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The Genesis of Islamic Provincial Governance: Administrative Structures and Gubernatorial Appointments During the Prophetic Era (1-11 AH/622-632 CE)

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Abstract

Provincial governance under the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, had evolved between 1-11 AH/ 622-632 CE encompassing six principal regions: al-Madīnah, Makkah, al-Tā'if, Yemen, al-Bahrayn, and 'Umān. Our study is based on twenty-three documented gubernatorial appointments, which are analyzed using *isnād-cum-matn* methodology, evaluation of transmission gaps, and comparative perspectives drawn from late antique Byzantine and Sasanian practices. Collectively, these reports illuminate the criteria for appointing governors, the scope of their authority, the mechanisms of their oversight, and the fiscal and judicial responsibilities entrusted to them. During the Prophetic period, it can be noted that provincial governance derived directly from the personal authority of the Prophet, peace be upon him, himself, rather than from a formally codified office or hereditary tradition. The transmitted directives likewise exhibit a consistent normative core across independent lines of transmission: Justice ('*adl*'), facilitation (*taysīr*), and fiscal integrity recur throughout. The *Riddah* Wars (11-12 AH / 632-633 CE) revealed this administrative model. Political integration in the outlining regions remained tied to the Prophet's personal authority and did not fully transfer to an impersonal successor after his death. Under 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him, the implemented measures represent corrective institutional developments addressing the limitations that had become apparent. Accordingly, they are better understood as adaptive refinements rather than direct continuations of the Prophetic administrative arrangement.

Keywords: administrative history, charismatic authority, early Islamic state, late antiquity, Prophetic era, provincial governance, *Rashīdūn* caliphate, *Riddah* Wars

Introduction

Over the course of the Prophetic decade (1-11 AH / 622-632 CE), the Muslim community in al-Madīnah transitioned from a fragile foothold into a position of political authority across much of the Arabian Peninsula. This transformation occurred within a regional order dominated by Byzantium, Sasanian Iran, and by the peninsula's tribal confederations.¹ Against this backdrop, the expansion of

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¹Robert G. Hoyland, *Arabia and the Arabs: From the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam* (London: Routledge, 2001), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203455685>; Fred M. Donner, *Muhammad*

authority required administrative arrangements capable of extending the Prophet's governance beyond the Madīnan core.

The present study investigates one dimension of that administrative response. It examines the provincial governance that the Prophet, peace be upon him, instituted across six regions: al-Madīnah, Makkah, al-Ṭā'if, Yemen, al-Baḥrayn, and 'Umān. It asks on what grounds he selected his governors, what authority he delegated to them, what normative principles he impressed upon them, and what the *Riddah* Wars subsequently revealed about the order he had established.

Max Weber's typology of legitimate domination (legitime Herrschaft) rests on three ideal types. Traditional authority draws legitimacy from the sanctity of long-standing custom and from the inherited status of those who exercise it. Rational-legal authority operates through codified rules and through formally defined offices that persist, independent of the individuals who occupy them. Charismatic authority, by contrast, attaches to the person of the leader and to the recognition of the qualities regarded as extraordinary by their followers, whether prophetic, heroic, or exemplary.² These qualities cannot be transferred as such. The central analytical problem Weber identifies is the routinisation of charisma (Veralltäglicung) after the founder's death.³ The Prophetic case fits this category closely, and the following sections argue that the *Riddah* Wars can be read as the first crisis of routinisation in Islamic history.

The Prophetic-era governance fits the charismatic type on three grounds. Political legitimacy was derived from revelation and from the Prophet's standing as messenger of God, peace be upon him. Neither tribal custom nor codified law played the primary role. Gubernatorial appointments followed from personal trust and demonstrated loyalty, not from tenure of a formally defined office. The governing order carried no institutional mechanism for transferring authority after the Prophet's death, peace be upon him. This was its structural fragility. Weber identifies the same fragility as the defining weakness of charismatic systems.⁴ Traditional elements were nonetheless present. Consultation (*shūrā*), long recognised in Arabian and later Islamic political practice, shaped procedure throughout the period. The primary legitimating framework was charismatic, and it carried the structural consequences that Weber's typology predicts.

Bryan Turner (2010) confirms that the typology remains productive for Islamic political history, in particular for the routinisation of charisma after the founder's death.⁵ Ibn Khaldūn's *aṣabiyyah*, group solidarity enabling collective political action, supplements the Weberian frame with an indigenous analytical lens.⁶ Early Islamic politics shifted from kin-based to religiously grounded solidarity. The change was incomplete, as shown by the *Riddah* Wars.

2. Literature Review

Scholarship on early Islamic political development falls into three methodological streams, each making a contribution while leaving a gap that this article addresses.

and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 68–82.

²Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, trans. Ephraim Fischhoff et al., 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 1:215–216, 1:241–245.

³Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:246–254.

⁴Weber, *Economy and Society*, 2:1121–1123.

⁵Bryan S. Turner, "Revisiting Weber and Islam," *The British Journal of Sociology* 61, no. s1 (2010): 161–166, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2009.01285.x>.

⁶Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, 3 vols. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), 1:249–310.

The *descriptive-traditional stream* is represented principally by W. Montgomery Watt's Muhammad at Medina (1956), and Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman (1961).⁷ Watt reads the Constitution of al-Madīnah, the governors' selection, and the tribal delegations as deliberate statesmanship. His reconstruction remains indispensable.

