

The Types of the Security Functions coming to Islamic Maghreb Country During The Fatimid Era (296-363H /910-973ad)

أنماط الوظائف الأمنية الوافدة إلى بلاد المغرب الإسلامي

خلال العهد الفاطمي (296هـ - 363هـ / 910م - 973م)

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Abstract:

Thanks to the development known in Islamic Maghreb country during the Fatimid Era. There were many types of coming administrative functions. Especially in the security side there were many terms related to the security functions such the police, the guards, the informer and shower men and so on. Most of those functions whose main aim was to protect people and their possessions (money and things). This study aims to show the main missions and works of those functions in the Fatimid era. Where they tried to impose their Ismailism doctrine by using the forces of security.

Key words: security ; coming functions ; Fatimid era ; Islamic Maghreb ; Andalusia.

ملخص:

نظرا للتطور الملحوظ الذي شهده العصر الفاطمي في المغرب الإسلامي، فقد تنوعت أصناف الوظائف الإدارية الوافدة والأصيلة خاصة ما يعنى بالجانب الأمني. فأصبحت هناك عدة أنماط في السلك الأمني، نوع من حيث المسميات، مثل الشرطة والحرس وصاحب الخبر والمرصد غيرها.

ولكنها كلها كانت غايتها حفظ الأمن العام، وحماية الأشخاص وممتلكاتهم. وصون هيئة الدولة. فكان هذا البحث محاولة للإلمام بجوانب تلك الوظائف من حيث المهام وواقع عملها، خاصة وأن الفاطميين وفدوا بمذهب جديد يخالف مذهب أهل البلد، يحاولون فرضه باستعمال مختلف الأنماط الأمنية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأمن، الوظائف الوافدة، العصر الفاطمي، المغرب الإسلامي، الأندلس.

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1. INTRODUCTION :

The Fatimid state was founded in (296 H./910Ad) by Abu abdillah Al-shiai , It was passes with two main periods; the Magherbian period (296-362h/910-973ad). It's capital was Reqqada first , El-mahdia ⁽¹⁾ second And El-mansura ⁽²⁾ last. The main rulers were four: first Obaidullah El-mahdi() his caliphate period was very difficult, because of the bad conditions and conflict. The second was his son who was called Abu Al-qasim Mohammed Al-kaim(222-297H/934-946ad). Then his other son Ismail El-mansur(334-341H/946-953ad) who was considered the real founder of the Fatimid state. The third was the son Ismail called Al-mu'iz lidinillah(342-365H/954-976ad) who era was the best Fatimid era at all ⁽³⁾ .

From the beginning , the Fatimids begun building and organizing their own state by setting up the registers and the offices. But the administrative body was existed before their coming. They developed the administrative functions more and more, Thanks to Obaidullah Shi'a after he entered Reqqada city, the capital of his new state.

When the Fatimids held their state, they begun to organize the different administrative services ; like judiciary, police and market-controlling. They appointed Mohammed ibn omar el-mirwazi as a judge of Reqqada city. who prevented judges of following the Maliki doctrine and other doctrines except the ismailism . He prohibited the scholars of giving religious verdicts (Fatawis) out of his doctrine ⁽⁴⁾ .

The references that historized to the Fatimid era had curried different terms related to the security, the police, the guards, the agents, the doorkeepers, the observatories and the patrolling men. But the more famous term was « the guards » or « the owner of the guards ».

Even the references gave us enough information in his side. But the question is : Are these different terms sorts or grades of the police ? or each one differs from the others ?

Through the missions of this service obliged us to think really that they represented specific types of the police as they are similar in many tasks and powers.

2. The police :

The historian Ibn Khaldoun stated that the police have been separated from the judiciary, and become independent, he said : « It(the police) was one of the religious jobs in those countries in there is an expanding consideration out of the judiciary judgements »⁽⁵⁾ .

The main mission of the police in the Fatimid era. Ibn Khaldoun said : « During the era of the Abbasids and the Umayyad state in Andalusia, the chief of the police was responsible for applying the appropriate punishments »⁽⁶⁾ .

