

Raja Ibnhayawahalkindi and His Role in the Umayyad State Policy

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Abstract

This research highlights a prominent figure that played an important political and administrative role in the Umayyad era, where he could make a dramatic political change in the Umayyad reign system by transferring - for a while - the caliphate of the sons of Abdel malikIbn Marwan to Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz, which was an unprecedented event. It is Raja IbnHayawahAlkindi, who left a clear imprint in the Umayyad state policy. He served as a judge and adviser to the caliphs: Abdel malikIbn Marwan, Suleiman IbnAbdel malikand Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz. Also, he was tasked with supervising the construction of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem by Caliph Abdel malikIbn Marwan.

Keyword: Raja IbnHayawah, Umayyad State, Umayyad caliphs , Historical Narrative , Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz

Introduction

Raja IbnHayawahAlkindi is considered as one of the most influential figures in the Umayyad era; his devout and pious character played a part in it. His closeness to the princes of the Umayyad house sowed the seeds of goodness and reform in this luxurious environment. Therefore, this character raised his profile in the hearts of the Umayyad caliphs and princes like; the caliph Ibn Abdel malikand his two sons Walid and Suleiman and the caliph Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz. Those caliphs' reign was made possible by the goodness seeds he instilled in the Umayyad reign.

Previous studies

Some researchers have addressed Raja IbnHayawahAlkindi's character, like a study entitled: Raja IbnHayawahAlkindi is a Muslim scholar who has made a change to the reign system in Damascus, by Salah Alkhalidi. The researcher provided a valuable study on Raja IbnHayawahAlkindi, but one of the its deficiencies is that Raja was a contemporary of the prophet's companion, Mu'azIbnJabal, while IbnAsaker ruled this out. Alkhalidimentioned that Raja was called Palestinian in a time and Jordanian in another one without giving reasons for this. He also overlooked his role in the administrative supervision of the construction of the Dome of the Rock, and his role in the distribution of money in some important battles, and his role in history narrative. Moreover, the old study dates back to 1984 in a popular magazine, and the resources were not documented on a scientific basis when it comes to: the years and place, publishing house and editions of the resources relied upon in his study. This study is added to what has preceded it in this field.

1. The Objective of the Study

The study aims to demonstrate the role that Raja IbnHayawahAlkindi has played in guiding the Umayyad caliphs towards the good. His efforts for change in the Umayyad regime resulted in Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz taking over the caliphate. The study also aims to describe the impact of opinion leaders (counselors) in the reform of the ruler and ruled.

The First Research: The Life of Raja Ben Hayawah

Life: Raja IbnHayawahAlkindi was born and raised in Bissan on the West Bank of Jordan Valley⁽¹⁾. Unfortunately, the primary recourses are unable to provide us with the year when he was born, which made it difficult to obtain a clear picture of his age. Primary recourses described him sometimes as Jordanian and Palestinian at other times. In order to remove ambiguity, Raja was described as Jordanian because he was born in Bissan in Jund al-urdun, and described as Palestinian because he moved to Palestine, which was mentioned by IbnAsaker who said: "Raja IbnHayawah lived in Jordan in a city called Bissan, and then moved to Palestine"⁽²⁾. " Perhaps, the first caliph Raja was contemporary of was Mu'awiyahIbnAbiSufyan, and he died during HishamIbn Abdul Malik's caliphate⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾Alkhaldi, Salah, Raja IbnHayawah, Journal of the Qatari nation, Fifty Issue, 1984, p. 60.

⁽²⁾IbnAsaker, TareekhDimashq, chap. 18, p. 102.

⁽³⁾IbnAsaker, ibid, c 18, p. 115.

