

NEW LIGHT ON THE PEASANTS' REVOLT IN PALESTINE

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ASAD JIBRAIL RUSTUM

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

In a former paper, on the nature of the risings in Syria-Palestine against the administration of Mehemet 'Alî Pasha, the writer of these lines attempted to stress personal feeling and interest as one important cause of these risings. He pointed out the fact that heavy taxation, forced labour, and military service were not enough to explain the Peasants' Revolt of 1834, and that such forces as the personal and material interests of the Abû Ghôsh family of Qaryat al-'Inab, and of the Qâsims, Djarrârs, and ʿTukâns of Nablus, had to be taken into full consideration to make plain and intelligible some of the more obscure points in the history of these troubles.¹

Since the date of the former paper, a number of important Arabic documents have come to light. Through the assistance of one of his former students, Mr. Waşfî 'Anabtâwî, and the kindness of Ibrahim Bey 'Abd ul-Hâdî, the author has been able to see, as well as copy and study an important section of the family archives of the 'Abd ul-Hâdîs. Ibrahim Bey has in his possession at the present time about thirty letters from Mehemet 'Alî Pasha, Ibrahim Pasha, and Shaykh Ḥusayn 'Abd ul-Hâdî to Shaykh Sulaymân 'Abd ul-Hâdî. All these letters deal with the disturbances of 1834, and they are all important. For our present purpose, however, the letter of Shaykh Ḥusayn 'Abd ul-Hâdî, governor of the province of Sidon, to Shaykh Sulaymân 'Abd ul-Hâdî, deputy governor of the same province, is of particular value. It is written on a piece of strong "abbadi" paper, and measures 21+31 cm. It reads as follows:

¹ *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, XLI, 34-57.

الجنب الاكرم حضرة ولدنا الاجل المحترم وكيلا بعا حالا الشيخ
 سليمان حرسه الله تعالى بتاريخه صدر امر سعادة افندينا ولي النعم السر
 عسكر المعظم بان جميع الذين كانوا مستخدمين في باب عبد الله باشالا
 يتمكنوا من الاقامة بالايالات السعيدة التي بخير حكومة دولة العلية بل
 يتوجهوا لغير محلات خارج الايالات المذكورة وان اذا كانوا يرغبوا
 يتوجهوا الى جانب محروسة القاهرة فتجمعوهم وتضعوهم في مركب وترسلوهم
 لمحروسة اسكندرية وأن الشيخ سعيد السعدي المقيم بالزيب فهذا يرُمى
 القبض عليه ويرسل لمحروسة اسكندرية ويجرر منكم تحرير لسعادة زكي
 افندي مأمور الديوان الخديوي بذلك الجانب بخصوصه وانه مر سول منفي
 من هذه الديار الى الديار المصرية المحروسة كذلك بتاريخه صادر لكم امر
 شريف من لدن العواطف السنية بقتل متسلم يافا اسعد بك الخضر فيلزم
 ان كان بوصول الامر الشريف لم تقتلتم الشيخ عيسى الماضي متسلم صفد فقتلوه
 مع متسلم يافا باب البوابة تاديبا لهم وعبرة لغيرهم وان الشيخ مسعود الماضي اذا كان
 بوصول هذا وصل اطرفكم فتذبحوه على باب البوابة لزم افادتكم بما صدرت به
 الاوامر الشريفة فيلزم بوصول تحريرنا هذا حالا جميعا يوجد في عكا من دايرة
 عبد الله باشالا يتمكنوهم من الاقامة في جميع الايالات السعيدة وان كان
 يرغبوا التوجه لمحروسة القاهرة ترسلوهم في مركب لمحروسة اسكندرية
 واما متسلمين يافا وصفد لا يحصل غفلة بقتلهم وكذلك ان كان حضر مسعود
 الماضي تذبحوه باب البوابة لاجل انفاذ الامر الشريف والشيخ سعيد

السعدى لا تجعلوا عاقبة بمسكه وارساله لمحرومة اسكندرية حسب منطوق
الامر الكريم السر عسكري ولا يلزم لكم زيادة تأكيد بذلك والله يحفظكم
في ١٣ ر ٢٥٠ سنة ٢٥٠ من سحرا نابلوس^(١) الختم محب مخلص
واما الذي من دائرة عبدالله باشا
ويقيم خارج عكا لا تقارشوه
مديرا ايات صيدا حالا
حسين عبد الهادي

