ABSTRACT

The central theme of this thesis is the impact on Syria of the acts and policies of the Tanzimat period especially after 1860. But in order to understand the background of those policies it was necessary to shed fresh light on the social and political outlook of those bureaucrats who stood at the head of the state at the time of the Tanzimat period and on certain currents of thought which emerged during that period.

It appears that the basic question which busied Ottoman Muslims was the moral and legal basis of the state. Under the impact of the teachings of the Naqshbandi and possibly other orthodox orders, the causes of the decline of the state and of the degeneration of Muslim society were attributed to a disregard of shari'a rules and to the rise of arbitrary government. In Istanbul and the Asiatic provinces a strong tendency emerged to restore the supremacy of the shari'a in society and state and to end arbitrary rule. The reforms in their early period (1826-1854) seem to have been undertaken with this object in mind. About the same time it appears that the title of Caliph as applied to the sultan began to assume a new importance with emphasis upon the sultan being a just and shari'a abiding ruler.

But in the following period Āli and Fuad were

unable to keep within the framework which the shari'a permits due to the growth of the influence of the western powers upon the affairs of the empire both politically and commercially. On the other hand the non-Muslim communities, the rise of whom was already felt by the end of the eight-eenth century, gained from the commercial expansion of Europe and grew wealthier and more powerful. In Syria, in addition, they led the Arabic cultural revival which was felt from mid-nineteenth century onwards.

Āli and Fuad could not ignore this fact and the reform edict of 1856 came it seems to lay a new basis for the integration of the non-Muslims in the state. Moreover those two statesmen put forward the idea of Ottomanism with the aim of creating an Ottoman nation of subjects with equal rights. To enforce their policy, in face of Muslim opposition, they resorted to autocratic government.

Both Ottomanism and autocracy aroused the violent reaction of a large section of Muslim public opinion which believed that these measures undermined the Islamic basis of the state and Muslim political primacy in it. The opposition also resented the growth of European interference in the internal affairs of the empire. The first outcry came from Mecca at the end of 1855 and took various forms in Jedda, Damascus and

Istanbul in the next few decades.

The Porte, under Āli and Fuad, backed by Western Powers, ruthlessly suppressed all signs of opposition. In Syria, moreover, they took steps to raise a new caste of notables, destroying the old one. Their policies seem to have given rise, among some leading Muslim notables in the Arab lands and possibly some opposition leaders in Istanbul, to disillusionment with the Sultan's Caliphate.

The policies of Āli and Fuad in Syria after the events in Damascus in 1860 were motivated by the need to cultivate the good will of the Christians. Had their policy continued, the cleavage in Syrian society may have been narrowed. But when Āli died in 1871 his successor, Mahmud Nedim reversed this policy. Unlike Āli, Nedim did not believe in the principle of Ottomanism; on the contrary, he worked for the restoration of Muslim supremacy, represented and safeguarded not by the supremacy of the shari'a but by an all-powerful sultan who respected it after the fash'on of the Ottoman golden days. M. Nedim represented, it seems, a third trend among the politicians of Istanbul.

There was considerable reaction by the Syrian Christians to this policy and in the 1870's there existed among them two main political trends. The first, the

Ottomanist trend, was represented by B. Bustani who advocated loyalty to Istanbul as in his opinion no better alternative was possible. The other trend, aroused by the policies of Nedim, raised the banner of Syrian nationalism with a view to autonomy.

Around the end of the 1870's corruption, maladministration, and discrimination in government employment in favour of Turks strengthened the later trend. It found, among a section of the Muslims some who shared this view and a short-lived movement for Syrian autonomy came into existence. But Sultan Abdulhamid was not prepared to allow any such autonomy because Syria was far too important to the Ottoman government. Moreover most of the Muslim notables still thought not in terms of regional autonomy but of a Muslim state in which their privileged position was secured. Moreover, they feared that in the absence of direct control from a central Muslim authority this privileged position would be compromised. Those who at first were prepared to co-operate in such a movement were to withdraw their support under pressure from the Authorities and because the Sultan, after the war with Russia, launched his Islamic policy and emphasized his position as Caliph, at the same time tightening up the administration generally.

Consequently most of the support which had earlier existed was withdrawn and the idea of autonomy for Syria came to nothing.

Finally, the idea of an Arab Caliphate took a new turn in the 1870's. After Ãli the title of Caliph quite clearly became a means for achieving absolutism in the hands of Abdulaziz, and for undermining the position of autonomous Muslim rulers in the empire such as Ismail of Egypt and the Grand Sherif of Mecca. Those who would suffer from this increased power of the Sultan may have thought in terms of a separation between Caliphate and Sultanate, entrusting the first to a descendant of the Prophet, possibly the Grand Sherif of Mecca, with the aim of limiting the Sultan's power. This idea may have found a degree of support in the Arab provinces. Sultan Abdulhamid was gravely concerned and his policy towards Syria, Hijaz, and possibly Egypt for some years may, in the light of this, be better understood.

SOME ASPECTS OF OTTOMAN RULE IN SYRIA IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: REFORMS ISLAM AND CALIPHATE

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At the University of Oxford

by

Butrus Abu-Manneh

St. Antony's College

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CONTENTS

		Page
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED		
INTRODUCTION:	THE OTTOMAN SYSTEM IN DECLINE: SYRIA AT EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY	i
CHAPTER I	THE EARLY PERIOD OF REFORM: 1826-1854	1
1.	The Reforms of Mahmud II	1
2.	Mustafa Reshid Pasha and the Gülhane Rescript	4
3.	The First Phase of the Tanzimat: 1839-1854	11
CHAPTER II	OTTOMAN REFORM AND THE NAQSHBANDI-KHALIDI SUB-ORDER	25
1.	Shaikh Khalid and the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi Order	25
2.	The Pre-eminence of Naqshbandiya-Khalidiya in Istanbul	31
3.	Naqshbandiya-Khalidiya and Reform	41
CHAPTER III	ĀLI AND FUAD: THE OTTOMANIST TREND	53
1.	The Ideal of Ottomanism	53
2.	The Economic and Political Impact of Europe at Mid-Nineteenth Century	56
3.	The Reform Edict of February 1856	61
4.	Autocracy and Centralization	67
5.	Some By-Products of the Reform Period	72

CHAPTER IV OTTOMAN CALIPHATE AND MUSLIM REACTION IN ISTANBUL 79

1. A New Phase in the Ottoman Assumption of the Title of Caliph 79

2. Muslim Reaction in Istanbul--The Kuleli Affair 82

3. Mustafa Fazil Pasha and the Egyptian Emigrés in Istanbul 93

4. A Second Phase of Opposition: Mustafa Fazil and the Young Ottomans 99

5. Mustafa Fazil and Syria 117

CHAPTER V SYRIA IN THE PERIOD OF ĀLI AND FUAD: THE FIRST PHASE, 1855-1860 122

1. Muslim Arabs and the Shari'a 122

2. The Revolt in Mecca (1855-6) 124

3. The Jedda Event of 1858 133

4. Muslim Grievances in Syria 135

5. The New "Middle Class" 137

6. Muslim Reaction 142

CHAPTER VI SYRIA IN THE PERIOD OF ĀLI AND FUAD: THE SECOND PHASE, 1861-1871 148

1. The Porte and the Damascine Notables 148

2. The New Leading Notables 153

3. Ottoman Policy Towards the Christians in Syria 1861-1871 158

4. The Publication of al-Jawaib 165

CHAPTER VII THE CHRISTIANS BETWEEN OTTOMANISM AND SYRIAN NATIONALISM: THE IDEAS OF BUTRUS AL-BUSTANI 171

1. The Cultural Revival of the Mid-Nineteenth Century 171

2. The Rise of the Concept of Syria and of Syrian Entity 180

3. Bustani and the Rise of Syrian Nationalism 187

4. Bustani and the Ottoman Authorities 194

5. Patriotism and Ottomanism in Bustani's Thought 200

CHAPTER VIII ISLAM AND TRADITIONALISM: THE ANTI-TANZIMAT CONCEPTS OF MAHMUD NEDIM 218

CHAPTER IX REASSERTION OF MUSLIM ASCENDANCY IN SYRIA AND CHRISTIAN REACTION 232

CHAPTER X OTTOMAN RULE AND THE QUEST OF AUTONOMY IN SYRIA IN THE LATE 1870's 245

1. A Muslim Cultural Awakening 245

2. Ottoman Rule in the Province of Syria in the Later 1870's 249

3. Organised Agitation 255

4. A Demand for Autonomy 260

5. The Mission of Midhat in Syria 265

6. The Renewal of Agitation 276

CHAPTER XI OTTOMAN CALIPHATE AND ARAB CALIPHATE 285

1. The Khedive and the Grand Sherif of Mecca 285

2. Ismail Pasha of Egypt and the Porte 287

3. The Rise of the Idea of an Arab Caliphate 294

4. Sultan Abdulhamid and the Caliphate 300

APPENDIX SULTAN ABDULHAMID II AND THE GRAND SHERIFS OF MECCA (1880-1900) 306

BIBLIOGRAPHY 343

List of Abbreviations Used

acc./pap.	accounts and papers
A.H.R.	American Historical Review
B.A.	Başvekalet Arşivi
C.H.I.	Cambridge History of Islam
Dah. Irad.	Dahiliye Iradeleri
D.N.B.	Dictionary of National Biography
E.I.	Encyclopaedia of Islam
I.A.	Islam Ansıklopedisi
J.M.H.	Journal of Modern History
J.P.H.S.	Journal of Pakistan Historical Society
M.E.J.	Middle East Journal
M.E.S.	Middle Eastern Studies
M.M.	Meclis-i Mahsus
O.M.	Osmanlı Müellifleri
R.d.d.M.	Revue du deux Monde
S.E.I.	Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam
S.O.	Sicilli Osmanı
T.T.E.M.	Türk Tarih Encümeni Mecmuası
Yıl.Ev.	Yıldız Evrakı
Yıl. Per. Ev.	Yıldız Perakende Evrakı

The abbreviations used for Muslim months

Muh.	Muharrem	Rec.	Recep
Saf.	Safer	Şab.	Şaban
Rebi.I	Rebiyülevvel	Ram.	Ramazan
Rebi.II	Rebiyülâhir	Şev.	Şevval
Cem. I	Cemaziyel	Zilk.	Zilkade
Cem. II	Cemaziyelâhir	Zilh.	Zilhicce

INTRODUCTION

THE OTTOMAN SYSTEM IN DECLINE:

SYRIA AT EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

The Religious Basis of the State[1]

The Ottoman Empire was a Muslim state not simply because the religion of the ruler or of the majority of the population was Islam, or because its culture was Islamic, but above all because its legal system and the moral values of its Muslim population were based on the divine law of Islam--the shari'a. The status of the non-Muslims was also defined according to shari'a rules.

