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TRADITION AND REFORM IN OTTOMAN MECCA AROUND 1884

by Alexander H. de Groot

The constructive elements of the conservative policy of the government of sultan Abdul-Hamid II (regnabat 1876-1909) will remain unknown unless the study of nineteenth and twentieth century Ottoman institutions comprises the growth of nationalism and secular reform in the Middle East.

Ottoman provincial administration - one cannot stress this too much - lasted more than four centuries. Despite periods of decentralization and social-economic change, popularly described as decline, Ottoman rule always enjoyed general support in the Arab lands. Its authority was never under serious discussion until the actual breakdown of the empire at the end of the First World War.

The study of the history of Ottoman imperial institutions in the areas where traditional forms of local government continued to exist side by side with the administrative reforms of the so-called Tanzimat-period (1839-1908), should shed light on the comparative merits of tradition and reform.

The region of the Hejaz received constant attention of the sultan's government ever since sultan Selim put an end to the Mameluke state in Syria and Egypt in 1517.

In the nineteenth century Mecca, Medina and dependencies were reorganised in the new province, wilayet of the Hejaz¹⁾. After Egyptian forces restored Ottoman authority in Western and Central Arabia, direct government from Istanbul was established. From 1840 till 1876, local authority was in the hands of three emirs, sherifs, i.e. descendants of the house of the Prophet Muhammad, and the traditional local rulers of Mecca since 1200 A.D.. Next to them nineteen walis, governors-general in the new provincial system, were appointed by the sultan's government as representatives of reform²⁾.

The Ottoman government always attached great importance to the Hejaz, the Holy Land of Islam and the goal of the yearly pilgrimage. Peace and well-being of its population, "Allah's neighbours", was a prime concern of the Ottoman sultan. The value of this province did not lie in its revenue. The cultivated area was small and its role in international trade limited. But the "Guardi-

anship of the Two Holy Places" (Haramayn) carried great prestige in the Islamic community. The acquisition of this particular region was thus of immense, albeit immaterial, benefit to the Ottoman Dynasty.

The economical and financial relations between the Hejaz and Istanbul showed a reverse picture of the normal situation between centre and province. This province profited from large donations of the imperial treasury. A splendid example of the sultans' munificence were the yearly caravans from Istanbul and Cairo carrying gifts, amongst which was "Holy Camel" (mahmal). The Hejaz became the most privileged province of the empire. Its male population was exempt from military service, the rates of taxation were lower than elsewhere, and local autonomy was still granted, in contrast with the centralized administration of the Ottoman Empire.

Subsidies came also from a number of Islamic princes, like the Khedives of Egypt, the sultans of Morocco, rulers of Muslim states in British India and the Dutch East Indies, as well as from countless private Muslim benefactors.

This one-sided financial relationship seems not to have been used as an instrument of political pressure by the Ottomans at any time. The Sublime Porte gave its support apparently without strings attached, and unrelated to the internal condition of the province.

The Hejaz in the Era of the Tanzimat.

Mecca and Medina, notwithstanding their international prestige in the Islamic world, were not an important political or cultural centre during the nineteenth century. The history of the region has so far attracted only a modest amount of scholarly interest³⁾. The reforms of the Tanzimat had to be adapted to local circumstances. Regional dynasties and local notables were removed in Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq, but doing away with the emirs of Mecca was never even considered.

Ever since the sixteenth century, the sultans accepted the loyal submission of the emirs. The Ottoman administration of the Two Holy Cities showed special respect for their local traditions, directly related to the Sunna of the Prophet. Such respect was combined with a realistic appreciation of the limits set to the exercise of authority.

A delicate balance had to be kept between the powers of the wali, the pasha sent from Istanbul, and those of the emir, appointed by the sultan from among contenders belonging to the House of Qatadah. These two partners in government were dependent on the support and influence they could secure in Istanbul. The emir, who could count on the loyalty of the Bedouin tribes, was in a strong position vis-à-vis the Ottoman wali, a stranger whose term of office was limited to a small number of years. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the

governor-general's direct authority did not reach beyond Jidda, until then the administrative and military centre of the province of Habesh (Ottoman Turkish for "Abyssinia"), comprising territories on both shores of the Red Sea⁴⁾.

