
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Epidemics and Natural Disasters Through Yahya Bin Said Al-Antaki's Book (458H./ 1067 A.D.) History of Al-Antaki "Known as the Connection to the History of Otikha"

Prof. Dr. Adnan Abdullah Obeidat

Department of History, Faculty of Arts and Science, The World Islamic Sciences and Education University, Amman- Jordan

Corresponding Author: Prof. Dr. Adnan Abdullah Obeidat, **E-mail:** adnan_obeidat2002@yahoo.com

| ABSTRACT

This study seeks to shed light on epidemics and natural disasters which were discussed by Al-Antaki in his Book History of Al-Antaki, and what accompanied these diseases and disasters of social phenomena in the Islamic Society, and effects of political factors in spread of many diseases, especially the period in which Al-Antaki lived, witnessed several political incidents reflected on the social side. And the study showed poverty in rise of basic goods prices and spread of epidemics, that undoubtedly led to change in the demographics of the regions in which epidemics were spreading due to the many deaths or population migration to safe areas. The study also discussed numerous natural disasters, especially earthquakes and what resulted from them of social and economic effects, this in addition to disasters caused by the Nile River flood in Egypt in varying periods.

| KEYWORDS

Al-Antaki, Epidemics, Natural Disasters, Earthquakes

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

The history of Al-Antaki chronicles an important historical era in Islamic History and the History of Byzantine Empire in the two Hijri Centuries, Fourth and Fifth/ 10th and 11th. A.D., exactly beginning from the 326-425H./ 938- 1035 A.D., this book is a complement to Ibn Al-Bitreeq Book completed in the year 326H./938A.D. Therefore, it was known as connection to History of Otikha. The significance of the book comes from that the historian witnessed many incidents that he chronicled. Al-Antaki had discussed many political and social incidents, news of Caliphs, Kings, ministers, writers, princes and military leaders, and the significance of the book comes from the discussion of the history of the Islamic World in the Islamic East and West; from the news of the Abbasside State, the Fatimian, the Hamadanian, and El-Ikh Sheedian (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 75, 46), and the Saljuki State⁽¹⁾ and news of Bani Bowaih⁽²⁾ (Al-Antaki, P. 52, 1990), and the relationship of Christian with Muslims and new of Byzantine Empire (Al-Antaki, P. 49, 1990), and its relationship with Muslims either in period of war or peace. Also, the Book discussed earthquakes, natural disasters and diseases between its folds, and what resulted from that of economic and social effects, such as height of goods prices and diseases spread (Al-Antaki, P. 33, 1990).

Al-Antaki followed the style of public history and history of the Annals in talking about incidents that happened in group in one year, so incidents are followed across years and through independent titles, but in the same time lays titles to the beginning of Caliphs getting power, then starts serially through years (Al-Antaki, P. 33, 46, 1990). Sometimes at talking about

⁽¹⁾ The Sajuk State, Led by Tughrul, took control on Baghdad after the end of the Buyid influence, and killed the last King "Al-Raheem" in 441H./ 1055A.D) about Saljuk entering Baghdad, see (Al-Bindari, 199. P. 10 and after).

⁽²⁾ Buyids origin from Daflam country, they are Shiat Zaidiya got control on several countries as the Islamic East, then entered Baghdad in 334H./ 946 A.D. the monopolized power after completing the Abbasside Caliph and participated him in many of Caliphate's fees, The Buyid period ended by coming of Seljuk in 497H./1055 A.D for more, see (Mukhweih, 2003, pt. 51 P. 275 and after).

Al-Fatimeyah State, for chronicles to this state entitled "History of the Fatimeyah State, and discusses Al-Fatimeyah call until the Caliph Obeid Allah Al-Mahdi's Death in 322H./ 933A.D., without being crossed by other incidents (Al-Antaki, P. 59).

It appears that Al-Antaki lived a long period in Egypt and witnessed the history of Al-Fatimeyah State and its government in Egypt. Al-Antaki sometimes gets away of years consequence, for example talks about incidents of 377H./ 987A.D, then completes talk about the conflict between sons of A'dod Al-Dawlah (372H./982A.D.)⁽³⁾.

