Peace Agreements at the Beginning of the Muslim Triumphs in Ajnadin and their Influences on Tax (Jaziyeh) Payers

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Abstract

One of the ways to put an end to wars was the peace agreements which dated back to letters of mercy at the time of prophet (peace be upon him). Once it is signed, Muslims must remain loyal to its contents and they cannot breach it. Based on the contents of these letters the residents of the conquered cities must pay tax or become a Muslim. These rules were based on peace or opening the cities to other countries and even the financial and social rules of the residents. This became the core concept of the spread of Islamic ruling and governing method. Origin, terms and conditions of such agreements in Ajnadin and their influence on the tax payers are subject of this research. Some research have been done in terms of tax(jaziyeh) and how to obtain it as a juridical and historical issue. However, the lack of any research regarding the agreements or letters of mercy and their effects on people necessitates the need for this research. The research method adopted in this case is descriptive-analytic and some library work through compiling information.

Key words: Peace agreements, Ajnadin, tax (jaziyeh), Tax payers

PREFACE

By the smite of victories in the eleventh year after Hijrat and it's expansion in the thirteenth year the Muslims advancement towards Iraq and al-sham, peace agreements and letters of mercy were regarded as one of the most important ways of ending a war. These agreements were allowed by the contemporary Muslims and infidels i.e. Muslims after signing suck contracts were responsible for upholding them unless they were against sharia which made them null and void. On the other hand, infidels were regarded as enemy if they breach the contents.

Based on these agreements people fell into three categories: First, people who accepted Islam, became Muslims and joined them. This group should not pay taxes called "Jaziyeh" but they paid "Zakat". Second, people who practice other religions

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than Islam and they must annually pay "Jaziyeh" and based on the 29th verse of "Tobah" sura and prophet's tradition their property and life must be protected by Muslims so they are called The people of Conscience (ahl al-dhimma). Third, people who did not accept any of these features and went to other places or stayed enemy and therefore called Harbi (enemy) infidels. Jaziyeh tax had a very primary role in the administrative system of Islam and the expansion of their influence on the neighboring countries. From the administrative point of view, Muslims and ahl al-dhimma were the citizens of an Islamic government and must be provided equal services and given equal rights. One of these rights was guaranteeing their health regardless of their race, color and social status. They were divided to three groups 1. Jews 2. Christians 3. Magus The peace agreements had diverse types, conditions and effects which after considering the Ajnadin area and signing the treaty their effects and influences on the tax payers and their reactions towards the treaties; were studied.

THE ORIGIN OF THE TREATIES

Inviting infidels and the people of other religions to accept and practice Islam was the basic condition of "Jihad" at the time of our prophet Muhammed (PBUH).

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The prophet in his advice to the Islamic army said that, If you confronted the enemies of Islam do not kill them, first try to invite them to accept one of these three options. If they accepted, then leave them be. First invite them to accept these then ask them to move or pay tax. In "BaniNazir" incident, the prophet ordered the Muslims to save their life and let them move to another place and take a camel load of their properties except any weapon. (Tabari,1996,3/1085)

As indicated in the history the prophet Muhammed did not terminate his political relations with his most vicious enemy, Abu Al Sofian. He accepted his messengers and answered his letters and messages. Even he talked to him over military issues. In "Ahzab" battle he negotiated with "Qatfan" tribe in the hope to prevent them from waging war, when they were sieged by "BaniQorayza" tribe also he negotiated so as to make them surrender without shedding blood. In "Kheibar Battle" some forts were triumphed through battle and some through negotiation and reaching truce on condition that the residents would move out. Jews agreed that anything they got from harvesting and dates half of which would be given to the Muslims. (Ibn al-khaldoon,1984,1/437).