It nonetheless proceeds through narrative synthesis of the classical sources without systematic source criticism. Watt's studies also predate the development of the isnād-cum-matn method and related tools, and they, therefore, attribute a degree of formality to Prophetic institutions that the sources do not independently support. Hugh Kennedy's *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates* (2004) follows the same descriptive line. The work is an administrative synthesis, and its genre treats provincial governance as context for military and confessional developments rather than as an object of analysis in its own right.⁸

Said Amir Arjomand's sociolegal study (2009) provides the most systematic analytical treatment of the Prophet's acts of political foundation. Arjomand identifies the need for an integrated constitutional and sociological analysis of the ummah's founding documents. He also outlines the shape such an analysis would take.⁹

The *revisionist stream* is associated principally with Patricia Crone. Her *Slaves on Horses* (1980) and *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* (1987) apply sceptical source criticism to the early record.¹⁰ Crone argues that the classical accounts of administrative appointments carry strong legitimating interests and cannot be read as straightforward historical evidence. The corrective is valuable. An awareness of ideological layering is essential for any credible reconstruction. The method, when generalised, tends to dissolve the record rather than to reconstruct it. It leaves subsequent scholars without usable material for systematic administrative analysis and without an alternative account of how early Islamic administration functioned.

The *tradition-critical stream* is the most productive for the present study. Donner's *Narratives of Islamic Origins* (1998) shows how classical sources can be read for both their historical core and their legitimating functions.¹¹ Michael Lecker's studies of early Medinan society (1995) and the Constitution of al-Madīnah (2004) offered the most careful reconstruction of local administrative arrangements.¹² Paul Lawrence Rose (2011), applying triangulation across the *Sīrah*, the Qur'ān, and the *Kitāb* itself, identifies multiple treaty strata within the Constitution, while confirming a genuine

⁷W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 221–228; W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 217–220.

⁸Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century*, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 2004), 41–48.

⁹Saīd Amir Arjomand, "The Constitution of Medina: A Sociolegal Interpretation of Muḥammad's Acts of Foundation of the Umma," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41, no. 4 (2009): 555–575, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743809990067>.

¹⁰Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 1–35; Patricia Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 3–6.

¹¹Fred M. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1998), 1–31.

¹²Michael Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and Pagans: Studies on Early Islamic Medina* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 28–51. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004491014>; Michael Lecker, *The "Constitution of Medina": Muḥammad's First Legal Document* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 2004), 29–54.

seventh-century core.¹³

Dedicated studies of the Prophetic-era provincial administration as a system are rare. Ella Landau-Tasseron's analysis of the transition from tribal to centralised polity (2000) identifies mechanisms of early state formation in Arabian political culture.¹⁴ Turner (2010) shows that Weber's typology, and the concept of the routinisation of charisma in particular, remains productive for early Islamic governance. Ahmed El-Wakil (2016) applies source-criticism to the Prophet's covenants with the Christians of Najrān, and argues that categorical dismissal of these documents as forgeries is unsupported by the transmission evidence.¹⁵

Three contributions follow. The article treats provincial administration as an independent analytical object, not as background for military or confessional narrative. It brings Weber's typology of legitimate authority and Ibn Khaldūn's *aṣabiyyah* to bear as explicit analytical frameworks, building on Turner (2010). It also reads the geographic pattern of the *Riddah* Wars as a diagnostic of administrative depth. The distribution of apostasy shows where integration had become institutional and where it remained tied to the Prophet, peace be upon him, himself.

3. Method

This study draws on the principal classical Arabic sources. The narrative and biographical material comes from Ibn Hishām's *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, Ibn Sa'd's *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, al-Balādhurī's *Futūḥ al-Buldān* and *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, al-Ṭabarī's *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa-al-Mulūk*, and al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*. The *ḥadīth* material comes from the canonical collections of al-Bukhārī and Muslim. These compilations were produced 150 to 250 years after the events they describe. The gap raises reliability questions. It also raises the risk of projecting later institutional arrangements onto the first Islamic decades. The *ḥadīth* collections carry earlier material through their transmission chains, but the problem remains.

Three strands of modern source criticism address this problem. Harald Motzki's isnād-cum-matn method correlates transmission chains with their textual variants. It dates traditions to their earliest recoverable common link and narrows the gap between the event and the written record.¹⁶ Gregor Schoeler's work on oral and written transmission supports a retrievable historical core in short biographical reports.¹⁷ Fred Donner's tradition-critical approach identifies legitimating motives in

¹³Paul Lawrence Rose, "Muḥammad, the Jews and the Constitution of Medina: Retrieving the Historical Kernel," *Der Islam* 86, no. 1 (2011): 1–29, <https://doi.org/10.1515/islam.2011.012>.

¹⁴Ella Landau-Tasseron, "From Tribal Society to Centralized Polity: An Interpretation of Events and Anecdotes of the Formative Period of Islam," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 24 (2000): 180–216.

¹⁵Ahmed El-Wakil, "The Prophet's Treaty with the Christians of Najrān: An Analytical Study to Determine the Authenticity of the Covenants," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 27, no. 3 (2016): 273–354, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etw027>.

¹⁶Harald Motzki, "The Muṣannaf of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī as a Source of Authentic Āḥādīth of the First Islamic Century," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 50, no. 1 (1991): 1–21, <https://doi.org/10.1086/373461>; Andreas Görke, Harald Motzki, and Gregor Schoeler, "First Century Sources for the Life of Muḥammad? A Debate," *Der Islam* 89, nos. 1–2 (2012): 2–59, <https://doi.org/10.1515/islam-2012-0002>.