Al-Antaki commenced his book at the point Ibn Al-Bitreeq finished in the fifth year of Al-RRadi Caliphate in 326H./ 938A.D., after discussing the conflict between the Turkish leaders, he ended by the death of Al-RRadi in 329H./940A.D, and mentioned that he died on dropsy (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 31).

2. Epidemics and Disasters in Egypt and the Islamic West:

Al-Antaki mentions that in 329H./ 842A.D. disease-spread in Egypt, as a result of hunger that caught people, because of shortage in basic commodities like wheat and grains, the thing that led to increase of prices and inability of the public to buy, and because of its severity, Al-Antaki calls it the "great epidemic" (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 33). Such scenes repeated in 353-357H./ 964-967A.D., but its severity was in 357H./ 967A.D., until a great number of weak people died after the height of prices of grains, to a degree people ate the dead animals and carcasses, the thing that led to spread of great epidemic, in it there was a lot of death, people were buried without washing or prayer, effects of this epidemic continued until the year 321H./ 971 A.D., Al-Antaki mentions that the cause of that was the shortage in the Nile water (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 122). And thus was the State in 372H./982 A.D., because of cessation of the Nile River that led to increase of prices, Al-Antaki mentions that a "great epidemic" accompanied that, until "a great number of people" died in it, and as his custom Al-Antaki does not give numbers of dead people after every epidemic, but through his expression shows the extent of diseases and epidemics effect at the population ratio (Al-Antaki, 1990, P.P. 201, 202). This scene had been repeated in 398H./1007A.D., till people ate dogs and dead animals, and diseases and epidemics spread among people, this state continued in Egypt till the year 399H./ 1008A.D. (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 278).

And what made the situation worse in Egypt was shortage of water of the Nile in the year 397H./1006A.D. led to lack of food and supplies accompanied by spread of diseases, Al-Antaki described it "severe diseases and epidemics caught people", led to death of many people of the population of Egypt (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 275).

And Al-Antaki talks in incidents of 398H./ 1007A.D., to what Egypt was exposed of natural disasters, but this once the happening of floods as a result of heavy rain and pelting of hail, led to flowing of big floods swept away more than three hundred houses in Cairo, and a great number of people died under the rubble, and big parts of the Caliphate Palace were collapsed (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 276).

Many people believed that what happened of disasters, as a result of increase or decrease of the Nile water, is a Divine punishment because of many sins, and this appeared clearly in 408H./1017A.D. when floods covered the streets and markets of Cairo as a result of the Nile water increase, and destroyed many markets and collapsed houses, cut trees, until a great damage took place in Cairo (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 341), Al-Magreezi discussed these floods and what they caused of damage in Cairo in incidents of 406H./1015A.D. (Al-Magreezi, 1996, P.2, P.112).

No doubt that disease spread among members of the army was a cause of the defeat of Obeid Allah Al-Mahdi led by his son Al-Qa'min 307H./ 919A.D., when he intended to invade Egypt and got control on it, when the Abbaside Caliph Al-Mogtader Billah Mo'nis the servant⁽⁴⁾. He achieved victory on Al-Fatimi Army "disaster took place in Al-Ga'm Army and high cost spread and many of them and horses died" (Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt. 6, P. 659, Al-Thahabi, 2003, pt. 7, P. 685).