After this incident, there were contents in letters which were sent to KhosroParviz, Maghsus, Hirakl and some generals and their subordinates in different areas that included features basing the later peace agreements in the coming years. When the prophet reached "Tabook"; yahya ibn al-raviyeh, Ilehsoldan and the people of Jarba came to him. The prophet agreed to sign a truce contract with them on condition that they pay Jaziyeh(tax) and a document was drafted. (ibn al-khaldoon, 1984, 1/451). Some other regional governors did the same too and agreed to pay Jaziyeh. (ibn al-asir, 1992, 2/382). The prophet in return let them to trade and transport inside Medinah and other Islamic dominated countries freely and guaranteed their safety. In a letter to Maghsus the representative of Heraghl in Egypt, the prophet said: the followers of the guidance are safe against the torments of GOD. After respecting and greeting God, I invite you to accept and practice Islam, embrace it to be and stay safe. (Tabari, 1996, 3/1143). Also in the order of the prophet to Monzer regarding Hejrzoroastrians it is said that: Invite them to Islam if they accepted it they would have the same share as you in your gains and loss and if they do not, just ask them to pay Jaziyeh without eating their food or marrying them. (Hamid al-allah,1995,201). In the tenth year of Hijra, the prophet sent messengers to Bani Hares tribe to teach them Islamic ways and methods. What was gravely emphasized was: Any Jews or Christian who becomes Muslim by heart, in regarded as a true Muslim and has the same benefits an duties and anyone who remains Jews or Christian

should pay One full Dinar or something with the same value and the payers are under the protection of God and his prophet(Tabari, 1996,2/1259). In a letter to Yemenis people the prophet said: Any Jews or Christian who became Muslim is regarded as a Muslim and the ones who remain on their religion should pay Jaziyeh (Yaghubi, 1992, 1/448). On the day of "Mobahele (cursing) the Najran Christians told the prophet that: We do not enter into cursing with you and instead we pay Jaziyeh and the prophet gave them a letter of mercy (Yaghubi, 1992, 1/451). These letters were sent to Hamedan, Najran, Bahrain and Ethiopia which later became the basics for the financial and social laws of Muslims. These agreements developed and turned into rules which were about Muslims reactions to non-Muslims called "the people of dhimmis" who lived among them. (Gil,1992A.D, 30). Jaziyeh was set by the prophet as the chief and then in Medinah as the legislator. This was not just tax but a symbolic sign of surrendering of the people of dhimmis.(Lewis,1984A.D,14)

AJNADIN

Ajnadin was called to the area between Ramle and BeytJabrin in Palestine (Tabari, 1996, 4/1560). Muslims named Palestine "Jond" because it covered a group of areas and regions then they named Jordan, Hamas and Damascus "QanassarinJond". Some say that any area where troops stayed there for some time is called Jond(Belazari, 1958, 195). Each of these Jonds of Damascus, Hamas, Palestine and Jordan plus Qanassarin included vast areas and big boroughs(ibn khordazbeh,1889A.D,5). Ajnadin has the same meaning as legion or Megiddo. This meant a special and important place an alias for places where the main parts of the Islamic troops met while moving to northern parts(Gil,1992A.D,41). Abu ObeydehJarah divided Levant to four parts named as Ajnad namely for Administrative, Military and Financial matters, these four parts were: Damascus, Palestine, Hamas and Ghansarin(Katebi, 2014, 153). Perhaps these administrative divisions were affected by the system in Byzantine Empire with this main difference that the Arabic strategy is based on Nomadic life and the victories of the commanders with four flags became the fundamentals of dividing Levant into four cities(Katebi,2014,156).

Following the victories of Islamic commanders in the 13th year, Hijrah; they set up a camp in a place called Ajnadin in front of Romans and continued to expand their country through more and more victories. Due to the animosity of Syrian people with their contemporary Roman Governors, that city was easily conquered it seemed Ajnadin people preferred Arabs to Romans (Danet, 1962, 99). When Muslims seized a fortress or a city and the people of that

