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# Khurshid Pasha's campaign on the province of Al-Ahsa and the end of the unfulfilled dream

Those who study the historical documents that dealt with the Turkish invasion of the Arabian Peninsula through the campaigns of Muhammad Ali Pasha, to overthrow the first Saudi state, will find direct or implicit indications and signs that carry declared goals. Among those goals are the restoration of the Two Holy Mosques and the overthrow of the Saudi state, while there were other undeclared goals that Muhammad Ali Pasha hid.

These goals can be known through his correspondence with his son Ibrahim, as the latter tells him: **"I have received your honorable correspondence and reviewed all its contents. Al-Qassim and the remaining provinces were placed within our interests in addition to bringing Al-Ahsa under the obedience of the Sultan. After entering Diriyah, we will seize Al-Ahsa and the port of Qatif"**.

Such a historical text showed that Muhammad Ali's ambitions went beyond Najd to other regions of the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Ahsa and Qatif were part of his expansion strategy in the Gulf region. This could have been done at the first time, but the Ottoman Sultan prevented him from doing so and prevented the realization of that ambition and expelled him from the region quickly.

This strategy remained in the mind of Muhammad Ali Pasha, and he continued to plan for it, waiting for the appropriate opportunity to achieve it at any stage of the conflict with the Saudis. For him, it was a matter of time and he had his future plans to achieve his goal which embodied in the shores of The Arabian Gulf.

This time his goal was not limited to subduing Imam Faisal bin Turki and ending his rule. Rather, his real goal was to define an expansionary political map that he dreamed of creating, which included the Arabian Peninsula, the Arabian Gulf and Iraq. The movement of his forces towards Al-Ahsa and Qatif was only to implement the goals of the plan that he had prepared in advance.

Therefore, Khurshid Pasha, the commander of the invading military campaign, sought to carry out this task with all firmness and in all possible ways. As a result, the province of Al-Ahsa, which extends on the western coast of the Arabian Gulf, was occupied. Its strategic location and its multiple ports made it of an important value for supplying his occupying army to Najd with foodstuffs, ammunition, weapons and other supplies on one side, and on the other side the possibility of reaching the Arab countries bordering the Gulf to realize the dream and ambition of his master Muhammad Ali to expand in the Arab region starting from the Al-Ahsa.

We can say that that occupation achieved economic and strategic gains for Muhammad Ali Pasha, including that it allowed him to reach Bahrain, Qatar, Oman with its coasts, and Kuwait easily, and then extended his influence there, which made him close to the British influence in The Arabian Gulf.

The occupation of Al-Ahsa facilitated for him the chances of conquest towards the north, where Ottoman Iraq was, in addition to contacting Persia. This made Muhammad Ali Pasha impose temporary control over navigation in The Arabian Gulf and its maritime routes, and at the same time he had control over the waters of the Red Sea to the Bab Al-Mandab Strait and Aden. Thus, he achieved strategic progress when he controlled the most important sea crossings surrounding the Arabian Peninsula. Nevertheless, his control over the Levant and the Mediterranean was a motive to move towards Anatolia and what followed from the directing of his armies towards the Ottoman capital. All these matters made Muhammad Ali Pasha's political influence great at the regional and international levels, which put the Ottoman Empire in great embarrassment because of the man who was the appointed governor over its largest Arab province at the time. The Sublime Porte moved quickly against him in various directions and officially labeled him an enemy and incited the European countries against him.

This was followed by a request for assistance from those countries in an attempt to deter Muhammad Ali Pasha and destroy his great dream of establishing his own empire. This was actually achieved when the European alliance countries were able to defeat his naval fleet in a humiliating way near Greece in 1256 AH / 1840 AD, and force him to sign a treaty of surrender and withdrawal from all the areas he occupied in Turkey, the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula. He was also forced to reduce his military forces and to be isolated in the Egyptian province. Thus, the dreams of Muhammad Ali went unheeded.