Arabs, the Holy Prophet (SAW), the Pious Caliphs, the Umayyads.*

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Introduction

The rise of Islam and the socialization of the Holy Prophet (SAW) transformed Arab culture, making it Islamic polity. The Pious Caliphatic rule, which lasted from the Prophetic to the Pious Caliphs, was marked by tribal feuds and divisions based on tribal loyalties and lineage. The Holy Prophet abolished the chieftain system and appointed trusted followers in different tribes and regions to educate them about society. He also appointed governors for the tribes they belonged to, ensuring that the whole tribe fell into the fold of Islam. Tribal divisions were based on tribal loyalties and lineage, encouraging different tribes to settle in newly conquered regions.

Governors played a crucial role in creating social friction and spreading minor prejudices throughout the Islamic Empire. Provincial feuds were based on regional basis, with the first outbursts felt in Iraq against Hijaz and Syria. The gubernorial role emerged as a strong contender in power and service dispensation, but the Umayyads further extended this role to sharpen divisions and crevices to consolidate their despotic rule.

The Umayyad period in the Arab world involved a series of conflicts, tussles, and feuds that continued throughout the region. Governors like Ziyad bin Abihi played a crucial role in holding tribal chiefs accountable and reorganizing the Arab tribes in Basra, leading to stability and consolidating gubernorial power but also causing discontent and feuds in the region of Khurasan.

Throughout the Umayyad period, Khurasan, a region similar to Kufa, Hijaz, and Iraq, experienced tribal conflicts and feuds. The first mass exodus of Arabs to Khurasan involved many Basarian tribes, leading to new inter-tribal conflicts. The situation intensified during Yazid bin Muawia's reign, with insurrections and tribal rivalries. Governors like Qutaiba bin Muslim and Yusuf bin Umar faced challenges, leading to fissures and issues for the governor. Provincial and regional prejudices were prevalent, with provinces favouring Imam Hussain and Hijazians falling to Abdullah bin Zubair. This provincial bias and territorial conflicts weakened the Umayyad Empire, leading to provincialism and a shift in governorship. This led to cultural misunderstandings, conflicts, and skirmishes.

The paper describes the entire process, from the time of the Holy Prophet(SAW) to the Pious Caliphate and the Ummayd dynasty, along with its advantages and disadvantages as well as its ramifications for the Islamic polity.

The Arabs

The rise of Islam and the socialisation of the Holy Prophet (SAW) transformed the Arab culture in multidimensional ways and the *ummah* culture holistically so much so that it became an empire, jolting the very global structure of that time. That unique tribal organisation by the Holy Prophet (SAW) has surprised and even sometimes mesmerised modern scholars to put this social and societal mores to exhaustive research [1]. Two aspects of these researchers have specific relevance to the gubernatorial roles of the Pious Caliphatic rule. These two aspects include the Makkian tribal living and tribal society and the Madinite inclusive structure comprising the immigrants, the helpers, and the Quraish, the tribe of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

In the post-Prophetic period, the Arab tribal system was fraught with contradictions, feuds, and protracted skirmishes. However, the Holy Prophet (SAW) abolished that chieftain system. He rather brought his social system people appointing his trusted followers in different tribes and regions to educate them about the organisation of the society [2]. To provide an example, the Holy Prophet (SAW) himself assumed the charge of the position of the chief in Madina to lead from the front [3]. Further, there were various examples of the Holy Prophet (SAW) appointing governors for the respective tribes they belonged to the whole tribe fell into the fold of Islam [4].

Surad bin Abdullah al-Azdi, for example, is stated to be the first such governor of the al-Azdi, his tribal faction, when they all embraced Islam [5]. The Holy Prophet (SAW) foresaw a sanguinity of ruling one's tribe through his mandated authority. It has also been seen through various other examples during the Pious Caliphatic reign as well as an Umayyad dynastic rule that mostly the chiefs were appointed from the same tribe, while the tribal traditions were also kept intact, for the tribes, too, favoured such appointments of governors [6]. Hence, the Prophetic wisdom of using his trusted members to govern his tribe proved an elixir for governing chaotic Arab nomads.