city surrendered, they just paid tax called Jaziyeh annually or they accepted some errands to do for them (yaghut hamavi,2001,1/43). The agreements that were reached after every victory are samples of the conditions after the truce. In a battle near Ajnadin, Hirakll was killed and Romans were defeated(Tabari, 1996, 4/1560) and the cities and fortresses declared that by paying tax and obeying the Muslims; they want to have Arabs' protection(Danet, 1961, 84). Bosra was the first city of Levant which was conquered by Muslims(Ibn asaker,1415A.H,2/105). The people in Bosra together with Khalid ibn-al-walid started to pay Jaziyeh so as to guarantee the safety of their life, property and progenies, however the essence of Jaziyeh whether individual or shared had not been clarified (Katebi, 2014, 92). After that the Muslims went towards Damascus (Masoodi,1986,263). Conquering Damascus happened in the year 14th, Hijra and through four gates. On the other hand, AbuObeydeh opened the gate of Jabiyeh through peace and truce and Khaled ibn al-valid went up the eastern gate through ladders and conquered the other part of the city(Balazori,1958,170) and then told Abu Obeydeh that take the people of the city as slaves since I entered the city by force; Abu Obeydeh denied it, though; and said I granted them mercy and we reached an agreement (Yaghubi,1992,2/21) and Abu Obeydeh conquered Damascus without shedding blood in pure truce(Ibn Asaker,1415A.H,2/112). The truce here was reached through a letter of mercy in which diverse types of tax like Jarib and dinar were set. Also in this letter of mercy, it is mentioned that if the tax payers got richer or poorer nothing would be added or declined from the appointed tax and based on their financial ability; they would be treated (Katebi, 2014, 93). Khaled Ibn al-valid while entering Damascus granted mercy to people's life, properties and churches and said anyone who pays Jaziyeh will be treated kindly (Balazori, 1958, 176). After conquering Jordan, Muslims left Yazid ibn Abusofyan and his troops in Damascus and went to Fahl where at that time was part of Jordan(Tabari,1994,4/1586)and Shorahbil ibn Hasaneopened that area of Jordan as Anveh which means a conquered land except for Tabariyeh whose people compromised(Balazori,1998,167). After that Muslims went to Hamas whose people compromised with the same conditions as the people of Damascus (Yaghubi, 1992, 2/22). The people of Hamas were granted mercy and their life, property and churches remained safe and they could practice their own religion and their churches would not be destroyed or used as accommodation. Also the ones who wanted to move out of that land were free to do so and take their property(Teritton,1930A.D,11). Abu Obeydeh before conquering Hamas crossed through Baalbak and their people wanted peace an in a letter of mercy to them it was written that: This is mercy to lives, properties and churches inside and outside of the city and their mills. The vernaculars could bring their livestock for grazing until 15 miles, and if they became Muslim we share what we have and our duty would be their duty, too. Their merchants can travel to wherever land that they signed a peace agreement with us and whoever decides to stay must pay Jaziyeh(Balazori,1998,187). After conquering Hamas, Khalid went to Qanassarin.

Qanassarin where it's borough is Halab was always part of Hamas until Moaviyeh rebuilt it with Antakiyeh and Manbaj a diffrentJond (Yaghuthamavi, 2001, 1/128). Khalid invaded Qanassarin and occupied the nearby cities (Ibn khaldun.1984.1/526). After that Abu Obeydeh seized Beit Al Moghadas, The people there asked him to Make peace with them with the same conditions and terms like that of Sham city. The peace agreement was made by Omar Ibn Khatab.

Abu Obeydeh wrote this to Omar and he came from Medinah (Tabari,1996,5/1788). Omar made peace with the people of Iliya in Jabiyeh and wrote a peace agreement under these conditions: You are safe in terms of your life, properties, churches and crosses. No one will abode in them nor they will be destroyed (Yaghubi, 1992,2/31). The people of Iliya and the ones from Palestine who joined them must pay Jaziyeh like the people in Sham and the thieves must be chased away from the city and the people who decide to go out from city are safe with their properties until they reach a safe place(Tabari, 1996, 5/1789). He also set Jaziyeh on the people with other religions named "Zemmeh" (Ibn Asaker, 1415 A.H, 2/182). In yarmuk battle Khaled told the Roman commander that I invite you to one of these three things: Accepting Islam, paying Jaziyeh and finally war. The commander asked what will be the status of a person who accepts Islam? Khaled answered:

We all have the same value and status and are the same in any case (Ibn Athir.1992,8/154). Other agreements which were made in other cities of Sham getting Jaziyeh from the residents was affirmed (Katebi,2014,92).