Indeed, in a Muslim state the shari'a was held supreme and no principles of law could exist apart from it. The Muslim ruler was under an obligation to uphold it and to be subject to it. Held as infallible, the shari'a comprised the religious, political, social, and domestic duties of those who professed Islam.

In the opinion of Ibn Taimiyya good government depended on an "alliance" between emirs, the political and military leaders, and ulema the guardians and

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1 This section is based on the works, listed in the bibliography, of J. Schacht, A. Hourani, and Gibb and Bowen.

interpreters of the shari'a. Such an alliance existed in the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Sultans were the first to organize the ulema into a hierarchy which reached its final shape under Sulaiman the Magnificient. At the head of the hierarchy was the chief mufti (Şeyh-ü l-Islam) who was the opposite number of the Grand Vezir and virtually equal to him in rank. As he was the head and representative of the guardians of the law, his official sanction in the form of a fetva was always required for every act of prime importance of the state. He also had had a right to disapprove of actions of the government as being contrary to the shari'a.

In the provincial centres the functions of the Şeyh-ül-Islam and his subordinates were exercised by a qadi trained in the medresses of Istanbul and a mufti of the indigenous ulema. The qadi appointed deputies (na'ibs) in the sub-provincial centres, from the indigenous ulema. The functions of the qadi (and on a smaller scale of the na'ib) were not confined to judicial administration. In addition, he was concerned with doctrine, education and social relations, exercised a degree of general supervision over the mosques and endowments (evkaf) created for their upkeep or for charitable purposes, and over the conduct of the civil administration. Moreover, the mehkeme (the shar'ī court)

also fulfilled certain administrative functions. Acts and decrees were issued through it and were registered in its sijill (record). Indeed the religious hierarchy had more functions than the title implied.

In the sixteenth century, alongside the qadi who was appointed for a limited period, the government began to appoint a mufti (jurisconsult) for each chief city of the empire. Usually regarded as the head of the local ulema, a mufti was appointed for life. This practice spread to sub-provincial towns and in the Arab provinces there were muftis for each school of law.

The religious hierarchy to which the whole corps of the ulema was attached in either this or some other way, appears to have played a double role. Firstly, by virtue of their being guardians of the law, religion, and culture, they formed a moral link between the Sultan, the defender of religion and state and his subjects, the body of the believers. Secondly, by virtue of the wide powers described above, they appear to have acted as a counterbalance to the "civil" authorities, imposing a moral check upon them, and ensuring that their acts did not exceed shari'a norms (or the regulations of the Sultan).

Hand in hand with the existence of the ulema, the representatives of official Islam, there existed the

sufi orders, independent organizations which also enjoyed the protection of the Ottoman sultans, possibly with the purpose of controlling them, while at the same time maintaining a direct link between the Sultan and his Muslim subjects. In the later centuries of Islam, sufi orders expanded to include almost every section of the Muslim community. The reason for this expansion was rooted on the one hand in the social realities of the Muslim lands and on the other in the fact that official Islam, being a rigid dogma, did not satisfy the religious feelings and spiritual requirements of the common man who found in the sufi shaikh a spiritual guide and in sufi rituals an expression of his piety.

But sufi orders were not merely fraternities of pious men, and they became, in the later period of Islamic history, an important social factor. Indeed their impact upon Muslim society can hardly be exaggerated. They first of all provided Muslim society with a socio-religious coherence which the official dogma failed to do. Moreover, the structure and organization of a sufi order provided its shaikhs and preachers with social influence and thus with the means to mobilize public opinion. In some cases this influence was used for political ends although this was not the general pattern and on the whole, within the framework of a Muslim state, sufi

orders refrained from political action and preached a doctrine of quietism.

In spite of this lack of political ambition sufi orders were bound to exert a degree of influence over the affairs of society and state although this was probably more indirectly than otherwise, it would seem that the teachings of the sufi orders (or some of them) made the major contribution in later centuries in shaping the social outlook of the Muslim believers. High functionaries of state and even high ulema were also affected by those teachings. Examples of this are not lacking in Ottoman history. Indeed the history of the reform movement in the nineteenth century may not be well understood without understanding the socio-religious beliefs of some leading statesmen and ulema, rooted in the ideology of certain orders, as we shall see in the course of this work.

However, the impact of the sufi movement upon Muslim society in the last few centuries appears on the whole to have been disadvantageous. By its nature sufism emphasized ritual and piety more than learning. Indeed the permeation of the upper classes by sufi influences may have had certain implications in the learning of the sciences of official Islam in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Moreover, the sufi orders allowed the people

to indulge in certain pleasures which the shari'a explicitly prohibited such as wine drinking, music, or consumption of opium. "Dispensation from obligations imposed by the shari'a has always been characteristic of sufism"[1] stated a modern authority. Thus from the moral aspect, the shari'a appears to have lost ground to sufism. In short, the fact that the sufi movement spread throughout the ranks of Muslim society, contributed to the degeneration of this society--a degeneration which was most noticeable in the eighteenth century. In the light of this it is parodoxical that the drive for the moral regeneration of Muslim society came from the ranks of the sufi movement, as we shall see below.

This moral degeneration which also influenced the religious institution was accompanied by a degeneration of justice. A Muslim ruler had no legislative power of his own. But the shari'a allowed the ruler a discretionary power to issue administrative regulations within limits, prescribed by itself, for the sake of the well-being of the Muslim community. Such regulations, springing from the ruler's will were not held as constituting a secular law rival to the shari'a but were confined to matters undefined by it and were not supposed to conflict with its rulings. Such matters were

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[1] Gibb and Bowen, Islamic society and the West one vol. in 2 pts. (London 1950 and 1957), I/2, p. 204.

concerned with certain branches of civil and penal law which were administered by the state.

In the Ottoman empire those laws were codified through the issue of kanuns by the sultans. This prerogative was used extensively and it became in certain circumstances an excuse for tyranny. Criminal justice was performed in the diwan (audiance-chamber) headed by the sovereign or his representative. He awarded punishments by practising his discretionary powers. When the restraining power of the religious heirarchy declined the civil authorities exercised an uncontrolled power disregarding both the moral obligations of the shari'a and the limits within which it permitted them to act. Thus the diwan courts tended to exceed the strict limits of their jurisdiction and power. In this way shari'a norms were violated and injustice and insecurity of life and possessions spread in the land.

No wonder then that from the time of Koçu Bey onwards, the memorialists stressed the need to follow strictly the requirements of the shari'a for the good order of the state and religion. Indeed in the Islamic tradition, a just ruler was he who upheld the shari'a, did nothing to contradict it, consulted the ulema (its guardians and interpreters), and listened to their exhortations.

This was so because in the Muslim state the shari'a was the best guarantee for justice and for the security of the individual's life and property. In the opinion of a modern authority on the shari'a, concerning the relationship between state and subject, it is stated that "the solutions provided by Islamic law go decisively and consistently in favour of the rights of the individual, of the sanctity of . . .. private property, and they put severe limits to the actions of the state in these matters". "Islamic law", he adds, "protects man as an individual as much as possible from interference with his rights and interests by the state".[1]

To sum up, the Ottoman system of government was based on the shari'a. The Ottoman sultans organized the ulema corps in a religious hierarchy to ensure that state and society were being governed according to the shari'a. On the other hand, they also protected the sufi orders with the aim of controlling them and of maintaining a direct link with the people. But it appears that by the eighteenth century the religious hierarchy was failing to perform properly its duties as guardians of the shari'a. Shari'a rules no longer defined the acts or the moral behaviour of the ruler or his representatives.

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1 J. Schacht, "Islamic law in contemporary states" in: The American Journal of comparative law, vol. 8, No. 2, Spring 1959, p. 138.

Consequently, arbitrary rule grew, injustice and insecurity spread, and this was followed by a feeling that Muslim society had degenerated. Shari'a rules were also disregarded in relation to the non-Muslims as we shall see in the following section in relation to Syria. Indeed it looked as if the system of government was passing through a period of change.

Non-Muslim Challenge to Muslim Political Primacy

It has been stated that the status of the non-Muslims in a Muslim state was defined according to shari'a rules. In this way the shari'a came to guarantee the supremacy of the Muslims in the land. The state was that of the Muslims. Non-Muslims were tolerated but were not regarded as part of the political community--and as such they did not have the right of equal citizenship with their Muslim compatriots.

The Ottomans organized the non-Muslims in the Millet system. Each community was organized on a semi-autonomous basis headed by its own religious heirarchy,[1] but this only led to their being socially and culturally segregated from the Muslim community and in the long run the disadvantages of this system proved to be more than the advantages. "It militated against the solidarity of

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1 For a detailed discussion of the Millet system and the status of the non-Muslims in the Cttoman Empire see Gibb and Bowen I/2, pp. 207-261 (chap. 14, "The Dimmis").

Ottoman society as a whole",[1] asserted a modern historian.

However, by the end of the eighteenth century shari'a rules in this matter were being disregarded. The non-Muslim communities as a whole were becoming stronger and more cohesive. They profited both commercially and culturally from their contacts with Christian Europe. In Syria, for instance, they were no longer isolated from the political or cultural stream of the Muslim majority. By that time they were having some share (though subordinate) in matters of government and culturally they were identifying themselves with the culture and literary heritage of the majority.[2] These were signs of a beginning of social integration but it was at the expense of the Muslim element loosing its political primacy--a direct contradiction of the shari'a.

This development started to take shape at a time when the central government was very weak and had lost all effective authority over its provinces. A new type of governor was emerging in those provinces--the semi-autonomous Pasha. Having roots in the land or ruling for life, those Pashas were, according to all the evidence, concerned with the welfare and stability of their districts[3] and even though their government was

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1 Ibid., p. 256, see also p. 79.