Himself an immigrant in Madina, the Holy Prophet (SAW) is stated to have demonstrated an inclination to use immigrants rather than helpers of Madina called *Ansar* in Arabic, though they also took part in the early expeditions [7]. The reason perhaps was that the tribes of Makkah like that of the Quraish had first-hand organisational abilities and resilience that a leader should have, which made the Holy Prophet (SAW) bless them with leading roles. A vast majority of governors and leaders belonged to these two tribes of Makkah as is shown by the Holy Prophet's (SAW) preference to appoint the people from

either the Thakafi tribe or from Quraish such as the appointment of Uthman al-Thakafi as the governor of Taif [8]. However, comparatively, the helpers were just land tillers and almost ignorant of the organisational benefits. That is why history provides testimony that the Holy Prophet (SAW) mostly preferred immigrants for appointments as military commanders in battles [9] until the most famous, *Ghazwah e Badr* or the Battle of Badr [10] Furthermore, there was a financial aspect to such appointments. Baladhuri, perhaps, has minutely observed this when stating about the Holy Prophet's (SAW) move of dividing the Banu-an-Nadhir (Jewish tribe of Madina) property among the immigrants, while among the helpers only Sahl bin Munaif and Abu Dajjana won the Prophetic favour on account of their poverty [11]. This distribution continued in the future such as in the post-Hunain period when the Holy Prophet (SAW) took up the work of booty distribution among different tribes among which the Quraish was at the top followed by the other Makkan tribes with less for the helpers.

When he made his way to Makkah during the conquest, both the Holy Prophet (SAW) as well as the Quraishis, who were his staunch enemies before this conquest, knew how he would treat them, for when he asked about it, they heavily praised him for his nobility and generosity to which he responded in affirmative [12]. Interestingly, the entire Quraish was awarded full liberty instead of putting their tribal property to distribution among his followers as was done in the previous conquests. Rather, he appointed various Quraishi young, educated minds as governors of some regions, specifically from the Umayyad branch; [13] perhaps to pacify their anger of having their major chieftains gotten killed in different skirmishes from the Badr to the last one *Ghazwah e Khandaqor* the Battle of Trench.

These factual narrations given in historical documents glaringly present before us the divisions, fissures, and cleavages existing in the Arab society of that time that the best efforts of the Holy Prophet (SAW), somewhat, succeeded but only during his lifetime. The political strife of Sakifa in Madina at Banu Saida is a case in point that the discord caused differing opinions in the Madanite social fabric [14]. Although the disputing parties were immigrants and helpers in the election of the Prophetic Deputy, it later burgeoned into a social issue [15].

An incident makes this clear how the parties were so much sceptical of each other. The heated debate over this election/selection invited different opinions from different followers. The case of Hazrat Umar (RA) and Hubab ibn Mundhir, a helper; wrangling the argument of succession shows when Hazrat Umar (RA) argued that the Arabs would never submit to the rule of the Madinites [16]. Then he advised him to look toward Hazrat Abu Bakr [17]. When

the dispute protracted, the sagacity of Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) led to the election through consensual consent [18].

The second split came soon after the martyrdom of the second caliph, partying the Madinites into supporters of the Banu Hashim, who supported Hazrat Ali (RA) to rule, and the supporters of Hazrat Usman (RA). The third group also emerged among them, supporting two other caliphatic candidates, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas and Abdur Rahman bin Awf from the Banu Zahra tribe [19]. Although it also settled down for the time being, it continued to simmer beneath the social fabric.

In those turbulent times, only Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) could have led the Muslims, which happened after he won the support of the majority of the Makkans and influential followers of the Holy Prophet (SAW) [20]. while several other tribes parted ways with the central authority, refusing to accept this governance Madinites model [21]. However, the resolution and determination of the first pious caliph to use the theological force multiplier of the newly established zealots of the state came to the fore to subject all such insurgencies to military onslaughts, getting rid of what they used to call *Al-ridda* (Apostasy Wars). Although the last caliph took almost the same path, the gubernatorial positions strengthened at that time, leading to somewhat insurgency-style splitting.

Therefore, it is imperative to unravel the *raison d'être* of these feuds to move to the social reorganisation of the Prophetic and Pious Caliphatic periods to shed light on the gubernatorial roles in policymaking and its implementation.

In this post-Prophetic demise period, the tribal feuds and their emergence might have proved a death knell, had the first caliph's sanguinity not brought it to an immediate halt with his own emergence as the towering leader. However, it provided a latent matchstick that could alight on itself at any time, causing old and buried tribal jealousies and prejudices to come to the fore. The heat of these inter-tribal initial controversies soon enveloped the entire *ummah*, though, stayed deep-seated in the initial few decades.

Although, some historians have rejected some of these narratives, terming them flimsy inter-sectional arguments to support the relevant narrative, while, others have supported them with historical records and evidence. However, another group of historians argues that these feuds erupted during the period of the third caliph, Hazrat Usman (RA) [22], and that before that it was all calmness and stability. It, though, is interesting to note that such cracks appeared during the time of Hazrat Umar (RA), the second pious caliph, too. The caliph is stated to have advised his governor, Abu Musa al Ashari, to deal

with the feuding tribes with military force to make them refrain from in-fighting and order them to seek forgiveness from Allah or seek assistance from their elected or selected leader [23].