Conditions and Terms of the Agreements

The people who signed the agreement when they came to Dar Al-Islam; they had financial and life safety and could stay there for four months but if they wanted to stay there for a year they had to pay Jaziyeh. If they broke any of these laws they were safely sent away by the authorities in charge (Maverdi, 2004, 300). Based on the conditions in agreements the people of dhimmis (having other religion than Islam) should not have the same clothes and rides as that of the Muslims. They must wear a special belt to be distinguished from Muslims and are not allowed to marry Muslim woman (Abu Yusef, 1979, A.D, 127). In an agreement with the people of Damascus Abu Obeydeh

said that: We gave you safety on condition that you must not go into Muslims' markets, do not invite them to your religion, your clothes, shoes, turban and rides must not be like Muslims and also you must not carry or possess any weapon. However, there is no limitation or restriction for them to accept Islam (Ibn Asaker,1415A.H,2/121). These are some of those conditions that came in agreements:

- 1. They must not change or disrespect the book of Allah.
- 2. They must not say bad things regarding God or his prophet and must not call the prophet a Liar.
- They must not disrespect Muslim women nor marry them.
- They must not prevent any Muslim from practicing his religion and must not invade his property and disrespect his religion.
- 5 They must not aid enemies of Islam.
- 6. They must not dress like Muslims and must wear special belt called 'Zonnar'.
- 7. Their buildings must not be taller than building Muslims.
- 8. If they get into Dar al Islam they have safety till four months then they must pay Jaziyeh.
- If other religions want to become Muslims they have guaranteed safety otherwise they must pay Jaziyeh. If they do not want it, they must leave Dar al Islam, and until they get out of that place they have safety in their life and properties (Maverdi, 2004, 299).

Due to the same terms of the agreements was guess that these basic rules that Omar ordered, were followed in all agreements:

- All the people must officially recognize Arab government
- 2. Pay the tax they used to pay
- 3. The previously tax auditing method will still be used
- 4. The people's life, property and religion safety should be guaranteed
- 5. Anyone who wants to leave his place is free to do so.

However, it is highly doubtful that options 2 and 3 are ordered by the Caliph (Danet,1961,102). We can understand that other options like the type of clothes, ringing the church bells, announcing holidays and etc, were later added to these agreements (Danet,1961, 110). Accepting Islam, paying Jaziyeh, war or leaving were the main parts of agreements. In most of the agreements it was mentioned that: I advise you to respect the people of dhimmi since they are under the protection of God and his prophet. They should know that this safety must remain unchanged and no further burden should be put on their shoulders (Arnold, 1979, 42).

The conditions Through Which the Agreements Work Out

The most important part of the agreement is related to Jaziyeh. It is a per capita payment set for each man as a sign

of contempt of infidels or obtained through kind relations with them and is a sign of granting safety (Maverdi, 2004, 294). At the time of Sassanid Jaziyah and Kharaj (different types of taxes) were common.at that time Jaziyeh did not have anything to do with the religion. It was an imposition that the upper class of the society would take from the lower ones. In Islam it is obtained from non-Muslims for their protection (Danet, 1961, 20). The minimum amount is set by judicial system and the maximum by jurisprudent. If he became a Muslim, then he does not have to pay Jaziyeh. Jaziyeh makes the Islamic Commander shoulder two main duties towards the payers: First, preventing any harm to them. Second, defending them(Maverdi, 2004, 295). Paying Jaziyeh for all the people with other religions was mandatory (Abu yusef, 1979A.D,121). The existence of interest was one of the main options for agreements. Soothing infidels so as to invite them to accept Islam, an opportunity for the troops to rest and organizing them, an opportunity for both Muslims and infidels to go to each other's cities so Muslims can get their hand on information and their secrets were among the main reasons for agreements(Akbari,2007,292). All the people of other religions except for children, demented people, women and slaves must pay Jaziyeh and if the people who signed agreement and the people of dhimmi together decide to fight against Muslims both of them were regarded as enemies (Maverdi,2014,300). Also poor people and the ones who attend Muslim's troops should not pay Jaziyeh(Abuyusef,1979A.D,123). Muslims in some parts let the tax payers, especially Arab Christians, not pay Jaziyeh in return for helping them in the battle (Zeydan, 2010, 55). The person in charge of collecting tax must be a well-qualified and trustworthy person(Maverdi, 2004, 311). The governors of Islamic regimens guaranteed the enforcement of these laws, they must treat all the people in their regimens with great care and fairly. When the Islamic troops enter Sham in a letter Abu-Bakr told them not to destroy churches, harm monks, not to cut down trees and harm animals. Let them live based on their beliefs (Teritton, 1930A.D, 149). Enforcing the laws, being based on Koran and flexibility of these rules along with paying attention to personal beliefs encouraged peaceful residents and the guarantee for living peacefully for a non-Muslim caused taxpayers to live near Muslims without any problems. These rules were upheld regardless of race, color and profession (Garba Mohammad, 2015A.D,11 and 12).

