



Al-Kufa and the Formation of a Tribal Army: A Historical Analysis of Settlement and Stipend Structures

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ABSTRACT

Army is one of the significant institutions of a state. The importance of the army for the security of a state is like that of a blood for the body. The duty of army is not only to protect the boundaries of a state but also to play a key role in its progress. The early Muslim state was also well aware of this fact that an adoptable army was necessary in order to sustain its well-being and growth. For this purpose, caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb[†] (RA) introduced the institution of regional armies with suitable organization after the conquest of some of the places of foreign domain. Muslims started the conquest of Persian Empire with the conquest of al-Hīra which led to a series of conquests. After several stages of conquests and re-conquests, the whole of Iraq was conquered by the Muslims. In order to maintain control on conquered places, 'Umar (R.A) decided to establish garrison cities at Iraq. After initially settling at several smaller garrisons, armies settled at the garrison cities namely al-Kūfa and al-Baṣra. This study is an effort to analyze the structure and formation of Kūfan army. In order to create authentic narrative and genuine picture of study different versions an event from primary sources are being compared and cross checked to avoid misinterpretation.

1. Introduction

In The Arab tribesmen were habitual of fighting for the spoils of war but in their own independent capacities entered in a complete different environment after the conquest of Iraq. Their status changed to salaried soldiers after settlement at al-Kūfa. Initially, they were very enthusiastic to go for further conquest towards Persia and other eastern parts as they envisioned getting huge spoils of war. Kūfan Army moved and settled in the form of tribes at al-Kūfa in 17/638 A.H/A.D., a new garrison city established by the Muslims, after the initial conquests of Iraq on the northern front was over. After their settlement, the army men were registered as regular army and salaries and stipends were given to them. Gradually the structure and formation of Kūfan army began to develop. It was planned and constructed according to tribal formation, streets and lanes were allocated to the divisions of the tribes. Further, troops were registered as regular army receiving stipends and had share in booty.

An extensive literature is found on al-Kūfa during the early Muslim rule; most of the authors writing about early Muslim history have taken into account the Muslim conquests in general or particularly highlighted the course of Muslim conquest in different areas. Al-Kūfa has been discussed in almost all works in Muslim history in one way or another but army at al-Kufa has been neglected so there is need for tribal structure and composition of Army of al-Kūfa to be explored. M.A Shaban in his work *Islamic History: A New Interpretation A.D 600-750 (A.H 132)* (1971) highlights the issues of the Muslim settlements in al-

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Kūfa during and after its conquest. For him Iraq was the most turbulent province due to the composition of Arab tribes which conquered it.[‡] Furthermore, he also explains the chaotic situation in al-Kūfa during the time of Mu'āwiyā (R.A) under Ziyād who radically changed the system set up by 'Umar (R.A) for the compatible formation of tribal community.

Another work particularly focusing on the conquest of the Muslims is written by Fred McGraw Donner titled *The Early Islamic Conquest* (1981) which primarily evaluates the Muslim conquests of the foreign lands. He argues that the conquests were the direct result of Muhammad's (P.B.U.H) teachings and their effects on early Muslim society and his political consolidation of Arabian nomads under the state.[§] Moreover, for him al-Kūfa was founded as a garrison for the Arab soldiers to precede the military activity in Iraq and it was founded in order to settle the nomads so that the hegemony and power of the state could be maintained.^{**} But he is more willing to see conquests as state policy for seeking the economic interests and to take hold of conquered areas rather than talking about it from the perspective of structure and composition of Kūfan army.

Another work focusing again on the Muslim conquests was produced by David Nicolle in his book *Armies of the Muslim Conquest*^{††} (1993). Nicolle has briefly discussed the structure of Muslim armies from the time of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) till Abbasid Revolution. He also briefed the establishment of al-Kūfa as a garrison town. For him, Muslim army was paid salary by the tax paid by the non-Muslims. He has also given a brief account on the pay scale of army units at al-Kūfa.

Malik AbdulAzeez Al-Mubarak in his thesis "Warefare in Early Islam"^{***} (1997) has shed light on the warfare in Islam. Different principles of warfare had been narrated in this work particularly focusing on the attitude of the Muslim leader and participants towards warefare.

