

# The Wahhabi Threat in Syria (Bilad al-Sham) and its influence on the Appointment of Suleiman Pasha on Damascus Province

## Suriye (Bilad-ı Şam)'de Vehhabî Tehdidi ve Süleyman Paşa'nın Şam Eyaletine Atanmasına Etkisi

Osama M. ABU NAHEL<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of History,  
Faculty of Arts and  
Human Sciences Al Azhar University,  
Gaza, PALESTINE

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Correspondence:  
Osama M. ABU NAHEL  
Department of History,  
Faculty of Arts and  
Human Sciences Al Azhar University,  
Gaza, PALESTINE  
osamabunahel@hotmail.com

**ABSTRACT** The Wahhabis had attacked the south of Iraq before Suleiman pasha's rule of Sidon. They controlled their holy cities for Shiite Muslims, they destroyed everything. Neither the Ottomans nor the governors were able to stop the Wahhabis geographical expansion. Moreover, they controlled the holy cities of Hijaz such as Makkah and Madinah. Therefore, it was an obligation to the Ottoman Sultan to secure the safety of pilgrimage and to return the two cities to his direct control. The governors of Damascus failed in finishing off the Wahhabis dominance; consequently, the Wahhabis intentionally had attacked the neighboring areas of Damascus. This was considered a blunted challenge to the power of the Ottoman Sultanate and its governors of Damascus which forced the High Porte to depose the governors of Damascus Abdullah Pasha al-Azm and Yusuf Kanj Pasha and appointing Suleiman pasha as a governor of Damascus and Tripoli.

**Keywords:** The Wahhabi; Suleiman Pasha; Damascus province; Ottoman Sultanate; Acre

**ÖZ** Vehhabîler, Süleyman Paşa'nın Sidon/Sayda'yı idaresinden önce Irak'ın güneyine saldırmıştı. Şiiilerin kutsal şehirlerini kontrol altına aldılar, her şeyi yakıp yıktılar. Ne Osmanlılar ne de valiler, Vehhabîlerin bu ilerlemelerini durdurabildiler. Dahası Vehhabîler, Osmanlı hâkimiyetindeki Mekke ve Medine gibi kutsal şehirleri de kontrol altına almışlardı. Bu nedenle hac güvenliğini sağlamak ve iki şehri doğrudan kontrolüne almak Osmanlı Padişahı için bir zorunluluktur. Şam valileri, Vehhabîlerin hâkimiyetine son vermede başarısız oldular; sonuç olarak Vehhabîler Şam'ın komşu bölgelerine kasıtlı olarak saldırdılar. Bu, Osmanlı Sultanlığı ve Şam valilerinin iktidarına karşı açık bir meydan okuma olarak kabul edildi ve Yüce Bâbali'yi, Şam valileri Abdullah Paşa el-Azm ve Yusuf Kanj Paşa'yı görevden almaya zorladı. Daha sonra Osmanlı idaresi, Süleyman Paşa'yı Şam ve Trablus valiliğine atadı.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Vehhabî; Süleyman Paşa; Şam Eyaleti; Osmanlı Sultanlığı; Akka

Suleiman Pasha al-Adel (Adjuster) assumed the Province of Sidon in 1219 AH / 1804 AD, at a time when the Wahhabi movement in the Arabian Peninsula became more powerful, and its leaders were able to control the two holy cities in it: Makkah and Madinah. During that period, Suleiman Pasha contemplated several rulers who ruled the Province of Damascus and closely followed the obstacles that the Wahhabis placed in their face, including their failure to complete the usual pilgrimage ceremonies, which weakened their political position, whether at the local level or the level of their relationship with the primary in Astana, the capital of the Ottoman Sultanate.

The High Porte insisted on successive governors of Damascus to work quickly to complete the ritual pilgrimage traditionally. The matter which, Wahhabi Prince Saud Ibn Abdul-Aziz met with absolute rejection, stressing the necessity of completing the rituals of Hajj in a manner that is completely devoid of any ritual marred by polytheism according to the Wahhabis belief of not smoking and having fun with musical instruments, in addition to the presence of al-Mahmal, which is a luxury adornment on the back of a camel that has Estimated, and in the bearing, the clothing of the Ka'ba or copies of the Holy Qur'an or precious stones, which represents the authority and prestige of the Sultan, as well as the prince of Hajj.

### ■ THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The importance of the study stems from the fact that it deals with an important topic, as it deals with the efforts made to eliminate the Wahhabi threat that attacked the Levant and the just role of Suleiman Pasha in it. And from here; The importance of this study stems from what these efforts have made in appointing Suleiman Pasha as governor of the Damascus province. The importance of the study also stems from the fact that it will provide a new reference for the Arab Library on the Ottoman history of the Arab region.

### ■ THE PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

The problem of the study that we have in our hands is to trace the historical events of the Wahhabi threat against the Damascus Province, which remained scattered through several references without giving it a certain amount of focus. Therefore, we decided to make a modest effort to uncover this threat, which, if it were to succeed, would have changed the political map of the region, and the Wahhabis would have been able to extend their influence to other regions, the results of which would threaten the same entity of the Ottoman Sultanate in its home.

The problem of the study stems from knowing the facts and contexts that affected the overall policy of the Wahhabi threat from its inception, and even the attempt of the Wahhabis to invade a good part of Syria. Hence, the role that Suleiman Pasha took upon himself in confronting and curtailing the Wahhabi expansion.

### ■ THE STUDY QUESTIONS

The problem of the study lies in the following question: What is the effect of the Wahhabi threat on the Levant on the assumption of Suleiman Pasha of the province of Damascus?

From this question arises secondary questions, which are:

1. What are the factors that led to the emergence of the Wahhabis in the Arabian Peninsula?
2. What are the reasons for the tension in relations between the Wahhabis and the governors of Damascus?
3. What are the motives and results of the Wahhabi campaign against the Levant?