Also a severe disaster spread in Morocco country in 395H./ 100A.D., that is because of the high cost that caught the country, till Al-Antaki calls it "The Great High Cost" that led to bread shortage, until it was lost in Barqa city (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 262). That had coincided with the arrival of Al-Walid Bin Hisham from Andalusia (Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt. 7, P. 549) in (397H./ 1006A.D.) to fight the leader Bi Amre Allah (412H./ 1021) Al-Fatimi supporting the Companions, and out of resentment for the curse that the ruler ordered them to be subjected to by the command of God, Al-Walid Bin Hisham met the Berbers and asked them to support the religion of God and Islam, reached Barqa city and defeated the army sent by Al-Hakem Bi Amerallah to meet him, Al-Walid was called Emir of Believers, annoucity the establish of the Sunni Sect, "he struck the coin in his name and made the call for himself, and the Egyptians nick-named him Abu Rakwa", during this year shortage in food took place, wars and fighting had a great role in diseases spread, as a result of that, the great disaster happened in Barqa so Al-Walid Bin Hisham marshed by his army to Alexandria (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 226), when Al-Hakem Bi Amerallah was informed with the news of Al-Walid's coming to Egypt, he was afraid of him and sent an army from Tamimeyeen Arabs and called in three from sons of Al-Mofarej Bin Daghfal Bin Al-Jarrah, but Al-Walid's army defeated them, and marched with his army to Al-Fayyom and caught it, then proceeded towards Al-Jeezah after he had defeated the army of Al-Hakim Bi Amerillah he sent led by Ali Bin Falah (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 265), and as a result of what Al-Walid Bin Hisham achieved of victories, organized

⁽³⁾ Got power on Baghdad after his cousin's defeat I'z Al-Dawlah, he expanded in Karmen & Persia, Al-Rothriwri the first called "King" sine loco, P. 30, and after.

⁽⁴⁾ He led Damascus in Caliph Al-Mugtader's reign, made a military coup on Al-Mugtader and fought him and killed him Cairo in 331H./933, see (Al-Thahabi, 1984, pt. 11, P. 375).

armies led by one of Al-Hakim Bi Amerillah, Al-Fadel Bin Saleh marched to Al-fayyom and met Al-Walid Bin Hisham's army and the Egyptian armies a great victory on Al-Walid's army near Al-Fayyom, a great number of Berbers was killed and the rest was caught by small pox and the epidemic, those who stayed in Barqa starved severely till most of died to an extent Al-Antaki mentions that they ate each other, but Al-Walid Bin Hisham and companions of Arabs fled, until he was ceased and killed in 397H./ 1006A.D. (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 267).

Egypt was also exposed to happening of many earthquakes, of them happened in 940H./951A.D., this earthquake led to houses collapse and splitting of the lighthouse of Alexandria, and death of great numbers of Egypt's population, and accompanied that earthquake exploding many of water springs (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 80), this scene was repeated in Egypt in 352H./ 963A.D., so the people got out to pray and supplicate God (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 103).

Al-Antaki talked about what happened in Egypt of the city blackening in 379H./ 989A.D., and red sky as a result of dust that affected the respiratory system (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 217). And the era of Al-Hakem Bi Amerillah Al-Fatimi natural disasters were repeated in Egypt, in 396H./1005 A.D. a violent wind unaccused before by Egyptians happened, till people began to ask help from God as consequence of violent redness that accompanied that, described by Al-Antaki, as "the raging fire" (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 262), especially a violent thunder accompanied that led to falling of "big hail" with the pebble size have not been seen before in Egypt (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 263). After a month of this scene a great planet appeared in Egypt's sky "and was fighting in nights without the moon giving light like the moon", reflected by the ray shed by it and such a planet appeared in the west till "it belonged and greatedened" (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 2263).

2.1 Epidemics and Disasters in Iraq and Levant:

It seems that there is shortage of basic supplies not limited to Egypt, but extended to Iraq, in the same year the Caliph Al-Mutqi Lellah caught Caliphate in (329-333H./ 940-944) in 329H./ 940A.D. high cost spread to an extent that people had eaten bran and grass, and diseases and mass death spread and every group was buried in one grave without Al-Antaki specify the cause that led to shortage of goods, and appears that political instability was behind that (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 33), Maskaweih discussed what happened in Baghdad in this year of high costs that led to spread of poverty and diseases, Maskaweih the people situation during this year "in it high cost increased in Baghdad and karaf four amounted to (130) dinars and people ate grass and death was abundant till a group is buried in one grave without wash or prayer (Maskaweih, 2003, pt. 6, P.38) , this scene was repeated in Baghdad in 331H./942A.D., for Al-Sooli, mentions that "prices increased in this year greatly, and people died from hunger, epidemic caught them, they stayed on the way days without burying till dogs ate some of them" (Al-Sooli, 1993, P. 83).

