The study of “Elja” (sponsorship) in conquered regions of Iran (Azerbaijan, Maragha …) in the Umayyad era

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Abstract

“Elja” is infinitive of “Efa’l” verb group, meaning harboring, forcing and entrusting to God. “Elja” is used both practically and juridical. In Islamic theology it means forced labor. When applied in jurisprudence it is manifested as in landholding and relationships of landowners. In the era of Umayyad, a lot of victories have been done including in Iran. A need to public revenue and greediness of Umayyad Caliphs to wealth in order to finance civil and military costs and prodigality of the court, they were increasing the rate of the tax. The Umayyad dynasty and relatives of their officials were eager to acquire property. So, they added tax pressures. The Umayyad played a fundamental role in creating the phenomenon of “Elja”. Whereby they added a lot of lands to their property including Iraq, Azerbaijan, Maragha and so on. “Elja” (sponsorship, patronage, support) was started in the middle of Umayyad era. Various factors were involved in its forming such as political, administrative, economical, and social factors including tax absconding due to tax rigor, caliphs’ eager and government leaders to achieve more lands and cooperation in improving affairs related to irrigation, agriculture and fear of robbers and oppressors followed by social unrest. In the present article, it is attempted to analyze factors forming the “Elja” phenomenon and its consequences in the conquered regions on Iran during the era of Umayyad based on function in historical books by analytic-descriptive approach.

Keywords: The Umayyad, Elja, protection, large and small landowners, Azerbaijan, Maragha, Fars, Zanjan.
Statement of problem:
Land and agriculture were always invaluable in human life and human has supplied his daily living standards to survive by working. Governments depend on land tax to do civil and military affairs. One of their income sources is land and crops which is called “tribute”. Omar’s policy was that “troops were dissuaded from attention to lands and agriculture”; because, if they were interested in them, they would quit militarism. However, the Umayyad caliphs had another policy.
Their view was to consider agriculture and landing. They knew that land is a good source for public revenue of government. Imposing legitimate and illegitimate unprecedented taxes was mostly derived from land.
In the age of Umayyad, firstly, many victories were done including in Iran and added to Islamic realm. Secondly, need to public income and greediness of Umayyad caliphs to more wealth for financing civil and military costs of their own court increased the rate of tax which its pressure was on small villagers and landowners.
Thirdly, sometimes a kind of chaos, followed by social turmoil and disorder, enveloped Islamic society in the period of the Umayyad which the government was incapable of controlling it. Fourthly, members of Umayyad family and relatives of authorities were eager to obtain properties and land and property and were adding to the pressures. In the meanwhile, the small landowners felt helpless and without shelter. This was how the circumstances were provided for appearance of a new phenomenon in the era of Umayyad called “Elja” meaning support. The phenomenon had no background among the Arab of age of ignorance. It was completely new. But, it was precedent among other nations like the empire of Iran and Byzantium. The phenomenon of “Elja” had catastrophic consequences for the economy of Umayyad society, so that possession of many small landowners was vanished and people got worse and worse than before. In fact, they not only were without refuge, but also became more refuge less. The public revenue reduced and the rich related to Umayyad dynasty became more productive and people poorer. They lost what they had.
Agriculture and products, landownership have crucial role in the economy and financial life of the governments and the livelihood of people is supplied by it. Man has always attempted to protect his life and property and has tried to secure it. The phenomenon of “Elja” is a kind of protecting and supporting the land or property by the authorities to be exempted from paying tax which this phenomenon in the period of the Umayyad was done by Umayyad leaders. The reasons for creating this phenomenon were security, political, economic, and administrative that the government members and jurists in the age of the Umayyad exhibit no reaction against it.
This article seeks to answer these fundamental questions that what circumstances led to create the phenomenon of “Elja” in the conquered territories of Iran? What was the role of the Umayyad in the shape of this phenomenon and its consequences on the economy of the Umayyad era?

The lexical meaning of “Elja”:
In different dictionaries, the word “Elja” was defined which some of them are mentioned here: Ibn Manzoor says in Lesan-al-Arab that: “Elja” is to seek for refuge from a material, relying on,
referring to, asking for help and assigning something to somebody or having someone to do something reluctantly (Ibn manzoor, Bita: 342/3).