### ■ OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to clarify the following:

1. Mention of the factors that led to the emergence of the Wahhabis in the Arabian Peninsula.

2. Addressing the causes of tension in relations between the Wahhabis and the governors of Damascus.

3. Explaining the motives and results of the Wahhabi campaign against the Levant.

## THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The methodology is the appropriate method for gathering, analyzing and interpreting information, and hence it leads to conclusions. Hence: This study was adopted on a combination of historical narration and descriptive analysis, given their importance in communicating the idea to the reader in a smooth, direct and simplified manner, without prejudice to other historical facts that took place outside the Levant. The researcher pursued as much as possible objectivity and impartiality in his presentation of the important issues mentioned in the study. The study relied on a good number of Arab and foreign references and periodicals.

## PREFACE

With the death of Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar in 1219 AH / 1804 AD, a painful page ended and a new page began in the history of the Levant in general, and in Sidon in particular, a royal firman was issued to Suleiman Pasha One of the Mamelukes of al-Jazzar to return from the Hijaz lands accompanied by the pilgrimage bearer to the Levant, as the Sovereign firman commissioned him to be under the command of Ibrahim Pasha Qatar Agasi to take over the affairs of Acre, and the two arrived at the same time to Acre and met in it, and after several days of their stay in Acre went out together, and on the way, they returned to it through Mount Nablus, they were met with harsh opposition from the people of the mentioned mountain and tightened the siege on them, which led to the closing of the gates of Acre in their faces, and its residents prepared for the siege that might be hit on their city, which called the Ottoman Sultanate to send military reinforcements to assist them, Then another decree released with pride Ibrahim Pasha from his post and the granting of the Province of Sidon to Suleiman Pasha.<sup>1</sup>

After several attempts, Suleiman Pasha managed to extend his influence over Acre. When he was assured of the stability of his rule, he called for safety and justice for all residents of Sidon, as well as the release of all security prisoners since the era of Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar, and closed the doors of grievances that were rampant in the country, such as Mount Nablus and Mount Ajlun, and also solidified the Emir of Mount Lebanon, Bashir al-Shihabi II in his rule, And secure it so that it can secure others in the areas under its influence.<sup>2</sup>

## FIRST: THE EMERGENCE OF THE WAHHABIS IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

An important factor that influenced developments in the Ottoman Arab provinces, including Palestine, was the emergence of the Wahhabi Salafi movement, which is considered a pioneer of the reformist movements in the Islamic world in the modern era. It appeared in Najd region in the Arabian Peninsula between the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. A reformed man named Muhammad Ibn Abdul- Wahhab from the Tamim tribe, who comes from a family of inherited Hanbali judges in the city

<sup>1</sup> Ibrahim al-Awrah, *History of Suleiman Pasha al-Adel*, Monastery of the Savior Press, Sidon, 1936, pp. 21-22.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pp. 27-34.

of al-Ayniyya, where he was born in 1703 AD, and he was a lover of science. He worked on studying jurisprudence and Sharia and memorizing the Holy Qur'an before he was ten years old. As was the custom of scholars, he moved between the capitals of the Islamic East to seek knowledge in its schools other than Damascus but was greatly influenced by the teachings of its jurist Ibn Taymiyyah, who lived there during the rule of the Mamluk Sultanate, in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries and while he was in Baghdad, The opportunity to study the jurisprudence of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, the founder of the last of the four Sunni schools of thought and Ibn Hanbal was who strongly and firmly defended the principle of taking the hadith and relying entirely on it against the tendency of the previous jurists to take an opinion, then this was supplemented by studying the literature of Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, who had a role in Reviving the teachings of Ibn Hanbal.<sup>3</sup>

It is clear that the political dispute that occurred later on between the Wahhabis and the Ottomans had a role in the clash between the two parties, as the Wahhabis on their part want to consolidate their influence in the Arabian Peninsula on the one hand, and the Ottomans struggle to maintain their sovereignty over that region because of its religious weight on the other. With the passage of days, the influence of the Wahhabis in the Arabian Peninsula increased, and they became a source of anxiety and inconvenience to their neighbors, and Imam Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhab, before he died in 1792 AD, had left behind four sons who emerged in jurisprudence, and a large number of students adopted the spread of Wahhabi thought, and he witnessed before his death the realization of his dream. In the establishment of a religious state, he also contributed to giving this state its Saudi dynasty status when it was taken from the states subject to the Wahhabis in the year 1788 AD, an oath of loyalty to Emir Saud Ibn Abdul-Aziz, the grandson of Emir Muhammad Ibn Saud, in place of his father Abd-Aziz.

The Sharif of Makkah, Ghaleb Ibn Saad, initially thought that he could alone eliminate the influence of the Wahhabis, but the army that he directed to Najd in 1790 AD failed to achieve his goal, and during his apostasy, Emir Saud Ibn Abdul-Aziz swooped upon him, and he inflicted a terrible defeat on him. Later, after the Wahhabis established their feet in Najd and Hijaz at the beginning of the nineteenth century, they began their attempts to control Iraq and the Levant, so the Wahhabis continued their advance to the north, to the point that the governor of Baghdad, Suleiman Pasha the Great, was eventually forced to take defensive measures against them. 1797 AD, the governor of Baghdad, with seven thousand Ottoman soldiers and twice this number of irregular Bedouin factions, led an attack on Ahsa area, the richest and most fertile property of the Wahhabis, but he postponed the march on their armor but rather delayed a month during which the siege on Ahsa Castle was struck, so that Saud he did not dare attack him but rather contract him Six-year term.<sup>4</sup>

But, in April 1801 AD, Saud and his followers led an attack on the centers of influence of the governor, and they aimed to seize the holy city of Karbala among the followers of the Shiite sect, which they hate, and consider it a heresy that must be removed, just as they aimed to seize the tomb of Imam Hussein Ibn Ali Ibn Abu Talib, the grandson of the Prophet, and were able to capture it on Eid al-Fitr,

