

**Damascus daily economic incidents in the eighteenth-  
century**

**Written by Al-Hallaq Al-Budairi**

Prof. Dr. Moustafa El-Abdallah Al-Kafry

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## **Damascus daily economic incidents in the eighteenth-century**

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The (Damascus Levant Daily Incidents), which was recorded by Shihab al-Din Ahmed bin Badir al-Budairi, famous for the barber, during the period 1154-1176 AH included oddities, wonders and horrors. Peels from these accidents and put the pulp, and refine it according to what is possible in the right way. <sup>1</sup>

### **Topics of daily incidents in Damascus:**

The incidents gained their importance from being a spontaneous and honest picture of the era in which Al-Budairi lived, from the political, social, economic, administrative and security aspects. The daily events in Damascus, which Al-Hallaq recorded, revolved around the following topics:

- News of Damascus Pashas, office holders, and governors, and this news took up most of the pages of the diaries.
- News of the sedition carried out by the Ottoman military in the Levant and its repercussions on the security and livelihood of the people.
- News of Hajj processions and people's interests in them, pilgrims' farewell and reception ceremonies, and news of religious events.
- News of the economic and living situation in the country, the prices of food supplies in the event of shortages and high prices, and what the people suffer from fatigue and distress, which is reflected in their social condition.

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<sup>1</sup> - Ahmed Al-Budairi, Daily Incidents of Damascus, Edited and Published by Ezzat Abdel Karim (Publications of the Egyptian Society for Historical Studies.



It was stored in his memory and recorded by his pen in addition to the narrations of his many customers who belonged to different groups of the people, and they told him their daily living and security concerns, in an era dominated by the strife, rebellion and tyranny of the Ottoman military. He used to stand on what is happening throughout Damascus in terms of accidents, joys, tragedies, seasons and holidays.

#### Diary of the daily events of Damascus by Al-Badiri:

Al-Budairi said what it means: In (the year 1155) the price increased in all things, especially food, with the presence of shackles and other things. A pound of Shami meat is sold for thirty Egyptian pounds, a pound of sheep meat with a penny and a quarter, eggs every two in Egyptian pounds, ghee a pound and two times for a penny, garlic a pound for thirty Egyptian pounds, and a pound of bread with four tubes and five tubes and more. Before Ramadan, zucchini was every hundred in an Egyptian, and when Ramadan came, it became five and four in an Egyptian, and eggplant every two pounds in an Egyptian, so every pound became in two Egyptian, and meat was nothing, and all of this is from the lack of inspection of the rulers).<sup>4</sup>

On the twenty-third day of Shawwal in the year 1156 of this year, Salkhur came from the side of the Sultan, and collected the money of Suleiman Pasha, which amounted to twelve thousand bags. , with the inspection in their pockets and their burdens, and sealed all the halls of the house, and ordered the arrest of the cousin of the late Suleiman Pasha, who is Mr. Muhammad, and another group with him, and ordered a severe demarcation on them, and asked about Muhammad Agha Al-Diri, an agent who went out Suleiman Pasha, they told him that he had gone With Asaad Pasha

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<sup>4</sup> - Al-Budairi, the previous source.

to the pilgrimage, he ordered to bring him, so they brought him, and ordered the demarcation of it.

The historian Al-Budairi said: (Then Al-Salkhor brought the judge and notables, and brought the sanctuary of Suleiman Al-Pasha, and brought the executioner and the instrument of torture, and stressed the harem by request, and that they inform him about the money where it was hidden. Those who lived in the Saraya, and they were Christians, and the teacher was a Christian called Ibn Siaj, so he ordered Al-Qubji to torture them and cut off their heads and hands. In a drawer, a wide place appeared with a locked chest on it, and there were galleries and locks on it, so they took it out and opened it, and they saw it full of dirhams and riyals. Then the Christians took them out to a room, and dug in its circles, and there were seven sandstones filled with the beloved Sultanate gold. Then they attacked him and seized him, and found him eight hundred and fifty bags. When the people reached what he had of this money, and it was in the days of extreme high prices, despite the bad situation, they uttered slander and abuse, and said that women, men, beasts and children had starved until he collected this money from the owners of the families God did not watch over the majesty.)<sup>5</sup>

On the fourteenth day of the month of Ramadan in the year 1157 of this year, Fathi Effendi Al-Daftardar came from Istanbul and entered Syria with joy and happiness, and he did not suffer the slightest grievance, and the reason for this was the money spent in Istanbul with which the hearts of men tended. He was affiliated with Al-Qidlar and a group of senior heads of state. It was said that he entered Istanbul secretly and separated the money secretly and publicly, and the Sultan had requested him, so they dressed a man

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<sup>5</sup> - The events of the year 1155, the book "Damascus Daily Accidents", Shihab al-Din Ahmed bin Badir al-Budairi, famous as the barber.

in his uniform, and brought him to the king, so he spoke to him and what happened to him. And he had been ordered to do so by whoever brought him in, and he immediately ordered his killing, and he was killed, thinking that he was Fathi Effendi Al-Daftardar. Then they ordered Fathi to go to Syria at night. At the end of Dhul-Hijjah, the money that was hit like this was invalidated.

In the year 1158 prices increased and matters of foolishness and wickedness became great:

In the year 1158, prices increased, the rains decreased, and the affairs of foolishness and wickedness became great, until a pound of cheese became half a piaster, an egg in Egypt, an ounce of serge reached half a third, and barley was extended by half a piaster, chickpeas were extended by half a piaster, lentils were supplied with half a piaster, and wheat flour was forty-five piasters, after it was five. Twenty gr., and an ounce of tahini with four drains, and molasses every three pounds for a penny, and a pound of honey for a penny and a quarter, and everything rose for its price above the norm, until the supply of salt became half a penny.