Razi says in Mokhtar-al-Sahah that: “man took a refuge to him and forced him to do that, I relied on him” (Razi, 1977: 592).

Kharazmi believed that “weak man puts his land on the strong to support” (Kharazmi, bita: 41). Zemakhshari in his Asas-al-Balaghe believes that “I made him specify some heirs for that” (Zemakhshari, 1399h: 332/2). Al-Monjed says that: (A group of authors, 2: 1396/1386). Ibn Darid says in Jomhoreh-al-Loghah that: “I relied on him” (Ibn Darid, Bita: 273/3). Moein dictionary defines that “Elja means to force someone to do something or shelter and entrust your work to God” (Moein, 1375: 337/1).

Laroos dictionary says that: “he made him shelter him, he assigned his property to one of his heirs and deprived others (Jer, 1367: under the word “Elja”). Majma-al-loghat translated “Al-teja” to "sought shelter, seeking shelter” (a group of authors, 124: 1362).

Concluding the discussion of “Elja”:
The word “Elja” is infinitive of “Efa’al” meaning obligation and compulsion, support, reliance and referring to, asking for help and assistance and entrusting God, forcing someone to do something and sheltering a weak man to a stronger one; the strong shelters the weak and supports him to be safe in different harms which in this case supporting a weak landowner by an influential strong individual who takes his land under his own support not let anybody to remonstrate him.

The literal meaning of “Elja”:
The word “Elja” is of two usages literally:
A) Philosophical and theological application
B) Juridical application in landowning

A: Philosophical and theological application:
In theological and philosophical discussion, “Elja” means forcing and depriving man’s authority. Under theological and philosophical discussion the word “Elja” in the discussion of “predestination” means forcing and lack of power on refusal of doing something. In the discussion of “fortuity” leading to deprivation of human power and resulting in “Elja” which divides human works into two parts: “obligatory and optional”. In the discussion of “No Thanks” it is said that: thanks and favor is whatever that the obliged is to obey and give up his sin and not to reach the “Elja” (Helli, Bita, 323-324).

“Elja” in philosophical and theological concept is only accepted by "determinists” and means being forced to and lacking authority and has no meaning in optional works.

B) Juridical application in landowning:
“Elja” is juridical applied in landowning. This means that small landowners yield their lands to an influential and powerful one of the government to be free from the persecution and oppression of government officials and benefit from the influential individual’s support (Kharazmi, Bita: 43/1). The original landowner is the receiver of “Elja” and the second one who supports is the
“Elja-giver”. What is regarded in this article is the second kind of “Elja” that is its “juridical” meaning which is related to landholding.

Background of Elja:
Studies suggest that history of “Elja” meaning landholding dates back to before Islam in non-Arab countries. This was a custom that was common among the residents of empires in Iran and Byzantium. There was no trace of it among Arabs before Islam (Ignorance Era) and its reason was tribalism which the people support each other and had no need to be supported by the influential ones. The influential and powerful people in Byzantium governments (East Rome) and Sassanid government profited from many advantages by giving support to the weak and the weak people yielded their property and land under the support of influential grandees to support (Qodameh, 1988: 184). Some believe that the phenomenon was one of old traditions that were known as support in the empire of Byzantium. When it entered the Islamic world from the middle of Umayyad ruling, it took a new name as “Elja” (Mithese, 1967: 215/1).
The reaction of Islam to Elja at first was led to its annulment. In the time of Mohammad, the prophet, and Rashedin (Guided) caliphs up to the middle of Umayyad Caliphate, there was no name of it among the Muslims until affected by pressures, oppressions and assaulting of tax Umayyad officers, the small farmers were forced to Elja their lands. For example, when the Muslims conquered Azerbaijan, Arabs flocked there from Syria and Iraq and other Islamic regions and seized agricultural lands, some bought the lands and in the following the villagers who had small lands in order to be released from the Arabs’ support gave their land to Elja and themselves worked as the farmers on the same lands (Belazari, 1865: 319-308). The Elja phenomenon has begun from the middle of the Umayyad era in Islam which small landholders put their land under the support of influential and powerful people related to Umayyad and government (Haman).