¹⁷Gregor Schoeler, *The Biography of Muḥammad: Nature and Authenticity*, ed. James E. Montgomery, trans. Uwe Vagelpohl (London: Routledge, 2011), 28–45, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203850060>.

the sources. It also shows that careful analysis can extract reliable data from them.¹⁸

The analysis is based on three procedures. The first is isnād-cum-matn scrutiny. Each report is tested by correlating its chain of transmission with its textual variants. The earliest recoverable common link is then identified. The second procedure is independent-transmission comparison. Accounts preserved through separate chains are cross-checked. Convergence is treated as evidence for authenticity. Divergence is examined for signs of later elaboration, local variation, or editorial intervention. The findings are then read against late-antique Byzantine and Sasanian administrative patterns. This places early Islamic practice alongside other seventh-century instances of state formation. Epigraphic, numismatic, and papyrological evidence falls outside the scope of this literary-critical study.

4. Al-Madīnah as Administrative Nucleus (1-2 AH / 622-624 CE)

4.1. Urban Transformation and Political Refounding

The Prophet's migration to *Yathrib* on 8 *Rabī' al-Awwal* 1 AH / 23 September 622 CE marked the start of a political refounding. His choice of the name *al-Madīnah* over *Yathrib* was deliberate. Ibn Hishām reports that *Yathrib* carried unfavourable associations tied to the Semitic root *th-r-b*, which connotes blame and reproach.¹⁹ *Al-Madīnah* (the City) designated both the physical site and an emerging political community that rose above earlier tribal divisions.

Pre-Islamic *Yathrib* required calibrated political management. The population included three major Jewish tribes, Banū Qurayẓah, Banū Qaynuqā', and Banū al-Naḍir, alongside the Arab tribes of *al-Aws* and *al-Khazraj*, subsequently designated *al-Anṣār* (the Helpers).²⁰ Early conversions among *al-Aws* and *al-Khazraj* before the *Hijrah*, facilitated by Muṣ'ab ibn 'Umayr's teaching mission, provided the internal basis for subsequent administration.²¹

4.2. Institutional Foundations

The construction of mosques immediately after the Prophet's arrival indicates an early prioritisation of institutional infrastructure. *Masjid Qubā'*, built at his first residence among Banū 'Amr ibn 'Awf, is the first structure erected specifically for Islamic congregational worship, as distinct from the private spaces and open-air prayer grounds used by the Meccan community.²²

Al-Masjid al-Nabawī formed the administrative core of the emerging polity in al-Madīnah. Its functions extended well beyond worship. It housed congregational prayer and the sessions of *shūrā* through which collective decisions were reached. It received the delegations that arrived from other tribes. It served as the court in which disputes were resolved, as the school in which the Qur'ān was taught, and as the site from which welfare was distributed to the emigrants who had arrived without means. It also functioned as the centre from which military campaigns were planned.²³ The early

¹⁸Fred M. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1998), 125–139.

¹⁹Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah* [The Prophetic Biography], ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqa, Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, and 'Abd al-Ḥafīẓ Shalabī, 4 vols. (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1955), 1:456–466.

²⁰Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 221–228.

²¹Ibn Sa'd, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* [The Major Biographical Dictionary], ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1968), 1:237–242.

²²Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* [The Authentic Collection of al-Bukhārī], ed. Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Nāṣir al-Nāṣir, 9 vols. (Beirut: Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 2001), *Kitāb al-Salāh*, no. 428.

²³Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa-al-Mulūk* [History of the Messengers and the Kings], ed. M. J. de Goeje et al., 15 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1879–1901), 2:410–418.

Islamic polity distinguished itself from its Byzantine and Sasanian contemporaries on this point. Both of those empires separated religious and administrative functions across distinct buildings. In Constantinople, the imperial palace and the prefectural offices stood apart from Hagia Sophia. At Ctesiphon, the royal court operated independently of the Zoroastrian fire-temples²⁴

4.3. The *Mu'ākhāh* System: Social Engineering and Economic Integration

The Prophet, peace be upon him, instituted *mu'ākhāh*, a formal brotherhood pact between the Meccan emigrants (*al-Muhājirūn*) and the Madīnan supporters (*al-Anṣār*). The pact bound each pair through shared residence, joint economic activity, and mutual inheritance. Classical reports preserve the named pairings across independent transmission lines in Ibn Hishām, Ibn Sa'd, and al-Ṭabarī. Discrepancies across these lines concern specific pairings and participant numbers. They do not concern the institution itself. This is the pattern of selective accumulation that Motzki and Görke identify in early ḥadīth transmission.²⁵

The *Anṣār* shared land, trade access, and housing with their paired *Muhājirūn*. The arrangement fostered integration and limited dependency.²⁶ It also served a political end. Cross-cutting bonds diluted the exclusive tribal loyalties that had structured Arabian social life before the Hijrah. Early practice extended inheritance between the paired non-kin. Q. 8:75 later restricted inheritance to blood relatives. The provision was therefore transitional, and the Qur'ān itself marks the transition.²⁷

4.4. Constitutional Arrangements

The *Ṣaḥīfat al-Madīnah* (Constitution of al-Madīnah) is the earliest surviving document that organises Islamic political life in a legal form. Two main recensions survive: Ibn Hishām preserves a version with forty-seven clauses in Wellhausen's standard. Abū 'Ubayd preserves a variant with minor differences.²⁸

The document defines the *ummah* as “the believers from Quraysh and *Yathrib*, and those who follow and join them.”²⁹ This formula is striking, as it places religious commitment where tribal descent had stood as the basis of political belonging³⁰. The Prophet, peace be upon him, is named as the final arbiter of disputes. This limited recourse to factional feuding and created a single forum for settlement across groups that signed the document.³¹

Debate continues on the Constitution's dating and unity. Some scholars argue for composition immediately after the *Hijrah*. Others place it after the Battle of Badr. A third position treats the texts

²⁴Jeremy Johns, “Archaeology and the History of Early Islam: The First Seventy Years,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 46, no. 4 (2003): 411-436, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156852003772914848>.