2 See below, pp.171ff.

3 Ş. Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought (Princeton, 1962), p. 149; R. Davison, Reform in the Ottoman Empire (Princeton, 1963), p. 169; B. Lewis The Emergence of Modern Turkey (London, 1961), p. 38.

arbitrary and some of them were reportedly tyrannical, on the whole their rule was beneficent to all the people they governed. Moreover, judging from the example of the Syrian provinces, it is noticed that where there were autonomous Pashas who tended to be more tolerant their treatment of the non-Muslims was distinguished by its freedom from religious prejudice. Thus for example when the leading ulema of Acre tried to incite 'Ali Pasha (the Kahya of Sulaiman Pasha, the Vali) against the Christians, he utterly refused quoting the Qur'anic verse "If thou chastisest them they are Thy servants, if Thou forgivest them Thou art the All-mighty, the All-wise".[1]

It would seem then that these semi-autonomous governors of the Ottoman provinces of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries treated all their subjects equally. This was at least true in the case of Syria the greater part of which was governed for more than half a century from Acre by a mamluk household founded by Jazzar. There are many signs to show that Jazzar and his two successors neither discriminated against the non-Muslims nor favoured the Muslims, in spite of Muslim susceptibilities. In fact non-Muslims were better

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1 Ib. al-'Awra, Tarikh wilāyat Sulaiman Pasha al-'Ādil, ed. by Q. al-Basha (Saida, 1936), pp. 145-6. See the Qur'an V/118, Arberry's translation (London 1955).

treated by those pashas than by the central authorities when the country was restored to Ottoman direct rule.

There were several causes. Probably the most important was that the non-Muslim communities represented at the time the more dynamic element in the country. In the course of the eighteenth century those communities achieved a degree of wealth and cultural progress unparalleled in previous centuries. Many Christians became well versed in Arabic, possibly better than any other community except a small number of ulema who preserved and carried on the sciences of Arabic and the teachings of Islam.

It was from the non-Muslims that the pashas of Syria tended to choose their local officials in the last quarter of the eighteenth and the first few decades of the nineteenth centuries. Generally speaking, their clerks and scribes were Christians while their accountants and bankers were Jews.

Clearly the pashas must have had other reasons for employing them apart from their qualifications and it is possible that it was because of their connections with members of the same group in other provinces, or that they might have been more loyal to the person of

the pasha than members of other communities.[1]

In any case there came a time that the chief scribes and most of the clerks of the pashalik of Acre (which included for some time the pashalik of Tripoli) were Uniate Malkites.[2] The chief accountant was Haim Farhi of a Damascine Jewish family. For many years Farhi enjoyed the full confidence of his master Sulaiman Pasha and a contemporary historiographer called him "the partner" in the government.[3]

In other words, the non-Muslim communities by the beginning of the nineteenth century had come to enjoy much power in spite of their being a minority. Their influence upon the affairs of the country appears to have been second only to that of the pasha's household and the captains of his soldiery: subsequent events were to prove how much this upset the Muslim majority.

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1 This probably was true in relation to the Uniate Malkites (Greek Catholics) who formed the majority of the scribes. All through the eighteenth century the Uniate Malkites suffered the persecution of the Greek Orthodox religious heirarchy. And, as this heirarchy was more powerful in Istanbul due to the position of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch and the Phanariote influence upon the Porte, it was natural that the Uniate Malkites would support local semi-autonomous pashas and seek their favour. (See R. Haddad, Syrian Christians in Muslim Society (Princeton, 1970), pp.51,63ff.,66.

2 Al-'Awra gave for the year 1811 a list of fifty Christian scribes in the service of the Sulaiman Pasha (Vali--1805 to 1819) see pp. 159-167 and p. 447; see also Mikha'il al-Dimashqi, Tarikh Hawadith al-Sham wa Lubnan, ed. by L. Ma'aluf (Beirut 1912), p. 39.

3 Al-'Awra p. 159, and especially p. 477.

Moreover, Muslim notables and the ulema resented the fact that in such a regime their power was diminished and many of them suffered death or other arbitrary punishment at the hands of the governors. Indeed the will of those governors was the law of the land. The shari'a which came to protect the rights and interests of the individual was disregarded, and its rules violated.

There is no doubt that the rise of the non-Muslim communities and the disregard for the shari'a rules by the civil authorities contributed much in defining the political thinking of the Muslims in the coming generations and their attitude towards both the non-Muslims and the state. Not only that, what equally disturbed the Muslims was, it seems, the rise to power of Mount Lebanon with its Christian majority, and the unprecedented influence of its ruler upon the affairs of Syria.

The Emirate of Mount Lebanon

While in Damascus after the decline of the 'Azm house, the Pasha was changed frequently, in Acre he was appointed for life as happened in the case of Jazzar and his two successors. In addition to the pashalik of Acre they also governed that of Tripoli for many years. The reason the pasha of Acre had such wide powers was not only because the state failed to restrict

them but also because it needed a powerful governor there to counterbalance the rising power of the emirate of Mount Lebanon and to keep its emirs under check.

There, in the last decades of the eighteenth century, the Maronites began to emerge as a relatively organized and powerful community.[1] In political terms this power expressed itself in the rise of the emir from a chieftain of a mountainous area to a sovereign of a country. Under the later Shihabi emirs and specially under Bashīr II, Mount Lebanon enjoyed a great deal of influence in central and southern Syria. It also became the most prosperous area in the country.

Bashir II ruled for more than half a century (1788-1840 with short interruptions). After the death of Jazzar in 1804, according to a modern historian, he became the most powerful man in Syria.[2] His locally conscripted army was more powerful than any of the armies of the Ottoman governors of Syria including that of his overlord, the Pasha of Acre. And it was due to his help that this pasha succeeded on two occasions (in 1810 and 1821) in beating the army of the pasha of Damascus.

Bashīr boasted to Muhammad 'Ali that he could have

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1 See I. Harik, Politics and change in a traditional society, Lebanon 1711-1845 (Princeton, 1968), p. 34f. and chap. V.

2 A. Rustum, Bashīr baina al-Sultan wa'l-'Aziz, 2 vols. (Beirut, 1956), I, 1, 3, 16.

easily occupied that city had he so wished.[1]

Bashīr's army was largely composed of Lebanese Christians. He himself, originally a Sunni Muslim, accepted Christianity on the Maronite rite, together with a large section of his family. Albeit, he was a ruler of a non-Muslim, autonomous, and prosperous region of Syria. There was no illusion among the Muslims that the rise of the Lebanon, (not to mention the other Christian communities), and the political power its emir could wield, virtually undermined their political primacy in Syria, in a way which had never happened before in Syrian history. The fact that Bashīr, who was possibly aware of this feeling, posed always as an aide to his overlord did not ease this feeling nor did it reconcile the Muslim majority to the situation.

When Muhammad 'Ali of Egypt occupied Syria in 1831-32 he also allied himself publicly with Bashīr and used his troops in quelling insurrections just as the Pasha of Acre had done. He employed Christians in very high positions in spite of Muslim displeasure and treated Muslims and Christians equally. It was further proof for the Muslim element in Syria that provincial semi-autonomous pashas put their own interest above all other

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[1] Ibid., I, 16, see also p. 35. In both occasions the root of the conflict was it seems the Biqā', an extremely fertile plain which Bashīr controlled while the Pasha of Damascus coveted but was unable to obtain.

considerations.

Muslim Reaction

Indeed long before that, Muslims were beginning to show signs of irritation. In Damascus, the vali Yusuf Kenj Pasha (1807-1810) of Kurdish origin, fell for a short while in 1808 under the influence of a young Kurdish shaikh and began to show signs of a change of character. He tried to impose certain rules of moral behaviour upon the Muslims and to treat Christians and Jews with intolerance, strictly applying the sumptuary regulations. In a few cases he even tried to force some Christians to accept Islam. 'Abbūd al-Baḥri, a Uniate Malkite Christian of Hums, his own chief of secretariat, refused to do so and because he felt insecure fled to Bashīr II when he sought refuge.[1] This attitude of the pasha aroused Muslim religious prejudice against the non-Muslims and, probably for the first time in many centuries, an atmosphere of persecution developed. However, Kenj retreated from this attitude in face of protest from the ulema who regarded his acts as contrary to Islam and without precedent. He also dismissed his shaikh and the situation returned to normal.

Such a tendency towards intolerance was found

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1 On this behaviour of Kenj see A. Hourani, Shaikh Khalid and the Naqshbandi order (in course of publication) p. 11f; Mikha'il al-Dimashqi, pp. 20ff; al-'Awra, p. 94.

in Acre too. In Damascus where the established ulema class was secure in its position, the incentive came from a stranger. But in Acre where the ulema and other Muslim notables were relatively a new class, they apparently felt insecure in a town dominated by non-Muslim merchants and officials. Some of them, as we have seen, tried to incite the Kahya against the Christians but he refused. Later, at a time of plague and when government machinery was almost at a stand still, those notables tried again to impose certain disabilities upon the Christians but they did not last.[1]

However, this feeling of Muslim sectarian prejudice against the Christians continued to grow and in the early eighteen twenties it was nourished by external factors such as the Greek revolution and by other elements which will be discussed later.

In conclusion, the rise of the non-Muslim communities on the one hand, and of the semi-autonomous arbitrary type of governor on the other, together with the co-operation that developed among them in such fields as administration and finance, and on a number of occasions in military matters, caused much anxiety to the Muslims in Syria. It created a tension in Syrian society which was soon to develop into an open cleavage.

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1 Al-'Awra, pp. 145f, 179ff.

For the Muslim majority this state of affairs was contrary to the rules of the shari'a the enforcement of which would have put the ruler under checks and secured Muslim political primacy. But the governors of Syria at that time were not prepared to do this.

In a word, Muslims in Syria came to believe that the power and influence which the non-Muslim element enjoyed, coupled with the existence of a decentralized system of government were contrary to their interests. It was also a proof of the weakness of Muslim society. They sought salvation in a retreat to Sunni Muslim social and political values. They may have found that to safeguard their privileged status and secure a better standard of justice and security of life and possessions, shari'a rules should be strictly followed in matters of state and that the authority of the central government should be fully restored.