Factors forming the phenomenon of Elja:
After death of the prophet, Islamic governance practices changed in financial and economic affairs; true Islamic method was avoided in financial affairs. These changes were faster since ottoman period. When the Umayyad took the Islamic caliphate, they approved much oppression on people. The harshest and most demanding governors and officers ruled over poor people for tax purposes. They wrangled to receive land tax. They took from people whatever they liked. They didn’t consider if there will remain anything for landholder or not. They surveyed the land and took tax; they did not care whether or not the land is cultivated. Even a person called Hajjaj tried to cut the benefits given to farmers to obtain products. Abdol Malik Marvan against him said: “Be convinced to what you have received. Leave flesh and bone to the poor to be accumulated fat around it (Zeydan, 1373: 229-230).
The Umayyad pushed the farmers of each region under extreme conditions and received heavy taxes and added the rate of tax day by day; so that farmers were escaping from villagers and refuged to cities. They had no respect for truth and justice, and imposed tax over wasteland which this severity intensified day by day; farmers had no resistance, severity got so much that the small landholders were forced to put themselves under the support of big and influential landowners to get free from the harm of usurpation and plunder of bullies; In this way, Elja or support was begun in the middle of “Umayyad era” in the Islamic world.
In the manifestation of the phenomenon Elja some factors were involved such as political, security, administrative, economic and financial factors. Black circumstances of the Umayyad put farmers and small landowners under such a pressure that these farmers began to think about supporter but stuck in the big and powerful landowners’ track. Scholars and government officials took noticeable position against catastrophic phenomenon and didn’t dare to encounter; they knew that Elja is a kind of land confiscation which does not match with the spirit of Islam because many lands were transferred to big landowners in this way and one of the ways of possession was Elja (Haman: 330-335).

Factors creating the phenomenon of Elja are as following:

1. Weakness of central government of Umayyad in supporting the landholders and farmers against bullies (Haman).
3. Disruption and uproar of troops and repeating violations on farmers and local small landholders (Jaheshyari, 1988: 118 and Masoodi, Bita: 162).
5. The small farmers were seeking support from big landholders in order to improve affairs related to water, agriculture, well and aqueduct digging and restoring water tables and rivers like constructing dams by Muslim Ibn Abed-al Malik in Batayeh of Iraq which local farmers got under his Elja for profiting from water rates and better agriculture (Zeydan, 1373: 331).
6. Land usurpation and properties of small landowners by big and influential ones.
7. Influential and powerful members of Umayyad dynasty regard it as a way of possessing fertile lands. Whereby they could add their property and farms.
8. Pressure, avarice and making no security by governments played important role in forming Elja (Belazari, 1865: 325-391).
9. It was as a motivation for native people of conquered regions to be supported by influential and powerful Arabs like those in Azerbaijan and Maraghah who sheltered to Marvan Ibn Mohammad (Yagoot Homavi, 1979: 479/4).
10. After socio-economic chaos and disorders which covered all around the society, governments was decreasing their support from small landowners, thus Elja became more common (Balazari, 1965: 291-325).
11. Fear from robbing and robbers and bandits who always threat rural peasants and are going to seize their property by bullying

What was mentioned were motivations for appearance of Elja; the original owners due to the oppression of tax officers, frequent tax increasing, the lack of political stability, state support of small indigenous owners or tax evasion decided to record and submit their properties and lands in the name of influential and powerful people related to Umayyad government. Meanwhile, the original owners were working on the farms as peasants. The name of Elja-givers was recorded and the name of original owners was omitted in the register offices. Over time they were transferred to their offspring’s’ names as inherit. So, the original owners (Elja-receivers) couldn’t do anything to have their lands again (Ibn faqih, 1988:m259).
What can be regarded as the main cause of Elja is tax pressures of Umayyad caliphs who received legally, illegally, innovatively and new from rural peasants and the effect of these pressures is the catastrophic and inhuman phenomenon known as Elja which was done under the so-called support of the influential strong from the weak which didn’t lead to a happy ending for receivers of Elja and based on this Kharazmi defines Elja as: being the lands of small owners under the support of big owners affected by much tax pressures and recording lands in the name of influential and powerful people related to Umayyad government while the original owners were peasants or Elja-givers (Belazari, 11865: 308-364 and Ibn Faqih, 1988: 259).