Ibn Khaldoun clarified precisely in his book « Al-mokaddima -the introduction- » the content of the general law that he Redding urgent judiciary wasn't among the powers of the judge. But it was related to a special authority which was «the police». He said : « It was looking at the crimes

¹ Al-istakhri Abu Ishak Ibrahim ibn Mohammed alfarissi :Al-masalik wa al_mamalik, tahkik Mohammed Djaber Abdullah, p 33.

² Ibn Hawki: kitab Sourato Al-ardh, library of life, p74.

³ Mohammed Al-salih Al-marmoul El-syyassa el-ddakhiliya lilkhilafa El-fatimia fi bilabi Al-maghrif Al-islami, diwan al-matbo'at alami'ayya, Algiers, p09.

⁴ Ibn Eidhari Al-murrakichi Ahled Ibn Mohammed :Al-bayan Al-Moghrib fi Akhbar Al-andalus wa Al-Maghrif, (written in Arabic), reviewed by Evariste lévi provançal , culture House,2nd edition, beyrouth, 1/152.

⁵ Ibn khaldoun Abdurrahman : Al-mukaddima,(written in Arabic),dar el-fikr, beyrouth, 2003, p216.

⁶ Ibn khaldoun : op.cit, p216.

and applying the penalties related to the head of the police. This function was an other religious function, expanding a little bit of the judiciary »⁽¹⁾.

The chief of the police was acting freely in the town like the governor. He had the criminal authority. He had the total freedom to punish everyone might threat the security of the state⁽²⁾.

Through some references, we can notice that the administrative workers in the Fatimid state. Especially the governor of Kairaouan in he era of Abi Obaidullah Shi'a. who was called Ibn Khinzir who opposed Al-Maliki Scholars, Especially the jurist Abu Said El-Daif. This governor of Kairaouan came and spread the scariness in the town. He ordered to kill anyone who went out at nights or drunk wine...⁽³⁾.

The forces of the police which were under the authority of the governor were divided over the centres of the guard in all fields of the city which was called "Mahriss" or "Rob'a ". The chief of Mahriss or Rob'a was doing night raids. Using the dogs in order to impose the security instructions⁽⁴⁾.

We can understand that during the Fatimid era, the police were sometimes collecting the fees and the different taxes. The matter that confirms the subtraction that makes the previous terms represented the specialities of the police in Maghreb during the Fatimid era that the term of "the police" was referred to the agents who applied the judgements or the governor instructions. The first subtitle opens with an introduction that presents the specific problem under study and describes the research strategy.

3.The awner of the quarter (Sahib Rob'a):

This function was related to the police in the fatimid era. It was a clear job especially in the period of the Fatimid existence in Egypt more than in Maghreb. El-qalqachandi stated the missions and the specialities of this function through the following text. He said : « find out the states of these neighbourhoods until you know their integrity and disruption fields... you promise to go around there. And keep it safe...⁽⁵⁾.

This text indicates that the Rob'a means a residential area, contains properties of the caliph or state-property. The owner of the quarter might extract the rent of these properties from the tanants and taking care of it.

It's obviously noticed that the policemen were just agents to the owner of the quarter of El-Mahdia expanding its properties. He collected a lot of money. The owner of the Rob'a Abdullah Ibn Raqiq was under the authority of the policemen were just agents following the owner of the *Rob'a*. Therefore, he had to arrange groups of the policemen to go around the city at nights.

It was observed that he owner of the quarter was appointed or disappointed through an order, according to the qualification in his work. Whereas imposing the domination on the quarter which required doing some abuses that might imposed on the inhabitants⁽⁶⁾.

The abuses that were made by the owner of the quarter and the other administrative workers, were not almost by the higher authorities. But they were issued by the higher, in order to show his

¹ Ibn khaldoun : op.cit, p216.

² El-Hadi rougi Idriss :al-dawla alsanhajia tarikh Ifriqia fi a' hdi Bani ziri ,translated by Hammadi Sahli,2en edition, dar al-gharb al-islami, beyrouth, 2/135-136-137.