No wonder then that when the central government reasserted its authority over Syria at the beginning of the Tanzimat period, non-Muslims were removed from all positions of influence. But as we shall see, due to their better education, the new trade with Europe, and other factors, they were capable of adapting themselves to the new situation and to restoring much of the power and influence they had previously enjoyed. But this

made no contribution to easing the tension. On the contrary it increased it, especially because it was regained as a consequence of the growth of western influence upon the central government and in the Ottoman lands. Indeed the cleavage in Syrian society was never completely healed.

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY PERIOD OF REFORM: 1826-1854

1. The Reforms of Mahmud II

Attempts to reform the Ottoman Empire were not new and probably go back to the Köprülü vezirs in the late seventeenth century. Following the disastrous defeats of the eighteenth century there were attempts to modernize the armed forces, the most serious of these (although before our period) probably being undertaken by Sultan Selim III (1789-1807) who tried to establish a new infantry corps, the Nizam-i Cedid, while leaving the old corps, the Janissaries, untouched. Those attempts, motivated by defeat in the battlefield, dealt only with outward aspects of the problem: they did not touch its roots. The nineteenth century reforms, on the other hand, appear to have been the outcome of internal dynamism within the Muslim community. In the early period of reform (1826-1854), both the forces and ideas of change were rooted in the Islamic tradition. The aim of the reform was not simply to strengthen this arm of the state or the other, but above all to restore virtue and righteousness into the acts of the ruler and his men,

and to strengthen the state as an agent for the regeneration of the Muslim community.

The reforms started with the destruction of the Janissaries in 1826 by Sultan Mahmud II. This act was not a result of a conspiracy against a turbulent and in a sense a foreign element as was the case in Egypt when Muhammad 'Ali exterminated the Mamluks in 1811. It was an open confrontation between the Sultan and an old army corps that resisted military modernization and openly rebelled. It was significant that the upper classes of Istanbul backed and supported the Sultan in this confrontation against an element which at that phase represented the lower classes of the city. The official historiographer of the event, one of the high ulema, wrote in justification of the act that "the Janissaries were bad Muslims who violated the religious law . . ."[1] Thus, their destruction may indicate that a new spirit was by then animating the upper classes in Istanbul. It was also a sign that those classes were by then largely united in their attitude to reform in a way such as they had never been before. Moreover, the crushing of this force helped the sultan and his advisers to define the course of reform undisturbed.

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[1] See U. Heyd, "The Ottoman 'Ulema and Westernization", in U. Heyd (ed.), Studies in Islamic History and Civilization (Jerusalem, 1961), p. 80 quoting M. Es'ad, Uss-i Zafer, pp. 113, 159.

The destruction of the Janissaries, asserted a historian of modern Turkey, opened the way for "radical reorganization"[1] of the Ottoman state. However radical this reorganization had been, it did not touch, in the early period of reform, the Islamic basis upon which the state was established.[2] In a sense the reforms in that period (including the Gülhane rescript), appear to have come to reaffirm that basis. Indeed the modernization of the Ottoman institutions was kept in the first generation within the limits which the shari'a allows the Muslim ruler in administrative, military and financial matters.

The reforms of Sultan Mahmud came to strengthen the state and in a decade or so decisive steps were taken on the road to modernization. A new army was built on European models and the reorganization of the central government started. Thus state departments and a council of ministers (though not a cabinet) were created together with two high consultative councils for military and civil reform. The second of these "The Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances" was later to play an important role in the Tanzimat period as a semi-legislative body.

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1 B. Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey (London, 1961), p. 79.

2 Cf. Heyd, pp. 90ff, 95.

Among other reforms,[1] salaries were fixed for government employees and state functionaries, new schools to serve the needs of the army and bureaucracy were established, and reorganisation of the evkaf (religious endowments) took place.

In addition to abolishing the Janissaries and to launching these modernizing measures, the period of Mahmud II was distinguished by the suppression of the political and military power of the A'yan and Derebeys, and of some of the semi-independent chieftains, and the restoration of the authority of the central government over most of the provinces. As we have seen in Syria, Muslim "public opinion" was perhaps not uninterested in this process, though Syria might have been a special case.

2. Mustafa Reshid Pasha and the Gülhane Rescript

Sultan Mahmud left the Ottomanastate in a stronger

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1 For a detailed discussion see Lewis, pp. 75ff, 366f; Ş. Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought (Princeton, 1962), pp. 149ff; H. Inalcık, "The Nature of Traditional Society" in Ward and Rustow (eds.), Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey (Princeton, 1964), p. 55; R. Davison, Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876 (Princeton, 1963), pp. 25ff.

position than it had been when he ascended the throne. After his death in 1839, the reforms were continued and directed by a group of young bureaucrats led by Mustafa Reshid Pasha (1800-1858) who was then Foreign Minister.[1]

Entering government service at an early age, Mustafa Reshid was trained and protected by Pertev Effendi (later Pasha) one of the high and influencial functionaries in the later days of Mahmud II.[2] Pertev was a dedicated follower of the Naqshbandi-Khalidi order in Istanbul[3] which advocated a firm emphasis on Islamic orthodoxy and on following the obligations of the shari'a. We do not know whether Reshid (or for this matter his close associate Şadik Rif'at) were Naqshbandis, but it appears that they were much influenced by Pertev in their approach to reform.[4]

A talk between Rif'at and Stratford Canning may illustrate to what degree the reformers were committed to maintain the Islamic basis of the state. Two Ottoman Christians accepted Islam but for some reason they decided

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1 On him see R. Kaynar, Mustafa Reşid Paşa ve Tanzimat (Ankara, 1954); 'Ali Fuad, Rical-i Mühimme-i siyasiye (Istanbul, 1928), pp. 6-55; Cavid Baysun, "Mustafa Reşit Paşa"in Tanzimat (Istanbul, 1940), pp. 723-746; 'A. Şeref, Tarih Musahabeleri (Istanbul, A.H. 1339), pp. 75-87; A. Rasim, Osmanli Tarihi, 4 vols. (Istanbul, A.H. 1326-30), IV, 2063-72, n. 292. See also B. Lewis, Emergence, p. 103f; Mardin, p. 155f.

2 Şeref, p. 75; Mardin, p. 158.

3 See below, p.32f.

4 Mardin, p. 159f.

to return to Christianity. They were put to death on a charge of apostasy according to the shari'a. The British Ambassador angrily protested to the Re'is Effendi (Foreign Minister), Rif'at Pasha. "In political matters" answered Rif'at, "we shall defer entirely to the advice of Europe. In religious matters we need all our liberty. Religion is the basis of our laws. It is the principle of our government, His Majesty the Sultan can no more touch it than we can".[1]

Reshid and Rif'at had a better view of Europe and its institutions than most of their colleagues. They both served as ambassadors in European capitals. Reshid in Paris in 1834 and Rif'at in Vienna in 1837 and both were ready to borrow what they deemed suitable for the reorganization of the Ottoman administration. But they did not borrow things that would change the legal basis of the state. Indeed as it is shown elsewhere in this work, a new wave of Naqshbandi teachings in the early nineteenth century permeated the upper classes of Istanbul to such a considerable degree that no reformer could have succeeded to introduce new measures, incompatible with shari'a rules, and remain in power. "Naqshbandism"

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[1] Quoted in Lewis, p. 101; cf. Heyd, p. 89. However, under the pressure of Canning, the Porte declared that no more such executions of Christian converts to Islam who desired to return to Christianity, should take place. (See Davison, p. 45).

concluded Hourani in an essay on the Order in western Asia in the nineteenth century, "offered the perplexed Muslim a faith which emphasised the importance of virtuous activity, and the claims of the shari'a to be a guiding rule for it, a faith which included all that was valuable in those of its opponents, justified Sunni Muslims in rejecting other creeds and strengthened them in resisting attacks from outside..."[1]

In the light of this, the Gülhane rescript should be understood. Fromulgated by Reshid, then Foreign Minister, on 3rd November, 1839 some three months after the death of Mahmud--the rescript opened the period of the Tanzimat (1839-1878).[2] In its preamble[3] it proclaimed that when the shari'a and the regulations of the sultans were honoured the empire increased in strength and the subjects enjoyed prosperity. And when the shari'a and those regulations were disregarded the power of the state declined and the former strength and prosperity changed into weakness and poverty. This was not merely "lip service" to the shari'a to appease

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1 A. Hourani, "Shaikh Khalid...", p. 20.

2 i.e. until Sultan Abdulhamid II prorogued parliament.

3 A copy of the rescript in Rasim, IV, 1865ff, n. 279. English translation in Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, 2 vols. (New York, 1956), I, 113-116. For a review of the rescript see Şeref, op. cit., pp. 48ff; Davison, pp. 38ff; Engelhardt, La Turquie et le Tanzimat, 2 vols. (Paris, 1882-4), I, 35ff.; An Arabic translation in Bustani, Da'irat al-Ma'ārif, XI, 631f.

conservative elements. On the contrary it indicated the conviction of the reformers that the supremacy of law (shari'a and regulations) should be restored if state and society were to be regenerated.

If the rescript was in any sense revolutionary, it was so only in that the ruler and his representatives should be bound by the laws of the state.[1] "The real aim of the Tanzimat...is to abolish tyranny and abuses and to give people and subjects security and comfort" stated the Supreme Council on an occasion in the late 1840's.[2] Strictly speaking the rescript introduced no new principle. "The traditional state philosophy was genuinely apparent in it" asserted a modern historian.[3]

After the preamble the rescript emphasised the right of security for the individual. When the subject is protected against injustice and enjoys security of life, honour, and fortune, he will not commit disloyalty but his actions will be devoted to the well-being of state and community. This was the essence of the rescript. It promised to end the practice by which sultans and governors used to put people to death at will or to confiscate their property. "No one can secretly or publicly put another to death by poison or in any other

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1 Cf. Şeref, p. 63.

2 From the minutes of the Council on Reb. I, 1265, B.A. 14/1, 1.46 quoted in Davison, p. 43 and n. 72.

3 Inalcık, pp. 56-57.

manner" without public trial "as the divine law requires", it affirmed. As a consequence, the power of life and death was withdrawn from governors of provinces.

The rescript also proclaimed the necessity to enact "new regulations" to bring about "good administration of the state and the provinces". This should not be understood as indicating an intention to introduce innovations. As explained above, the shari'a allows the ruler to take measures for the well-being of the community provided that they do not contradict its rulings. In this context the rescript proclaimed the intention of the government to abolish tax farming (iltizam); to introduce fixed and direct taxation and regular and orderly recruitment of troops; fair and public trial of persons accused of crimes; to fix suitable salaries for public servants, and to eliminate bribery. None of these measures would have affected the Islamic basis of the state.

