



In The Diary of Khairuddin Barbarossa

On the Same Grounds ... He Killed the Arabs and Pardoned the Traitors of Turks

The Ottoman navy was increased in strength by the efforts made by skilled sailors that get off on piracy. In the 15th century, Turkish pirates were carrying out their activities on the coast of northern Africa. While some of them were self-employed, the others were working for the benefit of the Ottomans in order to obtain spoils and plunder; among them was Khairuddin "Barbarossa", one of the most prominent sea pirates, who played a part in the naval invasions in the Mediterranean Sea, attacked and terrorized European ships during the 16th century AD. Furthermore, he contributed in facilitating the arrival of Ottomans to occupy parts of North Africa such as Tunisia, Algeria and countries. After Suleiman the Magnificent appointed him as a commander-in-chief of the Ottoman Navy.

"Barbarossa" left behind him a personal diary about that historical phase, which included real events along with incidents that involved strange, wondrous and exaggerations that are implausibility. By a quick look at this diary, there are many questions worth discussing and commenting arise to understand the reality of the situation in the piracy period of Ottomans.

The diary of "Khairuddin Barbarossa":

A disagreement occurred among historians regarding the validity of the manuscript copies of Barbarossa's personal diary; whether these copies are in the "Barbarossa's", himself, handwriting or they are in the handwriting of another one? Was he really the one who dictated it to someone else to write it to him? That person who was referred to by the diary as al-Mouradi? Was it in fact that Barbarossa's purpose of that diary to indicate the incidents in which he participated by himself or he was ordered to do? Was the idea of that personal diary on the famous captain's mind? Was he actually order to write it by Suleiman the Magnificent, by a Hamayuni order and why? What was the purpose for that? Therefore, was it an attempt to cover up and justify the failure of the Ottoman State to undertake the sweeping military action to support the people of Andalusia? Many questions shed a light on the nature of that personal diary or, to speak, the political diary for a purpose.

His Turkish
discrimination presumed
that he would despise
the Arabs by curses and
insults.

The diary of "Barbarossa" was published for the first time in Arabic in the year of 2010 AD. It was translated from Turkish into Arabic by Mohamed Darag, in (its first edition, Al-Asala for Publishing and Distribution, Algeria). The copy that he adopted is one of the manuscript copies that are widespread in the libraries of Istanbul. Moreover, there is another copy in the Vatican that is the oldest. There are copies in Berlin, Paris, Madrid, London and Cairo in addition to those copies available in Algeria. However, the original copy is missing?

Hence, the uncertainty surrounds the facts of this diary along with the absence of the original from the eyes of researchers and interested people. An Algerian researcher pointed out that there is a copy in the public library in Algiers the capital, which is under the title "News of the Arrival of Arouj to Algeria and His Brother Khairuddin". It was translated from the Ottoman language into Arabic during the 18th century AD under an order of the Mufti of the city of Algeria at that time, Ibn Ali Muhammad al-Alj (died: 1755 AD), as it was considered to be written by an unknown author. However, upon matching it with the diary of "Barbarossa", there is an agreement in the topic of the book but a great difference in the wording of the text. So the translation into Arabic in the 18th century AD is relatively the oldest one, including its differences in the texts.

In view of what we mentioned of the multiple copies that had been written for this diary and its translation in different European languages, will the originals manuscript or even the translated version, for what it is, be important to the historians and researchers? While its terminologies differentiated, it was added to or omitted from its texts and its wording and connotations were changed in transcription and translation. Further, this diary that was fundamentally not written by "Barbarossa", which makes it lose its historical and scientific value, its information may be a cause for uncertainties. Furthermore, there are no determination or confirmation of the historical events and facts attributed to it. Not to mention that the diary was written in an interesting narrative and epic style.

From the depth of the diary:

Although the diary was personal, they had carried a clear official political nature. As this was as a response to the order of the Magnificent. Thus, the diary was of a purely Turkish orientation and it quoted what was intended to be mentioned by the Magnificent; on the other hand, it disregarded many other things. If we quickly reviewed it, we would find that "Barbarossa" elaborated in details about the capture of his brother "Baba Arouj" for a few years and about his escape after that, as well as the calling to his brother Arouj by the Mameluke Sultan of Egypt. He pointed out how their political loyalties were distributed among the sultan of Egypt, Tunisia, and the Ottoman Sultans. In addition to his statement by saying: "It has become necessary to establish a new State in our estrangement". Here, it appears that the "Barbarossa" have gone beyond the domination to the seaside, but rather desired even to the land, to extend the power of the Turks over North Africa, under the pretext of saving the lives of Andalusians who were exterminated by the Spanish.

"The Diary" ... Is a
political propaganda for
"the Magnificent" written
under a Sultani order.

The Diaries revealed Barbarossa's love for the Ottoman Sultan and his absolute loyalty; which was extreme. On the contrary, the Diaries revealed his evident despise for Arabs. In his dealings with the Algerians who revolted against him, he used words full of abhorrent racism, such as saying: "Son of a bitch, Bedouins, Desert Arabs" and other Descriptions, regardless of the motives and reasons that led him to do so, it is not appropriate for a man who was famous for being the mujahid and the great sailor (the pirate) to use such lowly words, or insult and detract from the Arabs as he describe them; saying: "Arabs, Berbers and Andalusians they did not know Martial arts like the Turks," and I see that this is a victory for his Turkish racism, and his intensity over the Arabs was observed in many situations, and in one of the texts of the Diaries he says: "At the head of the revolutionaries who had been captured was the Sheikh of the city of Algeria, and I ordered his execution and his damned body to be cut into four pieces and each of them to be hung on each of the city's gates to be an example to others.. " Is such a saying and deed acceptable from those who are described as a great mujahid? Or is it the morals of pirates?! He mentioned that he had consulted the great Algerian scholars about what he should do with the 185 Algerian prisoners he has in custody, so the scholars asked him to pardon that many of them who fought the Spaniards. However, he consulted the Turkish sailors, and they asked "for firmness to strike their necks so that they set an example to others." Then he said, "I ordered the necks of the rebel leaders to be stroke."

On the other hand, we find him and personally pardoning the Turkish traitors as he calls them and those who stood with the son of the judge against him and rebelled against the Sultan, and the reason for that "among them are those who rendered invaluable services to us, and among them those who are credited with eliminating many of the Spaniards' heads and seizing their ships." In this regard, the double standards evidently appear in dealing with his people of the traitorous Turks, which are the same reasons that led him to execute 185 Algerians and the same reasons that made him refuse the request for amnesty presented by Algerian scholars as they were the first in fighting the Spaniards and did not consider their opinion and executed them, is the same reason that made him pardon the traitors Turks because of their precedence in fighting the Spaniards before.

These Diaries, despite the events and facts they contain, are not without transgressions and unacceptable behaviors by those who claim to have saved thousands of Muslims of Andalusia from the war waged by Spain against them, out of mercy and brotherhood in religion, or are they private interests that the personal Diaries did not disclose. As the saying goes: "We condemn you from your tongue," rather from your Diaries we condemn you.

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