<sup>3</sup> Hussein Ibn Ghannam, *The History of Najd, called Rawdat Al-Afkar and Al-Afham for the Imam and enumerating the invasions of the Muslims*, Volume: 1-2, Cairo 1961, pp. 25-26; Othman bin Abdullah Ibn Bishr, *The Title of Glory in the History of Najd*, Volume: 1, Makkah 1930, pp. 6-7; Carl Brockelman, *The History of Islamic Peoples*, (trans. by Nabih Amin Faris - Munir Al-Baalbaki), 13th edition, Dar Al-Elm for Millions, Beirut 1998, pp. 549-551; Abdulkarim Rafeq, *The Arabs and the Ottomans (1516-1916)*, 1st edition, Damascus 1974, p. 340; Vladimir Borisovich Lutsky, *Modern History of the Arab Countries*, (trans. by Dr. Afifa Al-Bustani), (review: Yuri Rochin), House of Progress, Moscow 1971, pp. 95-96.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Ghannam, op. cit, pp. 193-199, 233-235; Ibn Bishr, op. cit, pp. 107-110; Brockelman, op. cit, p. 551; St. John's Felibe, *The History of Najd and the Preaching of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab*, (trans. by Omar Al-Desrawi), 2nd edition, Madbouly Library, Cairo 1997, pp. 119-120; Rafeq, 1974: 341-342; Félix Mengin, *Histoire de L'Egypte sous le Gouvernement de Mohammed Aly*, Volume: 2, Paris 1823, pp. 518-521.

and they demolished the dome that oversees the tomb of Hussein and obtained great loot.<sup>5</sup> Then Saud and his aides returned to Dariyah, as Felipe<sup>6</sup> says, "to have the congratulations of his father and his people on the bold blow he paid to serve the true doctrine against religious groups that Wahhabism considers a revival and embodiment of idolatry". The residents of the Najd region equipped with rifle rickshaws were the finest Wahhabi factions that Saud was charged with crushing the city of Karbala.<sup>7</sup>

The successive Wahhabi successes led to the joining of almost all Najd and Asir tribes to the Wahhabis later, and after the destruction of Karbala, Hijaz became a major theater for their war operations, they launched an attack on Makkah in 1803 AD, and they seized it after a short resistance, and Sharif Ghaleb was forced to flee to the port of Jeddah, as he was forced Abdullah Pasha al-Azm, the governor of Damascus and Emir of Syrian Hajj, to leave Makkah after three days without completing the rituals of Hajj, and the same was done by the Egyptian and Moroccan pilgrims and all who accompanied the Sultan of Muscat. In the spring of 1804 AD, the Wahhabis seized Madinah, and destroyed the huge domes that overshadow the tomb of the Messenger Peace is upon him, and stripped them of all precious decorations, as Muslims had made the rituals of their visit to his tomb more like pagan rituals, as the Wahhabis expelled the Ottomans who had settled there Thus, the whole Hijaz was subject to their authority.<sup>8</sup>

Suleiman Pasha, during the mandate of Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar, was appointed to lead the Hajj Caravan for the year 1218 AH (1803-1804 AD), and he succeeded in his mission before the Wahhabis took control of the Hejaz, so he was lucky to complete his mission without colliding with them.<sup>9</sup>

The news of the Wahhabi takeover of the holy cities triggered panic and panic in the capital of the Ottoman Sultanate, and the loss of Makkah dealt the most severe blow to the reputation of the Ottoman Sultan and his religious status as the guardian of the two holy mosques and the holy cities. As the matter required of the High Porte to make a response, and in front of his inability to send military forces to fight the Wahhabis, he was forced to seek assistance from the Governors of Acre and Baghdad, so that the decision that was taken to use the Governor of Acre Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar against the Wahhabis received important support, as the High Porte had received several urgent messages from al-Jazzar, which included news of the Wahhabi invasions, stating no obstacles were preventing his further progress, and indicating his intention to occupy the Levant. al-Jazzar expressed his willingness to address this expected threat, with a promise to eliminate this threat within six months and to return the property looted by the Wahhabis to the High Porte.<sup>10</sup>

When Suleiman Pasha al-Adel (Adjuster) assumed the governorate of Sidon and Acre, he was busy consolidating his influence and restoring stability to Acre and the state of Sidon in general, so he did not care about what was going on outside his mandate, and he did not want to be involved in a conflict of greater size than the capabilities of his mandate. In Egypt, Muhammad Ali Pasha, who just came to power in 1805 AD, was not very different from what he was Suleiman Pasha, as his main concern was to

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Bishr, op. cit, pp. 121-122; Felipe, op. cit, p. 142; Abdul Rahim, op. cit, 217-219; Brockelman, op. cit, 551-552; Abdul Aleem Abu Heikal, *The Arab East from Ottoman sovereignty until World War I*, Arab Culture House, Cairo 1977, pp. 119-120; Mengin, op. cit, 522-524.

<sup>6</sup> Felipe, op. cit, p.143.

<sup>7</sup> John Lewis Burckhardt, *Notes on the Wahhabi Bedouins*, 1st edition, Dar Suwaidan, Beirut 1995, p.237.

<sup>8</sup> Abdul Rahman A. Abdul Rahim, *The First Saudi State*, 4th edition, Cairo 1982, pp. 65-82, 153-155, 156-158; Brockelman, op. cit, p.552; Felipe, op. cit, pp. 145-146; Mengin, op. cit, p. 525.

<sup>9</sup> Adel Manna, *The History of Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period (1700-1918)*, A new reading, 1st edition, Institute for Palestine Studies, Beirut 1999, p. 109.