The Effects of Implementing the Agreements

The presence of the new residents and implementing the contracts had religious, social, cultural and political effects on the lives of tax payers. Accepting Islam was religiously regarded as one of the main solutions to put an end to battles and the people who accepted it, infidels or other religions, had special rights that Muslims were not allowed to break them(Morvarid,1410A.H,245). If some of them accepted Islam in order to escape paying Jaziyeh, then they had to pay other taxes like Khoms and Zakat and during battle they were set higher taxes(Arnold,1979 A.D,46). Arabs after conquering a country did not insult their people's religion, trading, traditions and let them be the way they are which made Islam more attractive in their eyes. Tax payers were free to have their own religion and Muslims were bound to leave them be(Zeydan,2014,54). However, in drinking wine and carrying weapon, Muslims did not go easy on them(Abu yusef,1979 A.D,126). The people should not carry weapons or flags or sing their religious songs but they were free to have their religion and the people who wanted to leave the city could take their property (Teritton. 1930A.D,96). In fact, the people of other religions (Ahl al-dhimma) were allowed to hold their religious ceremonies unless all of their symbols were hidden from public (Louis, 1984A.D, 54). The existence of hard to understand complexities in Christian and Jesus doctrine which led to disappointment and weaken their beliefs; these were the reasons that drum up their interests in Islam since It was so easy on the new comers in Islam (Arnold, 1979, 58). Based on the agreements churches and their crosses would not be destroyed and also not used as accommodation(Tabari,1996sh,5/1790). After Arabs conquering an area the people were not forced to immediately change their religion and some remained on their religion. However, fear of divisions in religion and Hirakl's reaction reinforced their tendency towards a governor who let them be free in religions(Arnold,1979,40). The spread of Islam and the smite of Islamic provinces, fulfilling the agreements and mixing the culture of sovereignty made the Christians from majority to minority leading them towards accepting Islam(Louis,1984A.D,17). From social point of view, Muslims obliged to protect from the life and property of tax(Jaziyeh) payers and insisted on it and if they could not do so, then they returned the tax to them (Abu Yousef, 1979A.D,127). If anytime, Hirakl organized a troop against Muslims and they understood it so they returned the tax they collected from Hamas people and told them we cannot protect you now since we have a war ahead of us so you are on your own to protect yourself (Balazori, 1958, 199). It is obvious that returning the tax could bolster the spiritual and religious importance of Arabs among those people and they closed the gates of their cities to Hirakl's troop and said that they accept and prefer Muslim's justice and fair governing system to that of Roman's un justice (Arnold, 2006, 42). The ethical and spiritual conditions of eastern Churches made the Christians frustrated making them seek another place which is safe and without any of these problems, Islam granted them such a place(Arnold,2006,59).

Although Jaziyeh was a fine set and obtained from non-Muslims as a punishment for rejecting Islam, the payers were exempted from doing service in the Islam's troops and any Christian who was doing service or part of the Islam's troop did not have to pay Jaziyeh. Like Jarajameh tribe which became Muslim's allied and helped them in their battles, instead they did not pay Jaziyeh and had their share in the whole booty; and Muslims due to their promise defended them against their enemies and anyone who wanted to harm them (Arnold, 1979, 47).

Comparing the amount of Jaziyeh and tax set by Muslims to that of the Roman Empire and Byzantine Empire encouraged them to accept Muslim's ideas and embrace Islam. The lay people of Iran and Rome who went under the hegemony of

Islam, it was like getting out of Hell of brutality and entering Heaven. Whenever Muslim's troop got out of their city in order to expand the country; they were advised to be kind to their subordinates (zeydan,2010, 52). The prophet told them not to be brutal towards dhimmi people, not to injure them or set them tasks that they are not able to do(Abu Yousef,1979A.D,125). However, the people of Zemeh should not call prophet or Muslims as liars and should not marry Muslim women otherwise, they were not under protection anymore and their properties were taken like enemies. They were under protection unless they did something wrong, breached the rules and also drinking wine, eating pork and doing Haram things were not under any protection by Muslims (Treitton, 1930A.D,15).