From that time onwards, administrative reforms gradually changed the relationship between the emir and the sultan. Ottoman policy was to increase control over the affairs of Arabia. As of old, safeguarding of the pilgrimage remained of primary importance, but the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 made the area appear on the international scene.

European trading and shipping firms established themselves at Jidda, and European consulates were opened around 1850, a Dutch consulate in 1871. The consuls were no forerunners of imperial western expansion. They had to assure diplomatic protection to their nationals living in the Hajez, merchants as well as Muslim pilgrims, albeit without having access to the two Holy Cities. Thus, the local authorities remained at a safe distance from western interference, but in Jidda a bloody conflict occurred in 1858 between Muslims and foreign Christian inhabitants and a typical example of gunboat diplomacy was demonstrated by the British⁵⁾. Anti-Christian feelings ran high in the Hejaz ever since the drive for the abolition of slavery began to interfere with the thriving slave markets of Mecca and Medina, important elements of local economy since ancient times⁶⁾. The Ottoman government was induced to issue legislation in conformity with this branch of western idealism. The enforcement of such ordinances, inappropriate to local circumstances and conflicting with Islamic legal tradition, created much ill-feeling against the spirit of the Tanzimat which were seen as the unholy inventions of the Unbelievers. The proclamation of the imperial irade ordering the abolition of the slave-trade in the Ottoman lands caused open revolt in Mecca in 1855. A number of Ottoman officials were massacred. In reprisal, the Ottoman government deposed emir Abd al-Muttalib, who was sent into honourable exile in Istanbul in 1856⁷⁾.

The only marginal presence of the Western Powers gave Ottoman policy the opportunity to introduce modernization in its own tempo. The discreet and slow application of the Tanzimat offers an instructive view on the conflict between traditional and modern styles of government, between local and central power in an Ottoman, Middle Eastern milieu still almost wholly outside the sphere of European influence in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

An insight in the situation in the years 1884 and 1885 may be gained from the observations of an expert eye-witness, the Leiden arabist and islamologist Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) who lived for nearly twelve months in Jidda and Mecca.

The rivalry of traditional and modern government was personified by the emirs Abd al-Muttalib and Awn al-Rafiq (1882-1905) on the one side, and by a

succession of Ottoman pashas on the other⁸⁾. Ranking as excellencies, the latter, at least formally, were put on an equal footing with the emirs who were also given the title of pasha. Mecca at this time offers a clear example of the dual policy of sultan Abdul-Hamid II who availed himself of western methods of centralized power as well as of the universal prestige he enjoyed as Caliph of all Muslims. This duality left in the Hejaz the choice between modernization and opposition by the two successive emirs.

Abdul-Hamid's reform policy, in many aspects the culmination of the Tanzimat, was almost completely successful in the Hejaz thanks to the energetic "Hadji" Topal Osman Nuri Pasha. By 1886, however, it became clear that conservatism could not be overcome by introducing efficient administration. The sultan realized that it was wiser, politically speaking, to give in to the crafty emir, who embodied centuries of petty tyranny and corruption which were part of an almost medieval state of affairs in Meccan society, still acceptable to a majority of the population. Concessions did not mean however that modernization was abandoned. Abdul-Hamid's politics were continued in a more tactful guise and in a slower tempo.

Osman Pasha and the emir Abd al-Muttalib

A new stage in the struggle for power in the Hejaz was reached in 1881. Appointed for the third time in 1880, the aged emir Abd al-Muttalib became insupportable to at least an influential part of the Meccan population. An increasing number of complaints and petitions were handed to the wali.

The Ottoman government decided to act discreetly in order not to arouse the suspicions of the old emir. The wali Safvet Pasha who was in open conflict with the emir, was replaced in 1880 by the aged Ahmed Izzet Pasha, who had already been wali from 1852 to 1854. The new representative of the sultan did not appear as a menace to the emir's position⁹⁾. In november 1881 general Topal Osman Nuri Pasha arrived. Recently promoted to the rank of Ferik ("Divisional General"), he was given the new function of Military Commander of the Hejaz, and also appointed as acting wali.