And at the beginning of the coming of Muiz Al-Dawla to Baghdad and the beginning of the Buyid Rule in the year 334H./945A.D. Al-Antaki mentions scenes of disease and death states that spread during that year as a result of goods high cost and unavailability of the basic needs, till diseases spread, they never had been in Baghdad's people, like their entrails swelled and their bodies became swollen, leading to death of many people in Baghdad, and many of the rest were dead, and many of diseases spread as a result of the rotten dead bodies, Al-Antaki mentions that many dead bodies were not buried for their abundance, so that many people went out to Al-Basrah searching food, but they died in the way (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 55, Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt 7, P. 170).

Ibn Al-Athir mentions that because of what the population greatly suffers from hunger, real estate and houses were sold for bread (Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt. 7, P. 170), and Al-Antaki mentioned scenes off the familiar framework at the humans, he mentions that a woman had roasted a child and ate some of it, she was ceased and got her neck cut, this state was not the mere one, this scene had been repeated more than once during that year, and this gives us an idea about the extent of worse situations (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 56, Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt. 7, P. 170). Not doubt that effects of diseases spread were not economic and healthy only, but naturally affects the demographic of the population of Baghdad, especially that Al-Antaki called it "the great annihilation", for greatness of its effect and what it causes of the death of great numbers of the city inhabitants, without giving estimations or numbers about numbers of dead people (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 56). And in the Buyid era Baghdad was at a promise with the happening of many disasters and diseases, some of their what Maskaweih mentioned in incidents of 346/347H.-957/958A.D. "earthquakes were abundant in Baghdad, Helwan and the mountain countries and its great importance in particular, so it damaged the buildings and killed the people (Maskaweih, 2003, pt. 6, P. 206), and in 367H./1986A.D., when A'dod Al-Dawla got power after his victory on his cousin I'z Al-Dawla (356-367H./ 966-986A.D.)⁽⁵⁾. Baghdad was at a promise with the happening of many disasters, earthquakes and diseases, Ibn Kathir is solely talks about it, and mentions that Baghdad was exposed to many earthquakes during this year, in addition to Plague that caught them and led to minority of Baghdad population (Ibn Katheer, 1988, pt. 11, P. 328).

At Thahabi mentions that in the year 376H./986A.D., severe diseases spread in Baghdad, death was abundant, and Al-Mousel was exposed to earthquakes in the same year, led to collapse many houses, and death of many people, without

⁽⁵⁾ Got power in Iraq after the death of his father, Mu'z Al-Dawla, he did not empower and keep the government, because of the Turks revolts, his cousin killed him (A'dod Al-Dawla), in 367H./ 986A.D., see: (Al-Thahabi, 1984, pt. 12, P. 277).

giving any estimations about numbers of houses that collapsed, or numbers of dead people (Al-Thahabi, 2003, pt.8, P. 349), Ibn Taghri Bardi individualized talk about spread of plague in Basra, without any details, and summed it up by saying: "and in it was great plague in Basra" (Ibn Taghri Bardi, pt. 4, P. 240). And also what happened in the year 423H./1031A.D. of the plague spread in many of the east countries, that stretched to Iraq, without Al-Antaki mentioning any information about this plague (Ibn Taghri Bardi, pt. 4, P. 277). But Al-Sooli mentions this plague in incidents of 423H./ 1032A.D., "bread and flour were scarce, they were not available in Baghdad for days, and a great plague caught people they were annulated in Baghdad and else (Al-Sooli, 1933, P. 83).

And in the year 425H./1033A.D. Baghdad was exposed to conditions of death as a result of diseases spread and death was abundant in Al-Khawareg in Baghdad and Al-Mousel, the most of it caught women, the news contacted what was in Persia of the epidemic, till houses were closed on their owners (Al-Thahabi, 2003, pt. 9, p. 350).