Another work was produced by Hugh Kennedy titled *The Armies of Caliphs: Military and Society in Early Islamic State* (2001). It explains the role of Muslim armies in the conquests of Byzantine and Persian Empires maintaining that the power of both Empires collapsed due to the Muslim victory in the battles of Qādisiyya and Yarmuk.^{§§} Moreover, while talking about al-Kūfa he pronounced that military expeditions resulted in the foundation of garrison al-Kūfa in Iraq in order to keep hold of the conquered territories briefly.^{***}

Hugh Kennedy in another of his book *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World in Which We Live* (2007) gives a brief account of the foundation and construction of al-Kūfa as an encampment and argues that it was created for effective military advancement and as a place for the distribution of booty or salaries among troops after expeditions. Additionally, it was the military base from where the military set out to conquer Iran and other parts of the east. He also argued about the conquest of surrounding villages and towns by the Kūfan army.^{†††} For him al-Kūfa was the main centre of political developments which provided great resistance to Umayyad rulers.^{***}

Rafia Riaz in her thesis "Arab Migration to Iraq and Transformation of Socio-Economic Structures 632-750 A.D"^{§§§} (2014) has analyzed the Muslim migration of Iraq in detail in which she has discussed the settlement of migrants at al-Kūfa. Further, she has also narrated the economic benefits provided to the tribal men in the form of fay land and the booty taken from the war. She maintains that migration was the result of conquest movement and it took many years to complete. For her, migrants moved and stayed at many stations and finally settled at al-Kūfa. She argues that there were many factors which played undeniable role in driving migration of tribal men. The major factor which led to the migration was that of economic factor. However, her focus of writing was migration.

Alexander Knysh in the book *Islam in Historical Perspective* (2017) explains Muslim conquest of the Middle East. He says that during the time of 'Umar (R.A) al-Kūfa was founded as a garrison in order to continue the military operation towards Iran and other parts of the east. 'Umar (R.A) set rules in the garrison for military and in return they enjoyed regular stipends and share of booty.

‡ M .A Shaban, *Islamic History: A New Interpretation, vol, 1 A.D 600-1050 (A.H 132)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 51-64.

§ Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests*, 237-245.

** Ibid., 227-29.

†† David Nicolle, *Armies of the Muslim Conquest*, ed. Martin Windrow (London: Osprey Publishing, 1993).

††† Malik AbdulAzeez Al-Mubarak. "Warfare in Early Islam." PhD diss., University of GlasGow, October 1997.

§§ It was a major battle between the Muslim army and the Byzantine forces.

*** Kennedy, *Armies of the Caliph*, 1-18.

††† Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests*, 117-126.

*** Ibid.

§§§ Rafia Riaz, "Arab Migrations to Iraq and Transformation of Socio-economic Structures 632-750 AD" (PhD diss., International Islamic University Islamabad, 2014).

Rafia Riaz in the article “Tribal Composition and Settlement of Arabs at al-Kufah from the conquest of Iraq to end of Umayyad Period (632-750 AD) (2024)” writes about the tribal composition of tribes settled at al-Kufa since its establishment. She has analysed the tribal migration and settlement of Arabs tribes during all periods from 632 to 750 AD. She has maintained that some of the tribes kept on increasing and were in larger numbers while others were few and consisting till the end of Umayyad dynasty. Certain tribes were few at early time period and were decreasing with the passage of time. Some tribes were constant generation after generation and kept on growing in numbers like Hamadān and Bajīla while Quresh were almost same during all periods neither shrinking nor growing. While her focus of writing were tribal settlement did not specifically talk about army enrollment at al-Kufa. ****

1.1 Foundation of al-Kūfa as Military Encampment

After the battle of *Qādisiyya*, Sa‘ad moved to al-Madā’in and concluded a treaty with the people of ar-Rūmīyah and Bahurasīr and his troops were settled in al-Madā’in, Asbānbur, Kurdbandhāh after the conquest of these lands.**** However, Muslims were badly affected by the mosquitoes after their settlement in al-Madā’in. They had been suffering with dark and unhealthy skin while living there.**** Sa‘d conveyed the whole situation to Caliph ‘Umar (RA) regarding the unhealthy condition of army men over there in a letter as the army did not find the place fit and healthy to their traits and it was dirty and unhealthy causing diseases to them.**** On this, caliph ‘Umar (RA) decided and asked Sa‘d to shift them to western side in a place that was *Sūk Hakamah* while others maintain that place was *Kuwaifah* existed on the side of al-Kūfa.*****

Further, Caliph had given many instructions for the strategic location of place where army should be inhabited. One of condition of Caliph was that there should be no sea between garrison town and Madīnah.**** ‘Umar (RA) asked them to look for a land which would be appropriate for camels as only that type of land would be suitable for the Arab army. In the opinion of ‘Umar (RA) Arabs were like camels, probably he was talking about the semi-desert lands with fresh air and greenery unlike barren desert lands of whose effects would have been dreadful not only for army but also for their animals which were also a great tool to win a war for the Arab people.****

Initially, Sa‘ad visited *Kawāifah ibn ‘Umar* to house the muqātila but this place was surrounded by water and could be ailing for troops.**** Thence, he decided to search a congenial place and found al-Anbār***** as next place for lodging troops but that was also unbefitting for Muslim army as numerous flies were over there.***** Next place also seemed unsatisfactory for army. Then al-Kūfa as next place was chosen which was not a waterless desert and was placed outside muddy land where there was no mosquito.***** This place was labeled as *Sūristān* at that time.***** They reached on ridge set boundaries and established themselves at a place called *Khadd al-adhra* which means the virgin’s cheeks where poppies, daisies, lavender and broom-plants were grown.*****

The origin of the name of al-Kūfa is not clear as different authors have given different versions for the origin of its name. Some traditions designate the name of al-Kūfa derived from the Chinese word *Ya-kiu-lo* while others maintain that it is created from the Persian word *Kabu*.***** Tabarī relates it to a word *aqul*.***** However, Balādhurī maintains that al-Kūfa is derived from

**** Rafia Riaz, Tribal Composition and Settlement of Arabs at al-Kufah from the Conquest of Iraq to the End of Umayyad Period (632-750 AD), Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society 72, no.4, 2024, 11-41.

**** Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 276.

**** Ibn Khaldūn, *Tarikh*, vol. 2, 901; Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 276; Jamel Akbar, “Khaṭṭa and the Territorial Structure of Early Muslim Towns,” *Muqarnas* 6 (1989): 25.

**** Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, 527; Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2483.

**** Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 276.

**** Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2483; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, 528; Akbar, “Khaṭṭa and the Territorial Structure of Early Muslim Towns,” 25.

**** Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 276; Tayeb El-Hibri, *Parable and Politics in Early Islamic History: The Rashidun Caliphs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 86-87.

**** Ibid.

***** The Arabic and Persian name of Ctesiphon.

***** Al-Dīnawarī, *Kitāb al-Akhbār al-tiwāl*, 131; Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 276; Akbar, “Khaṭṭa and the Territorial Structure of Early Muslim Towns,” 25.

***** Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 276; Akbar, “Khaṭṭa and the Territorial Structure of Early Muslim Towns,” 25.

***** Ibid., 277.

***** Ibid., 278.

***** Michael Dumper and Bruce E. Stanley, *Cities of Middle East and North Africa: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, Calif: ABC-CLIO, 2007), 222-24.

***** Ibid.

the word *Takauwaf* meant for the “reunion of people” while some other traditions suggest a circular sandy place which is called al-Kūfa. Another version argues that this place was called al-Kūfa for the land filled with pebbles, mud and sand. In point of fact, al-Kūfa is a place having all these characteristics because of settlement of troops in the form of different tribal units in that very place loaded with that of pebbles and sand etc. In this way, these meaning are applicable to this land.

Caliph ‘Umar (RA) appointed Sa‘ad bin Abī Waqqās as a governor over al-Kūfa and its surrounding areas which included Hulwān, Qurqisiyā, Māsabadhān and Mawṣil and all the area till Baṣra but Baṣra was excluded. There were seven towns of al-Kūfa namely, Qādisiyya, ‘Ayn al-Tamr, Sūrā, al-Nil, al-Jami‘ayn, Hammam and Ibn ‘Umar.

Al-Kūfa was founded in the month of Muharram of the year in 17 (A.H) and it was the fourth year of ‘Umar’s (RA) caliphate. Sa‘ad informed caliph ‘Umar (RA) in a letter that he had settled army in a place roofed with pebbles namely al-Kūfa. It was located between al-Hira and Euphrates and having water on its one side and other side was dry. People were allowed to stay either in al-Madā’in or set out towards al-Kūfa as Sa‘ad left al-Madā’in as garrison. The people intended to settle in al-Kūfa arranged themselves into *Irāfā* in order to find those who had lost path and so that they could return to them. Considerable numbers of warriors came from Hulwān and Jalūlā and settled in al-Kūfa which included Hamrā under the leadership of Qa‘qā bin ‘Amr and Asāwirah with their leader Abdallāh bin Mu‘tamm.

1.2 Settlement of Army in the Garrison

With the approaching of the army in al-Kūfa, the first task was to demarcate the place making the separate roads and colonies for tribal army of diverse background. All the roads radiated from the center and the center of the city was used for the construction of palace and Friday mosque. The army in the form of tribes dwelled in rows in different streets and sub-tribes and clans of one tribe were inhabited in one colony.

Area was divided into big zones and settled the tribal army in those zones in the form of units of different tribes on different sides. Army moved and settled in the form of tribal groups. Many of tribes, their Sub-tribes and clans were merged together to form a larger unit of army. In al-Kūfa, the structure of construction of houses for army was made according to the organization of tribes. Hence, the whole settlement plan was formed according to the tribal formation. The streets and lanes of al-Kūfa were allocated according to tribal divisions. Different tribes had settled together in their colonies. The whole city was constructed around the mosque and the palace. A mosque was constructed on the center. An arrow throwing expert on Sa‘ad’s order stood on the centre of the place and set directions by throwing arrows on different sides. He shot arrow in the direction of *qibla* where Mosque and governor’s palace were built and public treasure was kept in Sa‘d’s palace but when there occurred an incident of stealing in public treasure; he joined the buildings of palace and public treasure. This building was constructed with bricks taken from desolated palace of al-Hira and the marble pillars which had been taken from the churches of Kisra, second one arrow was thrown towards north and others marked the positions of south and east. Mosque and governor’s palace were erected in the centre from where that expert man shot in different directions marking the positions for settlement of army. Yemānis were 12000 and Nizāris were 8000. In order to equally treat the tribal

§§§§§§ Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 276.

