

The Role of Iranian Secretaries in the Rise of the Bureaucracy of Islamic Art and Civilization in the Abbasid Era

Abstract

Islamic art and civilization has developed under the influence of various factors from the beginning to the present day. In the meantime, Iranians have also made a significant contribution to this issue. After the conquest of Iran, a suitable platform was provided for the use of the Iranians' civil experience as they bestowed a distinguished civilizational experience and background in real estate and civil affairs. The role of Iranian secretaries in the bureaucracy of the Abbasid era has not been accurately explained. Before the Arabization of Islamic bureaucracy, Iranian secretaries were not only executives and managers of the administrative and financial institutions of the government; but also played the main and essential role in the transition from native bureaucracy to Arab administration. The present research has been carried out in a descriptive and analytical way and by relying on the data of library sources. The research findings indicate that Iranian art and civilization and Iranian secretaries played a central role in the rise of bureaucracy in the Islamic civilization of the Abbasid era. The foundations of Islamic bureaucracy, from the beginning of its establishment to its complementary and evolutionary stages, were grounded by Iranian scribes and relying on the civil heritage of Sassanid Iran. By transferring cultural and artistic data, Iranians were significant in granting identity to art and civilization in the Abbasid era.

Research aims:

١. Explaining the role of Iranian bureaucracy on the development and emergence of the institution of court during the Abbasid Caliphate.
٢. Clarifying the role of Iranians in the development of art in the Abbasid era.

Research questions:

١. What is the contribution of Iranians in the development and consolidation of organizations and bureaucracy during the Abbasid Caliphate?

۲. What was the role of Iranians in the development of art in the Abbasid era?

Keywords: Islamic bureaucracy, Iranian bureaucracy, Iranian secretaries, Islamic art and civilization.

Introduction

The bureaucratic institution as a miniature of the whole society has continuously played a chief and fundamental role in the development and progress or non-development of societies. This is particularly evident in societies such as Iran, with a history of thousands of years of administration. The lack of law and legalism in the political and administrative history of Iran, as the accepted routine in the society until the Qajar period, ruled out the necessity and feeling of the need for any fundamental change and transformation in the country's bureaucratic system. No phenomenon or social institution, including the institution of bureaucracy were created unexpectedly and at once. Momentous phenomena and events have deep historical roots in society. The administrative organization and bureaucratic system in any country includes features and elements in which its origin can be traced in the history, culture and political-social-economic developments of that society. Iran's bureaucracy, with a history of thousands of years, is actually a product and representative of many developments and events that have taken place in the context and throughout the history of this land; also, it is the result of institutionalized elements and characteristics. A review of the history of bureaucracy in Iran shows that this organization, with strong and solid features have always been accompanied by changes and have remained resistant and influential despite many historical fluctuations. An imperative feature in Iran's bureaucratic system is that the capacity and ability of “tradition” in Iran was to such that Arabs, Turkic tribes, Mongols and other tribes and nomads who ruled in Iran, within a short period of time, they accepted the main and defining characteristics and elements of the Iranian court. However, in each of their periods, they also left effects and colors on the court system. Parallel to the transfer of bureaucracy as one of the most important civilizational data of Iran to the Abbasid Caliphate, Iranian art was also transferred to them. Examining this influence can reveal the identity-making parts of the art of the Abbasid period. Concerning the topic of the current research, no independent work regarding the topic of this paper has been published so far. However, several studies have

investigated the impact of Iranian bureaucracy on the Abbasid period. Farahmandpour (۲۰۱۳) in an article entitled "The Role of Iranian Secretaries in the Analysis of the Abbasid Administrative System", investigated the role of Iranians as bureaucrats in the Abbasid administrative structure. Rezaei et al. (۲۰۰۹), in an article entitled "The Role of Iranian Secretaries in the Establishment and Development of Islamic Bureaucracy in the First Century of Hijri", have studied how Iranian secretaries developed the administrative organization of Iran in the Abbasid administration. With these interpretations, the present study attempts to respond to the influence of Iranian teachers on the bureaucracy and art and civilization of the Abbasid period by following descriptive and analytical methods and relying on the data of library sources.

Conclusion

After the conquest of Iran, a suitable platform was provided for using the judicial and organizational experiences of Iranians, who had significant experience and civilizational background in assets and civil affairs. After the Arab conquerors found that the calculation of the income from tribute and Jizya, specifically the recording of the accounts of financial relations in different regions of Iran, was far beyond their capacity and organizational ability, they had to ask for the assistance of Iranians and they applied the class of Iranian secretaries as a helping hand in organizing administrative and executive capabilities in the field of real estate. The unfamiliarity of Muslim Arabs at the beginning of Islam with the details of the secretarial art and its customs and traditions, on the one hand, and the long history of the secretarial tradition among Iranians, and, in parallel, the difficulty of the Persian courts, on the other hand, and the alienation of the Arabs; the peninsula brought about the entry and continuation of the presence of Iranian teachers in the organization of the Supreme Court of Islam, both in terms of agriculture and cultivation, as well as in the ways of interaction with the people of agriculture. During the Umayyad period, the policy of seeking Arab supremacy was also extended to the field of court formations, and Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan (۶۸۵-۷۵۰ A.H.) attempted to isolate the courts, and Hajjaj ibn Yusuf in Iraq also appointed Saleh ibn Abd al-Rahman in Iraq for this purpose. In ۷۵۰ A.H., the official translated the court from Pahlavi to Arabic, and this process continued until the end of the Umayyad era. Facing the situation after the translation of the court, on the one hand, a significant number of Iranian teachers converted to Islam, and on the other hand, they started learning Arabic, the official language of the Islamic State. These two measures in the following periods brought many positive

results for the community of Iranian secretaries and provided the ground for their progress both in the formation of Arab literature and in the hierarchy of the judicial system and caused Iranian secretaries to benefit using their experiences and abilities as they climbed the steps of advancement and in the Abbasid caliphate even reaching the position of a minister. Parallel to the transmission of administrative principles as a part of culture and civilization, Iranian art gradually became an inseparable part of Islamic art in the early Islamic centuries.

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