The rescript stated that the Council of Judicial Ordinances was to be enlarged by the addition of new members and to prepare "the necessary regulations concerning the security of life and fortune and the assessment of taxes" which however would have needed the sanction of the sultan to be promulgated. In this sense

the sultan delegated, in part, his law-making authority.[1] Being compounded of high functionaries, the strengthening of this council meant in practice more power for the bureaucracy.

At one point the rescript is not clear, and that when it proclaimed that Muslims and non-Muslims ("Ehl-i Islam ve milel-i saire")[2] shall enjoy those favours without exception and when in the following year Reshid introduced a new penal code he made all Ottoman subjects equal before the law.[3] It appears however that this "favour" did not come to change the status of the non-Muslims. Equality before the law is not equal citizen-ship. The non-Muslims continued after the rescript to pay "Cizye", and their evidence in the shari'ī court was still not accepted against Muslims, and they were refused high office--in spite of their being no less qualified than their Muslim compatriots. In other words, equality before the law should not be regarded as the beginning of "the emancipation" (if we may use this term) of the non-Muslims in the empire. Indeed, until the rise of the influence of the western-powers in the mid-1850's, their status would appear to have been--in practical terms--better before the reform than after it.

To sum up, the Gülhane rescript introduced no new principle but reaffirmed the supremacy of the shari'a

1 Davison, p. 42; see also Lewis, p. 105f.
2 Rasim, p. 1873n.
3 Lewis, p. 107 and Davison, p. 40.

in the state. It was the edict of 1856 which introduced an innovation incompatible with the shari'a. Ziya Pasha, the leading young Ottoman, was probably right in his estimation of the Gülhane rescript: "If we put the...rescript letter by letter under scrutiny", he wrote, "not a word could be seen out of the rules of the shari'a and all the matters which are called reforms followed its commands".[1]

3. The First Phase of the Tanzimat: 1839-1854

Even though the Gülhane rescript came to reaffirm the Islamic basis of the state, the reforms that followed it brought a change in the system of government which in a sense was incompatible with the spirit of the shari'a. They also brought about a shift in the locus of political power in the state from the palace to the hands of the bureaucracy.

During the preceding century, the bureaucracy had become larger and more influential, possibly due to increased diplomatic contacts with European countries. All through the reign of Sultan Mahmud II it played an increasingly growing role especially after the destruction of the Janissaries. The promulgation of the Gülhane rescript marked the beginning of the ascendancy of this

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[1] Hürriyet no. 41 of Zilh. 22, 1285 (April 1869) quoted in I, Sungu "Tanzimat ve Yeni Osmanliler" in Tanzimat (Istanbul 1840), p. 801; a similar view of N. Kemal in p. 807 of the same source.

class. It was the bureaucracy that formulated the reforms and carried them out. Both the reorganization of the central government and the provincial system of government demanded a large number of officials, following which their number vastly increased. Secure from the arbitrary rule of the Sultan and given full control over the affairs of the state, they controlled the destiny of the empire for several decades.

Indeed power rested in the hands of the bureaucracy until the last years of the Tanzimat period, which was what probably characterized this period more than anything else. At the same time it was a cause of weakness and a source of many failures since it was difficult to find the necessary number of trained, capable, and honest officials. But for a better understanding of the Tanzimat period it is necessary to study the origin, beliefs, and social outlook of its makers.

From the proclamation of the Gülhane rescript until 1852, Reshid was regarded the leader of the young reformers after which date his star went into rapid decline. Although stayingin politics until his death in 1858, the leadership of the movement had passed into other hands and indeed had entered a new phase. But even in this short period, Reshid did not stay in office uninterrupted. In 1841 a party opposing his reforms

brought about his dismissal. He returned in 1845 again as Foreign Minister and a little later as Grand Vezir. During those few years some important measures had been taken: a penal code (1840) based, it seems, on previous Ottoman regulations; a commercial law (1850) based on a French law;[1] and more state schools were established to fulfil the need of the government for officials.

Not less important however was the reform undertaken in provincial government. Sultan Mahmud died leaving the control of Istanbul over the provinces stronger than it had ever been in the century and a half that preceded his death (except of course over the areas that succeeded in achieving semi-independence). But it was a control in the frame of the traditional pattern. Authority, it is true, was restored to the hands of the government's representatives appointed by the sultan and upon his choice. This restored control of the central government did not pass much beyond the towns or the more accessible regions, however, and at least in the case of the Arab provinces of the Fertile Crescent, hilly districts and less accessible regions enjoyed in practice a varied degree of autonomy under their own local chiefs.

Such a state of provincial government was not satisfactory to Reshid and his associates. It did not

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[1] Davison, p. 44 and n. 78; Lewis, p. 107.

guarantee the power of the state or protect the interests of the population as they thought it should. The reforms they introduced ended with a complete change in the system of provincial government.

In the old system, the traditional functions of government were limited to the maintenance of law and order, to the raising of taxes, and to the preservation of the true religion. Such functions required only a limited body of officials in addition to the body of the ulema who (organized in the religious hierarchy), exercised as we have seen many administrative functions. Society in towns was organized in such a way that direct government authority was little seen or felt by the mass of the population whilst in the outlaying areas local chieftains usually formed the link between the Vali and the population.[1] We see then that pre-nineteenth century Ottoman rule in the provinces was to a great extent indirect, the functions of the government were limited, and the direct contact between the individual and the authorities which characterizes the modern state was not known in the Ottoman Empire or indeed in the former Muslim states.

The aim of the provincial reforms of the Tanzimat was to establish a uniform and centralized

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[1] Gibb and Bowen, I/1, p. 159f.

administration, and to create direct contact between each individual subject and the "civil" authorities.[1] The first steps taken in this direction were the imposition of conscription, direct collection of taxes, and the opening of the hilly and outlying districts to the direct rule of the government whilst at the same time suppressing their rulers.

There had never been compulsory conscription in the empire before. Its imposition would not only allow the government to choose its own soldiers, but simultaneously would deprive local magnates and chiefs of much of their manpower and thus weaken them. Hand in hand with conscription came disarmament--the forced collection of arms from the population. Both of those measures caused upheavals and revolts in many areas of the empire.[2]

Direct collection of taxes, it was thought, would protect the peasants and help to fill the treasury of the state, at the same time depriving the local tax farmers of an important source of wealth and power.[3]

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[1] A. Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables" in Polk and Chambers (eds.), Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East (Chicago, 1968), p. 54.

[2] In various parts of Syria. See M. Ma'oz, Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine (Oxford 1968), pp. 101-28; In Albania see Kemal, I., The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey ed. by S. Story (London 1920), pp. 8-9.

[3] Inalcık, p. 59.

Immediately after the proclamation of the Gülhane rescript, the Porte appointed revenue collectors in the provinces and sub-provinces of the empire. But direct levying of taxes did not succeed and the following year tax farming was restored. An additional reform in taxation was the cancelling of exemption from taxes of many of the notables and magnates in the provinces. Those measures were naturally bound to arouse opposition.[1] Thus, along with conscription and disarmament, tax reform was a source of much trouble for the central government.

In face of opposition, reform in this direction virtually stopped. In 1841, less than two years after he had promulgated the Gülhane rescript, Reshid fell from power due mainly to the failure of his new system of tax collection.[2] His successors in power decided to give priority to the building up and strengthening of the army as no reform could be successful if not backed by force. Reshid, it seems, attributed the failure to the lack of trained and willing bureaucrats. Thus when he came back to power in 1845 he gave much of his attention to this matter.[3]

In fact both measures--a strengthened army and an improved bureaucracy--were necessary and complementary

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1 Ibid., pp. 59, 61.

2 Lewis, pp. 109, 380; see also Inalcık, p. 61.

3 Ibid.; Lewis, p. 110f.

for the implementation of the new system in the circumstances described above. Trained and organized on the European model, the army became, at about mid-nineteenth century, powerful enough and sufficiently large to impose the Porte's authority and will wherever necessary. Later in the period it was divided into six commands one of which was posted in each region of the empire. Improvement in communications facilitated quicker mobility of troops from one place to another.

With the army and the bureaucracy becoming stronger and better trained, the imposition of reform upon the provinces took a more decisive turn. The forces that opposed the new acts of central government were those who were bound to suffer from their application, namely the intermediary forces, or more precisely the semi autonomous chiefs and sheikhs in the hilly and outlying areas. For to this group, reform meant elimination or subjugation and the Porte naturally met with strong opposition from them.

After a long struggle in which the Porte used both force and diplomacy intermittently, sometimes granting an official appointment to a local chief to administer his own district and, following the old precept of divide and rule, inciting at the same time his rivals against him, then using force at a favourable

moment, he eliminated all contenders and subjugated the area completely.

In this way, opposition was finally crushed and local chiefs were destroyed or forced to leave their districts into exile. Regions which had never seen a government official before, became in the later Tanzimat period governed directly by such officials. By the end of that period government authority prevailed, backed by the army and carried out by the bureaucracy. The new system which emerged was of a highly centralized nature. It also resulted, as in the case of Syria, in a decisive shift of political power within the province in favour of town notables, as will be seen later.[1]

A main feature of the decline of the Ottoman system in the eighteenth century was the failure of the religious hierarchy to play the role of a counterbalance to the "civil" authorities. With the reorganization of the provincial system and the imposition of direct rule from the central authorities, much power was vested in the hands of the bureaucracy. Consequently the question of instituting a counterbalance to it arose in order to avoid the deficiencies of the period of decline when the civil authorities unchecked, turned to arbitrary rule. Reshid tackled the problem in two ways. Firstly checks

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[1] See below, p.21.

were put upon the Vali's powers in as much as senior functionaries such as the chief finance officer and the army commander were independent of him and had direct contact with Istanbul.[1] Secondly, and more important, was that he introduced the system of local administrative councils--the meclis.