On a Sunday after the afternoon of Jumada al-Thani 15, 1159, a defender struck, (I asked the people about the news, and it was said: Saad Eddin Pasha is the brother of Asaad Pasha, the rank of minister came to him, and Toukh came to him. Fathi Effendi, al-Daftdar al-Sham, and when the Pasha saw him, he got up and entered the vestibule of the treasury, followed him and sat beside him, and Asaad Pasha took out a picture of a display and showed him to him, so Fathi Effendi took it and read it, and if the order was to kill him. I am in your neighborhood, so take as much money as you want and let me go, so the Pasha said to him: Woe to you, traitor, I have not forgotten what you did with my uncle's wives. Then he ordered to raise his screen and cut off his head. The minister seized his inheritance and the money of all his followers for the lofty state, so

it amounted to a great deal, and the rest dispersed as if they were not, and a state passed away as if it were a phantom of imagination.

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On the day of Monday, the fifth of Muharram in the year 1160, corresponding to the first of January, the water increased due to a great torrent, and it entered the Levant at midnight, and there was a flood unheard of since ancient times. And he destroyed countless many wealth, until the meadow became like the sea, yet the water snatches the birds, and it has rumblings and rumblings and roaring. This increase covered the stone of the history of the castle, passed through the markets and the houses and brought out something that was not confined, and it became under the castle and in the climate, the height of the person's height.

The historian Al-Budairi said: (I entered Al-Manakhliya coffeehouse after the water had left, and found the water on the top of its terraces, higher than an arm's length. Countless many, and I left them with nothing. <sup>7</sup>

In the year 1164, the governor of Levant, Asaad Pasha, imposed on the leaders, dignitaries and merchants to come to him from the city of Hama with wheat:

In the year 1164, the governor of Syria, Asaad Pasha, imposed on the chiefs, dignitaries and merchants to bring him wheat from the city of Hama, and his wages would be from them, so some of them went and brought a lot of wheat.

In the year 1166, Hazrat Asaad Pasha began building the Caesarea in Al-Buzuriya, which was distinguished by its counterpart in this world, after demolishing two Caesarea, houses and shops, and

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<sup>6</sup> - The events of the year 1159, the book "Damascus Daily Accidents", Shihab al-Din Ahmad bin Badir al-Budairi, famous as al-Hallaq.

<sup>7</sup> - The events of the year 1160, the book "Damascus Daily Accidents", Shihab al-Din Ahmad bin Badir al-Budairi, famous as al-Hallaq.

making it one Caesarea with an unparalleled quality. In the year 1173, the construction of the Umayyad Mosque began after the earthquake. Architects, carpenters, painters, and stonemasons entered it. They worked hard to rebuild the dome, the eastern side, and what fell from the minarets, and to improve all of them. It is only opened during prayer time. Architecture is also working on the castle and its restoration. The castle was built in the month of Rajab, the year of its history. The Umayyad Mosque, the northern side and the dome were reconstructed, and the minarets were restored and improved in the month of Ramadan of this year.

In those days, the news came to Damascus, the Levant, that Saad al-Din Pasha ibn al-Azm died in Diyarbakir, and the order came to seize his money, so the state seized his money and seized his money. [The book "Damascus Daily Incidents" is full of news:](#)

(The book “Damascus Daily Incidents” is full of news collected by Ahmad Al-Budairi Al-Hallaq during the period in which he was recording his incidents, which lasted twenty-one years... The author almost confined his interest to recording what is happening in Damascus alone, from the assumption of the pashas and senior officials, He dismissed them and confiscated their money, such as al-Mustamlim, i.e. the Pasha’s delegate to administer the state during his absence, and al-Daftdar i.e. the supervisor of financial accounts, the judge, the mufti, and the Aghas of the military, and this is a military rank. The rise of prices, security disturbances, corruption of morals, the spread of diseases, the invasion of locusts... and the occurrence of natural phenomena such as strong winds, eclipses, eclipses, floods and earthquakes).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> - <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6715509>



Al-Budairi wrote in (Damascus Al-Sham Daily Incidents) what happened in Damascus during twenty-one years of the eighteenth century:

The book (Damascus Al-Sham Daily Incidents), in which Al-Budairi Al-Hallaq recorded what happened in Damascus during twenty-one years of that century (1741-1762 AD).

Al-Budairi did not intend to write a history of Damascus, the Levant, for such a great work was beyond what a man's culture could bear, rather it was beyond the realization of most scholars of that time. He was motivated to do so by simply wanting to record for fear of forgetting, or a hobby of writing and expressing his feelings and venting his feelings and recording his opinion of people and accidents, or the desire to benefit those who come after him.

All these views and audio agitated the feelings of Al-Budairi Al-Hallaq, so he began recording them after his maturity, with the spontaneity of the popular blogger, over twenty years in pages known after they appeared as "Damascus Daily Incidents, Memoirs of Al-Budairi Al-Hallaq. In such a backward intellectual climate and a deteriorating social situation... the logical trial becomes crippled and the mind becomes ready to accept and believe rumors... without thinking about them and sifting them.

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- The events of the year 1159, the book "Damascus Daily Accidents", Shihab al-Din Ahmad bin Badir al-Budairi, famous as al-Hallaq.

- The events of the year 1160, the book "Damascus Daily Accidents", Shihab al-Din Ahmad bin Badir al-Budairi, famous as al-Hallaq.

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