<sup>10</sup> Vasilyev, op. cit, p. 121, based on the archive of Russia's foreign policy in 1804 AD, file 2242, p. 202, and file 2235, pp. 249, 184-186.

stabilize the pillars of his rule and to pursue his competitors from the Mamluks and others. As for the governors of Aleppo and Damascus, they were quickly changing, and they could not help the Ottoman Sultanate to fight the Wahhabis.<sup>11</sup>

## SECOND: TENSE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE WAHHABIS AND THE GOVERNORS OF DAMASCUS

The governor of Damascus, Abdullah Pasha al-Azm, left in Shawwal 1220 AH / January 1806 AD, with pilgrims to Makkah and was accompanied by Yusuf King Agha who returned to his service as Dali Bashi<sup>12</sup> and although Abdullah Pasha succeeded in performing the Hajj, he happened to happen Some difficulties and he was humiliated. At the time when the caravan of pilgrims reached Makkah, that city was under Wahhabi domination. Abdullah Pasha was forced to compliment the Wahhabis to be able to enter Makkah, in addition to the pilgrims enduring many hardships on the way, such as the lack of water and the theft of their camels, who had to redeem them with three hundred bags of dirhams. Moreover, the inventory failed to meet them at the agreed place, and thus many pilgrims and soldiers died due to a lack of equipment.<sup>13</sup>

Before the return of the Hajj convoy to Damascus, a civil war broke out between Qabi Qoul and Yarleya, and it continued during most of the year 1221 AH / 1806 AD. Abdullah Pasha was unable to stop the conflict between the two parties, nor even to return to Damascus until the High Porte issued a firman with the renewal of his appointment before he went to Hajj for the second time in January 1807. After the governor returned to Damascus, he managed to resolve the differences peacefully between the two parties, and the Janissaries did not accept his authority before this time and believed that he would be deposed before the end of the year 1806 AD, because of his folly. In any case, after the renewal of his appointment was confirmed, they could not continue to challenge as a governor, as he had absolute confidence from the High Porte.<sup>14</sup>

The Wahhabis seized the opportunity of the Ottoman Sultanate to be preoccupied with its external problems in its relationship with Europe when the Tilsit agreement was signed near the coast of the Baltic Sea in eastern Germany in 1806 AD, between Napoleon Bonaparte And the Tsar of Russia the Alexander I, not to mention its internal problems with the Janissary insurrection against Sultan Selim III's military reform.<sup>15</sup>

Saud decided to perform the Hajj pilgrimage to Makkah for the third time, but he saw the possibility of some disturbances on the part of Sharif Ghaleb if the Ottoman High Porte decided to send an army of the Ottomans and regular soldiers to protect the Syrian Hajj convoy that would be headed by Abdullah Pasha al-Azm, so he did not leave Dariyah except at the end of January 1807 AD (1222 AH), when the pilgrimage was to take place on February 18<sup>th</sup> of the same year.

Emir Saud chose Madinah as a meeting place from which they would enter Makkah to perform the Hajj pilgrimage, but before he embarked on travel he sent a messenger to the leaders of his forces in Medina to ask them to prevent the Syrian Hajj Caravan from entering Makkah, or traveling to it, so

<sup>11</sup> Manna, op. cit, p. 109.

<sup>12</sup> Abdul Razzaq al-Bitar, *Ornament of the People in the History of the Thirteenth Century*, An investigation by Muhammad Bahjah al-Bitar, Volume: 3, Publications of the Arabic Language Academy, Damascus 1963, p. 1600.

<sup>13</sup> George John Koury, *The Province of Damascus, 1783-1832*, University of Michigan Press, 1970, p.119.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, pp. 119-120.

<sup>15</sup> Abu Heikal, op. cit, p. 120.

when the Syrian Hajj convoy reached the outskirts Makkah, the emir of Syrian Hajj and the governor of Damascus, Abdullah Pasha al-Azm, was kindly informed not to allow him to move forward, and he was asked to return with the convoy from where it came, and Abdullah Pasha was forced to submit to this matter despite his strong protest.<sup>16</sup> It seems that Emir Saud, by his behavior, wanted to convey to the concerned, or in other words, the High Porte, a strongly worded message that the affairs of the sacred Hijaz lands had become his sole responsibility, and not that of the Ottoman Sultan.

The High Porte had made arrangements in the year 1221 AH / 1806 AD, with Muhammad Pasha Abu Maraq to open the path of Hajj and seize the Hijaz from the Wahhabis on the proposal of Abu Maraq himself,<sup>17</sup> so he appointed him responsible for Gaza, Jaffa, Ramleh, and Jerusalem, and also gave him 7,500 bags of cash. To pay the cost of the planned military campaign against the Wahhabis. Although Jerusalem was no longer within the jurisdiction of the ruler of Damascus, it appeared that Abdullah Pasha's mission in completing the Hajj season for the year 1221 AH / 1807 AD would be easy due to the expected Muhammad Pasha Abu Maraq campaign, but the latter continued to postpone his campaign, and did not he could not even protect the road between Jaffa and Jerusalem through which European pilgrims pass through to visit the holy sites in Palestine, so asked the High Porte to Suleiman Pasha punish him and return the state's money to its treasury. Thus, Abdullah Pasha had to perform the Hajj under extremely dangerous conditions and without outside help.<sup>18</sup>

Before Abdullah Pasha went to Hijaz, he asked to rebuild the markets that were destroyed during the Civil War, and Yusuf King Agha entrusted to the recipients of Damascus during his absence in the Hajj.<sup>19</sup> A trustee can control the events if the civil war returns to a new fire between the warring factions in Damascus.

When Abdullah Pasha and the pilgrims approached the Hijaz, Wahhabi leader Saud Ibn Abdul-Aziz called him to agree on arrangements for allowing pilgrims to complete the Hajj. Whatever the case, Saud granted the caravan a promise to perform the Hajj, if the armed escort of the caravan is kept out of the area, and that the pilgrims refrain from practicing music and using the usual means of adornment while they are close to Makkah.<sup>20</sup>

Abdullah Pasha rejected the dictates of Saud, as he feared entering Makkah without his forces, and was forced to return to Damascus without completing the ritual of Hajj. Abdullah Pasha was afraid of the chaos that would spread the Hajj caravan during her return due to the expectation that Wahhabis would steal it, and it appears that the presence of the mother of the Ottoman Sultan within the pilgrims increased the embarrassment and humiliation of the governor greatly.<sup>21</sup>

Preventing the Syrian Hajj convoy from reaching Makkah to perform the Hajj pilgrimage, had a very bad impact on Astana, the capital of the Ottoman Sultanate, and it was an earthquake shock, which led to serious and important repercussions after the severe embarrassment of the center of the state, and

<sup>16</sup> Felipe, op. cit, pp. 165-166; Haider al-Shihabi, *A History of Prince Bashir Al-Kabeer*, two sections, the first section, compiled by Reverend Peter Badr Habeish, commented on its footnotes: Bolus Qarali, Beit Chabab, Lebanon 1933, p. 512; Muhammad D. al-Rayes, *The Arab East and the Ottoman Caliphate during the last round of the Caliphate (1774-1924)*, Volume: 1, Nahdet Misr Library, Cairo 1950, p. 217; Koury, op. cit, p. 131.