Two months after the proclamation of the Gülhane rescript, a firman was despatched to the governors of the provinces[2] in which they were ordered to set up local administrative councils in each provincial and sub-provincial centre. Councils in the capitals of the provinces were to be composed of 13 members, 6 of them ex-officio: the Vali himself (or sub-Vali in the sancaks), 2 clerks (secretaries of his), the local military commander, the Qāḍī (or the Na'ib in smaller towns), and the mufti; plus 7 "elected members": 4 notables "able and experienced", and where there were non-Muslims the Metropolit and two headmen (koca başis).[3] The elected members were to be nominated and chosen by a

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[1] E.Z. Karal, Osmanli Tārihi, cilt V (Ankara, 1947), p. 196; Englehardt, I, 108.

[2] Text in R. Kaynar, Mustafa Reşit Paşa ve Tanzimat (Ankara, 1954), pp. 226-234.

[3] Ibid., p. 229; R. Davison "The Advent of the Principle of Representation in the Ottoman Empire", (in Folk and Chambers (eds.) Beginnings of Modernization, p. 98); Inalcık, p. 58; Ma'oz, p. 92. Presumably if there were no non-Muslims living in that district or their number was insignificant the last three members would be Muslim notables.

complex indirect procedure.

The meclis in the first phase was invested with wide powers. Its authority extended to nearly all areas of administration and finance. Moreover it supervised the work of the sub-provincial councils and was required to sit as a criminal court. This judicial function had been shared previously partly by the Vali and partly by the Mehkeme (the shar'ī court).[1] Holding such powers, the meclis overruled the Vali who in his part could do nothing without consulting it.[2] Such measures amounted in fact to half measures in the way of decentralization, giving local notables not a little share in the government of their province.

The council included the leading notables of the city and their membership in it increased their power[3] both within the city and in the province as a whole. True, they had not been without power in the pre-reform era, but their power was confined to the city and its immediate vicinity. Moreover, as in the case of Damascus, they frequently suffered from the unrestrained power of the pasha or his men.[4] Now however, they became, within

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1 Kaynar, p. 229; Davison, Reform, p. 48; Inalcık, p. 59. See also Ma'oz, pp. 93ff for the powers of the meclis of Damascus.

2 Englehardt, I, 108.

3 See M. Ma'oz, ch. VII, pp. 85ff; Davison, Advent, p. 98.

4 In the days of Jazzar for instance a mufti of Damascus and two other notables were put in a dry well in the castle of the city and left to die, nobody daring to rescue them; see Bitar Ḥilyat al-Bashar, 3 vols. (Damascus, 1961-3) II, 1007-8 and M. al-Dimashqī, Tarīkh Ḥawādith al-Sham wa Lubnān, ed. by L. Ma'aluf (Beirut, 1912), pp. 12-13.

the city, far more powerful than before. In addition, with the inclusion of the outlying districts within government authority, the city notables spread their influence into those areas serving above all their own narrow interests. Some of the Tanzimat laws such as the Land Code of 1858 operated in their favour.[1]

Their hold upon the people of those areas increased with the weakening or destruction of the traditional leading sheikhs and chieftains, the people turning to the city notables to protect them from the unfavourable consequences of the application of the new system. Indeed as had happened in Syria the Tanzimat, it seems, opened the way for the domination of the country-side by the city.[2]

Because of its structure, the meclis had a Muslim majority. The few non-Muslim members in it carried apparently little or no weight in its decisions.[3] Presumably, its structure was similar (i.e. a Muslim majority) in the Balkan provinces with a Christian majority and in the eastern and southern Anatolian provinces where a large Armenian minority existed. The question is, how was it regarded in those provinces? This leads us to believe that the real purpose behind the establishment of the meclis system

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1 See Lewis, p. 117.

2 See below, p. 183f.

3 See Ma'oz, pp. 198-199 concerning the treatment of the non-Muslim members of the meclis of Damascus.

was not simply to "attract the loyalty of all its [government's] subjects"[1] meaning Muslims and non-Muslims alike. For the Muslims who were, as yet, not disloyal effectively controlled the meclis whilst those who were potentially disloyal, namely the Christians, were ineffective and under-represented[2] and consequently their interests suffered.

It has been stated above that the meclis became a counterbalance to the authority of the Vali. It also appears that it served to reassert or reaffirm Muslim political primacy in the provinces of the empire. The later upheavals and the tendency for separatism which were strong among the Christian communities of the empire in the late decades of the century may partly have had their roots in this period of early reform.

It seems that these measures which Reshid adopted towards the local meclis and his curbing of the powers of the Vali were unpopular among certain circles in Istanbul and when in August 1852 he fell from the Grand Vezirate, the measures were reversed. Summer 1852 marked the diminishing of Reshid's influence. He was followed in the Grand Vezirate by Āli Pasha, but after forty days in office Āli was dismissed and Mehmed 'Ali,

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1 Davison, Advent, p. 99.

2 H. Inalcık, Tanzimat ın Uygulanması (The application of the Tanzimat), Belleten, October 1964, p. 633; see also H. Temperley, The Crimea (London, 1964), p. 237.

a man of the palace, a damad (brother-in-law) of the Sultan, and an arch-enemy of Reshid, was raised to the Grand Vezirate.[1]

Mehmed 'Ali decided to invest provincial governors with full powers. A firman of 28 November 1852 was issued according to which every branch of administration, the military and the financial officers, and the meclis were placed under the Vali's control.[2] Naturally, the powers of the meclis were bound to be affected and later it became merely a deliberative and advisory body,[3] or even a tool in the Vali's hands rather than a check upon him, or a medium for the expression of the will of local ulema and notables. It might have been that in some areas a strong meclis continued, after the issue of the firman, to dominate a weak Vali but this was not the rule. This state of affairs found confirmation in the Vilayet law of 1864. After 1852 and until the rise of Mahmud Nedim in 1871, the Vali was all-powerful, all authority was centralized in his hands, and he was supported by a strong military presence.

This was not the only difference which distinguished Reshid's approach to reform from that of his

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1 'Ali Fuad, ___, pp. 14, 61, 65; see also Cevdet, Tezakir (1-12) (Ankara, 1953), pp. 21ff.

2 Englehardt, I, 109; Karal, Tarih, VI, 31-32; Ma'oz, p. 36; Ubicini, Letters on Turkey, 2 vols. (London, 1856), I, 45.

3 Davison, Reform, p. 147.

successors in the leadership of the movement, namely Āli and Fuad. But in order to understand fully the difference between the two periods and the background of the violent events which took place in the later one, it is necessary to discuss first a movement which contributed to the formulation of the ideological outlook of the men of reform during that first period, namely the Naqshbandia-Khalidiya sub-order to which we have already referred in the course of this chapter.

CHAPTER II

OTTOMAN REFORM AND THE NAQSHBANDI-KHALIDI SUB-ORDER

1. Shaikh Khalid and the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi Order

While Muslims in Syria and indeed in other parts of western Asia were self-searching, the young Kurdish Shaikh Dhia al-Din Khalid al-Shahrizuri who in 1808 influenced Yusuf Kenj the vali of Damascus to act as he did, assumed a new role and became a shaikh of the Naqshbandi order and the founder of a sub-order, the Naqshbandiya-Khalidiya which bore his name.

Shaikh Khalid was from Qaradagh, a town in the district of Shahrizur in Kurdistan.[1] He was born c. 1193/1779 and acquired a traditional Muslim education of Arabic and

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[1] On his life see 'Abdulmajid al-Khani, al-Hada'iq al-Wardiya...(Cairo, 1308/1890), pp. 223-259; Muhammad al-Khani, al-Bahja al-Saniya (Cairo, A.H. 1303) pp.82-99, (hereafter al-Bahja); 'Uthman ibn Sanad al-Wa'ili, Aşfa al-Mawarid. (Cairo, A.H. 1313); Muhammad ibn Sulaiman, al-Hadiqa al-Nadiya (on margins of the above); 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Biţar, Hilyat al-Bashar, 3 vols. (Damascus 1961-1963), I, 570-587; Muhammad Jamil al-Shaţţi, Rawḍ al-Bashar (Damascus, 1946), pp. 80-86; Muhammad Amin Zaki, Tarikh al-Sulaimaniya (Baghdad, 1951), pp. 225-229; 'Ali 'Alā' al-Din al-Alusi, al-Durr al-Muntathar, ed. by J. 'Ālusi and A. Jabburi (Baghdad, 1967), pp. 208-210; and A. Hourani, Shaikh Khalid and the Naqshbandi Order, (in course of publication). For some of the writings of Shaikh Khalid and a collection of some of his letters to his followers and to a number of prominent Ottoman functionaries see As'ad Sahib, Bughyat al-Wājid. (Damascus, 1334).

Persian languages, the Qur'ān, and the sciences of religion, first in his native town and later in Sulaimaniya, the seat of the Baban Kurdish emirs, where he started to teach at an early age. He later studied ḥadith with a Damascine 'Ālim for a short while.

In 1220/1805-6 he made the Haj by way of Damascus at a time just after the Wahhabis had established their rule in the holy cities of Islam. There is a tradition in the literature about him that in Mecca he was advised by "a holy man" to look for enlightenment in India.[1] On his way back he spent, it seems, a year or so in Damascus and it was during this time that the episode described above with Yusuf Kenj, the governor occurred.[2] It was perhaps in the light of these experiences that Shaikh Khalid decided after his return to Sulaimaniya, to go to India to be initiated into the Naqshbandi order following the advice, so the sources state, of a passing Muslim Indian Shaikh of that order, one Mirza Rahim Allah, who advised him to accompany him to India, to meet 'Abdullah al-Dihlawi, his master and a leading Shaikh of the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order. Khalid went to India in 1811 and stayed there for about a year.

Naqshbandiya was founded originally in Transoxania, drawing its theology from the Maturidi doctrines of Sunni Islam. It was regarded as being one of the more Orthodox orders and was distinguished by its strict adherence to, and

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1 Al-Khani, p. 225.
2 See above p.xvii of the introduction.

defence of, the tradition of ahl-Sunna and the shari'a.[1] As late as the sixteenth century Naqshbandiya was carried to India where its arrival was probably not accidental. The Mughal Emperor Akbar (d. 1605) had shown in his later days tendencies towards a syncretic form of religion, possibly with the aim of narrowing the gap between Islamic and Hindu beliefs[2]--a move which was resented by orthodox Muslim divines. About the end of Akbar's reign, a Naqshbandi missionary, Khawaja Baqi Billah (d. 1012/1603) who was initiated into the order in Samarqand, reached India[3] after which date Naqshbandiya took the lead in the Orthodox reaction against Akbar's religious policy, aiming at the moral regeneration of the Muslims and at freeing them from un-Islamic influences.[4]

One of Baqi's most distinguished disciples was Shaikh Ahmad al-Sirhindi (d. 1034/1624) whose works left a lasting impact on Naqshbandi thought in India and beyond.[5] Before Shaikh Ahmad, Naqshbandi shaikhs tended to stay away from courts of rulers but he was not to follow this tradition because, as he put it "the monarch is to the

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1 Al-Bahja, p. 7f; Hourani, p. 6.