Although this seems a cursory and curt advice, it has the force of the central authority, which seems to be delegated to that incumbent governor to use it, in case, this in-fighting continues or revert to the theological superiority of the gubernorial role.

Some of the tribal feuds erupted due to faulty remuneration and pension systems such as happened during the rule of the second pious caliph when some tribes complained about the faulty pension system for the soldiers, which, they said, was proving an irritant and long delays. However, the truth behind this was the foundation laid down by the Holy Prophet (SAW) led officials dealing with it to confuse it with his precedents set for the Quraish. However, the second caliph reorganised this system through tribal tracking of the soldiers, creating a very pernicious system of prioritising one tribe over the other and antagonising the deprioritised [24].

Among several tribal offshoots, the Holy Prophet (SAW) came from the Quraish who won priority in the eyes of the second caliph on account of the Holy Prophet's (SAW) familial relations, and even among them, the Banu Hashim won the top, leaving the Umayyad to vie for the top slot. Even in the Banu Hashim, the nearer to the Holy Prophet (SAW), the nearer to the caliphatic preference became a common precedent [25] in the pre-caliphatic Islamic government. Not finding enough, the second caliph issued a decree of the un-mixing of the Arabs with the non-Arabs creating a new cleavage in the newly formed Republic, resulting the Arabs retaining their traditional Bedouin lifestyle with tribal loyalty and individual liberty at the expense of corroding the central authority, [26] which has had hard time subduing them in later ever-emerging rebellions.

Perhaps such things led the purely Arab governors when appointed to Kufa to accept festival gifts during the Muawian period, witnessing which Amir Muawia imposed taxes on such gifts [27]. Abdul Malik when had to go ahead with a ban upon his governors from creating such precedents of accepting gifts. He even removed such a governor for ignoring the caliphatic decree [28] and the later caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz, entirely abolished this ritual which was taking firm roots in Kufa and was reaching fast in other corners [29] of the Islamic polity. These discriminatory gubernorial precedents do not seem to have the caliphatic bidding, yet they do not prove that the caliph was ignorant of such impositions, which led to the social fabric ripped apart by such unwarranted acts of the over-enthusiastic governors. Some of the governors even resorted to unlawful

practices, creating further social fissures. Further fuel was added to this newly lit fire by the separate tribal mosques in Kufa, which kept these tribes aloof from each other as well as from the local tribes, stopping their merger. This proved an ideal ground for creating social fissures to sow the seeds of future rebellion and tribal insurgencies [30]. The situation in other cities of Iraq was not much different.

However, these tribal divisions were not made based on administrative facilitation. These were tribal divisions based on tribal loyalties and lineage [32]. This, though, was not a novel precedent, for the second caliph already did it when appointing Abu Musa, issuing a decree for him to settle tribes in that region. As pointed out earlier, tribal loyalties prompted different people to get settle their tribes and families in the newly conquered regions, which had rich lands and fertile prairies.

Even the caliphs encouraged tribes about these settlement divisions in Kufa on account of governance and financial convenience for the government. Also, in case of some impending threat, it was easy to summon the soldiers from those martial tribes, the reason that this tribal warring spirit was kept alive during the Pious Caliphatic rule. Even Hazrat Umar (RA) relied heavily on this tribal warring spirit as was the case in the Battle of Bridge [33].

Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas went so far as to sub-divide his military organisation on tribal basis [34]. to provide a boost to the existing tribal pride. It seems that the second caliph strategised it on two counts; first to keep the tribes engaged to keep them busy and second to recruit soldiers.

If this issue was promoted by the second caliph, the third caliph continued with it, employing family members to the gubernatorial posts [35]. His favouring of family members created further fissures among the tribes it caused resentment among other tribes [36]. The opponents led by none other than the sons of the former caliphs alleged that Marwan bin Hakam, an individual of the dubious character, about whom the Holy Prophet (SAW) ordered to be expelled from the holy cities and banned his entry including his father, was not only recalled but also made the caliphatic secretary, who used to run the affairs of the government according to his own wishes and whims to the point of antagonising the opponent tribes [37]. The existing feud between the Umayyads and the Banu Hashim further worsened due to these policies of the third caliph, for both these tribes had a protracted but sagaciously subdued feud over the guardianship of the holy place of Ka'aba. This generations-old hostility caused resentment among the followers, leading to insurgency to cause a threat to the caliphatic seat [38]. Easily falling territories in Syria and Persia further boosted their morale as well as piety

to confront the caliph in the mosque. However, the Syrian governor, Amir Muawia did not hesitate to extend the law to deal with the influential followers of the Holy Prophet (SAW), who settled there. On the other hand, their superior purity gained from the proximity of the Holy Prophet (SAW), good educational spirit, and above all tribal pride, went so far as to challenge any wayward governor and make him flee to Madina, as it happened successively in Basra and Kufa [39]. Sociologically, Arabs were anathematic to the idea of having external control, partly, because of their first Muslims and partly because they were all Arabs; from the same blood and lineage. However, the governors always favoured the Quraish over others, and they favoured the Quraish such as Sa'd bin al-As, which is stated to have called the *swadi* lands the estate of the Quraish [40]. This calling proved offensive for the senior followers so much so that they alleged that those barren lands were nothing without their hard work and their fighting spirits. Further bickering on both sides led to in-fighting in the government led by a firebrand follower, Malik Ashtar, with various others, who rose to rebellion against the governor for drinking [41].

