

The Military Organization and the Army Position in Egypt's Fatimid Caliphate

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Abstract

The Fatimid Caliphate (297-567AH) enjoyed special military and political distinctions in the Islamic world. The reliance of the Fatimid caliphs on the organization of powerful land and naval forces led to the expansion of this caliphate and the achievement of political and military power in their struggle against the Abbasid caliphate. The present study seeks to evaluate the military organization and establishment of the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt (567-358 AH). To this end, it aims to analyze and answer the following questions: First, how did the Fatimid Caliphate's army institution in Egypt contribute to the rise and fall of this government in the Muslim world during the fourth century AH to sixth century AH? Second, how did the structure of the Fatimid army form based on the need and pattern of Islamic governments? And third, which institutions were responsible for the administration of the enormous Fatimid army? The findings of this study indicate that the Fatimid army, with the backing of a coherent administrative structure and enjoying ethnic and racial diversity, became one of the most extensive military institutions within the governments of the Middle Ages. However, a relative weakness in maintaining a stable balance among different groups of soldiers made the state always vulnerable to garrison uprising.

Keywords: Fatimid Caliphate, Egypt, Berbers, Hujariah, army, Diwan al Jaysh wal Rawtib.

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| Received: May 23rd, 2018 Accepted: November 24th, 2018|