***** Ibid.

+++++++ Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2498-99; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, vol. 2, 901; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, 530.

***** Al-Muqaddasi, *Ahsan al-Taqaṣim fī Marīfat al-Aqalim*, 114.

§§§§§§ Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, 528.

***** The ancient Persian city lay three miles to the west of al-Kūfa.

+++++++ Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, vol. 2, 901; Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 1, 2486-88; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, 528.

***** Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 1, 2488; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, 528.

§§§§§§§§ Jalūlā is situated to the northeast of Baghdad. See Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam*, vol. 2, 107.

***** Al-Hamrā literary means the Red. They were the Persian who settled in al-Kūfa and had assigned special quarters. They fought with the army against the Muslim enemies. See, Baladhurī, *Futūh*, 280.

+++++++ Asāwirah was the Persian cavalry. See, Baladhurī, *Futūh*, 280.

***** Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, 528; Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 1, 2485-6.

§§§§§§§§ Baladhurī, *Futūh*, 277; Dumper and Stanley, *Cities of Middle East and North Africa*, 222-25.

***** Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 1, 2491.

+++++++ Riaz, “Arab Migrations to Iraq and Transformation of Socio-Economic Structures 632-750 AD” 42.

***** Ibid.

§§§§§§§§ Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2491-92.

***** Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 277; Akbar, “Khaṭṭa and the Territorial Structure of Early Muslim Towns,” 25.

+++++++ Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol.2, 529.

***** Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 1, 2492, 2499; “Khaṭṭa and the Territorial Structure of Early Muslim Towns” 26.

army he promised to settle one from Nazāris or Yemānis on the east which was comparatively better side than that of west on the condition that of whose arrow drew first. Yemānis were given left side according to the first lot drawn by them and other side was allotted to Nazāris. §§§§§§§§§§

The army units in the form of tribes were lined up in rows in different streets around the mosque; five streets were erected on the front side and on the back side of the mosque four streets were constructed. Three streets were built on the eastern and western sides of the mosque. §§§§§§§§§§ On the front side, Sūlaym and Thaḳīf were settled in two streets. In other two streets, Hamadān and Bajīla were lodged, Taym al-Lāt and Taghlib up till now in other two remaining streets inhabited. §§§§§§§§§§ On the back side of the mosque, Asad, Nakha', Kinda and Azd were settled in the four streets. On the eastern side, Ansār and Muzynah were in one street, Tamīm and Mahārib in second and Banū 'Āmir were in the third street. §§§§§§§§§§ On the western side of the mosque, Bajala and Bajīla were in one street, Banū Jadila and related tribes were in another and Banu Jaheena were in the third street. Those army men settled nearer and around the mosque, and settlement was made in the space which had been created by radiating the roads and sub roads in all directions. §§§§§§§§§§ The *tenths* of the army were dwelled there, following the status of fighters *Ahl-ul-ayyām* §§§§§§§§§§, *ahl-ul-Qādisiyya* §§§§§§§§§§ and those of preceding the treaty of Hudaybiyyah §§§§§§§§§§ and those who joined after it on the basis of their joining of expeditions were inhabited close to center than those who came later. The construction of houses continued behind these main settlements. These main settlements were followed by the inhabitation of newcomers. §§§§§§§§§§ When the newcomers in second and third wave of migration poured into al-Kūfa, it was not possible for some of the tribes to adjust their people in the quarter where they were already living. For this reason, the tribal section whose numbers were high and was it difficult to adjust them in quarter due to the congested area, found it better to vacate that plot and be settled in another place while the tribes whose newcomer muqātila were in small size adjusted them in their colony. These Muqātila stayed in reception camp until Abū Hayyāj granted all of them plots which they required. There was made separate settlements for the border Arab tribes of Mawṣil. §§§§§§§§§§

Later on, army at al-Kūfa asked permission from caliph 'Umar (RA) to build residence of reeds. Initially, 'Umar (RA) believed that it would have been easy for army to set out for expedition from army camp but then he allowed the construction of houses made up of reeds. For this reason, army at the start remained in tents and bamboos houses but after an incident of fire breaking out, the armed men took permission from Caliph 'Umar (RA) to build houses of bricks. §§§§§§§§§§ Following the instruction of caliph 'Umar (RA), the construction of more than three room houses were not allowed and no one could erect dwelling higher than the other. Abū al-Hayyāj b. Mālīk had the responsibility to supervise the settling of army there. §§§§§§§§§§ Furthermore, main roads were planned of forty cubits in widths while the widths of the secondary roads were thirty cubits and the less wide streets were made twenty cubits. §§§§§§§§§§ All the narrow streets and lanes of the garrison city were made up of seven cubits and none of any street was made less than it. Moreover, members of all tribes were given sixty square plots except banū Dabbah. Abū Hayyāj divided the land among them when they selected the part of their choice meanwhile the people started measurement of land who had insight regarding it. §§§§§§§§§§ In the reign of Ziyād b. Abīhi, mosque and citadel were built with kiln-fired bricks and then the residence of soldiers was made from it. §§§§§§§§§§ The adoption of this method for the inhabitation of army in the form of tribes was a wise idea to avoid the tribal conflict and smooth settlement that will contribute in hasty and swift participation in further conquests keeping away the troops from skirmishes among themselves.