<sup>17</sup> al-Awrah, op. cit, pp. 80-81.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, pp. 80-81; al-Shihabi, op. cit, p. 436; Manna, op. cit, p. 110, citing al-Quds Record No. 288, p. 2, and Nablus Register No. 6, p. 327; Koury, op. cit, p. 121.

<sup>19</sup> Michael al-Dimashqi, *The History of the Levant and Lebanon Accidents (1192-1257 AH / 1782-1841 AD)*, An investigation and presentation: Ahmad Ghassan Spano, 1st edition, Dar Qutaiba, Damascus 1981, p. 32; al-Bitar, op. cit, p. 1600.

<sup>20</sup> Koury, op. cit, p. 122.

<sup>21</sup> al-Dimashqi, op. cit, p. 33.

a feeling of humiliation and this speech echoed The Great, that the High Porte decided to release Abdullah Pasha from his position and to appoint Yusuf Kanj Pasha to replace him on Safar 1222 AH / 1807 AD.<sup>22</sup> In this way, Abdullah Pasha was the last of the rulers of Damascus from al-Azm family, that ancient family that had not wavered or spared no effort in serving the Ottoman Sultanate for centuries.

It is evident that the emergence of the power of the Wahhabi movement on the political scene contributed to the change of governors on the one hand, as happened in isolating the ruler of Damascus Abdullah Pasha al-Azm, and later Yusuf Kanj Pasha - as will be his statement, and the eruption of conflicts between the governors in the Levant, including Palestine, as happened between Yusuf Kanj Pasha, the governor of the Levant, and Suleiman Pasha, the governor of Sidon and Acre. It seems, as Ibrahim al-Awrah mentioned, that the motives that pushed the High Porte to appoint Yusuf Kanj Pasha as governor of Damascus are due to his close relationship with the High Porte on the one hand, and his richness and his clan, which would directly enable him to conduct pilgrimage trips again as he pledged to the state on the other hand. Whereas the usual practice is that whoever takes charge of the state of Damascus, the largest of the Levantine provinces, is sent, upon receiving the position, a notice to the rest of the other governors, he was sent to Suleiman Pasha al-Adel (Adjuster) promising him the assumption of his new position, and Suleiman Pasha replied to him with a letter of congratulations with gifts as usual ministers.<sup>23</sup>

It seems that Muhammad Pasha Abu Maraq failed to comply with the contract concluded with him by the Ottoman Sultanate in launching a military campaign against the Wahhabis, so the high Porte asked Suleiman Pasha the governor of Sidon to get rid of Abu Maraq and hit his neck, and in this way Sanjaks of Gaza and Jaffa returned to the judicial authority of Sidon - as mentioned above, as for the Sanjak of Jerusalem, has returned to the judiciary of the governor of Damascus.<sup>24</sup>

As a prelude to a successful Hajj season from the Wahhabis' point of view, and after the return of Yusuf Kanj Pasha from the usual session, a delegation of Arab Harb from the Hijaz representing the Wahhabis presented to urge the governor of Damascus that the pilgrims and the caravan comply with certain conditions if he wanted the Hajj to be successful this year. And they demanded that the pilgrims not be without a beard, to prevent smoking that was permitted on the road, and not to accompany the traditional Mahmal that always accompanies the caravan. Yusuf Kanj Pasha found that his acceptance of these conditions might include serious humiliation for him because the Mahmal represents the powers of both the Sultan and the Emir of Hajj to the governor of Damascus, so Yusuf Kanj refused to obey these requests.<sup>25</sup>

The pilgrimage caravan departed Damascus in December 1807 AD, retaining a little pomp and luxury, accompanied by only less than two hundred people, and it appears that Yusuf Kanj Pasha was expecting his failure to manage a successful pilgrimage season, so he appointed Mullah Hassan, whom he trusted to lead The caravan, as expected, the caravan was prevented from reaching Makkah and was robbed by the Wahhabis, And added to Yusuf Kanj troubles, that the Wahhabis sent several messages to Damascus full of threats if they did not become Wahhabis, and the panic-filled Damascus and the trust

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<sup>22</sup> Asad Rustem, *Bashir between the Sultan and the Aziz*, The first section, Lebanese University Press, Beirut 1956, p. 27; al-Dimashqi, 1981, p. 35; Peter Malcolm Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent: 1516-1922*, Cornell University Press, New York 1966, p. 131.

<sup>23</sup> al-Awrah, op. cit, p. 89.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, pp. 81-88.