The Hejaz had become an especially sensitive area, not merely because of the emir's continued intrigues and recalcitrance¹⁰⁾. The arrival at Jidda on August 9, 1881, of the former grand vizier Midhat Pasha (1882-1884) was a source of potential unrest. He was the most widely known Ottoman statesman of the Tanzimat Era, but now a state prisoner condemned to life imprisonment. This sentence, commuted from the death penalty, was to be served in the Hejaz, a place out of reach of foreign interference. The august prisoner was received in Taif on August 17 by emir Abd al-Muttalib and the local Ottoman authorities. The old-fashioned emir ordered harsh treatment for Midhat Pasha and his fellow

prisoners, in order to earn the favour of sultan Abdul-Hamid who took undoubtedly a great personal interest in the case of his hated enemy. Midhat Pasha was lodged in poorly equipped rooms of Taif castle, while Osman Pasha was to exercise a trustworthy vigilance over the prisoners.

Osman Nuri Pasha was a product of the enlightened but conservative milieu of grand vizier Küçük Said Pasha (1840-1914), who implemented the sultan's policies to uphold Islamic tradition with modern means. Osman Pasha was known as "a man of the palace" i.e. of undoubted loyalty towards the sultan¹¹⁾, as is clear from the confidential reports he sent to the palace. The prisoners at Taif were given careful attention, and the authority of the emir methodically subverted.

Soon all responsibility for the prisoners was given to the "commander of the Hejaz Division", Osman Pasha, and emir Abd al-Muttalib began to understand that this pasha was his most dangerous rival. His intrigues against Osman Pasha produced accusations of inexperience and of collusion with sharifs. Such attacks, all transmitted to Yıldız Palace, were not left unanswered.

When in June 1882 Izzet Pasha resigned his office, Osman Nuri Pasha was appointed governor-general and confirmed in his military command. The emir was duly alarmed. Soon afterwards, Osman Pasha found out about Abd al-Muttalib's contacts with the British consul at Jidda, about his repeated request for arms, and about letters addressed to leaders of the Arab tribes round Medina and in the Djabal Shammar. The emir seemed to be plotting with the British to organize the evasion of Midhat Pasha¹²⁾. This alarming information led the sultan to order Osman Pasha to prepare the removal of the emir Abd al-Muttalib from office. This was no easy matter, especially since the military means at the disposal of the wali were slight. The troops in the province were not regularly paid nor provided with necessary facilities, while transportation was hardly feasible.

In August 1882 the emir left Mecca to spend the summer-months as usual at Taif, and thus he would stay close to Midhat Pasha. Osman Pasha decided to act after consultation with leading members of the sharifian clan of the Dhawi ^CAwn, rivals of Abd al-Muttalib's clan. One of the Sharifs, ^CAwn Abd al-Ilah, was pressed to accept the investiture of the emirate. The move was only based upon Osman Pasha's initiative, but seemingly confirmed by an imperial irade, in fact nothing more than a faked telegram. On August 17, 1882 (Shawwal 27 1399 A.H.) Abd al-Muttalib's residence at Taif was surrounded by Ottoman troops. The old emir understood that resistance was meaningless and gave himself up to the local Ottoman commander colonel Ömer Bey¹³⁾. He was put under arrest in the same barracks where Midhat Pasha was kept prisoner¹⁴⁾. Osman Pasha reported the success to Yıldız Palace and the Sublime Porte. The Bedouin tribes did not

revolt nor did the loyalty of the Arab cities seem to be shaken.

In Istanbul the news caused surprise. The new emir, now officially appointed, was not Sharif Abd al-Ilah but his brother ^CAwn al-Raqif Pasha, who lived in Istanbul, held the rank of vizier and was member of the Council of State (Shura-i Dewlet). Apart from this different choice - a momentous one as it would turn out - , the sultan's government gave its full approval to the action of Osman Pasha. A decisive development in the relationship between the emir and the wali seemed to have taken place, and Hamidian reform apparently was successful in the Holy Land of Islam. Osman Nuri Pasha had given solid evidence of his talent as a political administrator.

Osman Pasha and the emir ^CAwn al-Rafiq (1882-1886)

Snouck Hurgronje stayed in the Hejaz in 1884 and 1885 and lived in Mecca from February till the beginning of August 1885. He was full of admiration for the governmental abilities of the wali who still carried the historical title of Shaykh al-Haram ("Inspector of the Holy City") of Mecca. One of Osman Pasha's achievements was the restoration of the great mosque complex¹⁵⁾, and the city was enriched with new buildings in modern Ottoman style¹⁶⁾. The financial means were found in the pious foundations, waqfs, made by sultans and other members of the imperial family.