²⁵Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah*, 2:3-11; Motzki, “The Muṣannaf,” 1-21; Görke, Motzki, and Schoeler, “First Century Sources,” 2-59.

²⁶Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and Pagans*, 28-51.

²⁷Landau-Tasseron, “From Tribal Society to Centralized Polity,” 186-192.

²⁸Lecker, *The “Constitution of Medina,”* 29-54.

²⁹Fred M. Donner, “From Believers to Muslims: Confessional Self-Identity in the Early Islamic Community,” *Al-Abḥāth* 50-51 (2002-2003): 9-53, <https://doi.org/10.1163/2589997X-05005101012>.

³⁰Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*, 1:501.

³¹R. B. Serjeant, “The *Sunnah Jāmi'ah*, Pacts with the Yathrib Jews, and the *Tahrīm* of Yathrib,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 41, no. 1 (1978): 1-42, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X00057761>.

as a compilation of documents drafted at different moments.³² Rose (2011) identifies multiple treaty strata within the document while confirming a genuine seventh-century core beneath later compilatory activity. Lecker argues that the major Jewish tribes may have been governed through separate treaties rather than through this single document.³³

Three principles stand out across the document, whatever its compositional history; political community transcending kinship, dispute resolution is centralised in a single authority, defence is organized on confederal basis. These principles shaped the state-building that followed.

5. Provincial Integration and Governance Mechanisms

5.1. Chronological Phases of Territorial Expansion

Expansion proceeded in cumulative phases. Each phase consolidated the existing frontier before the next extension began. Resources constrained the pace, and the sequence was deliberate rather than opportunistic.

Phase one (1-2 AH / 622-624 CE) established the institutional prerequisites for outward expansion: *al-Masjid al-Nabawī* as the administrative centre, the *mu'ākhāh* pact integrating Meccan emigrants with Medinan supporters, and the *Ṣaḥīfah* as a legal compact for a multi-religious polity.³⁴

Phase two (3-5 AH / 624-627 CE) tested and demonstrated institutional resilience. Badr, Uḥud, and al-Khandaq, and the expulsion of Jewish tribes judged to be in breach of the civic compact, showed that the community could sustain extended military pressure.³⁵ Phase three (6-8 AH / 628-630 CE) converted military credibility into diplomatic reach. The Treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyyah (6 AH / 628 CE) recognised the Islamic polity as a political actor and opened access to tribes that Qurashī opposition had previously blocked.³⁶ The peaceful entry into Makkah (Ramaḍān 8 AH / 630 CE) removed the centre of organised resistance and produced a rapid bandwagon dynamic.

Phase four (8-11 AH / 630-632 CE) systematised Arabian integration. The *ʿĀm al-Wuḥūd* (Year of Delegations, 9 AH / 631 CE), in which numerous tribal delegations arrived to submit to Islamic authority and negotiate governance terms, brought envoys to the centre.³⁷ These phases show that territorial integration was a managed, sequenced process governed by available capacity.

5.2. Mechanisms of Territorial Integration

Territorial integration followed a calibrated strategy shaped by local conditions and available resources. Tribal delegations (*wuḥūd*) came to al-Madīnah to negotiate incorporation and produced written compacts with clear terms: performance of prayer and *zakāh*, recognition of central authority, and defined military duties.³⁸

The charter granted to the Christians of Najrān offers a model of diplomatic accommodation. It protected their ecclesiastical leadership, their property, and their worship in return for acceptance of Muslim political authority and payment of *jizyah*. *Jizyah* is the poll tax levied on non-Muslim

³²Uri Rubin, "The 'Constitution of Medina': Some Notes," *Studia Islamica* 62 (1985): 5-23, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1595521>.

³³Lecker, *The "Constitution of Medina,"* 55-89.

³⁴Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah*, 1:501-504.

³⁵Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 41-48.

³⁶Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah*, 3:321-334.

³⁷Ibn Sa'd, *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, 1:313-342.

³⁸Landau-Tasseron, "From Tribal Society to Centralized Polity," 186-192.

subjects under Islamic governance.³⁹ El-Wakil has shown through source-critical analysis that the categorical dismissal of these documents as forgeries is unwarranted, and that the charter reflects authentic early Islamic policy toward non-Muslim communities.⁴⁰ The precedent shaped the later *dhimma* system.⁴¹

Military action was used sparingly when groups resisted incorporation. The siege of al-Ṭā'if after the battle of Ḥunayn illustrates this approach. Al-Wāqidī reports that the Muslim forces deployed catapults (*manjanīq*) and battering rams (*dabbābah*). The siege lasted twenty days, and the fortifications held.⁴² Al-Ṭā'if submitted months later after an economic blockade. The pattern is consistent: force signalled resolve, and negotiated settlement followed.⁴³

5.3. Case Study: The Integration of Yemen

Yemen's incorporation illustrates the difficulty of governing distant and politically fragmented territories. The region had been under Sasanian suzerainty before the Hijrah. That experience left it with an existing administrative infrastructure and with expectations of substantial local autonomy.⁴⁴

Zeev Rubin argues that the Sasanian administrative apparatus in Yemen formed the institutional backdrop within which the Prophet, peace be upon him, had to work. The apparatus comprised district structures, fiscal arrangements, and governor-clients such as Bādhān.⁴⁵ The Prophet's decision to confirm Bādhān in his position after his conversion was a pragmatic choice. It engaged the existing Sasanian-derived power structures rather than breaking with them.⁴⁶

After Bādhān's death, the Prophet assigned multiple representatives to different Yemeni regions. The choice acknowledged the territorial fragmentation of the region.⁴⁷ The appointment of Mu'ādh ibn Jabal combined religious instruction with judicial authority. Wael Hallaq's 1984 study of *ijtihād* traces the concept from its Prophetic-era origins, including the canonical dialogue with Mu'ādh on the sequence of the Qur'ān, *Sunnah*, and reasoned judgement, and shows that this appointment established foundational principles of legal reasoning.⁴⁸ Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī received similar educational and administrative responsibilities. 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib later received military command.