“To our highly honoured and respected son — our present deputy in Acre — Shaykh Sulaymân. May God, Most High, guard and protect him. At the date of this writing, His Excellency our highly privileged and exalted Seraskier has ordered that all former officials of the palace-administration of ‘Abdullah Pasha be not allowed to remain in the happy provinces which are now within the area of his sublime administration. They must seek residence outside the above mentioned provinces. In case, however, they desire to go to Cairo, assemble them and ship them together to Alexandria. As for Shaykh Sa‘îd us-Sa‘dî, who resides at present in az-Zîb, he is to be put under arrest and sent to Alexandria. You are further requested to write a letter concerning him to Zakî Effendî of the Khedivial Council in that region and thus inform him that Shaykh Sa‘îd us-Sa‘dî is exiled from this land to the land of Egypt. At this same date of writing His Excellency has issued an order to you to put to death the governor of Jaffa — As‘ad Bey el-Khaḍr. Now, if by the time his noble order reaches you, you have not already executed Shaykh ‘Isâ-l-Mâḍî, governor of Safad, you are to kill him, together with the governor of Jaffa, at the portal of the city gate; as a punishment for their crimes and a warning to others. And if by the time you receive this message Shaykh Mas‘ûd ul-Mâḍî has reached you, you are to kill him at the portal of the city gate. It is necessary thus to inform you of His Excellency’s noble commands. Upon receipt of this letter it is accordingly necessary that you forthwith make it impossible for ail members of ‘Abdullah Pasha’s staff to continue in any of the Happy Provinces, and should ship them together to Cairo via Alexandria in case they prefer to go there. As for the governors of Jaffa and Safad, see that you do not neglect

to execute them. In like manner, in case Mas'ûd ul-Mâdî has arrived, enforce the noble order and put him to death at the portal of the town gate.

Also, allow no difficulty to prevent the arrest of Shaykh Sa'îd us-Sa'dî and his despatch to Alexandria, as stated in the order of the Seraskier. No further emphasis do you need in regard to these matters. May God preserve you.

Ḥusayn 'Abd ul-Hâdî,

Governor of the Province of Sidon

Plain of Nablus, Rabî' I, 12, 250.

P.S. As for the members of the staff of 'Abdullah Pasha—who reside outside Acre, do not interfere with them."¹

There is enough evidence in the kind and the size of the paper on which this letter is written, as well as in the style of its writing, to show that it is genuine. The seal of authentication which is used in its preparation is also the same as that used in the preparation of other documents of Shaykh Ḥusayn.²

In view of all this, and of Shaykh Ḥusayn's official position, as well as his personal friendship with Ibrâhîm Pasha, and the fact that he is addressing Shaykh Sulaymân and no other, the student of the history of this period can safely assume that Shaykh Ḥusayn is sincere in making this statement to Shaykh Sulaymân. As far as can be known, moreover, Shaykh Ḥusayn could not have gained any practical advantage from a deception of Shaykh Sulaymân in this matter; nor does he seem to have been placed in a situation which compelled him to violate the truth about Ibrâhîm Pasha's orders. Furthermore, Shaykh Ḥusayn, in his official capacity as governor of the province of Sidon, and his position as friend and supporter of Ibrâhîm Pasha, was in a very favourable condition to know such orders of the Seraskier in 1834. According to Ibrâhîm Pasha then, Shaykh Sa'îd us-Sa'dî, Shaykhs 'Isâ and Mas'ûd ul-Mâdî, and As'ad Bey el-Khaḍr were, to a greater or lesser degree, all implicated in the troubles of 1834. What is of greater interest

¹ This is only a free rendering of the Arabic original. For the text in Arabic of similar documents from Palestine, See Rustom, A.J., *Materials for a Corpus of Arabic Documents Relating to the History of Syria under Mehemet Ali Pasha—Advance Notice.*

² Consult Foll. 1251 of the Library, American University of Beirut.

to the student of this period, however, is the fact that certain members of the staff of 'Abdullah Pasha were also suspected of the same kind of intrigue against the government of the day.¹ The author knows of no other available and important source of information that records such a specific charge against the staff of the former governor of Palestine. This section of the archives of the 'Abd ul-Hâdîs thus corroborates the author's original thesis as it appeared in 1924, and adds to the group of persons that were known to be implicated in the revolts of 1834 certain members of the staff of 'Abdullah Pasha.

¹ Why, according to the postscript, it should have been those who resided in Acre and no others, is a question which can not as yet be definitely answered. The fact that Acre was a stronghold in the zone of trouble and that some of the suspects were military men, may have been one reason for this distinction between the two categories of officials.