Further discrimination in the dealings of the Usmanid governors added more fuel to the fire. Tribal feuds were fanned with punishments and rewards to opposing sides in Kufa. Al-Tabari is stated to have recorded some notes between the Kufan governor of that time with Hazrat Usman (RA), saying that disturbance in Kufa was because of the nobility not agreeing to mix with the Bedouins, who accepted Islam after them. However, the caliphatic advice was in favour of the nobility, who were the earliest converts, and that the Bedouins should follow them [42]. However, some Arabs objected to these caliphatic decrees. It is stated that the caliph came strongly upon the objectors, ordering the expulsion of Ammar bin Yasir, a respected follower, from Madina. His tribe, the Banu Makhzun, fiercely contested this caliphatic decree, making the fourth caliph, Hazrat Ali (RA) mediate and request the caliph to revert to revisionism [43]. This innocent request for revision of orders later turned the Umayyads against the fourth caliph, sowing the seeds of permanent hatred and hostility between the Umayyads and the Banu Hashim. This inter-tribal feud also led to further divisions among the Arabs and non-Arabs alike; making some allies of the Banu Hashim, considering them the direct followers and familial relations of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Umayyads, who were in power and tried every time-tested technique of subduing or winning loyalties of the tribes by any means.

When Hazrat Ali (RA) assumed the charge of the caliphatic slot, the Umayyads fiercely alleged him to side the insurgents, who were instrumental in the regicide against Hazrat Usman (RA) [44]. Therefore, the caliph, as a

caliphatic precedent, had to go after the Umayyads, who were adamant in accepting the central authority. And all other tribe's hostile to the Umayyads stood by him but when it came to fierce fighting and reasoning, many of them turned to the Kharijites. The fourth caliph also selected a commander for the Battle of Camel (36AH/656AD) to win the support of his tribe against the Umayyad governor, Amir Muawia[45]. However, it does not seem to be such a masterful stroke in the wake of the strategisation of Muawia who instead of fighting a duel, turned to other theological engineering. The fourth caliph's pitting the same people from tribe to tribe in the same battle, however, did not pay off, yet it sowed the sour seed of fissures among the tribes [46].

Even the fourth caliph permitted the tribal chiefs to win the support of the sister tribes for both inter-governmental battles; for example, he asked Adiya bin Hathim to urge his people to join the caliphatic army [47] along with several other governors [48]. Although in legal parlance, it seems legitimate to ask tribes to join the army to bolster the armed forces of the Islamic polity. It seems that when Amir Muawia held his heels, the central authority started seeing it as a threat, which called for further recruitment, and without asking the tribal chiefs, this task was a Herculean one. The later battle, of the Siffin between the caliphatic and rebel gubernatorial forces, [49] provided a wider canvas to comment upon the social stratification, categorisation, and further division. Al-Tabari is of the view that Hazrat Ali (RA), specifically, enquired about every tribe having the soldiers in both armies to pit against each other, [50] a strategy he followed in the previous battle. This social engineering, perhaps, speaks volumes about the caliphatic sagacity of stopping the inter-governmental war that could lead to the deaths of thousands of Muslims, and he seemed to have won them, but ultimately, he lost to the game of the political tactics in which his opponent were excellent tacticians. This short review of the pious caliphatic period demonstrates the inter-tribal prejudices, tribal feuds, and use of the tribes against each other and against other tribes, which had positive dividends for the central authority. It was an old way of dealing with the social psyche of the tribal living. Later, further political storms such as religious ones along with urban and provincial respectively arose and subsided accordingly.

The history of these feuds led Hazrat Ali (RA), who was specifically wary of the Kufans and Basarian citizenry on account of their resentment and argument over *fai* and *kharaj* as well as tax collections [51]. This tribal resentment was one of the factors which led to the Battle of Camel [52]. Some governors dissuaded their tribes from taking part or not taking part in the battles which may amount to treason, treachery, betrayal, or deceit; the gubernatorial role is critical even in

creating this social friction. The later Battle of Siffin, too, demonstrated the same animosity, the Basarians supporting the Umayyadson account of their love to Hazrat Usman (RA), and the Kufans supporting the fourth caliph, [53] considering him a rightful heir to the caliphatic position. This urban rivalry spread to other areas leading to political characterisations of the cities [54]. These minor prejudices were amplified and multiplied with propaganda and rumours spread during caliphatic rivalries after the fall of the fourth caliph and spread throughout the Islamic Empire, causing wider social fissures, and leading to wider regional and provincial feuds. The role of governors in these petty feuds is clear from the governance.