³⁹Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor, and Aidil Harith Bin Ahmad, "Jizyah and Kharaj," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 14, no. 2 (2019): 1-12, <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol14no2.1>.

⁴⁰Ahmed El-Wakil, "The Prophet's Treaty with the Christians of Najrān: An Analytical Study to Determine the Authenticity of the Covenants," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 27, no. 3 (2016): 273–354, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etw027>.

⁴¹Michael Bonner, *Jihād in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 64–67, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400827381>.

⁴²Al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* [The Book of Military Campaigns], ed. Marsden Jones, 3 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 3:922–935.

⁴³Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, 217–220.

⁴⁴G. R. Smith, "The Political History of the Islamic Yemen down to the First Turkish Invasion (1–945/622–1538)," in *Yemen: 3000 Years of Art and Civilisation in Arabia Felix*, ed. Werner Daum (Innsbruck: Pinguin-Verlag, 1987), 129–139.

⁴⁵Zeev Rubin, "Islamic Traditions on the Sāsānian Conquest of the Ḥimyarite Realm," *Der Islam* 84, no. 2 (2008): 185–199, <https://doi.org/10.1515/ISLAM.2007.007>.

⁴⁶Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa-al-Mulūk*, 3:120–122.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Wael B. Hallaq, "Was the Gate of *Ijtihād* Closed?" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16, no. 1 (1984): 3–41, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743800027598>.

This functional specialisation anticipates the formal separation of roles under the *Rashīdūn*.⁴⁹

Yemen's revolt during the *Riddah* Wars tests the depth of integration achieved during the Prophet's lifetime. The scale of the uprising indicates that allegiance in many areas was primarily political recognition of Muslim ascendancy rather than settled religious commitment.⁵⁰

5.4. Eastern Arabian Provinces: al-Baḥrayn and 'Umān

The Eastern regions of al-Baḥrayn and 'Umān followed a different integration path. Distance, existing politics, and religious diversity shaped the process. Incorporation proceeded primarily through letters and envoys.

Al-Baḥrayn was led largely by the Banū 'Abd al-Qays and included Christian and Zoroastrian minorities. It entered the polity through its ruler al-Mundhir ibn Sāwā in 8 AH / 629-630 CE.⁵¹ The Prophet, peace be upon him, set the terms in his letter to al-Mundhir. Muslim Arabs paid *zakāh*. Non-Muslims paid *jizyah*. The existing leadership remained in place. The assignment of al-'Alā' ibn al-Ḥadramī, may Allah be pleased with him, alongside al-Mundhir points to an advisory and fiscal role rather than replacement administration.⁵²

'Umān entered the polity through the Julandā brothers. The Prophet, peace be upon him, dispatched 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, may Allah be pleased with him, as an envoy. The mission began as diplomatic and took on administrative dimensions once the brothers accepted Islam.⁵³ Apostasy in both regions followed the Prophet's death, peace be upon him. The *Riddah* Wars exposed the fragility of the Eastern arrangements. Integration there had rested more on the Prophet's person than on durable institutions.⁵⁴

6. Gubernatorial Selection Criteria and Administrative Principles

6.1. Patterns in Gubernatorial Appointments

Twenty-three documented gubernatorial appointments survive from the Prophetic era. They indicate a coherent administrative philosophy. One central problem shaped it; how could distant provinces be managed under minimal institutional oversight?

The exclusion of office-seekers established the moral baseline. Al-Bukhārī and Muslim preserve a statement of the Prophet, peace be upon him: "*Innā lā nuwallī ḥādhā al-amr man sa' alahu wa-lā man ḥarasa 'alayhi*" ("We do not appoint to this position one who asks for it, nor one who is eager for it)."⁵⁵ The tradition recurs across independent transmission lines. This supports its authenticity as a governing norm. The rule framed appointment as a religious trust (*amānah*). Byzantine and Sasanian practice treated office-holding differently. Office was something to be sought and financially rewarded.

A strong preference for the early converts (*al-sābiqūn*) addressed a rational governance

⁴⁹Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān* [The Conquests of the Lands], ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1866), 89–91.

⁵⁰Elias Shoufani, *Al-Riddah and the Muslim Conquest of Arabia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 78–94.

⁵¹Ibn Sa'd, *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, 1:260–262.

⁵²Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, 91–93.

⁵³Ibid., 93–94.

⁵⁴Shoufani, *Al-Riddah*, 95–112.

⁵⁵Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Kitāb al-Aḥkām, no. 7149; Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* [The Authentic Collection of Muslim], ed. Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, 5 vols. (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, n.d.), Kitāb al-Imārah, no. 1733.

problem. Approximately 78 per cent of the named appointees were *Muhājirūn*.⁵⁶ Distant provinces required governors who could exercise independent judgement. They also required governors who remained loyal without continuous monitoring. Early conversion served as the most reliable observable proxy for both qualities. A formal *tazkiyah* procedure did not yet exist. The pattern is a solution to a principal-agent problem under pre-bureaucratic conditions.⁵⁷

Religious knowledge and teaching capacity operated as explicit selection criteria when provincial populations required instruction in Islamic practice. The appointment of Mu'adh ibn Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, to Yemen combined judicial authority with a pedagogical mandate.⁵⁸ This dual role, administrator and religious educator, has no structural counterpart in Byzantine or Sasanian provincial administration. It represents a distinctive feature of early Islamic institutional design.