For the police new headquarters and eighteen stations were built together with four military barracks and a citadel on Djabal Hindi overlooking the city. Osman Pasha's most meritorious contribution was the reconstruction and extension of the water system, still based on the ancient Ayn Zubayda aquaduct. Good drinking water became available at all seasons by connecting a number of reservoirs, while more than twenty new sabils (drinking fountains) were opened¹⁷⁾. Two secondary schools, a printing house and a modern hospital were also established, and in Jidda a new aquaduct, the "Hamidiyye", was constructed. The modernization of the castle barracks at Taif in 1883¹⁸⁾ was the result of the wali's responsibility for the prisoners of state held there. Snouck Hurgronje arrived in the Hejaz about three months after Midhat Pasha and his fellow victim Damad Mahmud Nedim Pasha had been murdered in the prison. Snouck never visited Taif, and it is remarkable that the name of Midhat Pasha is never mentioned in one of his books or articles. Does this reflect Snouck's disapproval of Midhat Pasha and his policy of reform, or did he wish to protect the reputation of the wali, the man he so manifestly respected and admired? Speaking Arabic fluently and knowing Turkish well enough, he certainly was aware of what had happened at Taif on May 18th, 1884. News of the brutal murder spread quickly.

The complicity of Osman Pasha, although not yet established by any document, seems beyond doubt. As wali and commander of the Hejaz, he carried sole

responsibility for the doings of all Ottoman civil and military officials in the province. Colonel Ömer Bey had been especially appointed to the small Taif garrison¹⁹⁾, as was the case of Mehmed Lutfi Bey, in charge of the actual killing, and of Major Bekir Fahri Bey, another accomplice²⁰⁾. Mahmud Bey, a civil servant who, according to various sources, brought the heads of the murdered pashas to sultan Abdül-Hamid, was Osman Pasha's brother-in-law²¹⁾. Ömer Bey was directly responsible for the ban of newspapers and books, the suppression of airing the prisoners and of the gradual deterioration of the quality of the food²²⁾. Ömer Bey's intention of gradually poisoning the pashas, which did not happen after all, caused disagreement with Osman Pasha.

Yıldız Palace was constantly kept informed. Abdül-Hamid seems to have been worrying about British agents organizing the escape of Midhat Pasha. Such rumours were repeatedly transmitted to Yıldız and Osman Pasha had to reassure the anxious sultan. Abdül-Hamid's unabating preoccupation finally led to the decision to put an end to the prisoner's life. Midhat Pasha was strangled in the night of 7-8 May 1884 (12 Radjab 1301 A.H.). Medical reports of the two military physicians on duty at Taif and at Mecca explained the deaths of Midhat Pasha and Mahmud Nedim Pasha, killed the next day, as having been caused by chronic illness²³⁾. Osman Pasha was ordered to verify the deaths in person. He had the graves opened and sent his report to the sultan. Yet, the latter's mind was not at rest and still in 1886 emissaries were sent repeatedly to the Hejaz to confirm all the details²⁴⁾. As a reward for his services, Osman Nuri Pasha soon afterwards was promoted to the rank of Ottoman Fieldmarchal (Müşir)²⁵⁾.

The inescapable conclusion is that Osman Pasha was responsible for the murder of the greatest promoter of modernization and reform in the Ottoman state.

This excursus shows a fundamental problem of sultan Abdül-Hamid's policy of modernization. It was not by accident that the assassination of Midhat Pasha took place in the Hejaz. The Hamidian programme of modernization and reform was devised within the framework of Islamic tradition and conservation of the Ottoman State. Its strongest opposition came from secular, liberal constitutionalism of the earlier Tanzimat period represented by Midhat Pasha. The Holy Land of Islam was probably the only province in the empire where the Ottoman liberals and their political supporters were totally powerless. Here, there would be no interference with the murder of the head of the opposition, whom Abdül-Hamid had come to see as a personal enemy of his autocratic government. On the other hand, there was in the Hejaz another form of opposition, one of pure conservatism and regional particularism, based on locally established interest. Hamidian reform policy aiming at the same time to uphold Islamic traditions of government, faced opposition from the traditional Islamic rulers par excellence, the emirs of Mecca.