Of judicial review, if a man Muslim was killed, was verified by Muslim judge and dhimmi people must pay wergild (Ibn Asaker, 1415A.H,2,185). The duty of Imam was to protect the people of Zemeh, preventing Muslims to hurt them and if they have any litigation they should refer to a proper and fair judge and accept his judgment (Ibn al Ekhvah,1981,41).

Of economical view, the land which was for a non-Muslim seized by Muslims or its owner became Muslim; then tax was lifted from that land. This was one of the most economical issue at that time which was very beneficial for the owners leading them to accept Islam. As a result, tax incomes of Muslims reduced and they had to do something else to compensate it, and making other non-Muslims shoulder more burdens of paying taxes. Many newly turned Muslims left their lands and went to Arab cities to be dependent on them as "Mavali" [non-Muslims dominated by Arabs] (Danet, 1961, 5). Abu Hanife believed that the lands of the owners who were fighting with Muslims must be plundered as immoveable property but not their moveable properties (Maverdi, 2004, 110). Islam nullify most taxes except Jaziyeh and Kharaj. Other types of taxes which were set and common before Islam so as to pay the debts of churches and their maintenance we can name taxes on urban lands, trading, cows, sheep, etc.(Alris,1994,163). Islam other than deducting taxes, made them clear and created equality on obtaining them(Alris,1994sh,165). In fact, Arabs were sometimes indifferent towards Islamic doctrine and the system of the new government was built based on the prophet's ethical doctrine and this made Islam survive in those areas. The main reasons of spreading Islam was not based on the martial actions of the troops but it was because of the conditions of the people in that conquered city (Arnold, 1979, 36).

Of cultural review, Omar accepted easy conditions in Syria and granted safety of life, freedom of religion and church to Christians at that time (Broukalman, 1967, 80). Some cities like Damascus two time surrendered under two different conditions and Hamas that was seized four times(Danet, 1961sh, 830 however, whatever conquered as "Anveh" (land invaded and occupied due to battle), was not taken into account and made all the placed peacefully surrendered and governed (Balazori, 1958, 178). In addition, due to the fact that all the conquered countries had diverse races, traditions, civilization and governments, Omar let the local governors continue governing (Holt and Lembton, 2004, 110). When Muslims wanted to set Jaziyeh on Taghalab Christians, they refused to accept it. Omar asked his companions for advice and they told him that they are Arabs so do not do anything to force them become friends with your enemies so Omar exempted them from paying tax but under this condition that they let their children choose their religion freely and do not force them to become Christian (Zeydan, 2010, 672). If anyone from Taghalbian declared that his debt is equal to the supplied goods then he should not pay extra tariffs (Tritton, 1930, A.D, 120). Omar even accepted the requirements of the people in Jerusalem who wanted peace on condition that Omar himself write them a letter of mercy and grant them mercy and went there and writes the letter (Ibn Khaldun, 1/263). It seems the race, language, geographical and cultural conditions of that place was of great importance and value hence highly influential.

CONCLUSION

After conquering different countries at the time of Caliphs, letters of mercy used to be written granting protection, their terms and conditions rooted in prophet's time toward the people of Tabuk, Yemen, Ethiopia, Bahrein and others. Based on these letters of mercy Muslims obtained something called Jaziyeh which was in return of protecting their life and properties. Also there were some other conditions in those letters which dated back to the prophet's time, too and fulfilling them affected the life of tax payers. Those payers were free to perform their ritual

ceremonies however they had to obey some rules such as not insulting the prophet and Quran and wearing special dress, wearing special scarf called Zannarto be distinctive from Muslims and should not carry Cross or marry Muslim women. However, some of these people became Muslim and some administrative clerks and held important status in the governing system. The racial, language features and equality offered by Muslims and the condition of the people in conquered cities were the main reasons for the people of Zemeh to accept Islam in a way that after the victory of Muslims most nomadic tribes became the followers of Islam. The kind relations between Muslims and Christians was the other important issue in spreading Islam at that time in Ajnadin area. The Arab-oriented policy adopted by the second Caliph made the situation proper for a peaceful coexist between Muslims and Tax(Jaziyeh) payers in Ajnadin area which itself was a good and proper but not forceful invitation to Islam. The conditions and terms in peace agreements shaped the tax system as well as the social and judicial laws of Muslims in conquered area.

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