Provincialism or provincial feuds were based on a regional basis. Its first outbursts were felt in Iraq against Hijaz or for that matter against Syria. This provincialism of that time proliferated in various shapes and strands and spread to the Far East and West. The first was the Kufans' intransigence against the centrally appointed governors since the time of the second caliph [55]. The second argument is that the evolution of this Kufan intransigence in general and Iraqi in specific toward the third caliph and his governors; both were derivative of the Iraqi nationalism or provincialism of that time against the central authority [56]. When the transition in rule occurred, it reflected through two provincialisms; the first of Iraqi against the Hijazian and Syrian and *vice versa* as the transfer of capital from Madina shows [57]. Although Hijaz, somewhat, remained critical in swaying the opinion between Syria and Iraq, yet it could turn into a decisive factor. This three-tier animosity could be observed from the position of Amir Muawiyah *vis-à-vis* Hazrat Ali which stipulated not only the tribes against tribes but also region against region such as the poetic verses of Ka'b ibn Ju'ayl, a court poet of Damascus at that time, alleged that the fourth caliph to remind him this factual position that both the people of Iraq and Syria harboured strong hostility towards each other [58].

It means that the social fissures or cracks, tribal prejudices and discriminations, social engineering, tribal manipulations, and consequential social reorganisation to suit the political stability and consolidation of centrality have been a characteristic feature of the entire caliphatic rule of the Pious Caliphs though; their main purpose was, obviously, the political stability. However, the gubernatorial role in the caliphatic period emerged as the strong contender in the power and service dispensation set up like in other various sectors and fields of a political polity. Yet, the Umayyads further extended this role in sharpening those divisions and crevices to consolidate their despotic rule, for they were more than aware of the insurgencies on account of the Prophetic proximity to the time and

space of that era. Therefore, gubernatorial machinations had a strong role in such re-engineering of the social fabric. The general pattern led to the in-depth exploitation of these weaknesses on a mass level for the smoothening administration.

For example, such social reorganisations ensued on a massive level with the consolidation of the political position of Amir Muawia (RA), a caliphatic governor, who rebelled against the same central appointing authority but used Yemenite crutches to ensure the Syrian throne for him. Seeing his end, he nominated his son Yazid, whose maternal relations from the Kalb tribe emerged as a reason for his quick political consolidation [59]. When Walid I assumed the charge of the caliphate, the Umayyad polity expanding, gubernatorial militaries of Hajjaj and other governors were conquering regions but also pitting the Arabs against non-Arabs in Iraq [60]. Walid's expulsion of Cyprians and ensuing anger led to a new social issue[61]. Hence, it seems that the last Umayyad caliphs seem to be engaged in securing familial support in either way to consolidate their rule. The reduced sovereignty of the empire led to a weakening of the central authority [62]. In this backdrop of the weakening Umayyad dynastic rule, the governors, too, became highly wary of the strong tribes and strong familial conglomerations. Not only they instigated the tribal feuds, but also, they also helped fuel these feuds to become conflagrations when it suited them. Although, Ziyad bin Abihi, the most prolific Umayyad governor, tried very much to win laurels in this field. The old loyal hands were much inclined to follow the Muawian policy of winning tribes for state policy matters such as recruitment of military, administration of the civil authority, and financial support for the state machinery [63]. For example, Amir Muawia's governor of Kufa, Mughira bin Shuba, rendered him great services by colluding with different tribes and winning intelligent governors for him such as Ziyad bin Abihi[64]. However, the legendary Ibin Abihi was so much involved in this social engineering of the tribes and their inter-tribal rivalries that he almost won the caliphatic seat for Amir Muawia (RA), who mostly relied on his gut feeling rather than his machinations against Hazrat Ali (RA) [65]. He belonged to the Thakifi tribe whose members mostly settled in the territories around Basra and made it their bastion. He was also a leading figure of the tribe during the time of the fourth caliph, who dealt with several tribes instigated by Amir Muawia[66].