'Abd-al-Malik ibn 'Umar's residence was used as a guest house for those coming from different provinces. §§§§§§§§§§ Probably this special place was chosen for the stay of messengers or spies who could report regarding unforeseen threat such as the news of the advancement of rival force to any section of region under Muslim control or demand of reinforcement in the battlefield

§§§§§§§§§§ Baladhurī, *Futūh*, 277.

§§§§§§§§§§ Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2490.

§§§§§§§§§§ Ibid., 2491.

§§§§§§§§§§ Ibid

§§§§§§§§§§ Ibid.

§§§§§§§§§§ The people who had fought the battle of *Badr*.

§§§§§§§§§§ The people who had fought the battle of Qādisiyya.

§§§§§§§§§§ It was the treaty at the place Hudaybiyyah.

§§§§§§§§§§ Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 1, 2491.

§§§§§§§§§§ Ibid.

§§§§§§§§§§ Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, vol. 2, 901; Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 1, 2487-88; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, 528-29.

§§§§§§§§§§ Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, 529; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, vol. 2, 901.

§§§§§§§§§§ Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 1, 2488-89; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, 529.

§§§§§§§§§§ Ibid.

§§§§§§§§§§ Dumper and E. Stanley, *Cities of Middle East and North Africa*, 222-4.

§§§§§§§§§§ Baladhurī, *Futūh*, 279

etc. It could provide the facility to deal secretly with the problem before time. This also shows the proper planning regarding ever concerned plan to hold conquered areas.

An important feature of the settlement of the army at al-Kūfa was that of safeguarding of the already conquered areas and for the further conquest towards East. The conquest of foreign lands not only served their practice of fighting but also provided them economic opportunity to improve their economic status. For this reason, the tribal members of different background poured into al-Kūfa in order to be registered as an active soldier. For this reason numbers of soldiers in *dīwān* were increasing day by day as it could make their economic status better. These increasing numbers of warriors created unevenness and disproportion in *tenths* of army. For the re-division of contingents on more appropriate basis, Sa'd called the expert genealogists and knowledgeable men who included Sa'īd b. Nimrān and Mash'alah b. Nu'ayam to re-divide the army of al-Kūfa into Sevenths. One of the seventh sub included Kinānnah, its confederates from among Ahābīsh and others and Jadīlah (Banu Qays b. 'Aylān). The second sub was comprised of Azd, Kindah, Khath'am, Hadhramawt and Qudā'ah which included Bajīlah and Ghassān b. Shibām as well while the third sub was made up of Hamadān, Himyar, Madhhij and their confederates. The fourth sub was formed of Hawazin, Tamīm and containing Ribab's all. The fifth included the Ghatāfan, al-Namir, Muhārib, Asad, Taghlib and Dubay'ah. 'Akk, 'Abdul Qays, Hajar and Hamza's group were figured out as the sixth sub. This re-division existed until Ziyād b. Abīhi came into power and changed it into fourths.

1.3 Allocation of Stipends and Division of Fay Land

The system of *atā* was introduced by caliph 'Umar (RA). The names of the members of the tribes were registered as regular soldiers in *Dīwān* and it was written in Persian language until the time of Caliph 'Abdul Malīk who changed it into Arabic. Apart from *atā*, regular soldiers won their reward in each battle they fought. Moreover, they were allocated *fay* by the government as a spoil of war. The structure for the distribution of pay was based on units called *Irāfā*. The army was divided into *Irāfā* units for the distribution of pay. People were assembled in *Irāfā* units according to their function and status, each *Irāfā* consisted of the men of equal status and they were paid equally but the salary and status of men of different units of *Irāfā* varied on the basis of the seniority in terms of their joining in expeditions. The pay of one unit of *Irāfā* was fixed amount. Al-Kūfa was divided into seven blocks and these blocks were further re-divided into subdivisions. Each subdivision was comprised of the men of one *Irāfā* headed by a leader. The *atā* of the soldiers was handed over to the commanders of the Sub's and standard bearers who in turn gave it to the leader of the head of *Irāfā* came to be known as 'Arīfs and chiefs of whom responsibility was to duly distribute among soldiers in their homes. The people who had not been fighting in the battles but were supplying arms, raising or making ready horses for battle or supplying eatables were paid directly by the *sevenths*. The *atā* was given in the form of dirhams.