In fact, Raja was venerable in the hearts of the people of Syria. He was one of the few people who dealt with the prophet's Hadith word for word and not on the sense ⁽⁴⁾like others. And Raja is in the third or fourth generation of followers⁽⁵⁾. Some researchers mentioned that Raja IbnHayawah was a contemporary of Mu'azIbnJabal⁽⁶⁾, while IbnAsaker ruled this out in his history book: "This is not true, given his age, Raja's couldn't have met Mu'azIbnJabal, this is untrue story"⁽⁷⁾. The study tends to rule out a meeting between Mu'azIbnJabal who died in 18 AH / 639 AD with Raja IbnHayawah who died in 112 AH / 730 AD.

Family: Raja IbnHayawahIbnJandalAlkindi, and reportedly his grandfather was a companion of the Prophet, peace be upon him⁽⁸⁾. He took some narrations from a number of companions and followers of them such as: MuawiyahIbnAbiSufyan, Abdullah IbnAmrIbn Al-Aas, Mu'azIbnJabal, ObadaIbnAlsamit, Mahmoud IbnIbnrabe'e and others⁽⁹⁾. Asim (his son), Makhoul, Alzuhri, Ibrahim IbnAbiAblah and others (10).

The Second Research: Raja IbnHayawah and his administrative role

Raja IbnHayawahheld several administrative positions throughout his life, including the judiciary, as he was credible to Caliph Al-walidIbn Abdel Malik regarding Fatwa.It was narrated that a woman sold utensils in a brass market in Damascus. The buyer returned it to her when he realized that it was made of gold; she probably sold them without knowing they are made of gold. The woman then refused to take them back and said: "we inherited them as brass, if it is gold, it's yours". Then, they were referred to caliph Al-walid who consulted Raja IbnHayawah on the case, and he replied: "O Amir al-Mu'minin (Commander of the Faithful)!Pay her the price and keep it in Bayt Mal Al-muslimin (Muslims' House of Money)"⁽¹¹⁾. Perhaps this trust made caliph Al-walidgave him the task of the judiciary, it is said: "Raja IbnHayawah was a judge and came to Alkufa"⁽¹²⁾.

Apparently, he refused to take the judiciary office for some reason not mentioned in the primary sources. He served as an adviser to caliph Suleiman IbnAbdel malik who would consult him on the appointment of judges to the regions⁽¹³⁾, and served as an adviser to some of the governors of the regions. When caliph Abdel malikIbn Marwan killed Musab, the governor of Iraq, before his brother Abdullah Ibn al-Zubayr, he appointed his brother BishrIbn Marwan as a governor of Iraq and left Raja IbnHayawahAlkindi with him⁽¹⁴⁾. Probably Raja was asked to stay close to Bishr so that he could advise and assist him in running his administration affairs and monitoring him, where some sources mentioned that Bishr was alcohol drinker⁽¹⁵⁾.

RajaIbnHayawah was also responsible for keeping a battle's spoils sent to the land of Romans by caliph Abdel Malik Ibn Marwan, taking care of his brother MuslamaIbn Abdul Malik. He also assumed the responsibility of the houses of money and treasuries during the caliphate of Abdel malikIbn Marwan in Damascus⁽¹⁶⁾.Raja was really trustworthy; when caliph Ibn Abdel malik wanted to construct the Dome of the Rock, he sent him plenty of money and workers along with YazeedIbnSallam, his guardian (mawla), to help him, and rounded up all kinds of craftsmen from different parts of the country and pushed them to Jerusalem.

⁽⁴⁾Althahabi, Shams al-Din Mohammed Ibn Ahmad (748 AH / 1347 AD), TareekhWaWafayatAlmashaheerWaAla'alm, chap. 15, annot: Bashar AwadMa'arouf, Dar AlgharbAlislami, 1sted, 2003 chap. 3, p. 234. Alfasawei, YaqoubIbnSufyan (d 277 AH / 890 AD), Almaa'refaWaAltareekh, annot: AkramDheyaAlomari, Alresalah Foundation - Beirut, 2nd ed.1981 vol, chap. 2, p. 329.

⁽⁵⁾IbnAsaker, *ibid.*, chap. 18, p. 101.