Tax Exemption of Elja:
The main purpose of Elja (support) was escaping from tax and exempting the bullying which the tax officers of Umayyad were doing. The supported lands were exempted from tax due to the effect and credibility of the influential one or supporter. But, the property could be remained for the original owners and it could be bought and sold or it was inherited. The original owners of the land who have taken Elja were giving the tithe of the definite revenue to the supporter (Elja-giver) and the tithe was more than the tithe that they were paying as treasury (Estakhri, 1927: 158/1 and Qodameh, 1988: 241/1).

The role of grandees of Umayyad dynasty in forming Elja phenomenon:
In the middle of Umayyad era, the phenomenon of Elja was appeared for the first time among Arabs. Umayyad family had a fundamental part in creating it: first, tax pressures by Umayyad government; second, greed and passion of grandees of Umayyad family to grab fertile properties from the original owners.

They tried to develop their personal lands. Muawiya had a strong greed and could obtain vast fertile property; Ubutnan could possess Der Ghouta in Ashkelon and Sam villages (Jaheshyari, 1988: 23 and Yaqoot Homawi, 1979: 173/3).

Walid Ibn Abd-al-Malik due to his passion to possess broad lands seized much property. Other Umayyad caliphs including Hesham Ibn Abdol Malik, Walid Ibn Yazid seized many fertile lands and properties (Jaheshyari, 1988: 60 and Yaqoot Homawi, 1979: 52/1).

Peasants and owners of properties by observing the eager of Umayyad family in seizing fertile lands and acquiesced the phenomenon of Elja fearfully to be supported and nobody could attack their properties.

Some members of Umayyad family were active in the area of Elja such as a person named Amir Muslimah Ibn Abdol Malik. During the time of Walid Ibn Abdol Malik ruling, Iraq people entrusted Muslim Ibn Abdol Malik due to fear from tax officers to support their properties. Muslim Ibn Abdol Malik possessed the properties, then, his children inherited them (Belazari, 1856: 308-3119). He spent 3million dirham to modify and construct a dam in the age of Hojjaj Ibn Yusuf; conditioned that downstream lands to be entrusted him. So, small owners entrusted their land as Elja to others to benefit from more support and improvement of agriculture and irrigation (Ibn Sa’ad, 1981: 341/4-343 and Dinoovi, 1959: 331).

A group of owners of small farms in Pulse and villages around it in Jandaq Nasreen located at Syria entrusted their lands to Amir Muslim Ibn Abdol Malik; they recorded them to his name and decided to delve aqueducts and transferred water from Euphrates River to irrigation their farms; in turn, peasant paid him a third of their crops and grains. Also, they were supposed to pay tithe as tax. In this way, they lost their possession on lands (Qodameh, 1988: 170).
Caliphs and Emirs of the Umayyad dynasty could provide a lot of properties by Elja (support) and land-usurpation. When Omar Ibn Abdol Aziz came to power during his short time of ruling tried to return usurped lands to the original and legal owners including a land that was in hands of Abbas Ibn Walid belonging to a person from Homs (Ibn Sa’d, 1981: 341/5-343 and Dinoori, 1959: 331).

**Elja in the conquered lands of Iran:**
To clarify the aspects of the discussion it is necessary to explain, at first, conquer of different regions of Sassanid Iran by Muslims to understand better that how and under what conditions Iranians acceded Elja.