Each *Irāfā* in which *Ahl-ul-Qādisiyya* were put together comprised on forty three men, forty three women and fifty children who were distributed 100,000 dirhams. 100,000 dirhams were given to each *Irāfā* of *Ahl-ul-ayyām*, 3000 dirhams for twenty men, twenty women and every child was bestowed with one hundred dirhams. Each *Irāfā* entitled 1500 and 100,000 dirhams were divided between them to the men of army came in the first wave of *Rawādif*. Other *Irāfā* were treated

Robert G. Hoyland, *In God's Path: The Arab Conquests and the Creation of Islamic Empire, Ancient Warfare and Civilization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 82.

The registers in which the detail of army was mentioned such as their numbers and stipends.

Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol. 1, 2496.

Ibid., 2496.

Literally mean "one-seven".

Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2496

Ibid.

Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, vol. 2, 897.

Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 301.

Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2469, 2598.

Ibid., 2496.

Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, vol. 2, 897; Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2496.

Nicolle, *Armies of the Muslim Conquest*, 13.

Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2496.

Nicolle, *Armies of the Muslim Conquest*, 13.

Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2496.

Ibid.

The people who fought in the battle of Badr were paid the highest amount of 5000^{*****} while the people who had taken part in expedition before the Treaty of Hdaybiyyah were entitled 4000. 3000 were paid to the warriors who joined preceding the *ridda* wars. *Ahl-ul-Qādisiyya* received 2000 and the men among them who played very important role and fought bravely were allotted 2500. The later were entitled 500 and 300.^{*****} Hamrā, the Persian troops were rewarded 2000.^{*****} All the later migrants were given 200.^{*****} Al-Kūfa was one of the places where *dīwān* was inaugurated and soldiers were paid the *atā*.^{*****} It seems that the revenues taken from taxation would have been kept in the *dīwān* and soldiers were paid from there. *Mawālī* were also paid the *atā* in same amount as that of Muslim soldiers. In some cases, non-Arabs were paid highest *atā* depending on their status and service for Muslim state, for instance, ‘Ammār bin Yāssir was entitled the *atā* of 6000 and Salmān Fārsi was salaried 4000. Similarly, al-Hurmuzān was assigned the *atā* of 2000.^{*****}

Apart from booty from the each battle army fought, the revenue of *sawād* land was also distributed amongst the conquering army. Following the rules, *Sawād* had to be divided between army as booty of war and fifth part was to be set aside for Madinah. Caliph ‘Umar (RA) asserted that the lands of *Sawād* would not be distributed amongst the army as the salary of soldiers would be taken from the revenue of the lands cultivated by its owners. Furthermore, he said that in case of the allotment of land nothing would be preserved for coming generations.

The lands of *Sawād* were of three kinds, one category was of abandoned land owned by Kisra and his relatives divided amongst *ahl-ul-Qādisiyya* and another type was the land of rivers, jungles, marshes and ponds. This category of land was under the control of state and army had no share in it. The last kind was the property of common Persians. Some part of this type of land was taken by force while some other sort of land was taken by treaties with their holders. This land was under the control of state and caliph ʿUmar (RA) did not divide it amongst the army. As an alternative, the wages of armed men were paid from this type of land.

Only abandoned property of Kisra and his relatives was to be distributed amongst the army. This land came to be known as *fay* which means the spoils of war. Caliph permitted army to be settled on those places which was divided between army as spoils of war. The army did not settled in those places as were scattered in the whole of *Sawād* and far-from their settlements.+++++ They had given their lands to their entrusted probably for cultivation and got revenue from them.

***** Ibid.

+++++ Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 455.

***** Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2412-14.

§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§ Ibid., 2564.

***** Ibid., 2413-14.

+++++ Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 452-3, 455.131-2.

***** Ibid.,457.

Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2486.

***** Ibid. 2598.

+++++ Ibn Khaldūn, *Tarīkh*, vol. 2, 907; Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2556.

The limits of the territory of Sawād are extended from Mawṣil in the north on the Tigris and in the south to Abbādān on the Persian Gulf and the west side covered till Qādisiyya and al-Kūfa and on the east side territory included till Hulwān. See, Paul G. Forand, "The Status of the Land and Inhabitants of the Sawad during the First Two Centuries of Islām," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 14, no. 1 (April 1971): 25-37.

§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§ Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 268.

***** Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2467-69; Riaz, “Arab Migrations to Iraq and Transformation of Socio-economic Structures 632-750 AD”, 42.

+++++ Ibid., 2469.

