

International Journal of History Research (IJHR)

Tawba Al-Khafaji: His Political Confrontations & Invasion during the Umayyad Era
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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study is to explore the life of Tawba Al-Khafaji in his political confrontations and invasion during the Umayyad.

Methodology: The study desktop literature research design.

Findings: Tawba was an opposing and dissenting man to the Umayyad state and out of its law

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: To conclude Tawba was one of the fiercest men in the history of Arabs and had fights and duels with some of the most famous men of literature and poetry being the best and the defeater as mentioned in the history of Arabs literature.

Keywords: *Political Confrontations, Life, Invasion, Umayyad Era*

INTRODUCTION

Tawba bin Humayyir bin Hazim or Hazin, or John or Sufyan , bin Ka'b bin Khafaja bin Amr bin Aqeel bin Ka'b bin Rabi'a bin Amir bin Sa'sa'h, Abo Harb the famous poet. His mother is Zubayda. He is well-known for his love to Layla Al-Akheeliyya to whom he proposed, but her father refused him and married her to another man after which he set out writing poetry which resulted with his fame as the lover of Layla.

Taqba and Layla lived during the Umayyad era. He lived in the pre-Islamic era through Islam reaching the Umayyad rule. His name is among few of the poets who were loved before and during Islam. His family lived in the Arab peninsula but he traveled a lot to the Levant.

He is known also for his invasions of the Bano Al Harith bin Ka'b, Hamdan and Muhra and was known for his talent of knowing the roads and the ways through the deserts and the cities. In one of his conquests in 676 AD/57 hijra he passed by a neighbor of Bano Awf bin Aqeel bin Khatha'am with his brother Abdullah and a cousin [some say friend] called Kabidh bin Abdullah Rabi'at or bin Aqeel. He invaded their lands and stole their camels and killed a man from Abo Awf family called Tore bin abi Sam'an or Sufyan bin Ka'b bin Amir bin Awf bin Aqeel. He was chased by Abo Awf family and they reached him, he was also followed by Yazid bin Ruwaba bin salim bin Ka'b bin Awf who attacked him to be stabbed by Abdullah bin Ruwaba [some say the one who killed him was Abdulaah bin Salim] until he was left killed and his brother wounded.

His death was, according to some resources, in 699AD/80HJ or 694 AD/75 HJ others tales indicates that his death was in 676AD/57HJ and this later date appears more close to the historical reality for many reasons and evidences. Those who referred to his death in 694AD/75HJ was because of printing mistake because the numbers are similar to 676AD/57HJ.

It was recorded that Muawiya I the Umayyad Caliph (679-661AD/41-60HJ) when he knew about the death of Tawba was so happy and gave a speech about it which proves that his death was during the rule of Muawiya I which did not exceed 679AD/60HJ.

In addition to this there is a conversation between Layla Al-Akheeliyya and the Caliph Marwan bin Al-Hakim who ruled between 684-683AD/65-64HJ who announced the death of Tawba declaring "I swear by Allah that Tawba is dead", and also the conversation between her and the Caliph Abdullmalik bin Marwan who ruled between 704-684AD/65-85HJ. Another evidence is her conversation with Al-Hajaj bin Yousif Al- Thaqafi the Magistrate of Iraq [*wali al-iraq*] (694-713AD/65-85HJ). Most of these conversations were about Tawba's death and in all of them she was lamenting and praising his death. This proves that Tawba died during Muawiya I's rule and he did not make it until the rule of Marwan bin Al-Hakam or his son Abdul Malik.

Other evidences show that Tawba died in 676AD/57HJ including Al-Asfahani referring to Tawba meeting Malik ibn AlRaib Al-Mazini the poet who died around (680AD/60HJ) which conclude logically that they have met before his death.

Another evidence is given by some historians, Such as Ibn Asaker and Ibn Al-Jawzi, states that "Layla Al-Akheeliyya after the death of Tawba got married" which shows that she was still young

when Tawba died in 676AD/57HJ (living through pre-Islamic era and Islam) it is then not reasonable to believe that he died in 694AD/75HJ or 699AD/80HJ. Most of the historical references showed that Layla died in 694AD/75HJ or around 699AD/80HJ. Her husband 'Siwar' died after her and was also a maven character who lived through several epochs. In an incident passing through the grave of Tawba with her husband, Layla stated 'Whatever you want from Twaba now that his bones decrepitated'. This is all to conclude that the death of Tawba Al-Khafaji happened during the rule of Muawiya I specifically in 676AD/57HJ. He was buried in Binta Heida. Many of the historians wrote eulogies about him and spoke about his history as clear of any impurities and was a man of chastity, integrity, bravery and knighthood all appears in his poetry and the poetry of Layla and some of his enemies and rivals.