The rule admitted only limited exceptions. Two existing local authorities were confirmed in office when direct administration was impractical. These were al-Mundhir ibn Sāwā in al-Baḥrayn and Bādhān in Yemen.⁵⁹ Such cases appear only in the peripheral provinces. Displacing the existing elites there would have produced resistance the centre could not suppress. The pattern reflects deliberate adaptation rather than inconsistency.

6.2. Administrative Instructions and Normative Principles

Prophetic directives to governors set out a recognisable normative order. When the same formulations recur across independent lines of transmission, they point to a stable core rather than to random later accretion. Justice, sound instruction, moderation in fiscal demands, and financial probity appear repeatedly.

Justice (*ʿadl*) held clear priority. The Prophet, peace be upon him, warned: “*ittaqi daʿwata al-mazlūmi fa-innahā laysa baynahā wa-bayna Allāhi ḥijāb*” (“Beware the supplication of the wronged, for between it and Allah there is no barrier”).⁶⁰

Facilitation (*taysīr*) carried comparable weight. When the Prophet, peace be upon him, sent Mu'adh ibn Jabal and Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, may Allah be pleased with them, to Yemen, he instructed them: “*Yassirā wa-lā tu'assirā, wa-bashshirā wa-lā tunaffirā*” (“Make matters easy and do not make them difficult; give good news and do not drive people away”).⁶¹

Financial integrity imposed clear limits on tax collection. Mu'adh, may Allah be pleased with him, was instructed to take only what was due in zakāh and to avoid the finest portion of people's wealth.⁶²

⁵⁶Fred M. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 226–230. For more details see: Ibn Sa'd, *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vols. 3-5, and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Isābah fī Tamyiz al-Ṣaḥābah* [The Correct Assessment in Distinguishing the Companions], ed. ʿAdil Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Mawjūd and ʿAlī Muḥammad Muʿawwad, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1994).

⁵⁷The principal-agent framework is applied to early Islamic administration in Patricia Crone, *God's Rule: Government and Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 3–32.

⁵⁸Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Kitāb al-Zakāh, no. 1496. for the judicial mandate specifically, see Abū Dāwūd, Sunan, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, 4 vols. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Saʿādah, 1935), Kitāb al-Aqdiya, no. 3592.

⁵⁹Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:120-122; Ibn Sa'd, *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, 1:260–262.

⁶⁰Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Kitāb al-Mazālīm, no. 2448.

⁶¹Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Kitāb al-ʿIlm, no. 69; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Kitāb al-Jihād, no. 1732.

⁶²Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Kitāb al-Zakāh, nos. 1454–1459.

A further principle was *ta'rif al-qulūb*, the winning of hearts. It authorised targeted material support to stabilise loyalties among recent converts and influential leaders.⁶³ The category addressed a specific legal and political need. It strengthened communal bonds with recent converts and allied leaders whose full integration required time and support.

6.3. Provincial Variations and Adaptive Administration

The appointment of 'Attāb ibn Asīd, may Allah be pleased with him, as governor of Makkah reflects a careful reading of local conditions. At the time of his appointment, he was young, which set him apart from the older Qurashī leaders who had held power before Islam. At the same time, his Qurashī lineage gave him standing in the eyes of the Makkkan population.⁶⁴ A fixed wage was also granted to him. This is the earliest documented case of a regular state salary in the Islamic record, and it marks a step toward more deliberate administrative practice.⁶⁵

The appointment of 'Uthmān ibn Abī al-'Āṣ, may Allah be pleased with him, in al-Ṭā'if rested on a similar political judgement, though under different local conditions. As an early convert from *Thaqīf*, he possessed both religious credibility and tribal standing.⁶⁶ That combination mattered after the Prophet's death, peace be upon him, when the community might have defected. 'Uthmān, may Allah be pleased with him, helped prevent that outcome. Khalīfah ibn Khayyāt preserves his warning in stark terms: "*Kuntum ākhira al-nāsi islāman, fa-lā takūnū awwalahum irtidādan*" ("You were the last of the people to enter Islam, so do not be the first to leave it").⁶⁷

The appointments in Yemen show a different feature of Prophetic administration. They reflect functional specialisation. Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, was sent to oversee teaching and adjudication. Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, may Allah be pleased with him, assumed responsibility for the coastal districts. A further embassy to Najrān placed diplomatic and military tasks under 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, may Allah be pleased with him.⁶⁸ The appointments show deliberate specialisation, even in the absence of a formal bureaucracy.

7. Structural Limitations and Administrative Fragility

7.1. Charismatic Authority and Institutional Weakness

The Prophetic-era administration rested on the Prophet's personal charismatic authority rather than on stable institutions. Legitimacy came from revelation and from his status as messenger of God, peace be upon him. It did not come from custom or rational-legal procedure. This is the reading Weber's typology supports, and Bryan Turner has confirmed it in a direct application to Islamic governance.⁶⁹ Charisma enabled rapid mobilisation. It also carried structural weaknesses that became acute at the Prophet's death, peace be upon him.

The Prophetic order did not rely on a developed bureaucracy, the kind of which Byzantine and Sasanian administration maintained. The classical sources record neither permanent archives nor a professional administrative class. Appointed governors typically returned to prior occupations once

⁶³Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, 57–60.

⁶⁴Ibn Sa'd, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, 5:11–13.

⁶⁵Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār and Riyāḍ Ziriklī, 13 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1996), 1:505–506.

⁶⁶Ibn Sa'd, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, 5:397–399.