And no doubt the spread of high cost was also a cause of preventing the army from continuing facing the Byzantines, in 353H./964A.D. the army headed by one of Khurasan men returned to meet with Sayf Al-Dawla Al-Hamadani (356H./ 966A.D.) (Al-Thahabi, 1984, pt. 12, P. 247) to meet the Romans in Al-Maseesah, as the Khurasani army dispersed as a result of the high cost of living spread in the borders and Aleppo (Al-Antaki, 1990, p. 105), and inspite of Al-Antaki did not talk about effect of high cost on inhabitants, and what caused diseases spread, Ibn Al-Athir gives up a clear picture of incidents about this plague 354H./ 965A.D., and what caused of Romans control on Tartus and Al-Maseesah, in this year Nagfor invaded Levant and stayed in Qisaria, and sent to Tartus and Al-Maseesah to pay the royalty, he was informed that it caught the inhabitants by the epidemics, after the high cost was violent on them, also they ate dogs and the dead animals, the epidemic was abundant in them till 300 people of them died in a day...", after the army had returned to the worse conditions, Naghfoor himself intended to lead the army "and marched to Al-Maseesah, besieged it and conquered it by force" (Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt. 7, P. 254). And Ibn Al-A'deem pointed to these incidents and mentioned that congregations of Al-Khurasani because of the violence of high cost in this year in Aleppo and borders, high cost and epidemic greatened in Al-Maseesah and Tartus till they ate dead animals, and Nagfor returned to Al-Maseesah and conquered it by sword in Rajab of the year 354H. (Ibn Al-A'deem, 1996, P. 83), and Ibn Katheer mentioned these incidents in accidents of 353H./964A.D., and mentioned that he was with Nagfor Al-Amostog King of Armans, without giving details about the epidemic (Ibn Katheer, 1988, pt. 11, P. 286).

Al-Amostog's participation came as an effect of the defeat that caught him in 349H./953A.D., when Sayf Al-Dawla Al-Hamadani got victory on him, and captived many of Al-Amostog's companions, Qustantin Ibn Gud was killed in this battle, then Al-Amostog returned again in the same year, but victory was to Syf Al-Dawla, and in the same year people caught many diseases, Fever and sore in the throat (Ibn Katheer, 1988, pt. 11, P. 258).

Also high cost spread in Antioch in 350H./ 960A.D., till bread decreased, that led a great number of inhabitants to transfer to Al-Ramla and Damascus, Maskaweih estimates the number of immigrants to fifty thousand "the news was provided that high cost increased in Antioch and all borders till nobody get bread and people ate the plants and grass, and some people transferred to Al-Ramla and Damascus, and else about fifty thousand people escaping from high prices" (Maskaweih, 2003, pt. 6, P.243).

As a result of high cost of living that happened in the island and Levantine borders in 424H./1032A.D. many people died as a result of hunger and diseases, and many of them left their homes searching for a better place (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 488).

Levant was not far from happening abundant earthquakes; so in 360H./ 970 A.D., an earthquake took place in Antioch city and led to falling a big part of the city wall (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 146), but Ibn Taghri Bardi mentions that in incidents of 362H./ 972 A.D. (Ibn Taghri Bardi, pt. 4, P. 66), this happened in the year in which Al-Hassan Al-A'sam Al-Qurmoti went to face Mohammad Bin Falah who was sent by Jawhar Al-Sigilli to Levant to dominate Damascus (Al-Antaki, 1990, P.146). Then the earthquakes scene repeated in Levant in 381H./991A.D., but this time is in the city of Damascus and its provinces and the city of Baalbek, and for the violence of the earthquake Al-Antaki mentions that about a thousand houses were destroyed, this is an evidence to strength of the earthquake, and naturally the number of dead people was great, for (Al-Antaki mentions that "great number of people died under the rubble", and those who stayed quick on earth from the city transferred to the desert to live in tents, because of consequences of earthquakes in the city seeking salvation and the peaceful place (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 220). And Ibn Taghri Bardi mentions that in the year 393H./1002A.D. "Levant, capitals and borders were quaked till many people died under the rubble" (Ibn Taghri Bard, pt. 4, P. 207).