The army had been taking the annual stipends from the revenue of the lands which had always remained undivided. Up to ten crore dirham taxes were collected during the regime of Hazrat ‘Umar (RA).***** Hundred dirhams were increased to the stipends of the army with the coming in power of caliph ‘Uthmān (RA).***** The reign of Caliph ‘Alī (RA) started with the first civil war, and there is no mention that how much salary *muqātila* had been paid. However, caliph ‘Alī (RA) had distributed 600,000 amongst fighters after their victory in the battle of *Jamal*.***** He also offered them the *atā* of 500 if they joined in the battle of *siffin*. He had also increased the provision of *fay* land to armed men.***** In addition, he asked the tribal leaders to make an updated list of all of *muqātila* of Kūfan army including the adults and *mawālī* in the army.***** It seems that numbers of *muqātila* in the reign of Caliph ‘Alī (RA) increased to great extent in *dīwān* as updated lists has been produced. In the reign of Zīyad bin Abhī *Dar al-Rizq* was introduced in al-Kūfa and army was paid their stipends.***** It seems that the army was paid *atā* when they were about to go for expedition in the time when al-Hajjāj was in power. For instance, Kūfan army was paid their stipends when he sent army for the expedition of Sijistān. Well-equipped soldiers were provided supplementary allowances.*****

In order to draw a picture of the composition of the army of al-Kūfa, the 6th volume of *Tabaqat* of ibn Sa‘d +++++ However, in the present study data has been analyzed below in the context of army at al-Kufa.

Tribes	Total Numbers	Percentage of Tribally identified (601)	Percentage of sample (798)
Mudhhiġ (Murād, Ju‘fi, Nakh‘a, Ka‘b bin Hārith)	64	10.64 %	8.02 %
Hamadān	67	11.41 %	8.39 %
Asad (Anzah, Jadīla, Hilāl	35	5.82 %	4.38 %
Bakr bin Wā’il (Hanīfa, Sha‘bān, ‘Ijl)	35	5.82 %	4.38 %
Bajīla, Bajāli	34	5.65 %	4.26 %

Ibid.
Ibid.2376.

Ibid.
Ibid., 2376.

Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 270.

Ibid., 2800.

Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmīl*, vol.3, 209.

Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 3387.

Balādhurī, *Ansāb-ul-Ashrāf*, 170-210.

Michael G. Morony, Iraq after Muslim conquest, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984) 61-4; Kennedy, *Armies of the Caliph*, 72-73.

Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 1043-4; Kennedy, *Armies of the Caliph*, 73.

Muhammad Ibn Saʿd, *Al-Tabaqāt -ul-Kubra* (Beirut: Dar-ul- Sadr, 1985), 6.

Quresh (fahr) Taym, Mukhzūm, ‘Abd Manāf bin Zuhra	24	4.00 %	3.00 %
Ansār	24	4.00 %	3.00 %
‘Abs	20	3.32 %	2.50 %
Khuzayma (Tha‘laba bin Dawdān bin Asad)	18	2.99 %	2.25 %
Tamīm (Zayd, Manāt, Yarbū‘)	15	2.99 %	2.25 %
Azd	16	2.66 %	2.00 %
Hawāzin (Amir bin susa)	16	2.66 %	2.00 %
Hawāzin (Thaqīf)	14	2.32 %	1.75 %
Ashja‘	14	2.32 %	1.75 %
Hadrama	14	2.32 %	1.75 %
Muhārib	14	2.32 %	1.75 %
Muzayna	13	2.16 %	1.62 %
Sūlaym	13	2.16 %	1.62 %
Tay‘	12	1.99 %	1.50 %
Salma	12	1.99 %	1.50 %
Khuzā‘a	11	1.83 %	1.37 %
Ghatfān	11	1.83 %	1.37 %
Dabba	10	1.66 %	1.25 %
Hudhayl	8	1.33 %	1.00 %
Fazāra	8	1.33 %	1.00 %
Ash‘aria	7	1.16 %	0.87 %
Al-Ribāb (Taym)	7	1.16 %	0.87 %
Anaza	6	0.99 %	0.75 %
Hawāzin (‘Umro bin ‘Awf)	6	0.99 %	0.75 %
Qudā‘a	6	0.99 %	0.75 %
Juhayna	6	0.99 %	0.75 %
Kāhil (Asad)	6	0.99 %	0.75 %
‘Abd (Abdūl Qays)	6	0.99 %	0.75 %
Tha‘laba	5	0.83 %	0.62 %
Nahdī	4	0.66 %	0.50 %
Jurham	4	0.66 %	0.50 %
Hawāzin (Jush‘am)	4	0.66 %	0.50 %
Jarami	4	0.66 %	0.50 %
Kināna	3	0.49 %	0.37 %

ʿUkl	3	0.49 %	0.37 %
Aslam	3	0.49 %	0.37 %
Layth	3	0.49 %	0.37 %
Qays Eylān	3	0.49 %	0.37 %
Ghafār	2	0.33 %	0.25 %
Taghlib	2	0.33 %	0.25 %
Zubayda	2	0.33 %	0.25 %
Namīr	1	0.16 %	0.12 %
Khazrʿa (halif of Ansār)	1	0.16 %	0.12 %
Hārith bin Kulāb	1	0.16 %	0.12 %
Hawāzin (salūl)	1	0.16%	0.12%
Slave/Mawla	67	11.14 %	8.39 %
Kinda	18	2.99 %	2.25 %