⁽⁶⁾Alkhaldi, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁽⁷⁾IbnAsaker, *op. cit.*, chap. 18, p. 100.

⁽⁸⁾ IbnAsaker, *ibid.*, chap. 18, p. 6. Abdullah Ibn Muslim Aldainouri (d. 276 AH / 986 AD), annot: TharwatOkasha, the Egyptian General Book Authority - Cairo. 2nded, 1992, chap. 1, p. 472.

⁽⁹⁾IbnAsaker, *op. cit.*, chap. 18, p. 97. Althahabi, Shams al-Din Mohammed Ibn Ahmad (748 AH / 1347 AD) The Lives of Noble Figures, Dar Alhadith - Cairo chap. 8, 2006, chap. 4, p. 492.

⁽¹⁰⁾IbnAsaker, *op. cit.*, chap. 18, p. 97.

⁽¹¹⁾ IbnAsaker, *ibid.*, chap. 1, p. 332

⁽¹²⁾IbnAsaker, *ibid.*, chap. 18, p. 101. Alkhaldi, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁽¹³⁾IbnAsaker, *ibid.*, chap. 33, p. 345. Alfasawei, *op. cit.*, chap. 2, p. 369.

⁽¹⁴⁾IbnAsaker, *ibid.*, chap. 33, p. 344.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Mohammed Ibn Abdel Quddus (d 331 AH / 942 AD), Alwozara'aWalKottab, annot: Mustafa Alssaka et al., Mustafa Albany Alhalabi press - Cairo, 1st ed.1938, p. 25.

⁽¹⁶⁾IbnAsaker, *op. cit.*, chap. 9, p. 168.

Consequently, they built a fascinating construction which was piled with colored marble, provided with dedicated servants, decorated with gold and silver lamps and chains, and furnished with different kinds of colorful rugs. They would light incense which could be smelt from a distance⁽¹⁷⁾. As soon as the construction had been completed, there was between three hundred to six hundred thousand dinars left. They then wrote to Abdel malik who replied: "I grant it to you, "they said: "if we could, we would help construct this mosque using our women's jewelry," he wrote to them: "if this is case, pour it on the dome and the doors". The dome was coated with so much - new and old- gold that no one could contemplateit⁽¹⁸⁾.

Raja IbnHayawah also played a role in the appointment of some governors with efficiency and righteousness. When caliph Suleiman IbnAbdel malikintended to appoint a governor to Africa, he said to Raja IbnHayawah: "I need a virtuousman to govern Africa",Raja spent days thinking of a man who is qualified to assume this responsibility, and then said to the caliph: "MohammedIbnYazeed,Quraish'smawla", the caliph listened to him and entrusted Mohammed who proficiently ranhis people and initiated reforms in 97 AH/716 AD.MohammedIbnYazeed remained the governor of Africa for over two years by the ruler of Egypt sending the brigades to the African borders, and he would divide, with them, the spoils he acquired⁽¹⁹⁾.

Raja IbnHayawah was also in charge of the janitorial for caliph Suleiman after he gained the trust of the Umayyad caliphs, and took advantage of this trust to serve and fulfill the needs of the poor and needy⁽²⁰⁾. He was responsible for clerks of Caliph Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz⁽²¹⁾. It was said that heplaced the coronation ring on MuslamaIbnAbdel malik⁽²²⁾.

The Third Research: Raja IbnHayawah's Political Role.

We said that Raja IbnHayawahexercised his consultative role for the caliphs whom he won their trust and who realized his wisdom. Also, he took advantage of this role in transferring the caliphate of Bani Marwan to Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz, an unprecedented event, without occurring to the house of the Umayyad members. Perhaps, this is what Raja IbnHayawahhad in mind, a secret he didn't disclose to the nearest of his confidantes.