However, it is surprising that the same governor turned against such machinations when he was made governor by Amir Muawia. He rather tried to unify all the Kufan and Basarian tribes under the one caliphatic banner of Amir Muawia[67]. Both these regions required the governmental writ, which in the

case of Basra required strong enough to cut the tribal strength with strong rule and law. Hence, Ibin Abihi made the tribal chiefs strong enough to hold the tribesmen accountable, while the governor held the tribal chiefs accountable for any crime committed by their tribal brethren or a single tribal individual [68]. Following his stern warning during the period of Amir Muawia (RA), Ibin Abihi went ahead with his moves of moving 50,000 families from both the troubled regions of Kufa and Basra to the newly conquered region of Khurasan [69].

Although temporarily this replacement and displacement policy brought much desired stability and consolidation of the gubernorial power, it also led to discontentment and the same feuds in the region of Khurasan.

However, Ibin Abihi was a very clever as well as politically shrewd governor, for he knew the incentivisation of the tribes. For example, he set to the re-organisational work of the Arab tribes in Basra, creating a tribe as a separate social entity with financial independence with the appointment of a chief in each tribe for receiving official pensions and rewards. This tribal reorganisation bore fruit in that [70] it continued long after his death. Despite this move as being a generalisation about the Arab tribes, Ibin Abihi also forged tribal relations [71] and alliances within inter-Arab and Arab, and non-Arab tribal alliances. This was intended to bring a social balance.

Even later governors, too, played with this fanciful but very fruitful idea of breaking up lineages, relations, and tribal links to rule. Ubaidullah bin Ziyad, the ruthless governor of Yazid, when appointed to Kufa, created fissures among the tribes. For example, when Muslim bin Aqeel, the cousin of Imam Hussain bin Ali, arrived in Kufa to get consensus from the people about the caliphatic claim of Imam Hussain, Ibn Ziyad dispatched Quraishi tribesmen to arrest him, being aware that he would not be caught by any other tribe [72]. Pitting a tribe against another tribe was not his foray; rather, he preferred pitting a tribe with itself to break up the ranks gathering against the central authority, or gubernorial writ. However, when the tragic incident of Karbala took place, Ibn Ziyad felt the heat of his actions resorted to the tactics of exploiting and manipulating tribal loyalties [73]. Soon he heard that Yazid breathed his last, and turbulence created by his senseless massacre and genocides of his rival tribal chiefs, Ibn Ziyad became paranoia about Banu Bakr and Banu Tamim, two formidable tribes of his times and sought shelter from al-Zad. With the assistance of this tribe, he fled to Basra [74]. That is why when Ubaidullah resisted Yemenites and Azadites in Kufa, he won support of the later in Basra but when he fled to Syria, he conspired with Marwan bin Hakam for the caliphatic slot despite the fact that Yemenites

supported Marwan [75]. Truly arguing, Ibn Ziyad had been a highly capricious person with no tied-loyalties to any faction or person; he did not have any bad blood for Yemenites, neither he had any soft corner for Mudharites. He was only with the Umayyads, whosoever took the charge [76].

Following the civil turbulence in post-Yazid period, Hajjaj's governorial role was the only thing that consolidated the Umayyad rule, he himself supported the Yemenites and favoured the Azd when ruling Iraq, while Muhallabies were his favourites, for Muhallab bin Abi Sufra to Khurasan as an official [77] and also, he was his henchman while curbing the Kharijite threat and showered praises on him after he stood victorious against that threat [78]. This shows that the major intention of Hajjaj was the caliphatic consolidation and political stability in his region as the central representation. Therefore, he always made efforts to stay above these tribal frictions and conflicts. Regarding the Umayyads as his benefactors, he always tried to consolidate them in one or the other way. Although it is not narrated whether Hajjaj was aware of such internal tribulations or not, both, he nor Ziyad bin Abihi, did not implement anti-central policy; rather, they always endeavoured to exploit inter-tribal conflicts to consolidate the caliphatic position and bring regional stability.

However, when Hisham bin Abdul Malik assumed power, he was constantly faced with the power struggle between two tribes the Yamenites and the Qais, who violently rose against the central authority [79]. Following this start, Yazid bin Abdul Malik assigned Iraq to Umar bin Hubaira from the Thakafites, who were aligned with the Qaisites. Yazid let him loose on the Iraqi tribes to nip the insurgent tendencies in the bud [80]. Therefore, these two examples of governorial administration demonstrate the governorial roles in fanning tribal conflicts to consolidate their authority to contribute to the caliphatic control. In a way, they favoured one tribe to dominate the other and vice versa to accomplish their goals.

When Hisham bin Abdul Malik succeeded Yazid II as a new caliph, he immediately dismissed Umar bin Hubaira to deal with the Qaisite ruling tribe in the east, who were being empowered and posing a serious threat of secessionist tendencies. He appointed Khalid bin Abdullah al Qaisri from the sub-tribe of the Bajila of the Qasr tribe, as this offshoot did not favour the Bani Mudhar or Yemen [81].