Al-Kūfa was colonized by the heterogeneous tribes of whose figures varied, some of them representing majority while the other were moderate in size and remaining were gradually decreasing in terms of numbers. The total strength of the members of the tribes were found 798 while 601 (75%) are those of whom tribal origin is clear. The army of al-Kūfa was consisted of heterogeneous troops belonging to different tribes and their strength in army varied. Some of the tribes were in largest groups and increased day by day and some of them were in less numbers. The larger groups of people recruited in the army of al-Kūfa were from Hamadān, Madhhij, Asad and Bajīla. Other tribes whose men were in considerable numbers in the army and their figures were kept on increasing included Ansār, Kinda, Khuzayma and Asad. Adding up to the tribes in third category who took part in the conquest were Amir bin susa, Ashjaʿ, Azd, Hamahān, Mudhhij and Bajīla. These tribes were largest in numbers in the conquest movement. The members of these tribes started increasing day by day in *diwan*. *****

Conquering army of al-Kūfa also included a sizable number of men from the tribes of Abs, Khuzayma, Kinda and Tamīm. But their numbers were lesser as compare to above mentioned tribes. Small number of elements from Hawāzin (Thaqīf), Khuzā'a, Sūlaym, Ghatāfan, Ashja' and Hazrama also took part in the conquest of foreign lands. Some other tribes whose figure were few and very few were Aslam, Khuzā'a Khazara (halif of Ansār), Hārith bin Kulāb Harith bin Kulab, Layth, Qudā'a Qudaa, Ghafār, Taghlib, 'Ukl, Nahdi and Kinana. The numbers of Taghib settled in al-Kūfa were in less numbers but they were not very few as the Caliph 'Umar made terms with Taghlibi community and they settled in al-Kūfa and some of them resided in their own lands. This community settled in al-Madā'in with Sa'd and then migrated to al-Kūfa and helped Sa'd in its planning.

Slaves were also in huge numbers and they included both Arab *mawālī* and non-Arab slaves. They also played a significant role in army and they supported in one way or in another for the conquest of foreign lands. Arab *mawālī* were less in numbers as compared to non-Arabs. Apart from that, several people of al-Kūfa had settled in al-Madā'in. They were the registered people of al-Kūfa. Every year when pay was distributed, they came and collected their *atā* and then went back to Madā'in. Army settled in al-Madā'in took part in expeditions whenever needed and al-Madā'in was the meeting point of the army of al-Kūfa. Troops used to stay there before reaching the final destination.*****

Considerable numbers of warriors were residing at Hulwān and Jalūlā' and did not migrate to al-Kūfa after its foundation. When Sa'd bin Abī Waqqās ordered his representatives at Jalūlā and Hulwān to come at al-Kūfa with troops of Hamrā and Asawirah and others who joined them. They came and left their representatives there.⁺⁺⁺⁺⁺ It seems that the troops living at these places were in considerable numbers. For instance, when the army of al-Kūfa advancing for the battle of Nihāwand, Tuleha led by advance guard marched towards al-Madā'in and stayed there than he directed army on the way

***** Riaz, “Arab Migrations to Iraq and Transformation of Socio-economic Structures 632-750 AD” 42.

Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2482-83.

Kufi, *Futuh*, vol.1, 293-94.

+++++ Tabarī, *Tārīkh*, vol.1, 2485-86.

towards Jalūlā' and finally reached at Hulwān and stayed. It seems that these were the small garrisons for the army to stay for the time being and considerable soldiers must have been in those garrisons to protect the territory.*****

2. Conclusion

Hence, the above mentioned facts reveal that the army of al-Kūfa was a very well-organized and well-structured army. The organization of tribal army into proper formed army was started right on their settlement at al-Kūfa. The first step of choosing the strategic site and the settlement of tribal army men in their own colonies was very effective in the establishment of stable army by that time.

The structure and formation of army was adoptable enough to carry on their duty effectively of fighting for state and maintain it in its entirety. The army of al-Kūfa in its essential was the tribal army and the combination of different tribes formed the units of army. On the eve of the settlement at al-Kūfa and afterwards the structure and formation of Kūfan army continued to develop in a more stable army which had proper system of organization for the easy fulfillment of their task of conquering places. The strength of the army of al-Kūfa kept on increasing in order to successfully maintain the expanding state. The basic purpose of the establishment of the institution of army was to secure the already conquered territories of the empire. Further, it was vital to expand territories of state in order to enlarge and develop it economically and politically. Further, the introduction of strict rules and regulations both for the leader and a soldier and proper check by higher authorities on the military ministry transformed it into a stable army. The study shows that there was a chain of hierarchy in the army in order to maintain check and balance.

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