<sup>25</sup> al-Shihabi, op. cit, p. 524; Vasilyev, op. cit, p. 125.

in the Ottoman authority, which seemed completely impotent to the growth of Wahhabi power, was lost.<sup>26</sup>

Sultan Mahmoud commissioned the new ruler of Damascus, Yusuf Kanj Pasha, to go to fight the Wahhabis in the Hejaz itself, but he was unable to implement the campaign, which embarrassed his position in front of the High Porte.<sup>27</sup> For Yusuf Pasha to defend the southern provinces of his mandate against the danger of the Wahhabi tide, he built several military observation posts in the Houran area, concentrated his forces there, and also strengthened the castles in the al-Mazyreeb area, and therefore the governor was unable to aspire to carry out a counter-attack against the Wahhabis, Rather, he was content with just trying to defend his capital, Damascus. It appears that Yusuf Pasha was somewhat realistic, because the problem of the Wahhabis was intractable and greater than his potential, and he was unable to solve it on his own, given the challenges that confronted his authority within the Province.<sup>28</sup>

The Wahhabis had for some time succeeded in destroying the villages located on the outskirts of the city of Aleppo and had penetrated the Palestinian territories at the same time. Urgent measures were taken to protect major cities, causing the Wahhabis not to dare storm them.<sup>29</sup>

Among the most important challenges that he faced, his dispute with the governor of Sidon and Acre Suleiman Pasha, and the tension in his relationship with Emir Bashir II al-Shihabi, Emir of Mount Lebanon<sup>30</sup> and Yusuf Pasha found that it was more beneficial to coordinate the rulers of Egypt, the Levant, and Baghdad with their war plans, by sending simultaneously three campaigns from the sides Various open to the Wahhabis multiple destinations.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, Yusuf Kanj Pasha found himself unable to more than exchange correspondence with the Wahhabis, in the hope of obtaining approval from them to conduct the Hajj season in the usual traditional manner without interference from them. As for the Wahhabis, they took this opportunity to clarify their principle-based on complete unification, and their opposition to any form of polytheism and idolatry, and more than that they went to the call of Yusuf Kanj Pasha to embrace Wahhabism as a doctrine, and Saud Ibn Abdul-Aziz wrote to him personally explaining to him the validity of his belief and the deviation of other Muslims On the advice of the Noble Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, as he showed his strong contempt for the intercession of some of the guardians of Sufism, and a visit to their shrines by Muslims, and in general, the Wahhabis provided proof of their enormous hostility towards others different from them in the doctrine.<sup>32</sup>

### THIRD: THE WAHhabi CAMPAIGN ON THE LEVANT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Meanwhile, the star of Yusuf Pasha was on his way to decline, because of his failure and his inability to strip the campaign against the Wahhabis, or the opening of the Hajj season, as the High Porte promised,

<sup>26</sup> al-Dimashqi, op. cit, p. 40; al-Shihabi, op. cit, p. 534; Koury, op. cit, p. 126.

<sup>27</sup> al-Rayes, op. cit, p. 217.

<sup>28</sup> Koury, op. cit, p. 131.

<sup>29</sup> Vasilyev, op. cit, p. 132.

<sup>30</sup> As Ibrahim al-Awrah states, the enmity between Haim Shehadeh, the adviser of Suleiman Pasha, and Abboud al-Bahri, who is close to Yusuf Pasha, has increased and worsened the issue of their disagreement, so that the two ministers may have parted with his adviser, and this has become movements against that and his counterpart. al-Awrah also says as Yusuf Pasha demanded the recovery of the lands of al-Foula and Afula located in Marj Ibn Amir in Palestine, and other lands that reach Mount Nablus, claiming that it was subordinate to the Province of Damascus and that Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar had previously taken it forcibly, and the dispute between the two parties became worse Even each other complained about the high Porte. For more details on this dispute, see: al-Awrah, op. cit, p.96-98; Rustem, op. cit, p. 29.

<sup>31</sup> Jamal Z. Qassem, et al, *The Lebanese crisis: its origins, development, and different dimensions*, The Arab Organization for Education, Culture, and Science, Cairo 1978, p. 54.

<sup>32</sup> Koury, op. cit, p. 132.

because of the differences that accumulated between him and Suleiman Pasha first. More importantly, it was the Wahhabis who took the initiative and began gathering large forces after they possessed the entire country of Hijaz, and news began about their intention to come to the wilderness of the Levant and seize it second. The increase in turmoil within Istanbul itself and its need for yields due to the drought that afflicted it, and the killing of two sultans of the Ottoman Sultanate in one year (1222 and 1223 AH), Selim III, and his successor Mustafa IV third. And the unrest in Egypt, which followed the departure of the French from it and until the matter was restored to Muhammad Ali Pasha fourth.<sup>33</sup>

And if the star of Yusuf Pasha was already close to fading, then the star of Suleiman Pasha was on the rise after he succeeded in investing the failure of his rival for two years without Yusuf Pasha achieving any of his promises, he made to himself in front of the high Porte. The men of government in Istanbul, by sending food aid and grain on board two large ships, and quickly enforced them to Istanbul. Suleiman Pasha was not satisfied with that, but he sought to market himself with the guardians of the state by presenting a petition to the officials of the official ships that transported the aid, including his loyalty to the Sultan and the High Porte, and that, upon hearing the state's need for grain, he had to borrow from several methods and bought the necessary yields from everywhere as Ibrahim al-Awrah said.<sup>34</sup>

Suleiman Pasha succeeded in his behavior, not only in winning the men of the rule in the Ottoman Sultanate but also in winning the friendliness and consent of Sultan Mahmud II as well so that the men of the High Porte were no longer able to listen to the complaints of Yusuf Pasha that he filed against his rival Suleiman Pasha, not even paying attention to his demands, after realizing that he had broken his promises he made by returning the seasons of Hajj to what they were before.<sup>35</sup>

After the strength of the Wahhabis reached its reach in the Hijaz and most of the Arabian Peninsula, they began preparing for progress towards the Levant, which is a dangerous act of conduct. The success of the Wahhabis in capturing the Levant means breaking the ties of the Ottoman Sultanate in the south, and thus the Province of Egypt is not connected to its base Istanbul, then it becomes an order to seize Iraq is inevitable, and consequently, the Ottoman Sultanate loses its property in the Arab region.

