

Naqabatul Ashraf Fee Biladisham Fil Asril Mamlouki the Syndicate of Sham(Syria) Land Sherrifs in the Reign of Mamluk Sultanate

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Abstract

This study focuses on the syndicate of Shamland Sherrifs during the reign of Mamluk Sultanate. It discussed and investigated the definition of Sherrifs in language and terminology. It also studied the administrative organization of the syndicate and its duties, as well as the salaries of its employees. The study focused on the interest of Mamluk Sultans of the syndicate besides the relationship between sherrifs and society as well as their role in the public activity.

The study concluded that the syndicate of Shamland sherrifs had been a part of the public and social institutions, and obtained the care of Mamluk Sultans who had honored the sherrifs by military ranks and religious and administrative positions. The sherrifs had built strong ties and relations with society individuals, where they had represented the intellect class so there had included scholars, poets, writers besides the tasks of maintaining the public order and commitment to religion instruction, and participation in the wars and defending Sultanate.

Introduction

The sherrifs of A'al Albeit had seized a high reputation in the Islamic society due to their relationship to Prophet Mohammad (pbuh). They had been under care of the state and society. To insure the care for sherrifs and protect their interests, the state had established a syndicate for them. For the importance of this syndicate as a civil organization in the Islamic society, the researcher discussed its duties during the reign of Mamluk Sultanate.

Definition of sherrifs:

1. Definition in Language:

The Sharaf (honor) is the highness and high place and mountain (Arrzai, 1993). The Sharaf is any swell of the Land that dominates its surrounding. The Sharaf is the glory, where any Shareef man is a glorious that inherited the honor from his ancestors (Ibin Manthour, 2003). The single man is Shareef while the plural is Shurafa' and Ashraf (Arrzai, 1983). The honor belongs to the free person who is a descendent from honored ancestors (Ibin Manthour, 2003). The person might be generous and reputable without being sherrif (Ibin Manthour, 2003). The scholars had said that if the mother had been a sherrif woman but her husband hadn't been a sherrif man so their son would have not been a sherrif. The generous features transit from one generation to another throughout a long time, so the long series of glorious fathers and grand fathers is essential to consider someone a sherrif (Alzubaidi, 1971).

2. Definition in Terminology:

The Ashrafs (sherrifs) are the Muslim individuals who are actually agreed upon their decendency from the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) through the marriage of his daughter Fatimah to his cousin Ali bin Abi Talib. This family had given the birth of Alhasan and Alhussein as their sons. So the descendents of both sons are still called Ashraf (Sherrifs) as Hasani or Husseini sherrifs (Alqalqashandi, 1987).

Almawardi had defined the syndicate of Ashraf as an institution devoted to the care and mainting the affairs of sherrifs, and distinct them from those who are not equal in the degree of family and reputation (Almawardi, 1989).

The Administrative Organization of sherrifs Syndicate:

The organizational chart of the Ashraf syndicate had consisted of the following members:

1. The President

The president in the language is the leader and supervisor of his groups (Ibin Manthour, 2003), and inspector because he inspects their affairs. He takes the responsibility of his group and insures their needs be met (Alzubaidi, 1971). The president is the honest and guarantor (Ibn Manthour, 2003).

The president of syndicate had to meet several requirements such as: be a scholar of religion so as his fatwas (opinion) can be considered by judges, and should be a religious with good behavior person. He should be aware of genealogy besides be characterized by integrity and chastity as well as an expert in the tasks of syndicate besides having an excellent mind (Almawardi, 1989).

The designation of the president had been normally decreed by the Caliph upon reasonable

justifications by the minister or region governor (Almawardi, 1989).

2. Deputy of President

The deputy always takes place of president in some responsibilities besides what burdens the president assigns to him. The president selects the deputy, either one of his sons or any qualified person. The deputy should meet the requirements that the president should meet (Alqalqashandi, 1987).

3. Alhajib (Office Manager)

The tasks of Alhajib had included the arranging of people who want to meet the president or deputy (Al thahabi, 1998). The Hajib should be committed to integrity, chastity, literacy upon a recommendation of Caliph who had stressed the need for a hard working, clever, honest and humble man for this position (Ibin Aljawzi, 1995).

4. The Clerk

The clerk had to be aware of the basics of writing, and characterized by honesty, integrity and chastity. The clerk task had been to implement all tasks and assignments of syndicate such as keeping records or any task the president assigns to him (Ibin Aljawzi, 1995).

5. Other positions of the syndicate had included the Sheikhs who had carried out the assistance work especially the women affairs (Ibin Alfurat, 1970), and the port keeper (Altanoukhi, 1993).

Each syndicate had a branch in all cities called "Dar Alnaqabah (office of syndicate), where the president and all staff meet and discuss the religious and jurisprudential affairs of the society (Ibin Alfurat, 1970).

Each syndicate had a court with employees as advisors, who should have been old men characterized by religiosity and knowledge to assist the president by their opinions. The president had not been able to take decisions without their consent or approval, in the social and economic problems (Ibin Alfurat, 1970; Alasfahani, 1959).

The salaries of employees had been varied upon the position. The president and other staff had been allocated salaries that cover all their needs to prevent them from delinquency and illegal practices as corruption or gifts. The Caliph had allocated funds for running the work of syndicate besides assigning a house for the president (Alqalqashandi, 1987).