³ Ibn Eidhari el-murakchi :op.cit, 1/181.

⁴ El_jawthari Abu abd Mansur Al-azizi : Sirat Djawthar, tahkik Mohammed Kamil houssain and Mohammed Abdelhadi Chea'iri, dar el-fikr al-arabi, beyrouth, p114.

⁵ Al-qalqashndi :op.cit, 1/450.

⁶ Al-djawthari :op.cit,p114.

competence , and makes his appearance to get the satisfaction of his higher responsible or to get the desire to be promoted to a higher position. As a result to this violent policy, people got grumpy and pushed to make revolutions.

4.The judges :(el-hukkam)

During the Fatimid era, the function of the judge (el-hakim) was not to clear because of the lack of the information of it. But in fact , it was related to the judiciary. The judge was appointed the great of the judges (the judge of the judges). It might be in the far areas, all the authorities of judiciary like managing the markets and the police were related to the judges.

It was said : « The judges have six missions (planes) : the judiciary, the great and the smallest police, the author of the grievances(sahib El-Madhalims) the owner of the reply, the owner of the city and the owner of the market »⁽¹⁾.

We can say that the judge had in his hand all thein the farther areas at the same time. His main role was the investigation in the abuses of the governors and the collectors of taxes against people⁽²⁾.

Whatever the matter , the function of the judge was related to the security of the Fatimid state. But it was subordinated to the judge's takeover and impeachment its mission was to ensure security, and following up the main political issues that related to the abuses of the authority.

5. The guards :

Concerning this function , the references had stated it a lot of times in different forms like the guards, the chief of the guards and the guarding... This is what pushed us to consider that the term of guard was the prevalent term in Kairaouan during the Fatimid rule⁽³⁾.

It is noticeable that the police were in fact executing the orders . As a result , the policemen were submitted to the authority of the guards chief. Who was considered the higher leader of the police at that time. While the mission of the police was to surround , arrest and follow , the Rome of taking a decision was referred to the chief of the guards. Who was himself taking the matter towards the higher authorities.

In addition, the mission of the guards during the Fatimid era was spying on the scholars and the orators of the mosques. Because they were considered the intellectual elite. Who had almost incited people to revolt against the rulers and the governors. Especially, the Maliki scholars who were obliged to give Fatawis in Ismailism doctrine. As a result a lot of them refused, they were arrested , punished and killed.

The jurist Djabala ibn Mahmoud was working as a guard. Once he was asked why do guard ? He answered that he guarded the muslims possessions and souls. Whenever i see some suspicious thing , I'll make people revolting on their rulers⁽⁴⁾ . The chief of the guards was spying on the enemies of the Fatimid state. In order to fail all the tries of the revolution against the shi'a Ismaili state in Maghreb⁽⁵⁾.

¹ Al-nnoaman ibn Mohammed The judge : Iftitah el-d'awa,tahkik Ferhat El-Dachraoui,Tunisian national company,2nd edition,1986,p90.

² Al-djawthari :op.cit,p99,123.

³El-Khoshani Abu abdillah ibn Harith ibn Asd el-qairaouani al-andalossi : Qudaatu Qurtuba wa Ulamau Ifriqia, corrected by Aizat al-attar al-hussaini, Al-khanji's library,Cairo,1/300.

⁴ El-Maliki Abu baker abdullah ibn Mohammed :Ryadh El-nnofous reviewed by Bachir Al-bakkoush, (written in Arabic),revised by Mohammed Laaroussi Al-matawi,1st edition,1983 , 2/38.

⁵ El-Maliki :op.cit, 2/38.

Sheikh Abu El-Hassan ibn El-Gabissi said : « Djabala was praying Al-Djomo'a (Friday prayer) in his mosque, and people were gathered to his speech. So the chief of the guards was spying on him. Sheikh Djabala had taken him and bit him until he repented and swore not to repeat again »⁽¹⁾.