2 On Akbar's religious tendencies see I.H. Qureshi, The Muslim community of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent (The Hague, 1962), p. 137ff; Aziz Ahmad, Studies in Islamic culture in the Indian Environment (Oxford, 1964), pp. 167ff.

3 Al-Khani, p. 178; Ahmad, p. 182.

4 Qureshi, p. 163.

5 On Sirhindi see al-Khani, pp. 178-191; Hourani, pp. 7-8; Qureshi, pp. 150ff.

state as the heart to the body, if the heart remains pure so does the body...".[1] And indeed under the influence of Shaikh Ahmad, the Mughal court was won back to Islamic Orthodoxy but not without paying the price of alienating the Muslim rulers from their Hindu subjects.[2] Shaikh Ahmad was also known as the Mujaddid of the second Islamic millenium and after him Indian Naqshbandiya bore the sub-title of Mujaddidiya.

These and other Naqshbandi teachings, Shaikh Khalid received in India in 1811. He himself was to write later some theological works but it seems that he saw his mission more in spreading the Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi beliefs in his part of the Muslim world.

Returning to Sulaimaniya about the end of 1812, he was soon to encounter the enmity of a Qadiri shaikh who was more firmly established in the town than he was himself. Shaikh Khalid was forced to leave and went to Baghdad where he enjoyed the protection of the governor who allocated for him al-Aḥsá'iya school which became later the Naqshbandi centre in that city. However, Mahmud Pasha the Baban ruler of Sulaimaniya recalled him and established a zawiya for him as a centre for his mission[3] where, it was said, he "and almost all the principle Koords are his...disciples".[4]

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1 Cited in Ahmad p. 183; cf. Hourani p. 7.

2 cf. Qureshi, pp. 159, 161.

3 Al-Khani, pp. 233-234.

4 Hourani, p. 14 citing C.J. Rich, Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan (London 1836), I, pp. 140-141.

During the five or six years that followed, Khalid succeeded in initiating a large number of adapts into Naqshbandiya in Kurdistan, Eastern Anatolia, and Baghdad. In 1820 he for some reason left Sulaimaniya suddenly and went to Baghdad where he was well received by its governor Daud Pasha.[1] There he continued his mission and gained many followers among the ulema and dignitaries of the city.[2] His fame reached Damascus whose mufti Husein al-Muradi, himself of a Naqshbandi family and a great grandson of Shaikh Murad al-Bukhari,[3] invited him to the city. Shaikh Khalid reached Damascus with many followers in 1823. This was to be his last station, for four years later he died there struck by the plague.

In Damascus Shaikh Khalid was well received. The great family of Ghazzi, in whom the shafi'i mufti-ship ran (Khalid was also a shafi'i), took him under its wing and he took one of their women folk as a wife. A Damascine apologist of his tells us that a great many of the people of the city, of all ranks, entered his Tariqa.[4]

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1 Al-Khani, p. 242.

2 Cf. Ibrahim Faşīh al-Haidari, 'Unwan al-Majd (Baghdad, 1962), pp. 135-136. (The book was written in 1286/1869-70)

3 Murad was a Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi Shaikh who spread the Tariqa more than a century earlier in Damascus and Istanbul. (see Silk al Durar, III, 130).

4 M.A. 'Ābdin, "Sall al-Ḥusām al-Hindi...", in Majmu'at Rasa'il ibn 'Ābdin, 2 vols. (Istanbul A.H. 1325), II, 285 and 324; see also A. Sāhib p. 88f. n.i.

In accordance with a Naqshbandi tradition, the expansion of the order in Damascus, as in Baghdad, was accompanied by a marked cultural activity. The adapts were taught in addition to the doctrine of the order, some theological literature and the shari'a. Thus many of those who accepted Naqshbandiya would have had some degree of education, and included many ulema and other notables. Indeed it appears from the biographical literature of nineteenth century Damascus that a large number of the prominent ulema in that century were his disciples. Moreover, contemporaries of Shaikh Khalid tell us that he was able "to revive many mosques in Damascus...[which had fallen]into negligence and destruction, by performing prayers, private worship, and zikr in them".[1] This emphasis on following the practices of the sunna and on disseminating knowledge of the shari'a,[2] that is the firm establishment of orthodoxy, was in a sense the centre of the Naqshbandis mission.

However, the arrival of Shaikh Khalid and his teachings in Damascus also had their disadvantages,

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1 'Ābdin, p. 324.

2 It was probably not an accident that M.A. 'Ābdin (d. 1836) a disciple of Shaikh Khalid started to write at this time his massive commentary on al-Durr al-Mukhtār of Muḥammad b. 'Ali al-Hiskafi. 'Ābdin was probably the last of the great Muslim jurists excluding Jevdet Pasha. His commentary called "Radd al-Muḥtār 'ala al-Durr al-Mukhtār (Cairo A.H. 1286),5 vols.

contributing to some extent to Muslim animosity against Christians and indeed arousing a spirit of fanaticism in them. Thus, according to a Damascine Christian chronicler, sometime between 1823 and 1826 some Muslim shaikhs "out of hatred for Christians" demolished, with the Vali's approval, an old Christian shrine situated opposite to a Muslim zawiya where the performance of zikr had recently been revived. The emotions of some Muslim lower classes, added the writer, became so high that events of aggression against Christians grew. It was only after an appeal to the Vali by the Christians, followed by his intervention through Muslim dignitaries, that such acts stopped.[1]

2. The Pre-eminence of Naqshbandiya-Khalidiya in Istanbul

The arrival of Shaikh Khalid in Damascus was, perhaps, a sign of an intention on his part to expand the order beyond Iraq and Kurdistan or Eastern Anatolia--or even Damascus. It is noticed that about this time his emissaries reached Istanbul, probably after the fall of Halet Effendi in 1822 who it seems opposed the order.[2]

Shaikh Khalid saw his duty not simply in caring for the inner purification of his followers, but in the

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1 Mikha'il al Dimashqi, pp. 48-49.

2 See al-Khani, p. 258; Azzawi, Tarikh al-Iraq, 8 vols. (Baghdad 1934-56)VI,298; Halet Effendi was Mahmud II's adviser and the most powerful statesman in Istanbul for over ten years. (On him see Seref, Tarih Musahabeleri (Istanbul A.H. 1339),pp. 27-38; Tekindağ in I.A. V, 123-5)

tradition of the great Naqshbandi shaikhs he also felt that his mission was to restore virtue and righteousness to the life of Muslim society and to the acts of the ruler and his men. It seems that Khalid planned to spread his tariqa in Istanbul with this object in mind.

This was not the first time that Naqshbandiya teachings had reached Istanbul. They had already spread there from Transoxania in the second half of the fifteenth century and had been favourably received by the ulema. Indeed Hourani tends to associate Naqshbandi expansion at that time in the Ottoman capital with the movement by which the sultanate turned its back on the heterodoxy of its earlier history and assumed a more orthodox character.[1]

The expansion in the early nineteenth century, however, marked a new stage. The emissaries of Shaikh Khalid met with favourable response in Istanbul and in a short while "many high dignitaries and ulema joined the order".[2] Among these were such people as the Şeyh-ül-Islam Mekkizade Mustafa ʿĀsim Effendi,[3] Pertev Effendi, a high functionary and a very influential man during the second

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1 Hourani op. cit., p. 8.

2 Lutfi, Tarih, I, 286.

3 Al-Khani, p. 232, 257; on Mustafa ʿĀsim Effendi see ʿIlmiye Salname-si (Istanbul A.H. 1334, p. 580), Lutfi, VIII, 124-5; Şeref, op. cit., pp. 300-301. He was Şeyh-ül-Islam three times (1818-19, 1823-25, 1833-46).

half of Muhmud II's reign.[1] There is evidence too that Hüsrev Pasha the founder of the new army sympathized with the order.[2] In the early stages the Sultan was much concerned but later his apprehensions were quieted. Lutfi says that the governor of Baghdad, Daud Pasha, was secretly asked about Shaikh Khalid, and apparently returned a favourable answer.[3]

And indeed there was no cause for apprehension for the nature of a Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi mission was to work within the framework of the existing order, by instilling virtue into those entrusted with authority. We find Shaikh Khalid instructing his first emissary to Istanbul "to urge the high and the low to pray for the Caliph of the Muslims, the commander of the faithful [sic] may [God] render him victorious over the enemies of religion".[4] In a letter to one of his deputies he instructed him to end the zikr by praying (du'a) for the safety of the "Sultan of Islam", for the virtuousness of his ministers and his men, and "for the revival on his and their hands of the exalted sunna and for raising high the light of the shari'a..."[5]

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1 Inal, Son Asir Türk Şairleri 12 pts. (Istanbul 1930-1942) pp. 1322, 2174; Brusalı, Osmanli Müellifleri, 3 vols. (Istanbul A.H. 1333-1342), I, 47 and II, 114; cf. Lutfi, V, 21.

2 Cf. I.A., V, 615.

3 Lutfi, I, 286.

4 As'ad Sāhib, Bughyat al-Wajid, p. 123.

5 Ibid, pp. 167ff. See also p. 174.

In another letter, to Abdullah Pasha the Vali of Acre (1819-32), he exhorted him to follow the rules of the shari'a adding that it was "a foremost duty to pray to God for the Sultan of Islam and for [his] ministers...upon whom the welfare of the land depends and whose righteousness is a precondition for the weal of the people".[1]

Once those intentions became understood, the Naqshbandiya-Khalidiya (as the order came to be known) started to enjoy a much favoured status in Istanbul which it kept for several decades.