⁶⁷Khalīfah ibn Khayyāt, *Tārīkh Khalīfah ibn Khayyāt*, ed. Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umarī (Riyadh: Dār Ṭaybah, 1985), 98.

⁶⁸Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa-al-Mulūk*, 3:156–157; Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*, 4:249–250.

⁶⁹Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:241–245; Turner, "Revisiting Weber and Islam," 161–166.

specific assignments were complete.⁷⁰ Communication remained limited. These constraints bounded administrative capacity, particularly in the distant provinces.

Financial administration remained rudimentary. Zakāh collection began in the Prophetic era. Systematic tax registers, professional collectors, and standardised assessment procedures had not yet developed.⁷¹ The system relied on the personal integrity of individual governors. This created structural vulnerabilities that the later caliphal administrations addressed through institutional reform.

Religious and political authority were concentrated in the Prophet's person, peace be upon him. This concentration prevented the kind of institutional differentiation that administrative development requires. Governors exercised religious, judicial, military, and administrative functions at once. No clear jurisdictional boundaries separated these functions.⁷² When the unifying authority was removed, a succession crisis followed.

7.2. The *Riddah* Wars: Evidence of Administrative Fragility

Widespread apostasy followed the Prophet's death, peace be upon him, in 11 AH / 632 CE. The movement exposed the fragility of the provincial integration of the Prophetic-era. The *Riddah* Wars required nearly two years of intensive military campaigns. They showed that apparent political unity had masked continued tribal particularism and shallow Islamisation.

The pattern of apostasy corresponded closely to the mechanisms of integration. The regions that had been incorporated through voluntary submission or diplomatic correspondence recorded the highest apostasy rates. These included Yemen, Eastern Arabia, and the peripheral tribal territories. The *Hijāzī* core, which had carried sustained administrative presence, remained stable through active intervention by resident Companions such as 'Attāb ibn Asīd and 'Uthmān ibn Abī al- 'Āṣ, may Allah be pleased with them.⁷³

The pattern reveals the personal character of the integration that had preceded it. Allegiance had been owed to the Prophet, peace be upon him, rather than to an enduring political institution, and it dissolved at his death. Meir Kister reaches a similar conclusion in his study of the campaign against Musaylimah. He notes that the sources' application of the term *riddah*, "was questioned by Western scholars who pointed out the political and social aspects of the revolt," and he observes that many tribes had understood their allegiance as personal rather than institutional.⁷⁴

The position attributed in substance to several rebelling communities captures the political logic. They are reported to have said that they submitted to Muḥammad, peace be upon him, not to Abū Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him.⁷⁵ Legitimacy had not passed to institutions. It had remained concentrated in one person. The suppression of the revolts required total mobilisation and the

⁷⁰Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 29-33.

⁷¹Daniel C. Dennett, *Conversion and the Poll Tax in Early Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950), 1-25; Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 49-56.

⁷²Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, 29-33; Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 18-25.

⁷³Elias Shoufani, *Al-Riddah and the Muslim Conquest of Arabia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 1-68; Fred M. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 85-112, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400847877>

⁷⁴Meir J. Kister, "The Struggle against Musaylima and the Conquest of Yamāma," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 27 (2002): 1-56.

⁷⁵Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 3:241-250; Shoufani, *Al-Riddah*, 70-85; Wilferd Madelung, *The Succession to Muḥammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1-40, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511582042>.

battlefield leadership of Khālīd ibn al-Walīd, may Allah be pleased with him. The battle of al-Yamāmah, in which numerous Qur'ān memorisers were killed, suggests that the reconquest was far from assured.⁷⁶

7.3. Transition to *Rashīdūn* Administration

The administrative innovations of the Rashīdūn caliphate under 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him (r. 13-23 AH / 634-644 CE), should be read as responses to the structural limitations that the succession crisis exposed. They were not extensions of Prophetic arrangements.

The *dīwān* drew in part on Sasanian precedent. It was a register system. Its creation moved administration away from ad hoc payments. Permanent registers for soldiers and pensioners appeared for the first time. Michael Morony has argued a related point. The early caliphate did not build its fiscal administration from a clean break. It inherited and adapted important elements of Sasanian practice. Morony identifies these continuities in district boundaries, revenue categories, and local administrative personnel.⁷⁷

Judicial specialisation followed. Dedicated judges (*quḍāh*) were appointed to operate independently of the provincial governors. Fiscal reform also extended to the tax system. The *kharāj* (land tax) and the *jizyah* were clarified as distinct fiscal categories. Surplus revenues were centralised.⁷⁸ These reforms changed the structural basis of Islamic rule. An expanding polity now required institutions, not the charismatic authority of a single leader.

8. Comparative Analysis and Theoretical Implications

8.1. Late-Antique Context and Administrative Adaptation

Prophetic administration belongs within the wider political transformation of the seventh century. Across the Mediterranean and Near Eastern worlds, older imperial structures were breaking apart, and new forms of rule emerged in the space left by that fragmentation.⁷⁹ A comparison with the Byzantine and Sasanian cases shows both continuity and divergence.

The Byzantine provincial rule rested on elaborate bureaucratic hierarchies and a professional civil service. These structures had formed over a long institutional history. John Haldon's reassessment of the themata system is instructive here. He places its development in the late seventh and early eighth centuries, not in the first generation of the Islamic conquests. Haldon also shows that the themata grew out of an administrative infrastructure that Arabia did not possess.⁸⁰

The Sasanian case points in a different direction. In territories that had previously fallen under Persian rule, administrative influence remained more directly visible. Morony's study of al-'Irāq documents substantial institutional continuity after the conquest. District boundaries, revenue

⁷⁶Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 52–55; Shoufani, *Al-Riddah*, 112–130.

