

Abstract

This research examines how the narrators and historians of the second until the fourth centuries A.H (8th - 11th century A.D), described the events of the Marj Rahit Battle that occurred in the year 64 HD\ 684 AD. The battle took place after the abdication, followed by the sudden death, of Caliph Mauawiya Bin Yazid. There were many disputes for the caliphate between the supporters of Ibn Al-Zubayr, which was unacceptable among Umayyads, and the supporters of Marwan Ibn Al-Hakam. This led both parties to face each other in Marj Rahit to decide the matter.

This study looks into the different narrations of both narrators and chroniclers regarding the Battle of Marj Rahit. In spite of the fact that the battle itself lasted for one day, narrations of narrators and chroniclers are in great discrepancy. The study supposed three hypothetical questions behind this discrepancy in narrations. The first question posed that the discrepancy took place as a result of delay in documenting and recording of historical events by narrators and chroniclers. The second question posed that the discrepancy refers the fact that the Umayyad history was recorded during the era of their enemies, the Abbasids. The third question carried several inquiries within its folds and showed that discrepancies relate to different causes like tribal loyalty and political parties.

In order to answer all of these questions, the study basically relied on first hand narratives by contemporary narrators to the event. They are represented by Al Kalbi (D 146 A.H. /763 A.D.) and Al Madaini (D 225 A.H./843 A.D.) whose narrations appeared in different Islamic references. It also relied on records of chroniclers starting with Khalifa Ibn Khayyat (D 240 AH./ 855 A.D.) and Al Masudi (D 346 AH. / 957A.D.) for the purpose of identifying their approach in recording the Battle of Marj Rahit, way of narration and references they relied on as well as the variances in historical records from one historian to another.

Based on tracking, studying and analyzing of historical narrations, it was found out that the variance in narrations of the Battle of Marj Rahit refers to all the study questions since it basically addressed and tackled eight narrators and seven chroniclers. Each one represented a special and unique approach in his narration and documentation of the details of this abovementioned event.

To achieve the goal of the study, the researcher used four different methods: the descriptive, the critical, the comparative and the analytical. The descriptive method describes the narrative and its content. The critical method, through asking logical questions about the narrations, critiques of the narration as either negative which means to refute the narration, or positive by mentioning the features of that narration and how closely it depicts the facts. The comparative method compares narrations to find out the closest narration to the

facts. Finally, the researcher used the analytical method that was based on the analysis of the historical narrations to offer some new facts.

The study, in terms of content, is divided into four chapters followed by a conclusion. The first chapter presents the most prominent of the narrators and historians in terms of their tribal, religious, political, and cultural affiliations. Their credibility, their attitude towards Marj Rahit Battle, and how they told their narrations was also taken into consideration.

The second chapter deals with the causes of Marj Rahit Battle from the perspective of the narrators and historians in terms of the abdication and death of Mu'awiya II, and the allegiance to Ibn Al-Zubayr or to Marwan Ibn Al-Hakam.

The third chapter includes the events of Marj Rahit Battle: supplies, names of the leaders, number of soldiers, description of the battle, duration of the battle, the year it occurred, the truce trick, number and names of the dead soldiers, chasing Dahhaak Bin Qais from Damascus to Marj Rahit, the victory of Marwan Ibn Al-Hakam and oath allegiance to him, and the fleeing of Ibn Al-Zubayr's soldiers.

The fourth chapter shows the direct and the indirect results of Marj Rahit Battle. Finally, the conclusion, however, shows the biases of the narrators and historians in documenting the events of Marj Rahit battle.