



Abdul Hamid and the Story of his Infection with "Paranoia"

His father, Abdul Majeed: "My Son is Melancholic."

Anyone who studies in depth the personality of Sultan Abdul Hamid II will find in him many aspects that deter him and reflexes its form and its intellectual, mental and psychological development and the extent of the impact of that and its clear reflection on his behaviors and actions throughout various stages in his life, including his reign, which lasted nearly thirty-three years.

The death of the Sultan's mother and its impact on the formation of his personality:

The upbringing and raising that Abdul Hamid II lived under after losing his mother when he was eleven years old affected him greatly. Although he lived under the care of the wife of his father, Sultan Abdul Majeed, Abdul Hamid was afflicted with a state of sadness and psychological depression, until he became a young man isolated from people, characterized by stubbornness and fleeing from crowds of people, preferring to withdraw from them, so much so that he resented the participation of his peers in fun and play. He often spent time in the depths of sorrows and misery; this was strongly reflected in his fear of the unknown. Fear and obsession with evil were innate foundations in his creation, which is an extension of the problem of upbringing and childhood. That is why his father, Sultan Abdul Majid, said about him: "My son suffers from obsession and suspicion. He is my melancholic son." On the other hand, his brother Murad would joke with and make fun of his younger brother Abdul Hamid for his excessive fear, by saying phrases such as: "Your face is pale. What happened to you?" Within Abdul Hamid's subconscious, fears, confusion, delusion, and suspicion increased more and more, and his brother Murad used to invoke such fears and felt a sense of superiority over Abdul Hamid when he provoked his reactions and emotions.

He lived as a stubborn
introvert ...

fleeing from people.

In his memoirs and thoughts, Abdul Hamid said in defense of himself and the state he was going through of illusion, suspicion and mistrust of others: "People always neglect any circumstances that I was brought up with and raised under their conditions. I didn't know why my father was mistreating me." It seems that the state of delusion and suspicion in his character continued with him throughout his life, and Tahsin Pasha, head of the writing department at Yildiz Palace, who was a contemporary and served the Sultan and was close to him in his memoirs, mentioned Abdul Hamid as saying: "This illusion known about Sultan Abdul Hamid, which shows its impact in all his conditions and procedures, did not leave him throughout his life, and this illusion had important and sometimes painful effects on his behavior in general."

Sultan Abdul Hamid II and his suffering from paranoia:

The state of imagination, suspicion, and delusion that the Sultan was going through was a long-lasting psychological condition that was defined by specialists in psychology and psychotherapy as a chronic syndrome called "paranoia," a term that is basically derived from an ancient Greek word that was previously meant "chronic delirium." However, later on the meaning of this term expanded to include the patient who is haunted by delusions and doubts, or what is known as paranoia, a thinking pattern that results in an illogical feeling of losing confidence in people, suspicion of them, and the belief in the existence of a threat, such as the feeling that there are people watching him or trying to harm him despite there being no evidence for this, so the patient projects his problems onto other people, and sees himself as a victim of their conspiracy against him.

Despite his pretense of
dictatorship, he was
plagued with phobia
and fear.

This state of "paranoia" affected the behavior of Sultan Abdul Hamid and his actions from the time he was Prince and Crown Prince until he ascended to the reign of the Sultanate. This situation continued with him throughout his life and during his rule, and affected his administration of government from an administrative and political point of view. Those around him took advantage of this pathology to increase his condition of imagination, delusion, and suspicion in their transmission of internal and external events, and some state men who held high positions in the Empire resorted to intimidating the Sultan, throwing terror into his heart, and fabricating images of rebellion and disobedience in various corners of the state in order to consolidate their jobs and their status with the Sultan. The best example of this is the Grand Vizier Saeed Pasha, who assumed the position of Prime Minister, (Grand Vizier) more than seven times during the reign of the Sultan, due to his benefiting from the state of paranoia that Sultan Abdul Hamid was going through, and he contributed to increasing that state in him and consolidating it more and more. Some of the contemporaries of Abdul Hamid's period hold Saeed Pasha responsible for many of the internal and external problems that the state went through. In fact, there may be some validity in this, but the one primarily to blame is the Sultan himself, as Tahse Pasha described him as a tyrannical ruler and absolute by his nature, and that he remained under the influence of Saeed Pasha and his revelation from the day he ascended to the throne.

With his unwell psychological state, Abdul Hamid ruled the vast old empire and tightened in his reign the freedoms of people through the secret police and intelligence services, spying on people and writing confidential reports about them. Even his brother Murad V was not spared from this surveillance, espionage and writing reports on him, even though he was deprived of his will, locked in his palace. He also fought freedom of the press and curbed it by various means and methods, under the pretext of preserving the Ottoman society and its security.

References:

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