⁷⁷Michael G. Morony, "Economic Boundaries? Late Antiquity and Early Islam," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 47, no. 2 (2004): 166–194, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1568520041262288>.

⁷⁸Wael B. Hallaq, *The Origins and Evolution of Islamic Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 25–45, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511818783>; Dennett, *Conversion and the Poll Tax*, 26-60; Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 56–72.

⁷⁹Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199264490.001.0001>.

⁸⁰John Haldon, "Military Service, Military Lands, and the Status of Soldiers: Current Problems and Interpretations," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 47 (1993): 1–67. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1291670>.

structures, and administrative procedures all survived to a significant degree.⁸¹ The early caliphate's provincial practice in places such as Yemen and al-Baḥrayn can therefore be read as pragmatic appropriation rather than institutional rupture.

Arabian tribal practice formed the immediate political context. Shūrā acquired a recognised role in collective deliberation. The *wafd*, or tribal delegation, was adapted for diplomatic incorporation during the year of delegations (*‘ām al-wufūd*) in 9 AH.⁸² The result was a synthesis with Arabian precedents rather than a rupture. The new supra-tribal authority nonetheless went beyond the fragmentary order it had replaced.

8.2. Theoretical Contributions

The findings bear on two debates in Islamic studies and comparative political development. The evidence for pragmatic adaptation and institutional flexibility works against the image of a closed Prophetic model, and it works equally against the revisionist position that denies administrative development in the earliest period. The record shows creative experimentation that met immediate needs while establishing broad principles that the Rashīdūn would later elaborate. Said Amir Arjomand has noted a gap in the sociolegal analysis of Prophetic governance, and the present study offers one way to close it.⁸³

The argument confirms a structural tension that Weber identified and that Bryan Turner has applied to Islam. Charismatic authority enables rapid mobilisation. Stable governance, however, requires institutions that alter the movement's original character.⁸⁴ The early Islamic case bears out the pattern. The Prophet, peace be upon him, led through charismatic authority. The Rashīdūn then built administrative structures, clarified official functions, and standardised fiscal practice. Prophetic governance, therefore, bequeathed to later Muslim political life a set of broad normative commitments rather than transferable administrative blueprints. The four commitments are justice (*‘adl*), consultation (*shūrā*), accountability (*hisāb*), and gradual adaptation (*tadarruj*). The last runs through the Prophetic record as a methodological principle.⁸⁵

9. Conclusion

Provincial administration in the Prophetic period remained practical and adaptive. It grew as circumstances changed, and it never became a fixed bureaucracy. In little more than a decade, the Muslims moved from persecution to political authority across most of the Arabian Peninsula. The Prophet, peace be upon him, established the normative basis of governance and secured major political gains, yet the system continued to depend primarily on his charismatic authority, not on stable institutional structures.

These features appeared clearly in four aspects of early Islamic provincial governance. Territorial incorporation did not follow a single course, but varied from one region to another. In some cases, submission was voluntary. In others, it came through negotiated settlement. Military

⁸¹Michael G. Morony, "Continuity and Change in the Administrative Geography of Late Sasanian and Early Islamic al-‘Irāq," *Iran* 20 (1982): 1–49, <https://doi.org/10.2307/4299720>.

⁸²Landau-Tasserou, "From Tribal Society to Centralized Polity," 180–216; Watt, *Muḥammad at Medina*, 238–260; Ibn Sa‘d, *Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā*, 1:291–359.

⁸³Said Amir Arjomand, "The Constitution of Medina: A Sociolegal Interpretation of Muhammad's Acts of Foundation of the Umma," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41, no. 4 (2009): 555–575, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743809990067>.

⁸⁴Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:241–252, 2:1111–1130; Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins*, 115–140.

⁸⁵Madelung, *The Succession to Muḥammad*, 1–40; Donner, *Muḥammad and the Believers*, 150–175. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511582042>.

action and diplomatic integration were also used where local conditions required them. Gubernatorial appointments show the same selectivity. Religious commitment, proven loyalty, and teaching ability carried particular weight. Administrative guidance repeatedly emphasized three central norms: justice, facilitation, and fiscal integrity. Their enforcement, however, depended above all on the authority of the Prophet, peace be upon him.

The *Riddah* Wars exposed a basic limit in provincial integration during the Prophetic period. Apostasy broke out mainly in the peripheral regions, while the political core remained stable. This contrast is significant. It shows that integration at the edges had remained tied to the Prophet personally, peace be upon him, more than to an institutional order capable of surviving his death. The *Rashīdūn* response was administrative reform. Under the caliphate, offices became more defined, official responsibilities clearer, and fiscal practice more regular. These measures incorporated elements of existing Sasanian administrative inheritance into an Islamic political framework. They neither created a wholly new order nor simply extended Prophetic arrangements. They should be read as corrective innovations made necessary by the crisis of succession.

Prophetic governance left broad normative commitments, not a fixed administrative system. Institutional forms adapted to context throughout the Prophetic decade and underwent significant structural revision under ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him. Early Islamic provincial governance developed through creative institutional responses to concrete problems, guided by stable normative principles, and without reproducing a fixed administrative model. These findings support a single analytical conclusion. Early Islamic provincial governance was charismatic in legitimacy, pragmatic in method, and normative rather than institutional in its enduring contribution.

Author Contribution

Elbane Mahfoudh Elidrissi: conceptualization, investigation, writing - original draft. **Suleiman Salem Alsaraireh:** investigation, resources, validation. **Muhammad Ahmad Ibrahim Aljahsh:** supervision, methodology, writing - review & editing, project administration.

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