Osman Pasha, having dealt with liberal opposition in the easiest conceivable way, now stood versus the full force of narrow-minded conservatism. In spite of the wali's proposal, the sultan appointed Awn al-Raqif instead of his brother Abd al-Ilah. With the arrival of the officially appointed emir, a new period of struggle between old customs and new reforms began. Snouck Hurgronje was an eye-witness of the early years of the emir's rule. Style and ceremony were reduced by the new emir who was fully aware of his delicate relationship with the wali. Osman Pasha, for his part, followed the course of further limiting the authority of the local ruler, of reducing it to the level acceptable elsewhere in the empire. In an early memorandum he expressed his surprise at the extent of the powers and privileges still left to the emir²⁶⁾.

Snouck Hurgronje had the impression that a form of dual government existed in the Hejaz and compared it to the colonial conditions in British India and the Dutch East Indies where native princes were left in place under guidance of administrators appointed by the foreign imperial power²⁷⁾. With evident admiration, Snouck describes the administrative talents of Osman Pasha, by whose efforts the rule of law and order, of equal justice and good government were introduced. At the same time, he had his doubts about the Ottomans being successful in applying the reforms of Tanzimat and Hamidian policy. In the Hejaz, the relatively reduced strength of modernization was opposed by formidable conservatism. A handful of irregularly paid civil servants, Ottoman Turks appointed for a limited number of years, were supported by a small military force - the so called independent troops -, scattered over various garrisons at Mecca, Jidda, Medina, Yanbu, Taif and other places. The officials found themselves in the midst of a population of Arab town dwellers and bedouin tribes, who were in control of the countryside and could at any time interrupt communications.

The will of the government could not be imposed by force but had to be negotiated. The emir of Mecca played an indispensable role as a negotiator between the bedouin tribes themselves and between these and the Ottoman authorities. By withholding his influence over the tribes, the emir could seriously block the working of the Ottoman government machine.

Outwardly, emir Awn al-Raqif gave the impression of recognizing the superior position of the wali. To enhance this impression, he discarded the splendid garments of his predecessors and put on a black dress and a small white turban. Only when travelling, he dressed up in the way noble bedouin chiefs did. His public receptions on Fridays and his private gatherings were reduced to formalities, during which politics were hardly ever discussed or administration affairs dealt with. Unlike in previous times, official business was handled in relative seclusion, which could lead to complete inaccessibility²⁸⁾. Snouck Hurgronje noted that a delegation from Taif waited six months and was then sent

home without a hearing.

This withdrawn behaviour made a strange impression on the bedouins and the Meccan nobility. It was partly due to Awn al-Rafiq realizing the limits of his power, partly inspired by his wish to shield himself from Ottoman interference and to hide his mounting displeasure about the high-handedness shown by the wali. The revenues of the customs in the ports of the Hejaz were in the hands of the Ottomans. The emir's share was not his acquired right but an appointed salary. His guards, the Bawardi and Bisha soldiers, were organized as an Ottoman military unit with Ottoman officers who also acted as aides-de-camp. The role of mediator between the tribes and the city population was undermined by the wali, who called in another arbitrators considered to be more devoted to the Ottoman case. The traditional competence of the emir as a judge in secular affairs was limited to cases concerning members of the House of the Prophet (sherifs and sayyids), bedouin tribes and persons of non-Turkish origin born in the city of Mecca²⁹⁾.

The conflict of authority between emir and wali manifested itself sharply in the field of justice. The clash between old and new governmental authority doubled here with the permanent tension between the Holy Law of Islam and the law given by the sultan. Snouck Hurgronje studied this area of conflict with more than ordinary understanding, this being a special field of his scholarly interests³⁰⁾. In his opinion, the administration of justice in the Islamic states always was of a highly complex and confused character. Cadis, for example, were in general neither able nor interested in applying conscientiously the law of Islam. In practice, the law as established by the Schools of Jurisprudence is hardly applicable. In the Islamic world of old, rulers reserved to themselves the whole field of criminal law and the greater part of jurisdiction in other cases, family law excepted.

The Ottoman reforms of the Tanzimat introduced new legislation, drafted after western codes of law, like a Law of Commerce, a new Criminal Law and Civil Law. The greater part of the reforms in civil law were collected in the Medjelle-i Ahkam-i Adliyye and applied in the Ottoman Empire since the second half of the nineteenth century³¹⁾. According to Snouck, however, the new legislation did not go beyond its paper covers. In his view, the law still was the expression of the will of the ruler, influenced from various sides.