6. Night watchmen

In addition, to the guard, there is a type of police during the rule of the Fatimid, who's speciality is to protect the city during night-time. They were known as the Night patrol, night watchmen or night guards (Assassa). The night patrol's duty was to protect the city and to follow the intruders (the criminals, thieves) as well as, the oppositions of the Ismailism Doctrine (Madhab). The gates of the city will be locked after Isha prayer (Night prayer) and the trumpet will be blown to announce to the citizens to stay inside their homes and not to leave.

Abdullah ibn Saad Al-Lajaam reported:" I had an appointment with Aba Soleiman in order to meet a librarian. He said: I will come to see you at night and meet him together. So I waited for him until dark and I shut the door and stood behind in order to escape the night police (Al assas). I waited for him for long time"⁽²⁾.

The night police (Al assas) who are ready for a battle at a fortress) stay the whole night to watch over the city. The night police use dogs to protect, to see the passing by, to catch the people who are hiding and the intruders.

A person called Saeed was with the Jurist (faqih) Assabai and left late at night, said: "I left from him and passed through a place of Abi Daoud and found a group of Night police, the group of night fighters, the watchers and dogs but no one spoke to me and not even dogs barked at me, then I passed by the path next to Ibn Asswad Ad-Dai's house and found Night police, the group of night fighters, the watchers and dogs. But no one spoke to me and not even dogs barked at me, then I went further through the market of Ibn Hicham, there were also watchers with dogs but none spoke to me either, until I reached the Wells of Umi Iyadd where I found the same. I continued my way until I arrived at the driveway"⁽³⁾.

I felt worried and scared and discovered that everyone had arrived and locked the door. I was wondering who opened door for me as I pushed and it opened. The text shows the many points that reflects the security situations seen during the rules of the Fatimid, due to the excess deployments of the Night police in every part of the city, from place Abi Daoud place to the path of Ibn Asswad Ad-Dai to the market of Ibn Hicham and the Wells of Umayyad. Verifying their fear from the citizens uprising due to the policy of the government of torture, arrests and killing the opposition.

Furthermore, the government was imposing the state of emergency and curfew from after Night prayer (Isha) until dawn Prayer (Fajr); those who did not follow the rules get killed. In addition, the cities were well protected by fortresses and gates that will shut at night-time, where the night police (Assass) will be on guard to make sure these gates are closed and gates in the streets in which the citizens were in charge of closing them.

7. Agents(Aawaan) :

This is part of the police during the rule of the Fatimid, they were called Helpers (Aawaan), It is plural of Awn, who helps the Judge or the ruler in general. They were called the helpers of the Judge, or the ruler were called also the workers (Amil). It has been mentioned in many resources that there were Helpers (Awan) of different type during the Fatimids era.

¹ El-Maliki :op.cit, 2/38.

² El-Maliki :op.cit, 2/332.

³ El-Maliki :op.cit, 2/488.

It has been reported from the ruler of Al-Jazira, Fadl Ibn Abi Al-Anbar: "I arrived with my colleagues and Helpers and we settled in one of the fortresses in Al-Jazira at the sea shore, they unloaded my luggage in a masjid and they brought into the fortress dogs and birds" ⁽¹⁾.

It has been also reported that the Faqih Ibn Al-Banaa, Judge of Kastiliya, was reported to Ibrahim Ibn Ahamd about his injustice. A letter was sent to the ruler of Kastiliya ordering him to fire Ibn Al-Banaa, to crucify him (putting him on a cross). He was later arrested in Raqqada Jail, and was not aware about the decision, so he came to the court and asked who are the Helpers, and thus was arrested. An order was given to arrest them instead, tortured them one after the other as well as hand cuffed them and putting them in jail. Soon after the Worker (Amil) came with the order of the ruler firing him, and he got arrested and sent to Rakada's jail ⁽²⁾.

The Helpers (Al Awan) assist the Judges by ensuring that the judge's rulings are executed, to bring to court the people that the judge wants and to punish the criminals using a discrete punishment. It has been reported in Qudaatu Qurtuba wa Ulamau Ifriqia, that the judge Amr Ibn Abdullah had a case between a poor week man and a rich influential opponent who came to court in cortege escorted by his men and cavaliers ⁽³⁾.