And from the most famous natural disasters to which Levant was exposed, especially Jerusalem City and surroundings, the earthquake that occurred in 425H./1033A.D., it is the year in which Al-Fatimi Caliph Al-Thaher to honor the religion of God (411-427H./ 1020-1035A.D.) by building the wall of Jerusalem, after completing the wall of Al-Ramla city, Al-Antaki mentions that occurred a horrible earthquake in the country never seen such one before, Al-Antaki discusses the consequences caused by this earthquake, it was a devastating earthquake, more than half of Al-Ramla houses were destroyed, in addition to its wall built by Al-Thaher, in addition to effects that led to the death of great numbers of the city inhabitants. "a great number of people passed away estimated greatly", the matter was not confined to Al-Ramla, but touched the city of Jericho, destruction occurred there, difficult to describe "The city was overturned on its household", also the city

of Nablus was exposed to effects of the earthquake and damages and a great piece of the Mosque of Bayt Al-Maqdes was fallen, cities of the Palestinian Coast were exposed to damage, especially Acre City, till the water of the sea absented in its port and returned to its state after horror of the people because of the horror of what they have seen (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 439).

It seems that the picture became more clear about the effects of the earthquake to the historians who came after Al-Antaki, Ibn Al-Jawzi discussed what happened in Palestine in detail, and adds to Al-Antaki by mentioning the number of homes that collapsed by the earthquake, and mentions the number of people who died, Ibn Al-Jawzi says: "in Al-Ramlah was an earthquake, people got out of it with their children, household and servants to the upper part of the town and stayed eight days as the earthquake destroyed one-third of that town, cut the great Mosque utterly and killed some of the people, and extended to Nablus, half of its buildings collapsed and three hundred people died, a surrounding village was overturned, it was deepened with its people and livestock and other village destroyed, some of the wall of Bayt Al-Maqdes was fallen and a great piece of Mihrab of David fell down and from Mosque of Ibrahim "Peace be upon him", but the room was safe, the Minaret of Al-Jami' Mosque fell down in A'sqalan and Gaza head of the Minaret (Ibn Al-Jawzi, 1992, pt. 15, PP. 239, 240). Ibn Al-Athir mentioned this earthquake in the incidents of 425H./ 1033A.D. and mentioned that the most affected zone was the city of Al-Ramla, after more than one-third of houses were collapsed (Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt.7, P.765, Al-I'leimi, 1999, pt. 1, P. 304), that agrees with what Al-Thahabi mentioned "there was an earthquake in Al-Ramla, people went out of it to the country-side they lived there eight month, earthquake destroyed third of the town, extended to Nablus, some its building fell down, three hundred of the people died, a village was wrecked, and some of the wall of Bayt Al-Maqdes fell down, A'sqalan Minaret and Gaza had fallen (Al-Thahabi, 2003, pt. 9, P. 350). While Ibn A-I'mad agrees with Al-Lateki and mentions that half of Al-Ramla collapsed and whole of villages were wrecked (Ibn Al-I'mad, 1986, pt. 5, P. 121).

But the city of Naseebain was not safe from happening some of natural disasters that caused a great devastation, Ibn Al-Jawzi says: that "A black wind blew through Naseebain and uprooted from its orchards more than two hundred trunks of mulberries, grapes, and nuts, and flattened them to the ground, and there was a palace built with Bajru and Hijara and limestone in some orchards, it threw it away, after that it rained accompanied by hail in the form of palms, forearms, and fingers, a news was provided that the sea in those coasts is about three leagues wide, and people went out to what appeared of land seeking fish and shells, water came and took people of them" (Ibn Al-Jawzi, 1992, p. 15, P.239, Al-Khaldi, 2005, P.73).

Al-Antaki discussed fire disasters occurred in Levant, and some occurred in Afamio Castle⁽⁶⁾ in 387H./997A.D. and led to burn all foods in it, Abul Fadel Bin Saad Al-Dawla, governor of Aleppo exploited that, and Lo'la' marched in an army to Afamia to rid it from the Moroccans, but it fell under the control of Antioch emir, until Al-Hakem Bi Amerllah Al-Fatimi sent an army could achieve victory and the Romans and entering Afamia (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 2, 242).