In Mecca the legal situation was even more complicated because the secular justice of the Ottoman sultan was exercised by the emir and the wali, both appointed representatives of the sovereign, but competing with one another. For instance, persons arrested by Ottoman regular soldiers or the Gendarmerie would be brought to the wali's offices and prison, but those who were arrested by the emir's Bawardi guards were taken before the emir or the lieutenant (Kaimmakam)

and subsequently to the latter's prison. In any lawsuit the Meccans could choose to bring their case before either the emir or the wali. The emir always claimed sole competence for affairs concerning the bedouin Arabs, the sherifs and persons born in Mecca unless they were Ottoman Turks. In fact, the lawcourt was chosen according to the party one had selected. Every lawsuit thus would sharpen the conflict between the two parties competing for supreme authority in the Hejaz. In 1886 the road between Mecca and Medina was blocked by bedouins of the Harb tribe. The pilgrims could not pass, and the visit to the Prophet's tomb became impossible. Osman Pasha set matters right with the troops under his command³²⁾. The emir reacted strongly, and the central government received complaints from both officials.

In year 1886 A.D., emir ^CAwn al-Raqif decided to use the time-hallowed tactical means of a "Hidjra" (emigration) to bring the conflict to a decision. Followed by a great number of clients, notables and merchants of Mecca, he left at night for Medina. Amongst his followers was the leading Islamic Scholar, shaykh ul-ulema, at the same time Shafii mufti of Mecca, Sayyid Ahmad bin Zayni Dahlan (d. 1886 at Medina), an eminent representative of the old school and a convinced - though discreet - opponent to Ottoman reform³³⁾. In his view, the so-called "Beneficial Tanzimat", these hateful ordinances, were forced upon the sultan by the English and the French³⁴⁾. The disastrous outcome of the Russo-Turkish war (1877-1878) he saw as a just retribution for the intrigues which lead to the deposition of sultan Abdül-Aziz and the latter's subsequent death in 1876³⁵⁾.

In his historical work Al-Futuhāt al-Islamiyya..., this learned mufti voiced the traditional disapproval of innovation and reform, wondering how a Muslim prince could order the believers to imitate the dress of the kafirs. According to Sacred Tradition, he who imitates another people becomes one of them, a reference to the 1827 regulations in the Ottoman army concerning uniforms. Dahlan's wholly traditional view of the Islamic state offers a striking example of how little headway Ottoman modernizing policies had made in the Hejaz. Against this background it is not difficult to understand that the emir never had accepted the position of the wali as being superior to his own, and had only made superficial concessions. In fact he was biding his time.

Having withdrawn himself from the direct reach of the sultan's governor, he sent his envoys to Istanbul announcing that he would not return to Mecca until Osman Nuri Pasha had left the Hejaz³⁶⁾.

The wali created a following of his own in Mecca, also among the ulema. The absence of the emir gave Osman Pasha full scope for administrative reforms, but the emir continued to oppose them. The installation of a municipal board for the sanitary control of the city of Mecca was considered as a major fault of the

governor-general. He had dared to defend this measure by referring to Istanbul where cleaning the streets and controlling hygienic conditions was already practiced. In the opinion of the wali, Mecca was not superior to Istanbul. Such innovation caused angry protest. The opposition pressed its hatred of the Tanzimat in a pamphlet posted to the gates of the Great Mosque of Mecca³⁷⁾.

Its text incited the people to revolt against the "accursed wali" Osman Pasha, quoting Qoran V, 49: "but whoever does not judge by what Allah hath sent down, they are the wrong-doers (i.e. unbelievers: kafirun)"³⁸⁾. The pamphlet promised "the entry into Paradise without Reckoning" (the Last Judgement) to whom would remove the wali from this world.

Other protests were directed against the creation of a municipal council for a unified administration of the city of Mecca, instead of the traditional wards (Mahalle), each governed by a sheikh. Indignation was great at the repeated comparison of Mecca with the Ottoman capital. The underlying motive was that a general administrative control over the city would lead to a census and to new taxation.

Facing the crisis in the Hejaz, the sultan concluded that the authority of the central government could no longer be upheld by the present wali. Without disavowing Osman Pasha or cancelling any of his decisions, he appointed his loyal representative to the governor-generalship of Aleppo, and transferred the wali of that province, Hasan Djemil Pasha, to the Hejaz.