Dissent of the Umayyad Rule and the Political Confrontations

In addition to the poetic and literary role Twaba played during the first half of the first Hijri century producing the poetry collection known with his name [diwan tawba ibn hummayyir] (Tawba ibn Hummayyir Poetry Collection) his political dissent against the Umayyads and his historical duels and fights played a greater role in his life journey and the History of Arabs and Islam.

Reports and tales indicates that Tawba was an opposing and dissenting man to the Umayyad state and out of its law. The Umayyad Caliph Muawiyah bin abi Sufyan (661-679Ad/41-60HJ) outlawed his blood which means that killing Tawba in the Umayyad state is not considered a crime. The justification he put for announcing this was that the family of Layla Al-Akheeliyah complained to him so he should be killed if he is found close to them. Tawba, however was a clever man and was able to flee before Muawiyah's men caught him.

During this period he had many fights and duels and was not easy to be submitted to the law of the Umayyad State a matter which led Muawiyah to describe him with the ugliest descriptions in his regular speeches calling him names and referring to him as a criminal. This was not something unfamiliar for Muawiyah who used to do the same with Imam Ali 3ibn Abi Talib the Rashidi Caliph, the cousin of prophet Muhammad and the husband of his daughter Fatima. This shows how Muawiyah deals with his enemies and rivals. The stories recorded shows that the moment he heard about the death of Tawba he claimed the platform and says: People of the Levant, God (be praised) has killed the donkey and son of the donkeys and saved the Muslims his evilness, so be thankful because it is a bless like honey and even more than honey for those who hate him. He was a dangerous outlaw and people feared his attacks" at this moment Hamam bin Qabisa said: Prince of the Muslims you were spared his deeds which he continued until his death. He was I swear:

A man of war whom people hate to face * he faces his rivals with the sword

He challenges his enemies while they avoid him * just like a huge monstrous lion

Which makes Muawiyah furious and ask him to stop talking because he considered this a prais of Tawba's bravery and would not one of his followers to do this, although it was not denied even by his enemies. After Twaba's death Layla Al-Akheeliyah met Muawiyah I who burst in her face with anger and hate complaining about Tawba's dissent and what he considers bad reputation to which Layla answered:

Not everything people say is true, people are an evil tree envying the blessed men wherever they are and for whatever. Prince of Muslims Tawba was the best of his people, firm when he speaks, generous when you need him, chaste and good-looking man. Then she added in poetry:

God Forbid what you say, he was I swear a generous gentleman

Capable of solving any problem

A young Khafaji man who feels ashamed of stinginess

His hands and fingers are softer than the dewy drops

Chaste and stiff far from troubles

A good-looking when you meet him you find him without pre-intentions

Hunger which now reached the neighbors, guests and everyone

Knew that you are his killer

And you are a knowledgeable man oh Tawba

Who know all the lands

If the mean attackers displaced people

He sleeps with clear consciousness those who are the neighbors of him

Because he sacrifices his house and goods for his guests.

She Said: Prince of Muslims by Allah if you know him you will know I did not say enough about him and not even close to what he is. Muawiyah answered: What kind of a man he was? She answered:

Death reached him when he became perfect

And those who would compete with him will fail

He was like a lion protecting his den, cubs and lioness

Meek when in anger

And a venom poison when he kills.

Tweba did not submit to any of the laws of the Umayyad when he used to invade the lands of Bano Qudha'a, BBano Al-Harith, Bano Ka'ab, KHath'am and Hamdan (at al Juruf area), during the rule of Muawiyah. Sometimes he would go up to the lands of Muhra and invade them crossing along desert between them and the lands of Aqeel where no one can reach even the birds except him because of his knowledge of the roads through the deserts. He used to take enough water for traveling in the desert to invade their lands then run out back to the desert where they follow him only to lose him there because he intentionally chose the hot days for his raids then run of to the desert where they cannot reach him, until they ambushed him and killed him.

Tweba witnessed his people Bano Khafaja and Bano Awf quarrelling at the charity administrator Hamam bin Mutrif Al-Aqeeli Wali (alderman) of Al Madinah who Marwan Bin Al Hakam employed to manage the charities for Bano Amer. During this quarrel Tur Bin Abi Sam'an

bin Ka'ab Al-Aqeeli hit Tweba with Jurs (a long iron stick) while Tweba was holding a shield (part of his war armor) the shield wounded Tweba's face and the administrator arrested Tur and put him in front of Tweba to take revenge. Tweba refused and told him that this was an order of yours and Tur would never dare to do this without your orders so he decided to let him go and take revenge later and decided to be generous this time and let him go. Later Tweba was informed that Tur is out in the desert at the homes of Bno Amer specifically in the house of a man called Sariah bin Uweimer bin abi Adi who was a friend of Taweba, which made him wait until they leave Sariah's house to follow them. They wanted to leave in the morning but Sariah stopped them because he told them they will not be able to escape Tweba's hands and advised them to leave at night. However Tweba waited them and when they left the house at night he followed them and killed Tur a matter which led to the killing of Tweba himself.