Raja IbnHayawahCaliph Suleiman illness that preceded his death: It was on Friday Caliph Suleiman was wearing green silk garments. He looked in the mirrorand said: "O God, I'ma young king". After that, he left and led the people in Friday prayers, but when he came back home, he was taken ill. Once he felt like he had one foot in the grave, he wrote a letter, entrusting one of his son who has not reached the age of majority, Rajasaid to him: "O Commander of the faithful! What are you doing? It would save a Caliph in his grave to entrust a righteous man to governing Muslims". After one or two days, Suleiman tore up the letter, called Raja, and asked: "What do you think of Dawood, the son of Suleiman?" I said to him:"he's away from you in Constantinople, and you are not wary whether he's is alive or dead! Suleiman asked: "who do you think fit?" I said: "O Commander of the Faithful! It's your decision" he asked: "what do you make of Omar IbnAbdAlaziz"? I answered⁽²³⁾: "I know, by Allah, he is a righteous and virtuous Muslim", and he conceded: "Definitely he is", and then added: "I'm quite certain If I didn't select a successor to rule after him, it would unleash disorder and they would never lethem be their Caliph, and since YazeedIbn Abdel malikis absent, I will make him his successor to their satisfaction."

⁽¹⁷⁾IbnAbdRabbu, Ahmed Ibn Mohammed (328 AH / 939 AD), AlaqdAlfareed, annot: AbdAlmajidAltejeeti, Dar Al-kotob Al-ilmiyah, 1sted, chap. 5, p. 148

⁽¹⁸⁾IbnKatheer, Ismail Ibn Omar Al-Qurashi (died 774 AH / 1372 AD), AlbedayahWalNnehayah, annot: Ali Shery, DarIhya'aAltorathAlarabi, 1st ed, 1988, chap. 8, p. 309. Aref, Almofassal Fe TareekhAluods, publications of the Ministry of Culture, Amman - Jordan, 2009, p. 108.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Ibn Abdel-Hakam, Abdul RahmanIbn Abdullah (died. 257 AH / 967 AD), FotouhatMasrWalMaghrib, Religious Culture Library, 1415AH, p. 241. IbnIdhari, Mohammed Ibn Mohammed of Marrakech (died. 695 AH / 1295 AD)AlbayanAmugharib Fe AkhbarAlandalusWalMaghrib, annot: J.S. Kolan, A. VierreVensal. Dar Althaqafa, Beirut, Lebanon, 3rd ed, 1983, chap. 1, p. 47.

⁽²⁰⁾IbnKatheer, op. cit chap. 8, p. 309.

⁽²¹⁾Aljahshyari, op. cit., p. 53. Alnoueiri, Ahmed Ibn Abdul Alwahab (died. 733 AH / 1332) NihayatAlarb Fe FonounAladab , National Library and Documentation, Cairo, 1st ed, 1423, chap. 21, p. 372.

⁽²²⁾Alttabari, Mohammed IbnJarir (died. 310 AH / 922 AD), TareekhAlrosolWalMolouk, annot: Ibrahim Abou El Fadl, Dar Alamaref, 2nd ed, chap. 6, S181.Ibn Katheer, op. cit, chap. 9, p. 181.

⁽²³⁾ IbnAlAtheer, Mohammed Ibn Mohammed Al-Shaibani (died. 630 AH / 1232 AD), AlkamilfeAltareekh, annot: Omar AbdessalamTadmori, Dar AlketabAlarabi, Beirut - Lebanon, 1sted, 1997, chap. 4, p. 96. IbnAljawzi Jamal Al-Din Abdul Rahman (died.. 597 AH / 1220 AD), Almuntazam FeTarikhAlOmamamWalMolouk, annot: MohammedAbdelckader Atta, Mustafa Abdelckader Atta, Dar Al-kotob Al-ilmiyah, Beirut, i 1, 1992, chap. 7, p. 32.

Then Raja said: "It's your call". After Suleiman saw his soothing position, he wrote: "In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. This letter from the servant of Allah, Suleiman, Commander of the faithful, to Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz, you shall be my successor and Yazeed Ibn Abdel malik shall be after you. So, listen and obey him, and fear Allah and do not fall into disputes lest your enemy covets you"⁽²⁴⁾.