3. Impact of the epidemics and natural diseases on the social conditions and demographics:

The appearance of diseases, epidemics and natural disasters in the years that Al-Antaki mentioned, and the sequence of their appearance, especially in the main cities which naturally be more crowded with inhabitants, they had clear social effect, reflected on the demographics exposed to those disasters and diseases, especially that it led to the death of great numbers of the population, inspite of that Al-Antaki does not give clear numbers about the extent of effects that caught the population and cities, but what the late Glansi mentioned about Al-Antaki, gives a clear picture about the effect of those disasters and diseases on the ratio of population, the Galansi describes the epidemic spread in Egypt in 505H./111A.D. the excessive epidemic that led to the death of sixty thousand persons (Ibn Al-Galansi, 1983, P. 289), and what Al-Antaki mentioned of description to the effects of those diseases and disasters, that he described most of them by the great epidemic, and some of them by the great annihilation, an evidence on the extent of impact caused by those disasters, and that diseases spread were not transient diseases or seasonal, and the follower of what was mentioned by Al-Antaki, finds that plenty of epidemics caught by those countries were a results of hunger and decrease of basic goods, and happened in Egypt in 329H./843A.D, and years 353-357/964-967A.D. (Al-Antaki, 1990, PP.122, 33), no doubt most of those who were exposed to those diseases were from the common people and the weak category of the people who have no ability to buy the basic goods, especially wheat. Al-Antaki pointed that frankly at the talk about incidents of 357 H./967 A.D, "and prices fluctuated in Egypt, the prices of grains and food increased and a great epidemic struck, the weak people died, they ate the carcasses and dead animals and they fell dead of hunger...". (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 122), and Ibn Al-Athir praised that saying: the weak people were used to eat the dead animals (Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt. 7, P. 111).

Since the common people formed the majority of the population, they were dying in groups from severity of hunger, and because of abundance of death they were buried without washing or praying, they were buried in group graves, so the period of disasters and diseases spread was overlooked, especially Islamic burial rituals like washing and praying over dead bodies and shrouding them, Al-Antaki says (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 122), the matter reached that most of dead people never to be buried or covered by soil because of the abundance of dead bodies, the thing that increased the spread of diseases, as

⁽⁶⁾ A district of Homs coast districts, and called "Famia" too, see (Al-Hamawi, 1977, pt. 4, P. 233).

happened in Baghdad in 334H./ 945A.D., this increased the spread of diseases that led people to go out to Basrah city searching for a peaceful place (Al-Antaki, 1990, P.55). Maskaweih mentioned these scenes in the same year, he added that "if man found few of bread covered himself under his clothes or else it is stolen from him" (Maskaweih, 2003, pt. 6, P. 127).

Decrease of goods accompanied high prices, as happened in the period of the government of Al-Hakem Bi Amerllah Al-Fatimi in 396H./ 1005A.D. until a punishment was imposed on who exploits the conditions, and reached the punishment of killing, he was calling "anybody increases in the price has forced himself to be killed" (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 266).

Also the earthquakes led to make happen great changes in structures and forms of cities, like the earthquake that hit Damascus in 381H./ 991A.D., and led to evacuate the city from inhabitants as a result of getting out those who were quick on earth to the desert, and led to make happen changes in the structure and the form of the city (Al-Antaki, 1990, P.220).

The earthquake that hit Levant in 425H./ 1044 A.D. gives us a clear picture of change that occurred in the cities and villages, and religious landmarks that were destroyed by the earthquake; so after the Fatimi Caliph Al-Thaher had commenced to build the wall of the Jerusalem city, a horrible earthquake happened in the country never such seen before... half of the city of Al-Ramla buildings were fallen, some parts of its wall, and a great number of people died. Jericho city was overturned on its people, and so Nablus and adjacent villages, a piece of the Mosque of Bayt Al-Magdes and lands, churches fell during its construction and buildings in the city of Acre fell too... (Al-Antaki, 1990, P.439). Ibn Al-Athir mentioned the effect of this earthquake in incidents of 425H./ 1033 A.D., and said it extended to Egypt, and Al-Ramla city was the most affected (Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt. 7, P. 765).