The rich man asked for reconciliation, the judge refused and ordered him to return the poor man's house back and asked the Helpers (Awan) to go with him and to make sure he returns back the poor man's house back and if he does not then they should bring him back to the Judge ⁽⁴⁾.

8. The door keepers :

The guards at the gates of the cities (as used to be common during the middle age). Cities used to be surrounded by walls and big gates in order to protect them from the outside attacks and to ease control of the cities. The door keepers stand next to the gates in order to control the people who enter and leave the city. According of the story of Al-Hawary Al-mouadib when he was taken to the Rule (Sultan) to make his statement in regard of that easterner (Al-Mashriqui). He found a person at the palace called a jawhar, who intervened on his behalf with the Sultan and gave him money. "Then he walked with me and gave me the money (Dinnars)... When I reached the veranda, the guards (Al Bawaboun) wanted to rob me, so I called upon him, O Aba Al Hassan Jawhar. He replied: What's wrong Mouadib, then he told them off and I took my money back and left" ⁽⁵⁾.

9. The observer/ Watchman (Almarasidah):

Watched (Rasada): Al Marsad: (place where to watch). The Watchers (Ar-Rasad) are the people who watch like the guards ⁽⁶⁾. It has been reported in Al Maghreb that Watchers (Ar Rasada) and the educated are plurals of Watcher (Rasid) and is an alert watcher. However, it is used in spoken form as similar to guard and working as a guard. The duty of a Watcher is related to police and security forces. They are the people who can be found in the roads that leads to other areas or other provinces or precisely, to the Trading Caravans. Many watching points can be found there in order to collect information that will be reported to the officials so that they may intervene as quick as possible in the case of an internal/external threat or attack. According to Jowdari's biography, "a big

¹ El-Maliki :op.cit, 1/335.

² Al-khoshani:op.cit, 1/214.

³ Ibid ,p106.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ El-Maliki :op.cit, 2/429.

⁶ Al-Farahidi Al-khalil ibn Ahmed Al-Basri : Kitab Al-'ayne ,tahkik Mahdi Al-makhzoumi, Ibrahim el-ssamrra'i, dar Al-Hilel, Cairo,1 /96.

number of government officials travel through those roads without registers and the possibility of clashes or misunderstanding that may occur between them and the slave watchers”⁽¹⁾.

This shows that the Watchers are slaves from Sudan or Cyprus, who were a type of police in charge of watching the roads and protecting the caravan’s traveller from attacks. It also shows existence of some type of guards or watchers posts where they used to stand and watch, especially on the top of the hills that allows them to clearly see what is going on. This is the equivalent of the civil police in charge of protecting the traveller and keeping the roads safe from thieves.

10. The Informer (Sahibu Al Khabar):

The informer is one of the jobs that has been mentioned in various books from the Fatimid eras, it defines the informer as being in charge of reporting all the news to the ruler (Imam), specifically the news related to the public peace and the one that may negatively impact the countries interests.

The Fatimids used to use the watchers and informers in the Maghreb to collect information against the political opposition (Mutabaeen) so as to collect detailed information about their activities and movements. This tactic allowed the Fatimid to strengthen their governments control and power and to protect the lives of the Fatimid Rulers (Imams), as well as finding their enemies and those who oppose the Fatimid Madhab.

In addition to *the Diwaan, Alabareel* and the Fatimid individuals outside that sector to collect information. The informer also has an important role in watching the Berber tribes that opposes their rules and disobey them. The Fatimid watchers also played a role in spreading the Ismaili Madhab outside Egypt and Andalusia and to collect information that would benefit them in the future extension of their territories. According to Al Khashni, the Faqih Ahmed Ibn Mousa AT-Tamaar and his brother who had been subjected to injustice. Ahmed Ibn Mousa AT-Tamaar and his brother had been subjected to injustice, so he complained about it and described the bad situation of the population and the injustice that they have been subjected to on the hand of the rulers; which displeased and angered Ubaidu Allah. He then contacted a person (referred to as-people from Alquirawan). They gave a testimony against him to the Informer who informed Ubaidi Allah through Mohamed Al-baghdadi. So Ubaidu Allah ordered to give Ahmed Ibn Mousa AT-Tamaar 200 lashes, so he was whipped so hard, causing his death (may Allah grant him mercy)⁽²⁾.