The region of Khurasan was not different from Kufa, Hijaz, and Iraq. The tribal conflicts, tussles, and feuds continued throughout the Umayyad period with governorial part quite significant. As the Arab migrations or mass exodus targeted Khurasan at the behest of Ziyad bin Abihi, it is stated that the first mass

exodus to Khurasan was around 25,000, a mass of different tribes that reached there from Basra, and another batch of unknown numbers reached Khurasan a decade later in 683AD [82]. Although geographically Khurasan provided the Arabs with vast plains to travel, they found it awkward to cross occasional streams and hilly regions, for they were mostly accustomed to the vast deserts [83]. Most of the Basarian tribes such as the Qais moved to the Khurasan region to settle there, while some other tribes merged after their forced or willing displacement. For example, the Bani Bakr and the Bani Tamim tribes merged in the east and settled in the Sistan territory, present-day Iran. This led to new inter-tribal conflicts in a new shape [84]. Old habits die hard seem to be their motto, for in Khurasan, Bani Bakr and Bani Qais joined hands to be Rabinites, and the Yemenite Azdites, who reached there later, locked horns with others such as the Mudarites, a conglomeration of the Bani Qais and the Bani Tamim tribes having pride at their lineage and ancestry [85]. The same old Arab pride still lingered even in the massive tribal settlements, leading to gubernatorial interferences and suppression through armed forces [86].

However, the situation during the period of Yazid bin Muawia (647AH/683AD) about the gubernatorial dealings with the tribal and inter-tribal conflicts and feuds became intense with some other incidents of bloodshed inviting extreme measures from the caliph. Soon the whole region witnessed outright insurrections, leading to various tribal rivalries which continued until Abdullah Ibn Khazim joined hands with the Tamimi tribe and brought Herat under control, though, he did not want to share power with the Tamimis. He soon resorted to conferring the posts to his near and dear ones; first handing over the city to his son, Muhammad, with his aide, Bukair as his force commander with specific instructions not to entrain the Tamimis. Now, the Tamimis were left to deal with Bukari, the commander, who enticed them with monetary benefits in return for their withdrawal. However, sensing deceit, they invaded the city, arrested Muhammad after subjecting him to torture for a night, and subsequently beheaded him. It does not seem to hurt in that context where friendships were forged with power and status [87]. All these minor bickering and conflicts seemed to die down when Hajjaj was given charge of Khurasan and its adjoining areas. Muhallab was, then, governing Khurasan and swore allegiance to the governor from his tribe along with other offshoots such as the Azad, the Bakar, and the Rabia, while the Mudharites from the Tamim and the Qais lost their majority after the gubernatorial shift in the balance of power [88]. Despite Muhallab's tendency to mend his relations with Hajjaj, he failed and Qutaiba bin Muslim won his place for Khurasan's governorship in 85-86AH/704-705AD.

This ploy of Hajjaj of bringing a person from an insignificant tribe to win alliances from other tribes and stand by the central authority for support worked [89].

This strategy worked in the favour of the caliphate, too, for winning support from the Khurasani territories and making Hajjaj his favourite. However, Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik, his successor after Walid I's death, held a grudge against Hajjaj and his aides, while sensing his fate hanging in balance, Qutaiba rose to rebellion against the caliph but failed to win public consensus. Therefore, he scolded the Arab tribes settled in Khurasan for their ineptitude and weaknesses [90]. This caliphatic shift brought various changes. Sulaiman appointed Yazid bin Muhallab again, but he was not tribe-less like Qutaiba. The Bani Azd, his tribe, soon rose into the caliphatic estimations, getting their pensions again but at the expense of the Bani Tamim. Yazid bin Muhallab not only harboured Syrian troops but also recruited all his blood relations, including his own sons into the Syrian army to make his base strong [91]. This brought a temporary halt to the tribal conflicts, for other tribes saw their immediate elimination in sight at these fast changes. However, with the arrival of Umar bin Abdul Aziz, everything came to an end as if nothing existed, but resurfaced with the arrival of Yazid II, who again appointed an Umayyad person, Said Khudhaina, to turn the table against the Bani Azd tribe and treat them as the state enemies [92]. These tribal rivalries continued during these times of the Umayyad caliphs capturing and losing the throne in Damascus until Hisham bin Abdul Malik. He immediately removed Khalid from his post as the governor and again brought the Hajjaj family into the limelight, by appointing Yusuf bin Umar, a Qaisite. However, in the case of Khurasan, Hisham appointed Nasr bin SaiyarKinnani, having no tribal loyalty or support in that territory. Therefore, he was bound to come to the caliph for support. Being a Kinnanite, he was at a disadvantage for having a few families in Khurasan, who could be of little help to him in response to rivalries, or even for his anti-caliphatic move. However, his familial support went to the Bani Tamim, a tribe related to his tribal offshoot for being both offshoots of the Banu Khinda. Therefore, he went on the spree of replacing other officials with the Tamimis to win their support [93]. His intention, though, seemed to unify the Arabs in support of the caliphate to leave the conflicts. His non-partisan approach succeeded on account of his having no strong tribal affiliations which strengthened his government in Khurasan [94]. This is just one aspect of the inter-tribal rivalries and their aftermaths. Other Muslim provinces were not immune to such changes of loyalties and fates.