Some researchers believed Raja Ibn Hayawah was careful not to express his opinion about the succession of Yazeed after Omar. This was the reason he wasn't so enthusiastic or supportive of Suleiman's order, because he knew it was inconsistent with the Islamic system of government. However, he did not oppose Suleiman's opinion, not because he was convinced with his opinion, but to secure Suleiman's approval for the succession of Omar in writing. He feared if he hadn't agreed upon Yazeed after Omar, Suleiman could have changed his mind about Omar's succession. He might therefore have missed the opportunity that probably could fulfill the hopes of Muslims. Seemingly, he agreed on that to leave it for Omar to select his successor, because he had a prior knowledge that Omar wouldn't agree on Yazeed to be his successor; the change would come out of the center of caliphate. This is what Omar actually did in his last few days when he tried to nominate someone from outside the house of the Umayyad to succeed, a righteous Muslim in his opinion, Al-qasim Ibn Mohammed Ibn Abi Bakr, who was in Almadina, so, the Umayyads feared that and poisoned Caliph Omar, which prevented his succession⁽²⁵⁾.

After the agreement with the Raja on Omar as a successor, Suleiman sealed the letter, and addressed Ka'ab Ibn Hamed Al-Absi, chief of police, and said: "tell my family to gather" and they did. Thereafter, Suleiman ordered Raja: "take the letter of Allegiance and tell them this is Suleiman's letter, and order them to pledge allegiance to whom I entrusted there in. As soon as Raja had done, the Umayyad princes requested to greet the Commander of the faithful? When they went in, Suleiman directed them: "In this letter -he pointed to the hands of Raja Ibn Hayawah- is my covenant, so, listen, obey and pledge allegiance one by one to whom I mentioned therein. Eventually, Raja went out with the letter sealed in his hand"⁽²⁶⁾.

When Raja Ibn Hayawah realized that Caliph Suleiman had died, he covered him and closed the door. Next, he sent to chief of police, and gathered people in the mosque to confirm the pledge of allegiance again, which they did, then, Raja said: "Arise for your companion who has just died, after which I began to read out the letter. When he reached the part that mentioned Omar's name, the sons of Marwan's faces changed color, and when he read out that Yazeed will be after him, they relieved. Hisham exclaimed: "We will never pledge allegiance to him!" I said: "I will, by Allah, have you beheaded! Stand up and pledge allegiance". People then got up to Omar in the back of the mosque pledged allegiance to him"⁽²⁷⁾.

This is how Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz was pledged allegiance to thanks to Raja Ibn Hayawah's thoughtful planning and resourcefulness after he devoted his life to serving the caliphs with what is suitable for the state and the citizens until he died in 112 AH / 730 AD in the succession of Hisham Ibn Abdel malik⁽²⁸⁾.

Raja Ibn Hayawah and his Role in the Historical Narrative

Raja Ibn Hayawah contributed in the historical narrative, he reported events we would never see without his narratives, especially the ones when he accompanied the Umayyad caliphs. We note, but not limited to, some of the narratives.

He narrated the arrival of Caliph Omar Ibn Al-khattab to Jabiyat Aljoulan (Golan) on his way to conquer Jerusalem and the fact that he prayed there in 15 AH / 636 AD⁽²⁹⁾. The invasion of Muawiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan to Cyprus, and how he insisted on Omar bin Al-khattab to carry out the invasion by the sea, after the people of Hums villages had heard the Romans' dogs barking and hens clucking in Cyprus, Caliph Omar wrote to the commander Amr Ibn Al-aas in Egypt, requesting him to describe the sea, when he described it: he said: I swear by the one who sent Mohammed with the truth I would never let any Muslim take the sea, and this was in 28 AH / 648 AD said⁽³⁰⁾.