It is understood that throughout the years following the destruction of Karbala, the Wahhabis made stubborn invasions into Iraq, but their campaigns that continued until 1810 AD were confined to plundering the Bedouin tribes, and despite internal problems in Iraq, the Wahhabis were unable to achieve successes comparable to the invasion of Karbala.<sup>36</sup>

Whatever the case, it was in the year 1225 AH / 1810 AD, a difficult year, as a result of the drought and the lack of resources, in addition to the scarcity of water and the lack of pastures in the Arabian Peninsula, so the Wahhabis pushed towards the Syrian Houran in search of these necessities<sup>37</sup> and they ate green and dry, they burned villages, insulted women and children<sup>38</sup> and forced Bedouin tribes to pay tribute to the Emir of Dairiyah.<sup>39</sup> This sweeping rush not only made Emir Saud at the Syrian border,

<sup>33</sup> al-Awrah, op. cit, pp. 98-99.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, pp. 99-100.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, pp. 100-101.

<sup>36</sup> Vasilyev, op. cit, p. 132.

<sup>37</sup> Tannous al-Shidiah, *News of Notables in Mount Lebanon*, Beirut 1859, p. 483.

<sup>38</sup> Hassan Haider al-Rukaini, "Jabal Amel in Qarn", *al-Irfan Journal*, 1939, Volume: 29, p. 681; Haider al-Shihabi, *The History of Emir Haider Ahmad Al-Shihabi*, Commented on his notes Dr. Maroun Raad, Volume: 4, Dar Nazeer Abboud, Beirut 1993, p. 1157.

<sup>39</sup> Ibn Bishr, op. cit, p. 126.

but also made him look on the outskirts of Damascus itself, and so terrified its residents, and he saw this and for the first time in his life snow on the top of Mount Hermon (Jabal al-Sheik).<sup>40</sup>

Al-Mazyreeb was an important gathering point for the Syrian Hajj convoy, and Basra Eski Sham, which is located in southern Syria, had met many saboteurs of the Wahhabis. Then withdrew to Basra to spend several days in it.<sup>41</sup>

The question that arises in this matter is whether the Wahhabis' intention was indeed to invade the Levant and subjugate them to their influence, or merely content themselves with obtaining their necessary needs of food and water, or terrorism of the Ottoman Sultanate in this region?

The answer to this question does not need much trouble, as the Wahhabis were not prepared and ready for a comprehensive invasion of the Levant. The need for such an attack was a great need for extensive supplies, the Wahhabis were not prepared for it, but their main goal was first, to deliver a message to those who are concerned with their ability to reach their homes, and secondly, in obtaining their needs from the necessities of life. It is known historically that Arab migrations from the Arabian Peninsula in ancient history to the north represented in the Levant were due to the scarcity of resources in their homeland.

Whatever the case may be, in the face of the wild rush of the Wahhabis who reached close to Damascus, Yusuf Kanj Pasha believed that the Wahhabis came with their power to take over the area, so he remained in al-Mazyreeb and was forced to seek assistance to Suleiman Pasha the governor of Sidon under the justifications of the service of religion and the state. With him and his previous opposition to him, he walked to him with his soldiers, who gathered them from his entire mandate, from the Sanjak of Gaza to Beirut. Suleiman Pasha also instructed Emir Bashir II al-Shihabi, the Emir of Mount Lebanon, under his influence, to gather as many men as he could and meet him in Tiberias to crawl together to al-Muzayrib, and Emir Bashir was able to mobilize fifteen thousand fighters. It should be noted that the Sheiks of al-Mitawila (Shiites) in the Jabal Amel region, which are also subject to the influence of Suleiman Pasha, participated in this campaign after Suleiman Pasha issued a decree to Sheik Faris al-Nasif, Sheik of al-Mitawila, who ordered him to collect the men of the clans subject to his influence and bring them to Tiberias, Which he arrived with the company of Emir Bashir al-Shihabi.

He also edited a decree to Sheik Saad al-Qadan, and Sheik Fahid, Sheiks of Arab Bani Sakher. The same was done with the Arabs of the Turkmen sheiks of Safed, the Arabs of Safed, and the dignitaries of Mount Nablus. As for Yusuf Pasha, he tried to prepare the situation for his situation, and he collected five thousand imaginations of his own ethnic Kurds, as well as several other soldiers of infantry.<sup>42</sup>

It appears that the High Porte did not have absolute confidence in Yusuf Pasha's ability to confront the Wahhabi threat, so he isolated him. Just before Suleiman Pasha left Acre heading to Tiberias, he was connected to an Ottoman warden called Issa Agha on 9 Jumada II, 1225 AH / July 1810 AD, a firman appointed him governor of Damascus and Tripoli and the dismissal of Yusuf Kanj Pasha. A firman cited the saying: The latter was isolated because he was unable to drive the convoy of pilgrims, and postponed the leadership of the campaign against the Wahhabis.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, pp. 148-149; Felipe, op. cit, p. 177.

<sup>41</sup> Felipe, op. cit, p. 178.

<sup>42</sup> al-Awrah, op. cit, pp. 101-103; al-Shidiaq, op. cit, pp. 483-486; al-Shihabi, Vol. 4, 1993, p. 1157; Koury, op. cit, pp. 134-135.

<sup>43</sup> al-Awrah, 1936, pp. 104-107; Constantine Bazile, *Syria and Palestine under Ottoman Rule*, (trans.by Tariq Masarani), Dar al-Takadum Moscow 1989, p. 93.

Meanwhile, Yusuf Kanj Pasha - who was unaware of the previous firman - had arrived in Houran to the rescue of Shamdeen Agha, the recipient of Arbed and Ajlun, besieged in al-Mazyreeb Castle, and retreat<sup>44</sup> after they seized huge spoils, they returned to their homes.<sup>45</sup>

When Suleiman Pasha and Emir Bashir learned of the flight of the Wahhabis, they decided to implement what was stated in the Royal firman and determined to attack Damascus by force, taking advantage of the opportunity of Yusuf Kanj Pasha to be outside it, who later learned of Suleiman Pasha's intention through the Arabs of Bani Sakher, so he left al-Mazyreeb and quickly returned to Damascus to manage how to confront his new enemy.<sup>46</sup>