As a result of the large number of deaths many charitable and wealthy people have taken the initiative to hasten the preparation and burial of the dead according to the Islamic teachings, giving money in charity for the purpose of burying the dead bodies and participating in charitable works, considering that this is a form of charity. Maskaweih says: after Baghdad caught diseases at the beginning of Caliph Al-Muttaqi's assumption of the caliphate in 329H./ 940A.D.: "And there Appeared from the people a religious tendency, charity and shrouds" (Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt. 6, P. 38), in the opposite many people showed opposite of that and were angry at what happened to them, until they reached the point of immorality, for "Maskaweih mentions that immorality appeared from others and force they are the most" (Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt. 6, P. 38).

For the severity of diseases and disasters effects and what resulted from them of houses collapse and markets and mass death that hit those cities. Many people thought that that was because of spread of injustice, and disbelief, so that they looked to what caught them as God's anger and discontent. Markets were flooded in Egypt as a result of the Nile water increase, flood almost submerged Cairo (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 341). Therefore, such disasters accompanied by praying and supplication to God to remove his anger and hatred from them, as happened in the earthquake that hit Egypt in 352H./ 963A.D. (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 103), also the people cried for help from the Al-Mighty God in the reign of Al-Hakem Bi Amerllah Al-Fatimi in 396H./ 1005A.D. when a strong wind blew on Egypt at night till the people cried for help from God. (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 262).

Many practices out of the familiarity happened during the diseases pandemic that caught Baghdad in 334H./ 945 A.D., who killed children and ate them (Al-Antaki, 1990, P. 55, 56). Ibn Al-Athir discussed what happened in Baghdad of diseases spread, and what followed such those practices and strange scenes that indicate the extent of suffering to which the people of Baghdad were exposed as a result of prices increase, decrease of bread, and diseases spread in incidents of the years of 343H./953A.D. (Ibn Al-Athir, 1987, pt. 7, P. 170).

4. Conclusion

Al-Antaki history uncovered the occurrence of many diseases, and natural disasters in Levant, Egypt, and Iraq. The study showed that Egypt in private, being Al-Antaki resided a long time in it, it was exposed to many diseases and the natural disasters, like earthquake and floods, and the study showed that causes of diseases spread returns to decrease of basic goods, and poverty spread, as a result of the Nile River floods, or decrease of its level in some years, till the diseases killed great numbers of the inhabitants, as happened in 357H./967A.D., for the severity of it in people Al-Antaki called it "the great epidemic". Also Egypt was exposed to many earthquakes, especially in the years 340H./ 951A.D., 352H./ 963A.D., led to the collapse of many houses and death of many of the population.

Because of Al-Antaki residence in Levant too he had been an eye witness on the happening of many epidemics in Levant and Iraq, especially at the beginning of Bouyhi government in 334H./945A.D., and what accompanied that of mass death, diseases spread, as a result of poverty and decrease of basic foods, Baghdad also was exposed to earthquakes occurrence at the beginning of Adud Al-Dawla's rule in 367H./ 896 A.D., and what accompanied it of plague spread, that led to great decrease in the number of population. Levant was at a promise with occurrence of many natural disasters; of them

the earthquake that struck the city of Antioch in 360H./ 970 A.D., and the earthquake that struck Damascus in 381H./ 991 A.D., and led to the collapse of great number of houses. The most severe of them the earthquake that struck Jerusalem and Palestine in 425H./ 1033A.D., and destroyed many holy places in the city.

The spread of epidemics and disasters accompanied many of the social effects, especially what concerns the demographics of cities which were exposed to those disasters, inspite that Al-Antaki rarely gives numbers concern number of deaths, or those who were displaced from those cities, but what Al-Antaki mentioned of description, as the great annihilation, and the great epidemic gives a picture about a great number of deaths, or collapse of houses as a result of the earthquake, and there was no way for the population except the supplication for God to remove the disaster from them. Al-Antaki mentioned that some people sought refuge to eat the meat of children, because of the decrease of food and spread of poverty.

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