⁽²⁴⁾ Alttabari, *ibid.*, chap. 6, pp. 550- 551. Ibn Katheer, *op. cit.*, chap. 9, p. 182. Aldainouri, Abu Hanifa Ahmed Ahmed Ibn Dawood (died. 282 AH / 895 AD) Alakhbar Altiwal, annot: Amer Abdel Moneim Dar Ihya'a Al-Kotob Alarabi - Cairo, 1sted, 1960, chap. 1, p. 329.

⁽²⁵⁾ Alkhalidi, *op. cit.*, P. 59.

⁽²⁶⁾ Ibn Alatheer, *op. cit.*, chap. 4, S97. Ibn Katheer, *ibid.*, chap. 9, p. 182.

⁽²⁷⁾ Alttabari, *ibid.*, chap. 6, p. 553. Wahbah Alzuhali, Alkhalifa Alrashid Aladel Omar Ibn Abdel aziz, Dar Qutaiba for Printing and Publishing, Beirut, Damascus, 2nded, 1992, p. 132.

⁽²⁸⁾ Ibn Asaker, *op. cit.*, chap. 15, p. 118.

⁽²⁹⁾ Alttabari, *ibid.*, chap. 3, p. 611.

⁽³⁰⁾ Alttabari, *ibid.*, chap. 4, p. 257.

Raja narrated the march of Caliph Abdel malik to Iraq to fight MusabIbnZubair, and the battle ended with the defeat of Musab's army and Abdel malik extended his control over Iraq in 71 AH / 790 AD⁽³¹⁾. He stated that the Umayyad caliphs were preachers on pulpits, sitting in the first sermon and standing in the second one⁽³²⁾. The caliphate inaugural of Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz⁽³³⁾.

Raja IbnHayawah narrated that one night I was sitting with Caliph Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz, the lamp went out, and he prevented me from lighting it and said: It is not courtesy to trouble your guest. He lighted it himself and said: I got up as Omar and came back as Omar⁽³⁴⁾.

Thus, Raja Ben Hayawah's goodness and piety which were in a position of trust by the Caliphs of his time could greatly change the house of Umayyad without bloodshed, and helped him have the best Muslims in charge. The Caliphate virtually transferred outside of the Umayyad house as a whole, but the Umayyad princes poisoned the rightful Caliph, Omar bin Abdul Aziz, which prevented the succession of Al-qasimIbn Mohammed Ibn AbiBakr. Raja Ben Hayawah was a hero without war drums and a soldier for the pious Caliphs, whom no one could recognize when they were present and no one would miss if they were absent. And, that he brought Omar bin Abdul Aziz to the caliphate was one of the greatest achievements he has ever made⁽³⁵⁾.

The Findings of the Study

1. The caliphs of the Umayyad state listen to the opinion and advice of good and righteous people, such as; Raja IbnHayawah.
2. Raja IbnHayawah's had an influential role in the selection of the rightful Caliph, Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz.
3. Raja IbnHayawah was a good consultant, starting from the caliphate of Abdel malikIbn Marwan until the end of the caliphate of Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz.
4. Raja took advantage of his closeness to the caliphs for the benefit of the entire nation in general and the poor and needy in particular.

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⁽³¹⁾Alttabari, ibid, chap. 6, pp. 156- 157.

⁽³²⁾Alttabari, ibid, chap. 6, pp. 465- 466.

⁽³³⁾Alttabari, ibid, chap. 6, pp. 550- 553.

⁽³⁴⁾IbnAljawzi, Jamal al-Din Abdul Rahman (died.. 597 AH / 1200 AD), Seerat Omar Ibn Abdel Aziz, commented on & explained by NaimZarzour, Dar Al-kotob Al-ilmiyah, Beirut, 1st ed, 1984, p. 203. Suyuti, Jalaluddin (died. 911 AH / 1505 AD), TareekhAlkolafa'a, annot: Mohammed Muhyiddin Abdul Hamid, Dar Alsa'adah press, 1st ed. 1952 p 338.

⁽³⁵⁾Alkhaldi, op. cit., P. 61.

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