**Conquering Iran by Muslims:**
Victories started at the time of Abubakir. Khalid Ibn Walid set off Iraq after suppression of dissenters. Considering that: first, Iraq people were Arab; second, Iranians didn’t dominate over these areas he could succeed to conquer good victories. Muslims approached Iran.
At the time of Omar Ibn Khatab according to Abubakir’s will the victories continued and they took attempts to conquer the wide Sassanid Iran. Omar collected forces from deserts and fields and Abu Obaid Sagafi (Mokhtar’s father) was assigned as commander. Arab forces first had some attacks to Iran guards and could succeed. Until, Muslims’ guards defeated seriously in a battle named Jasar meaning bridge and Abu Obaid was killed.
Muslims didn’t feel weakness after this defeat and refection and returned to the battle field with the commanding of Sa’d Ibn Abi Waqas and could defeat Iranians severely in Battle of Qadisiyah (year 15 or 16 AH). So, Arabs could enter Iran (Ibn Asir, 1374: 1520/4-1545).
In year 15 AH the capital cities of Sassanid Iran were surrounded and seized by Muslims. This city was highly valuable in economy, human sources and strategic position and was a great victory for Arabs. At the same year, some regions including Halvan, Jololae, Ramhormoz, Ahvaz, Masbazan and Qarqisa were captured by Islamic troops.
Nahavand battle occurred in 21AH which resulted in Muslim’s victory. Then, Muslims moved toward central cities of Iran to conquer such as Isfahan, Kashan…
In year 22AH some regions including Qazvin, Zanjan and Rey were conquered by Muslims. In year 23 AH some important regions of Iran such as Fars, Estakhr, Goort(Joor), Kazeroon, Nowbandegan, Fasa, Kerman and Sistan were completely occupied by Muslims (Haman and Bal’ami, 1378: 529/3-530).

**Conquering Azerbaijan and regions around it:**
After occupying Hamedan by Islamic troops, they moved to Azerbaijan and areas around it. On the way, they encountered Isfandyar (son of Farrokhzad) troops which Isfandyar army defeated and he was captured.
When he was caught, he suggested Bakir Ibn Abdollah that if you keep me alive with yourself, the people will pacify with you, and otherwise they will escape to the mountain and it will be difficult for you.
Peace resulted and people came down the mountain and the final peace was contracted which the provisions of the settlement were as: life, property and honor of people will be protected by Islamic government conditioned that ransom will be paid (Haman).
In the period of Ottoman rule, many of regions in Iran were conquered people revolted but they were seized again and the regions experienced peace. Imam Ali (AS) who faced three battles behaved people with kindness and in a letter asked the governor of Azerbaijan to treat people mildly and respect their life, property and honor.

State of the society during the period of Umayyad rule:
In the Rashedin caliphs’ period in which Islamic policy was based on justice and tolerance many regions were occupied, so the Islamic governing was developed. When the Umayyad won the rule, they definitely acted against Rashedin caliphs. They did their best to reach power and remain it and exhibited a special kind of ambition and emphasized Arabic and tribal fanaticism.

When Iran was occupied by Muslims, first, there was a kind of chaos in the conquered areas due to distance from the center of the government (Syria) and the central government didn’t have full control. Second, because Iran was a flourishing and full of blessings, many Arabs invaded Iran. By apartheid of Arabs over Iranians, the Arab got much power and bullied the local residents including Azerbaijan and areas around it, Maraghah, Fars and regions around it, Zanjan and regions around it.

There was a lot of difference between the Umayyad era and Rashedin caliphate in administration and dealing with people. Iranians were harassed as following:
1. In this period, the Umayyad changed the Islamic government to a political reign and misused Islam and religion name to their own benefit.
2. The Umayyad ruled on the basis of Arabic and tribal fanaticism and made non-Arabs (Iranians) as despicable and inferior. Thus, newcomers in Islam in Iran were oppressed all the time. They exploited other people as tools to achieve their goals.
3. The Umayyad employed any kind of instrument to earn money and wealth. Muawiyah emboldened his men and this method continued after him by other caliphs.
4. They appointed those to administer the economic and political goals that were reliable in power, qualification and collecting property such as Hajjaj in Iraq, Yazid Ibn Abi Muslim in Africa and Jarrah in Iran and Khorasan.
5. They asked people for ransom with force; for example, they oppressed non-Muslims to get tax and surveyed land to take whatever they liked and didn’t care whether there is something left for the owners or not.
6. They added the rate of tax day by day so that people were under pressure and escaped the villages. But their escape had no point, because they were returned to the villages by Hajjaj and other governors of the Umayyad to work on the farms.
7. The Umayyad agents estimated the rate of fruits in Fars more than usual price and based on their outrageous terms asked them for tax in such a way that there was left nothing for the peasant.
8. The measure of the Umayyad governors was more than usual. They did according to their will and measure so that the right of the caliph and his agent was specified, because the tax officer was always taking tax for himself and his relatives.
9. Regarding the lack of central government of the Umayyad in controlling the conquered regions in Iran looting and extortion was widespread (Zeydan, 1373: 227-235).
According to the above-mentioned terms existed by the Umayyad rulers in Iran and other conquered regions, the local owners in conquered lands of Iran had no choice but Elja based on which to be supported by an influential person to get rid of paying heavy taxes. The phenomenon of Elja was firstly derived from the oppressions by the Umayyad and their agencies which were successively changed. Second, the disorders ruled over the community followed by insecurity for small owners. Thirdly, concerning about escaping from the heavy taxes of the lands and preventing land grabbing led small owners to the Elja.