This proves that the informer duty during the Fatimid era, was not to collect information and report to the ruler (Imam), but to participate in fabricating accusations against the opposition, those who are displeased about the government official’s injustice; finding false witnesses in order to eliminate any individual who may think to object the Ruler’s (Imam) wish or interests and any Imam that may speak about the rulers injustice and exposes them in his speeches.

This proves the amount of injustice and dominance that the people of Maghreb were suffering during the Fatimid era. They was also excess use of force to silence the people. The informer had direct access and contact with the Ruler (Imam)and that the Imam had been aware about his plans all along. It also shows that the informers were very loyal to the rulers and very close to them such as Mohamed Al-baghdadi⁽³⁾.

Furthermore, the watchers during the Fatimid era have informers which had been spread inside and outside the country. They disguise themselves to spy on people, especially spying on important

¹ Al-dawthari :op.cit, p110.

² Al-khoshani :op.cit, 1/301.

³ Al-Maqrizi Taki eddine Ahmed ibn Ali Ibn Abdelkader :Itti’adh Al-hunafa bi Akthbar al-a-imma al-kh-ulafa, reviewed by Mohammed El-shayyal and Mohammed Hilmi Mohammed Ahmed,cairo,1st edition, 1 /99,

figures, tribe leaders, scholars and influence people, because they had the ability to influence and manipulate the subjects against the rulers and the Imams ⁽¹⁾.

According to Jawdar's biography, that he heard about a man at Al-M'sila called Othman Ibn Ameen, who was used to contact the Umayyads and look after his interests there but also criticised the government, however he was never arrested for some reason by the Aamil Jaafar Ibnu Ali ⁽²⁾.

The difficult controversial situation in Maghreb during the Fatimid era forced them to be careful and very strict in organising the police authority and power, this pushed the first Fatimid Khalifa to create a special agency for research and investigation and was called Register of Detection (Diwan Al Kashf) . According to the author of Al-Bayanu Al-Moghrib that:"on 298 H, that Abdullah Ashii travelled in the Berber land and fought with the tribes, he killed the men, took the wealth, enslaved the children and burnt some cities. He wrote about this occurrence to Ubaidi Allah and his messages were read to the people. On this occasion Muhamed Al Bagdadi was in charge of the Register of Detection alongside Imran Ibn Abi Khalid Ibnu Abi Salam" ⁽³⁾.

As for the relation between the police and the previous agencies, the citations from the resources mentioned do not give enough details. The intention was not to mention them particularly, however, it was mentioned briefly as a simple historical event with some of the distinguished touches and decisions taken by the Khalifs or their assistants. For these reasons the picture is not completely clear about their relationship with the police, However, even if it was independent from each other, there is a strong connection between them when it comes to their authority and their duties because they all participated in the police force duties requirements ⁽⁴⁾.

In conclusion, it is not possible to compare the police service during the Islamic era and the police service in our era, because the actions were under the Khalif's absolute control or his Naibs. All of them were serving the Khalif and his close circle from one hand and from the other hand, they were keeping the peace and protecting the population day and night in big cities and small towns, in the roads, street and farms and gardens.

11. CONCLUSION :

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¹ Al-NNoman the judge : Al-maalīs wa al-mussayrat, Reviewed by Al-habib al-fakki & Ibrahim shattouh & Mohammed al-y'alawi , dar al-muntadhir ,beyrouth,1996,1st edition,p79.

² Al-djawthari :op.cit, 123.

³ Ibn Eidhari Al-murrakshi :op,cit,1 /162.

⁴ Al-Maqrizi :op.cit, 2/102.

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