In December 1886 Osman Nuri Pasha left Mecca. ^CAwn al-Raqif returned immediately, and tried to reestablish his traditional authority. Friends and appointees of Osman Pasha were dismissed, and the emir prepared himself to meet the new wali on a footing superior to the one on which he had been with the predecessor.

The new wali, however, arrived with instructions to maintain the upperhand in the government of the province. Warned by the example, he proceeded in a more accomodating manner. The emir seemed to have won. The sultan indeed made a concession to the aura of holiness which the "Grand Sherif", the principal of the members of the House of Muhammad, was endowed with. In his dealings with the emir, the new wali behaved like a civil servant, executing orders received from Istanbul³⁹⁾. It was as if Djemil Pasha always was willing to meet the wishes of the emir, but could not do so because of regretful instructions from the highest authority.

To this tactful opposition ^CAwn al-Raqif had no answer. At the behest of Istanbul a number of Osman Pasha's appointments were gradually reinstated⁴⁰⁾. The emir had to give in and to recognize, although not openly, where the final decisions were made⁴¹⁾.

The Tanzimat in Mecca (1882-1886)

Snouck Hurgronje saw Osman Pasha's four years at Mecca as a period of good administration not seen before in that place, but he also realized the lasting prestige of the sherifian dynasty. Being local rulers of local origin, they constituted the highest nobility in the lands of Islam. Their position was strengthened by the fact that the people of the Hejaz feared their "Lord", "Sayyidina" because he was always present while they could never see their sultan, "Efendina", whose representatives succeeded each other every few years.

The walis sent by İstanbul acquired local experience and authority only in exceptional cases. Osman Nuri Pasha seems to have been such an exception. Gerald de Gaury considers Osman Pasha's tenure of office as the high-watermark of Ottoman rule there⁴²⁾. According to Snouck Hurgronje, Hamidian reform policy failed in the Hejaz, because of the lack of money of the Ottoman government. Stronger military force and continuity of its policies, in combination with modern means of communication, could have put an end to the Middle Ages in Mecca. Facing the slow progress of Ottoman-Turkish modern civilization, local interests inspired a united front behind the popular prince of tradition⁴³⁾. Good government and the rule of law would never obtain in the Holy Land of Islam, was Snouck's sombre opinion.

Any European-styled government caused the Arabs' indignation. They would compare the "pantalon" wearing and "fezzed" Ottoman officials with the "Christian Dogs". Snouck understood the conflict of modernization and tradition in the Hejaz, where it was more pronounced and elementary than anywhere else in the Ottoman dominions. He was able to appreciate positively the traditional ways of the Meccans and he regretted their disappearance but at the same time he saw in the Ottoman administration the only chance for this country to be modernized in a more or less harmonious way, reconciling old and new, popularly defined as "oriental" and "occidental" values, while remaining outside the sphere of direct influence of the Western World.

This not exactly prophetic vision is interesting all the same because it is the opinion of an expert eye-witness of the change taking place in nineteenth-century Mecca initiated by the policies of Hamidian reform.

Notes

- 1) Hicâz Vilâyeti Sâlnâmesi 1303 (1886) 2. Defa, Mecca 1303/1886 (not seen); idem 1309 (1892) 5. Defa, Mecca 1309/1892; Gerald de Gaury, Rulers of Mecca, London 1951; C. Snouck Hurgronje, Mekka, 2 vols. (plus Atlas), The Hague 1888-1889.