Examples of Elja in Iran:
1- When the Arab conquered different parts of Iran such as Azerbaijan, a group of Arabic people from Iraq, Syria, the Arabian Peninsula and other regions invaded Azerbaijan and the areas around it due to the prosperity and affluence of blessings. Some of the bought the lands of the local people, some other usurped their lands with force and bullying; finally, the native people concluded that they should entrust the influential members of the Umayyad (especially Mohammad Ibn Marvan) to support their lands and themselves. So that they worked as farmers on their own lands but there was name of them on the state documents. Finally, they lost their properties and lands over the time (Belazari, 1865: 319).
2- The people of Maraghah and the regions around it that were under the severe pressure of tax and rapine entrusted Mohammad Ibn Marvan, the governor of Azerbaijan and Armenia to support their property and farms, thereby they might find esteem and status. These properties remained as a heritage among the Umayyad families and never returned to the original owners. At last, they lost all of the properties to the Abbasids through defeats and changed into the property of the Sultan (Yaqoot Homavi, 1971: 479/4).
3- Elja continued over the later periods, too, including owners of the water and lands in Zanjan and the regions around it to get rid of brigands of the properties entrusted Qasem, son of Haroon, and registered their properties to his name and approached him to be supported; so, all of the drafts and documents were recorded to his name and they, themselves, worked as peasants on their own farms. After a while, the lands became the feudality of the Sultan (Zeydan, 1373: 331).
4. In Fars and the areas around it the small owners followed the other regions and submitted their properties to the attendants of the Sultan, residential of Iraq, whereby they could be exempted a quarter of the tax and the aforementioned properties were in the name of the grandees for a while. They traded by them and next generations inherited them; gradually they became the original owners of the properties. So that the local owners lost their possession (Estakhri, 1927: and Ibn Hooqol, Bita: 265).
5. In the other parts of Iran the small owners also acceded Elja to support their properties in order to get free from the pressures of the tax and fear from the bandits and expropriation of the lands and properties. But, eventually, they fell out of the frying-pan into the fire.

It is clear that the objective examples of the Elja in the history of Iran during the Umayyad dynasty. This style is a good opportunity for the influential members of the Umayyad to be landholders. The small owners to be released from the pressures and receiving support requested Elja. All of the properties that were kept by the Umayyad families were confiscated by Abbasids and they continued the possession of those lands. Examples of these have been mentioned in the history (Aboo Yusuf, 1971: 24, 59, 63 and Ibn Adam, Bita: 146 and Qodameh, 1988: 267).
Styles of Elja:
The phenomenon of Elja during its evolution and formation has been manifested in different and various forms and whatever was in Iran and Byzantium was different from what was in the era of the Umayyad; within this period all political, security, administrative and economic factors played an important role in the appearance of it (Abu Yusuf, 1971: 92 and Ibn Adam, Bita: 93-98).

Elja was performed in two ways:
A) Elja of (Supporting) all the property
Supporting all the property and ضیاع, transferring its document to the name of sponsor (Elja-giver) and registering it in the court and government office of which people of Iraq did some example of it during the ruling of Walid Ibn Abdol Malik and registered their properties to the name of the Elja-givers (sponsors) in the government offices. In turn, he sponsored them. The other example is the people of Maraghah who registered their properties in the government office to the name of others to be sponsored. In both cases, the properties were transferred to the Elja-giver (sponsor) over time; then, they were inherited by their heirs and at last, Abbasids possessed all of them (Belazari, 1856: 308 and Moskooyah, 1971: 97/2).