Tasks of the Syndicate

The syndicate had to fulfill the following tasks:

1. Verify the claims of belongingness to the Ashraf descent. If information submitted had been approved, the council would have registered the name of person in the records, else the application would have been refused.
2. If any sherrif had been died, his name would have been deleted from records. If a sherrif had begotten a son, his name would have been registered in the records. The president should follow up the needs of sherrifs and solve their problems and arrange for their funerals (Ibin Alfurat, 1970).

Syndicate of Ashraf (sherrifs) in the Sham Land(Syria) in the reign of Mamluk Sultanate :

some groups of sherrifs had been living in the Sham land (Syria) during the reign of Mamluk Sultante, especially in Damascus and Aleppo (Alqalqashandi, 1987).

The sherrifs had been under the care of Sultans who had honored the sherrifs of Makkah and Madinah with numerous properties and feuds in Egypt and Syria as an appreciation for their highness (Iin Doqamaq, 1989). The Sultans had gifted them military ranks and religious and administrative position. They had gifted the sherrif Shamsuddin Alhussein bin Mohammad Alhalabi (died in 766 h) the position of Commander of Tabilkhanah of Aleppo (Drums warehouse). The Mamluks had established sherrif syndicates in Syrian cities especially Damascus and Aleppo (Alasqalni, 1997).

The president of sherrifs who had been assigned by the Sultan or their deputies and ministers, had worn a green head cover where the decree of assignment should be announced at the house of deputants or the mosque, as an equal position of the judge of judges (Ibin Tolon, 1973).

To distinct the sherrifs from other people, the Mamluki Sultan, Alashraf, had issued a decree in 1371 a.d that sherrif men should put green covers on the turbans while women should put a green piece of cloth on their dress (Almagreezi, 1957).

The position of president had witnessed, in the Mamluk reign, a young sherrifs who had become presidents. It had been a result of hereditary act as a succession for the fathers or brothers, for the young men had experienced the work since early years of age. The sherrif, Ja'afar bin Mohammad bin Adnan, had been assigned the position of president as successive to his father in 741 h., despite his very young age (alasalani, 1997).

The sherrif president, like other state officers, had the opportunity to seize more than one position in addition to his original position. For example the president Hussein bin Mohammad bin Ali bin Zahra (died in 732 h) had also been the head of hospital in Aleppo. The president Mohammad bin Alhasan bin Ali bin Zahra (died 733 h) had been the secretary for treasury in Aleppo (Alasqalani, 1997). Ali bin Hamzah bin Ali bin

Alhusein bin Zahra (died 755 h) had been the secretary for treasury in Aleppo (Alasqalani, 1997). Ahmad bin Mohammad bin Ahmad bin Ali Alhuseini (died in 778 h) had been the scriptor of establishing the public kitchen in Aleppo (Ibin Taghribordi, 1993). In 827 h, the president Shahabuddin bin Ahmad had been assigned the position of supreme judge in Damascus (Almaqreezi, 1997). The president Ali bin Ibrahim bin Adnan Alhuseini had got the position of Damascus Secretariat (Asqalani, 1988).

The president Shahabuddin Ahmed bin Adnan had been assigned the position of army supervisor in 831 h. Other presidents had been assigned several positions such as the Mohtasib or the accountability comptroller like Burhanuddin Ibrahim bin Adnan bin Ja'afar bin Mohammad bin Adnan Alhuseini, who had been the Mohtasib of Damasques in 797 h.

The position of Castle Leader had been assigned to Ibrahim bin Mohammad in 875 h, who had been a president in Damascus (Almaqreezi, 1997). The position of courts principal, had been assigned to the president Amenuddin Ja'afar bin Mohammad bin Mohiddin Adnan in Damascus in 711 h. (Ibin Katheer, 1987).

In Mamluk reign, the sherrifs had been under the care of i the inhabitants through help and assistance to solve their problems or protect them from any aggression (Ibin Tolon, 1973). The people had considered them prominent persons in the cities they live in (Ibin Taghribardi, 1993). The people had listned and obeyed them (Alasqalani, 1988).

As an evidence of the strong relationship between sherrifs and people they had fought corruption and banned the prohibited items (Ibin Tolon, 1973). At war time, the sherrifs had been ready to participate in fighting the enemies ,as what had happened in 699 h, when the sherrif President of Damascus had demonstrated his soldiers in a military parade as a preparation to defend the aggression of Ghazan on Damasqus (Ibin Tolon, 1973).

The sherrifs had represented the literate class in the society in the Mamluki reign, where there had been many sherrif scholars, poets, and writers who had surpassed the people at their time, such as:

1. sherrif Sharafuddin Abu Abdullah bin Mohammad bin Radhwan bin Ali bin Abi Almudhaffar bin Abil Atahiyah, known as the Writer sherrif, (died in 671 h) in Damascus, who had contributed to many parts of knowledge especially poetry and prose (Ibin Taghribardi, 1992).
2. Ahmad binAhmad bin Mohammad bin Ahmad Alhuseini Alhalabi, Abu J'afar Izziddin ,the sherrif president in Aleppo. He had been born in 741 H and focused on writing and poetry so he had become a prominent person there. He had been died in 803 b. (alasalani, 1978).
3. Shamsuddin Ali bin Mohammad Alhuseini (died in 819 H), who had been a clever memorizing Quran while he had been a child and recited it to become the Sheikh of reciters (Alhanbali, 1982).
4. Women had been under care of Sultante through education where some sherrif female scholars had been prominent like Fatimah bint Ahmad bin Mohammad bin Ali bin Mohammad bin Ali Alhuseini who died in (813 h) at the age of 80 (Alhanbali, 1982).

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