Take the example of Egypt. Almost the same happened in Egypt what happened in Iraq and other territories occupied in the pre-Umayyad period. The

governors of this dynasty followed the same tribal conflict causing policies in Egypt by keeping the Arabs in their tribal quarters. For example, Amr bin al-As, when governing Egypt, mostly depended on the migrants from Yemen [95]. The Arab tribes soon developed fissures, causing serious issues for the governor [96]. This happened during the time of the Pious Caliphs and then again during the time of Amir Muawia. This was the entire review of the gubernatorial role in fanning or subduing the inter-tribal conflicts and feuds for the sole purpose of consolidating their positions and strengthening control of the central authority. Also, those feuds evolved further with time, specifically, keeping in view the caliphatic figure and the gubernatorial persona. For example, the factional or tribal identity was the hallmark of the province during the period of Amir Muawia such as the people of Kufa were with Hazrat Ali (RA) and of Basra with Hazrat Usman (RA) [97]. Similarly, most of the Syrians were Umayyads, while Hijazians were mostly orthodox in theological terms but not in ethnocentric terms [98]. When Amir Muawia assumed the charge of the seat of the caliph, he moved the public treasury to his capital city, Damascus [99]. However, when Yazid I came into power, Iraqis inclined towards Imam Hussain (RA), the son of the fourth caliph [100], while Hijazians fell to Abdullah bin Zubair [101]. This was the provincial reaction and provincial ostracisation in the case of direct involvement of the caliph.

However, in the later period, when Hajjaj was in power in Iraq, he built Al-Wasit city and tried to keep the Syrian and Iraqi troops segregated [102]. He considered Iraqis his staunch enemies [103]. As far as his feud with Ibn al-Ashth was concerned, it was not just a tussle of being an Arab versus non-Arab. It was a provincial bias of a Syrian against an Iraqi. In other words, it was the old and provincial rivalry of Syria and Iraq. Furthermore, not only the Syrian troops were imperialistic in their mindset but also arrogant when in the other lands, leading to their unified lives [104]. It is stated that during the period of Yazid bin Walid, Egyptians killed their commander and the same was the case of Hims. Even the Madinites expelled their governor on provincial prejudice [105]. This was the situation of provincial and regional prejudice during the Umayyad period. However, in terms of urban prejudice or conflicts, the Umayyad period has various examples of this discrimination. Writing about the Umayyad caliphate and factionalism of governors, Hawting says:

The importance of the career of Ibn al-Muhallab lies in its intensification of the factional schism. His defeat was followed by the installation of Qaysis and other 'northerners' into the key offices in Iraq and the east, as a reaction to the

identification of Ibn al-Muhallab with the Azd. To Iraq as governor there came a Qaysi, 'Umar b. Hubayra, a former governor of Mesopotamia [106]. He argues that the gubernorial factionalism uprooted the very foundations on which the Umayyad Empire was built. This turned into provincialism as his argument of the installation of the Qaisis shows that they occupied the key posts as opposed to the Azdis. This change in governorship ultimately swayed the entire population to turn antagonistic to the other tribe. These petty issues soon developed into cultural strands to feel pride in and belittle the other cities' citizenry, making it vulnerable to the governors to feel the same for their counterparts and take these little prejudices to the next level of battles and skirmishes.

Conclusion

The foundation of the Pious Caliphatic authority resulted from the transformation of Arab culture brought about by the arrival of Islam and the teachings and practices of the Holy Prophet (SAW). During the aforesaid period the Holy Prophet (SAW) and his companions introduced and practically manifested social justice and economic equality through egalitarian system based on non discriminations and circulation of wealth.

During the Umayyad period the old primitive pre-Islamic tribal jealousies and communal biases resurfaced causing serious damages to the social fabric of the Islamic polity. The most glowing and glaring example was the rejuvenation of the rivalry between Banu Umayyah and Banu Hashim. Governors were a major factor in the Islamic Empire's social unrest and the propagation of small-scale prejudices. Tribal chiefs were held responsible by governors like as Hajjaj bin Yousaf and Ziyad bin Abihi, but conflicts and unrest persisted in Khurasan and al-Iraq. The Umayyad Empire was weakened as a result, and governorships changed and provincialism increased.

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