B) Elja (supporting) all the products of the farms
In this method, all of the property and lands were not supported, but its products were supported based on the payment of particular volume; that is products of agricultural lands were supported; the original land and property were remained for the original owner, the rights of the influential and the great owners were limited and the possession of the properties were transferred to them. Properties in practice were remained for the original owners; even they transacted or inherited them and were giving the tithe of the land to the sponsor (Elja-giver). There was payment other than the tithe to be paid to the Exchequer (Estakhri, 1927: 151/1 and Ibn Faqih, 1988: 241/1).

It is suggested that the second kind was better to the Elj-receiver (supported one) because the document of the whole land was not transferred to the Elja-giver (sponsor) and there was no risk for losing the possession. Just a part of the revenue of the products (a percent of it) was devoted to him based on some conditions of the Elja (sponsor) and fewer side effects were for the peasant. On one hand, there was security of his crops and on the other hand the peace and the tranquility for him and his family.

Catastrophic consequences of Elja (supporting):
The phenomenon of Elja (supporting) which was resulted from the anxious, force, social, security, economic and social pressures and the owners was doing it because of security and peace, especially when the disorders and civil and social strife involved the society the phenomenon of the Elja was progressing.
The regions that were far from the center of the government, Elja was prevalence there. The small and local owners attempted to receive support in many ways. They put their properties and lands under the sponsorship of the influential and powerful men related to the Umayyad and the governors. At first, they were trying to maintain their properties but the result was catastrophic for them. The consequences are as following:
1-The catastrophic outcome of the sponsorship for the landholders and peasants was losing their possession over lands and farms: because the lands in the government offices and courts were registered in the name of the sponsors that is the Great Landholders which the properties were
taken from the original landowners; over time due to the death of each of them the possession was transferred to the heirs and offspring of the sponsors. Most of the properties that were sponsored by the Umayyad were transferred to their children after their death; and when the Abbasids took the governance, they belonged to Davood Ibn Ali Abdollah; then they were royal (Ibn Faqih, 1988: 259 and Zeydan, 1373: 331). In these kinds of changes, the great harm was to the original landowner who loses his possession and because of the fear falls out of the frying-pan into the fire so that submits his all properties to be supported due to the fear from the bandits and power-brokers. But, they were entrapment by powerful robbers.

2-The phenomenon of the sponsorship made the rate of the taxes and public revenue decrease; because the small landowners to escape from the illegal and heavy taxes and due to not paying to the power-brokers they were seeking for being sponsored and shelter. This was the factor of non-payment of the tax to the government and the public revenue was reducing and indeed instead of the Exchequer, the taxes were going into the pockets of the power-brokers of the Umayyad dynasty and their relatives; like Marvan Ibn Mohammad and Mulimah Ibn Abdol Malik who was active in the area of the sponsorship (Belazari, 1851: 292-325).

3-The phenomenon of the sponsorship destroyed the agriculture; thus the original landowners lost their possession over time; the possession was transferred to the grandees; after several generations, the motivation of the working on the farm that was not belonged to the original landowner was lost. The Great Landowners due to the lack of need and excess of the farms didn’t care them; as a result, the crops were decreasing. Thus, many of the people were losing their job. A new kind of Feudal Lands was created among the power-brokers. A group of landowners appeared in Islamic countries and possessed the properties, villages and lots of lands and farms. They became richer everyday financially. However, the original landowners became weaker and weaker (Hama: 302-319).

4-The other outcome of the sponsorship was that by weakening the sponsors in the political and government position, the value of their sponsorship decreased; the weak people were left without defense and patrons. If the patrons were from the officials, ministers, and army chief or of the power-brokers of the Umayyad dynasty, as far as they were powerful, their sponsorship was valuable. But when their government position and post was deprived, their sponsorship became valueless; his credit was ignored because he was not able to sponsor and support anymore. Most of the officials or influential people lost their power and effect due to removal from government post. If they patronized someone their patronage was worthless. Giving the patronage back from them was difficult. Real estate documents were to their names. If they were tried and judged, the government confiscated their property. Propagation of violence and tyranny and yielding to the bullying willfully were of consequences of patronage that is some people by making pressure and violence for peasants caused a few of them accept cruelty and submitted their property for patronage. Because the phenomenon of patronage and performing it was totally cruel in which most of the rights of people were destroyed. The phenomenon of the patronage was done by both parties’ request.