Soon, Yusuf Kanj Pasha went out with his forces to meet Suleiman Pasha at Jdeideh Marjeyoun, and the two sides met with her, and the battle ended with the defeat of Yusuf Kanj Pasha's forces who had to return to Damascus, Suleiman Pasha and Emir Bashir followed him and were accompanied by the crowds of al-Mitawila on the Quneitra - Daraya road that borders Damascus, and upon their arrival in Qatana, note that Yusuf Pasha had returned to Damascus, so they sent to notables of Damascus informing them of the Royal firman, who was deposing Yusuf Pasha and gave them three days to respond. After that deadline expired, they moved their soldiers to Daraya, clashed with the Damascene army, and Yusuf Pasha failed to block them, so he was forced to flee to Egypt seeking asylum from her governor, Muhammad Ali Pasha. The victors entered Damascus, and Suleiman Pasha was appointed governor of it, in addition to Tripoli and Sidon.<sup>47</sup>

Suleiman Pasha entered Damascus, and found the treasury of Yusuf Pasha open and empty, after the military looted it, and left with only a few luggage and some horses seized by Suleiman Pasha, and he immediately sat in the Court of Governance and ordered to call for safety. Then he summoned Mulla Effendi, the Mufti, the captain of al-Ashraf, Yanger Agasi, Qabagul Agasi<sup>48</sup> and the faces and notables of Damascus, and decided to meet them in the Diwan, and they publicly read out to them the Royal Sovereign by appointing him as governor of the Levant. The preaching ceremonies were edited by appointment to the rest of the parties and regions, the people expressed their joy at the New Testament, they exchanged congratulations, and Suleiman Pasha began dismissing the former recipients and commissioners of the provinces of Damascus and Tripoli.<sup>49</sup>

And the first thing that Suleiman Pasha did after his mandate in Damascus was that he appointed Mustafa Agha Berber, whose job was originally Qaterji,<sup>50</sup> taking over Tripoli, and he also granted the commitment of Jabal Akkar to Ali Bey al-Assad, who was "benevolent, kind, generous, Good biography, loved by all people, due to his generosity", as mentioned by Ibrahim al-Awrah. He also granted the recipients of Hama to Uzun Ali Agha al-Qasser, who was a Mamluk of Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar, and his job was by the Customs Secretary of Beirut, and he was given a recipient of Sanjak Homs to Jaafar Agha from the Mamluk of al-Jazzar also, and the recipient of Jerusalem to Kanj Ahmad Agha, who was ap-

<sup>44</sup> al-Shihabi, section 1, 1933, pp. 556-557; Holt, op. cit, p. 233.

<sup>45</sup> Felipe, op. cit, p. 178.

<sup>46</sup> al-Awrah, 1936, p. 128; Rustem, op. cit, p. 29.

<sup>47</sup> al-Awrah, op. cit, pp. 128-131; al-Shihabi, op. cit, p. 22; Bazile, op. cit, p. 93.

<sup>48</sup> Yanger Agasi: That is, Agha Ujak Janissary and most of them were from the people of Damascus.

Al-Qabqul: it is another Ujak, most of its members were strangers from Damascus, and they have a special president or leader. Qabqul means the servants of the door, meaning the door of the Sultan, and the two Ujaks were often in a state of constant fighting and rivalry in Damascus.

al-Awrah, 1936, p. 131; Ahmed Al-Saeed Suleiman, *An intrusion of what was mentioned in the history of al-Jabrati from the intruder*, Dar al-Ma'aref, Cairo 1979, p. 165.

<sup>49</sup> al-Awrah, 1936, pp. 131-132.

<sup>50</sup> Qaterji: in Turkish means the officer who is at the head of the convoy of mules. Ibid, p. 134.

pointed as a recipient over Damascus during The period of al-Jazzar's rule, as a result of Muhammad Agha Abu Nabot's intervention, and the granting of Nablus's surrender to Musa Bey Tuqan.<sup>51</sup>

After learning that the Wahhabis had isolated Yusuf Kanj Pasha from the province of Damascus, and appointed Suleiman Pasha in his stead, they decided to stop advancing towards Damascus, and only send a message to the people of the Levant, stating their good beliefs and inviting them to enter into their faith<sup>52</sup> and this was the last campaign of the Wahhabis towards the Levant, as well as the North in general.<sup>53</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Several results can be drawn from this study, including:

1. The Wahhabis seized the opportunity of the Ottoman Sultanate to be preoccupied with its external problems in its relationship with Europe, in addition to its internal problems with the Janissary insurrection against Sultan Selim III's military reforms, to reinforce their military strength in the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah.

2. The takeover of the holy cities by the Wahhabis meant, in the last analysis, that a direct clash between them and the Ottomans was inevitably imminent, and the Sultan was obligated to guarantee the safety of the pilgrimage, and he could no longer tolerate that these two cities be under the control of dissident military forces over his authority.

3. After the failure of the governors of Damascus and others to succeed in the successive pilgrimage seasons, the Wahhabis had to take the initiative and attack the lands actually under the jurisdiction of Damascus, and they started gathering large forces after they possessed the entire country of Hijaz, and launched an attack on the outskirts of the city of Damascus, the capital of the Province, which constituted a danger to settle down, and threatened to seize it.

4. The failure of Yusuf Kanj Pasha, the governor of Damascus to repel the Wahhabi threat, had a prominent role in the rise of the star Suleiman Pasha, the governor of Sidon, and the Ottoman Sultanate asked him to remove Yusuf Kanj from his mandate after he isolated him, and appointed Suleiman Pasha to replace him, so he succeeded in expelling him and forced him to flee to Egypt. If the Wahhabis had been destined to achieve some victory in Syria, this would have posed an imminent threat to the capabilities of the Ottoman Sultanate, because the Wahhabis would knock on its direct doors, and they would become close to their capital, Istanbul after Anatolia was under their goal.

5. Suleiman Pasha al-Adel (Adjuster) was more fortunate than his predecessors were, as soon as he assumed the mandate of Damascus; the Wahhabis stopped attacking the property of the Ottoman Sultanate in Syria.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, pp. 134-137.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, pp. 137-138.

<sup>53</sup> Vasilyev, op. cit, p. 132.

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