- 2) William L. Ochsenwald, "Ottoman Subsidies to the Hijaz 1877-1886" International Journal of Middle East Studies 6 (1975) 300-307.
- 3) Studies by G. de Gaury, W.L. Ochsenwald, B. Abu Manneh, R.B. Winder, e.g..
- 4) Cengiz Orhonlu, Habeş Eyaleti, İstanbul 1974.
- 5) De Gaury, op.cit. 249-252; C. Snouck Hurgronje "Een Rector der Mekkaanse Universiteit" Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederland-sch-Indië V-2 ('s-Gravenhage 1887) 344-404 (repr. C. Snouck Hurgronje, Verspreide Geschriften, 7 vols, Bonn-Leipzig 1923-1927, vol. III, 65-122); W.L. Ochsenwald, "The Jidda Massacre of 1851" Middle Eastern Studies 13 (1977), 314-326; Cevdet Pasha, Tezâkir 13-20 ed. Cavid Baysun, Ankara 1960, p. 51.
- 6) Ehud. A. Toledano, The Ottoman Slave Trade and its Suppression, Princeton 1982.
- 7) Snouck, Mekka I, 167.
- 8) İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, "Hicaz vali ve kumandanı Osman Nuri Paşa'nın uydurma bir ile Mekka emiri Şerif Abdülmuttalibi azletmesi" Türk Tarih Kurumu Belleten 39/10 (1946) 497-537; idem, Midhat Paşa ve Tâif Mahkûmları, Ankara 1950.
- 9) Snouck, Mekka I, 176.
- 10) Butrus Abu Manneh, "Sultan Abdülhamid II and the sharifs of Mecca (1800-1900)", Asian and African Studies (Jerusalem) 9, 1973, 1-22.
- 11) Uzunçarşılı, art.cit., 502; İbrahim Alâttin Gövsa, Türk Meşhurları Ansiklopedisi (İstanbul 1946) s.v. "Osman Paşa, Nuri (1840-1898)", 297; Snouck, Mekka-Bilderatlas, VIII.
- 12) Uzunçarşılı, art.cit., 504f,
- 13) Afterwards Ömer Pasha, later a lieutenant-general, commander of the Hejaz and Mutasarrif of Asir, cf. Uzunçarşılı art.cit., 507 n. 1 and Midhat Paşa ve Tâif ..., 145f.
- 14) Uzunçarşılı, art.cit., 509.
- 15) Snouck, Mekka I, 119.
- 16) Photographs of these buildings in Snouck, Mekka-Bilderatlas, nos IV, VI, I; Uzunçarşılı, Midhat Paşa ve Tâif ..., 145.
- 17) A distant echo of Osman Pasha's building activities is recorded by Martin Hartmann, Unpolitische Briefe aus der Türkei, Leipzig 1910, 10-11: in Salonica 1909 Hartmann met a citizen of Mecca, who mentioned the late pasha as having covered up the main well of the city (!) and deservedly been punished for that by lameness; hence "Topal" Osman.
- 18) Uzunçarşılı, Midhat Paşa ve Tâif ..., 17 n. 1.
- 19) ibidem, 37.
- 20) ibidem, 146-148.

- 21) ibidem, 103, 105.
- 22) ibid., 37 and n., 38-39.
- 23) ibid., 56-73.
- 24) ibid., 109.
- 25) ibid., 104, 105.
- 26) Uzunçarsılı, Mekke-i Mükerreme Emirleri, Ankara 1972, 28-29; idem, art.cit., 512f (document no. I).
- 27) Snouck, Mekka I, 179.
- 28) ibidem, 178; De Gaury, op.cit., 258.
- 29) Snouck, ibid., 179-183.
- 30) ibid., 183.
- 31) İslam Ansiklopedisi 7. Cilt, İstanbul 1972² s.v. "Mecelle" (E. Mardin) pp. 433-436; A.H. Berki, Açıklamalı Mecelle, İstanbul 1985².
- 32) Snouck, Mekka I, 184.
- 33) idem, art. "Een Rector ..." (1887), 344-404.
- 34) ibidem, 369.
- 35) Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition. Vol. II, 91 s.v. "Dahlan, Sayyid Ahmad B. Zayni" (J. Schacht); Snouck, ibid., 353ff.
- 36) Snouck, Mekka I, 185.
- 37) ibidem, 222-225 (text and translation).
- 38) Richard Bell, The Quran. Translated ..., Edinburgh 1960², Vol. I, 100, Surah V, v. 49.
- 39) Uzunçarsılı, Midhat Paşa ve Tâif ..., 144.
- 40) Snouck, Mekka I, 185f.
- 41) İhsan Süreyya Sırma, "Yemen valisi Osman Nuri Paşa'nın yolsuzluklarına dair imzasız bir layiha" Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi 10-11 (İstanbul 1979-1980), 395-412 contains the text of an anonymous memorandum dating from 1888/1306 A.H. accusing the then wali of the Yemen Osman Nuri Pasha of exercising a corrupt government i.a. by the misappropriation of customs revenues and the arbitrary dismissal of officials.
- 42) De Gaury, op.cit., 260.
- 43) Snouck, Mekka I, 188-189.