1. The other result of the patronage was the formation of new kind of feudalism among Muslims which was more similar to exploitation, apocryphal, and undesirable feudalism. This means that partnership will be beneficial to the extent that some amount of the given right of the products or paying some cash is limited (Ibn Adam, Bita: 22-63 and Abu Yusuf, 1971: 58).
2. It destroyed the balance and equilibrium in the society so that pressures of the tax officers and bullies forced people abandon their properties. Vanishing balance in the community was a solution and treatment to be free from violence and cruelty of the caliph’s agents (Zarrin Koo, 2536:287). According to this phenomenon the Great landowners especially relatives of the Umayyad dynasty began to develop their properties by usurpation but misusing the position of sponsorship. One way of the landholding for the grandees of the Umayyad was their eagerness (Belazaeri, 1856: 292-335 and Qodameh, 1988: 61-61).

Conclusion:
What has been studied in this article suggests that the phenomenon of the patronage among the Arab has no history or background and there was no trace of it in the Ignorance Age of the Arab, but it was common among the empires of the Byzantium and Iran which in the middle of the Umayyad era was widespread among Muslims. The political, administrative, security and economic conditions were effective in the appearance of this phenomenon in such a way that tax pressures of the Umayyad, tyranny and cruelty of the Umayyad officers to take tax and social disorders leading to chaos caused a few small landholders put their properties under the support of powerful people. The phenomenon of the sponsorship was emerged in the middle of the Umayyad age and the government men of the time did not take any action against it and the Umayyad dynasty played effective role in its appearance which was in two ways; first, wrong policies of tax and pressure resulting from it; second, their greediness in development of the properties which made the small landowners to be patronized and their lands were seized over time. Some people like Muslim Ibn Abdol Malik and Mohammad Ibn Marvan were of the active people in the field of sponsorship. So, they could grab lots of property. In Iran due to tax pressures, fear from bandits, greediness of the beneficial people… most of the small landowners in Azerbaijan and regions around it, Maraghah and regions around it and other areas of Iran such as Fars and Zanjan were forced to accede patronage thereby they lost the possession over their own properties. Sponsorship was done in two ways. Sometimes the whole property and garden was supported and its document was registered to the name of the sponsor in the government offices; the original landowner (the sponsored) was working on the farm just as a farmer or a harvester. Over time, he was losing his possession and was belonged to the heirs of the sponsor like whatever belonged to the heirs of the Muslim Ibn Abdol Malik and Mohammad Ibn Marvan and eventually was transferred to the Abbasids. The other form of the sponsorship includes products and crops, land, farm and the original property was not under the sponsorship, in this method the document of the property was in the name of the original landowner and it was not transferred and the farmer did not incur losses; they only paid some money for the crops besides the tithe to the sponsor. The phenomenon of sponsorship had some unpleasant consequences which were something more like the property usurpation than the patronage of a patron; because the final harm was for the original owner such as lose of the possession of the original landowner and transferring it to the sponsor, destroying the agricultural farms and reducing its crops, propagating of the cruelty and growing cruel, reduction of the tax and the public revenue and creating opportunities for
misusers which these affairs automatically made discontent and disagree with the government; people lost their job and source of income in such a way that they fell out from a frying-pat into the fire.

Their purpose was to get rid of unjust tax officers or dangerous people but they got caught in the trap of greedy people who took their property entirely which these negative results has a profound impact on the economy of the Umayyad era which its effects was visible in the Umayyad community. The phenomenon of sponsorship was common in the Abbasids age and continued somehow. Most of the sponsorships of the Umayyad era was transferred to the Abbasids and was a part of the Sultan property.

The Umayyad government did not care who pays the tax the new landowner or the old one, that is why they did not consider the phenomenon of sponsorship and its consequences and did not understand the conditions of the supported and they only understood their own tax. Ighar is a kind of tax support that is assigned to special people and had special position at the sight of caliphs; so that a property or a village is supported which the tax agent does not cover it and the landowner pays the tax directly for the exchequer and the officers should not enter his property or he should be exempted of paying tax.

In the end it is worth-mentioning that sponsorship in any style and name, done by anyone or with any motivation is a manifest injustice which the original landowner hurts and the benefit is for the sponsor because of his position and government post.
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