When the news arrived to Abdul Aziz bin Zararah bin Juz'u [or Jarir] bin Amru bin Awf bin Ka'ab Al-Kilabi he was furious and went with few of his tribe to find Tweba, prepared him for a funeral and buried him. It appears in few references that Abdul Aziz's Father was the one who buried Tweba because Abdul Aziz died during the life of his father in 670 AD/50 HJ which is clear in his biography. while Zararah was an old man in his seventies or eighties in 683 AD/64 HJ. Logically then, it was him who buried Tweba in 676 AD/57 HJ.

Both tribes took the case to the Caliph who stopped the fight and the killing. While Bano Awf bin Aqeel left the valley feeling from Tweba's tribe to the desert then the north peninsula then to the Levant. No one of them was left in these lands where Bano Rebi'ah bin Aqeel and Urwa bin Abadah bin Aqeel replaced them.

Marwan Bin Al Hakam confessed that Tweba is one of the strongest Arab men, and after his death he wrote to people from Aqeel's family saying: By Allah's name if I heard that anyone would say something I hate about Tweba he will be crucified on a palm tree. Apparently, these tribal conflicts led by Tweba was a reason of political unrest during the rule of the Umayyad until the death of Tweba Al KHafaji.

Duels and Heroic Fights of Tweba Al-khafaji

Tweba was known to be one of the brave Arab Knights praised by his friends and enemies. Stories about his travelling to the Levant and was attacked by a black man whom Tweba attacked back and cut in half taking his clothes, camel, and maid who was tied to the camel and took them back to his home.

Al-ASfahani referred to the bravery of tweba when he travelled to the Levant passing through the lands of Athraa where he met Buthaina and her lover Jameel 66who suggested a shooting duel and a race down the valley with Tweba which Tweba won.

Another heroic historical duel was between Tweba and Malik bin Al-Raib Al-Mazini, the Arab poet who passed by Laila Al Akhiliyah and sat down to talk to her for a long time until a young man came and sat by her side and started talking to her, for her to ignore Malik who became very angry and came to ask Tweba: who are you? Tweba answered: tweba bin Al Humier, Malik replied: do you accept a duel? Tweba answered what made ask for a duel while you are our guest and neighbor? Malik replied: it must be done, thinking Tweba is afraid of him so he insisted until

Tweba agreed and he defeated him. When Malik fell on the ground he released a bad smell wind and Laila started laughing at him. Feeling humiliated Malik travelled to Khorasan, saying that he will go back to the land of the Arabs ever. Malik lived in Khorasan until his death and his grave is a famous sight there.

Al-Farazdaq tells a story he witnessed when Ziyad Ibn Abih the Wali [magistrate] of Basrah and Kufa who died in 672AD/53 HJ his son Obied Allah bin Ziyad was employed by Muawiyah to be the wali of Khorasan in 672 AD/53 HJ and in 674 AD/55 HJ became the wali of Basrah. Al-Farazdaq came to the city while Marwan bin Al-Hakam was the wali so he said a libel poem [Hija'] about the wali and moved to reach the lands of Bano Aqeel and their water wills to meet Laila Al Akhiliyah where he talked to her and they exchanged poetry readings. Until a man passed by, she put her veil on her face and moved to talk to him leaving Al-Farazdaq a matter which made him angry and asked Tweba for a duel but Tweba refused saying: 'A gentleman won't fight with his guest. However Al-Farazdaq insisted and they were involved in a fight and Tweba defeated him and stood on his chest until he released bad smelling wind. Al-Farazdaq feeling ashamed decided to leave the Arab lands to Khorasan but Tweba begged him to stay or let him accompany Al-farazdaq in his journey which is mentioned later as one of his great travelling journeys. Al-Farazdaq never knew who were the women and men caused this fight until Tweba told him on the way "I am Tweba bin Alhumier and the woman was Laila Al Akhiliyah.

Another story of his great duels was that between him and Salil bin Tur bin Sam'an bin Ka'ab bin Ammer bin Awf bin Aqeel. Al Salil was famous as a surly strong man. Tweba and Salil Had a fight and they met near a water spring where Tweba knocked him down and killed him. Tweba did before kill Salil's father in one of his incursion on the lands of Bano Aqeel. To conclude Tweba was one of the fiercest men in the history of Arabs and had fights and duels with some of the most famous men of literature and poetry being the best and the defeater as mentioned in the history of Arabs literature.

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