The new wave in the early nineteenth century resulted also in a firm emphasis on orthodoxy and on sunni practices in matters of society and state, one of the early signs being the suppression of the Bektashi order. A month after the destruction of the Janissaries this order, which had traditional ties with that corps, was suppressed because, as the Ottoman authorities put it, the Bektashi's were of unorthodox leanings and not following the obligations of the shari'a.[3] Another early sign of the possible impact of Naqshbandi views on Ottoman thought at the time was the exile of five intellectuals who formed a sort of a "scientific society" discussing in private such subjects as philosophy, literature, mathematics, and astronomy. The

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1 Ibid, pp. 244-45.

2 A. Hourani, op. cit., p. 8.

3 Cevdet, Tarih, XII, 209f. (the edition of A.H. 1301). He quoted Mehmet Es'ad the official historian of the event.

leading figure of the group, Ferh Effendi, was said to have been of a philosophical outlook,[1] apparently with unorthodox leanings.

Indeed, this broad outlook of relatively open minded intellectuals who in their search for knowledge were ready to go beyond what Islamic culture offered was clearly discouraged. Thus we see, most probably due to the introversive outlook which grew in early nineteenth century Muslim thought, in consequence of Naqshbandi teachings, that in the next generation or two there was felt an increase in the interest of the Muslim educated public in Islamic culture and thought. In the Tanzimat period translating from Arabic and Persion into Turkish flourished. Equally so did the printing of many of the most popular "classics" of Ottoman and earlier Islamic culture.[2]

The firm emphasis on orthodoxy expressed itself outwardly in a general show of piety. Thus during the last decade or so of Mahmud II reign, a large number of mosques and sufi lodges both in the capital and in the provinces were repaired or restored.[3]

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1 Lutfi, I, 168-9; On this group and its broad outlook see also Mardin, p. 229f.

2 Mardin, p. 203; See also H.Z. Ülken, "Fikir Hareketleri", in Tanzimat (Istanbul, 1940), pp. 773-774.

3 Lutfi, IV, 72, 160, 166; V, 10-11, 21,and 70; see also Heyd "The Ottoman ulema and westernization" in Heyd (ed), Studies in Islamic History and Civilization (Jerusalem, 1961), p. 93; cf. Gölpinarlı, Mevlanadan sonra Mevlevilik (Istanbul 1953), pp. 75-76.

The Sultan issued a proclamation in A.H. 1252 (1836-7) to all Muslims to observe strictly the performance of daily prayers in groups.[1] Qāḍīs and na'ibs in the provinces were warned against actions contrary to the shari'a.[2] The Sudur dersi, a discussion of Qur'ān verses among the foremost ulema in the presence of the Sultan, was re-introduced (1836) following a long period during which it had been abandoned.[3]

The hold of Naqshbandiya-Khalidiya upon the public and upon government functionaries in Istanbul continued to grow. It probably reached its culmination in the eighteen thirties and forties. In this period the order enjoyed the virtual protection of the state and it was probably no accident that during this same period the post of Şeyh-ül-Islam was filled by two leading ulema of Naqshbandi outlook. The first was Mekki-zade Mustafa 'Āsim Effendi one of the early adherents of the order in Istanbul; the second was 'Ārif Hikmet Bey who succeeded him. Though not known to be a Naqshbandi himself, Hikmet Bey had much sympathy with the order and his father belonged to it.[4] Mustafa 'Āsim was appointed Şeyh-ül-Islam in February 1833 for the third time and remained in this capacity for almost fourteen years his tenure only being

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1 Lutfi, V, 65-66.
2 Ibid, p.94.
3 Heyd, p. 94.
4 Fevziye Abdullah, "A. 'Arif Hikmet" in I.A. I, 565.

ended by his death. Hikmet Bey stayed in office for eight years and was dismissed in 1854. No one in recent history, before or after them, served for so long in one tenure of office. That they did stay so long may possibly have been due to their connection with the Naqshbandiya--further proof of the influence which the order enjoyed in government circles, an influence whose decline was marked only with the dismissal of ʿĀrif Hikmet.

This protection of the state which the Naqshbandia enjoyed during the period which ended in 1854, was felt not only at the capital but also in the provinces. In 1846 a large zawiya was built over the tomb of Shaikh Khalid in Damascus by the order of Sultan Abdulmejid[1] and the famous lodge, al-Takiya al-Sulaimaniya, in that city was transferred to them (1843-4) as a second centre.[2] With the help of the Sultan's mother a zawiya was built in Mecca for Muhammad Jan, a Naqshbandi shaikh, not a follower of Khalid but having in common with him the same shaikh of Delhi.[3]

Another aspect of this patronage which had considerable social and political consequences, was the rise of the followers of Shaikh Khalid in the provinces, in terms of power and influence. In Baghdad, some of them

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1 M. ibn Sulaiman, al-Hadiqa al-Nadiya, p. 54; al-Khani says that the zawiya was built in 1842, see p. 257.
2 Ibn Sulaiman, p. 73; Shaṭṭi, Rawḍ al-Bashar, p. 237.
3 Al-Khani, p. 222.

were appointed Mufti.[1] In Damascus a number of the most influential notables during the early Tanzimat period were either Naqshbandi adherents or had some connection with the order.[2]

This favoured status of the Naqshbandi order in Istanbul was recognized beyond the Ottoman Empire. When a mission of the ruler of Khoqand, for instance, arrived in Istanbul in A.H. 1248 (1832-3) they carried with them as presents to the Sultan a Qur'ān and significantly enough, a copy of the writings of the Naqshbandi Shaikh Muhammad al-Sirhindi a grandson of the famous Shaikh Ahmed al-Sirhindi.[3]

The teachings of Naqshbandia-Khalidiya spread rapidly and widely and soon expanded beyond the Ottoman lands. From Sulaimaniya it reached Daghistan and the eastern Caucasus where its followers took the lead in the resistance to Russian conquest,[4] and from Mecca it

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1 Ibid, p. 260; M. Shukri al-Ālusi, al-Misk al-Adhfar (Baghdad, 1930), the biography of Mahmud al-Ālusi and specially p. 19.

2 Cf. al-Khani, p. 244, 271-272; and Bitar, I, 585; Shaṭṭi, pp. 67, 107, 189, 207.

3 Lutfi, IV, 77.

4 It was the movement of the murids which was led by Shaikh Shamil al-Daghistani, see Allen and Murattof, Caucasian Battlefields (Cambridge 1953), pp. 47ff; Shamil was a Naqshbandi-Khalidi shaikh, a disciple of Ismail Saraj al-Dīn later called al-Shirwani, an early disciple of Shaikh Khalid, see Ibn Sulaiman, p. 80; on Shamil see E.I., IV, 306-7 by Bartold; M. Süreyya, Sicill-i Osmani, 4 vols. (Istanbul A.H. 1308-1315), III, 171; (hereafter, S.O.). See also Hourani, op. cit., p. 19.

reached south east Asia.[1] Wherever it found adherents there was felt a spirit of moral regeneration and in the words of Hourani, "Naqshbandism offered the perplexed Muslim a faith which emphasized the importance of virtuous activity and the claims of the shari'a to be a guiding rule for it".[2] Indeed at a time of increasing laxity in following the requirements of the shari'a both by rulers and ruled, Naqshbandiya saw in this a cause for the degeneration of the Muslim community and in attacking it called for strict observance of the rules of the shari'a, both in matters of society and state.

Moreover, as we shall see in the following section, Naqshbadiya-Khalidiya introduced into Muslim thought in western Asia, in the early nineteenth century, an activist outlook which made reform acceptable and influenced for a time the course of that reform. We might also presume that through its numerous zawiyas in Istanbul and the provinces the order helped to mobilize public opinion in favour of reform.

Nor was thic all. Being the only order which for a long time had been so widely spread among three Muslim peoples of the empire--the Kurds, the Arabs, and the Turks--it presented them with a common purpose and thus

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1 C.Snouck Hurgronje, Mekka in the latter part of the nineteenth century (Eng. trs, Leyden, 1931), pp. 176 and 215.
2 A. Hourani, p. 20.

served Ottoman society and state in other directions. Thus it helped to strengthen the ties among them, creating an unofficial bridge between dignitaries and high functionaries in the capital and Muslim notables in the provincial cities, a state of affairs which was noticeable throughout the century.

However, the spread of Naqshbandi teachings had its concomitant disadvantages. It is reported that Shaikh Khalid, when on a visit to Jerusalem refused to enter the Church of the Holy Sepulchre even though some ulema had visited the place before him.[1] Such an intransigent attitude underlay all Naqshbandi teachings and helped to nourish a feeling of intolerance among Muslims towards the non-Muslims. In certain circumstances this feeling developed into open fanaticism.

Indeed all through the nineteenth century, there was a rise in religious sentiment among the Muslim public including some of the high functionaries. It appears, (as we shall see later in the case of Syria) that this sentiment in general, coupled with the rise of certain acts of intolerence in particular, were responsible to a large extent for the alienation of the non-Muslim communities from the Sultan's rule and ultimately their separation from the empire. Thus it might not be far from the truth to

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1 See A. Hourani, p. 15; al-Khani, pp. 245-246.

assert that from this aspect Naqshbandiya, in the long run, did a disservice to the empire.

ج. Naqshbandiya-Khalidiya and Reform

It is incorrect to regard the reform movement in its first phase (until 1854) as having been facilitated by the spread of western secular ideas.[1] Reform would not have succeeded in the first half of the last century, if its ideology had not come from within the Islamic set of beliefs as M. Mardin had shown in the introductory chapters of his book.[2] It is true that the reforms were undertaken under the impact of military defeats, but not under an Islamic ideological retreat in face of expanding secularist ideas of the West.

The Naqshbandiya-Khalidiya reached Istanbul at a very crucial time in the history of the empire. Its followers and sympathizers supported the reform, thus they represented, at mid-eighteen twenties, the progressive element among the statesmen and ulema of Istanbul. For them the danger that the Ottoman Empire was encountering at that time was not merely external--European military superiority. It was also internal--the laxity in following

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1 Cf. Mardin, pp. 169-170. He rejected the view of Prof. B. Lewis that secularist ideas of the French Revolution penetrated the Ottoman-Turkish traditional structure and influenced the act of reform. See B. Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey (London 1961), p. 40ff.

2 Ş. Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought (Princeton 1962).

the requirements of the shari'a, and the rise of the non-Muslim communities in terms of social and economic power. The contribution of Naqshbandiya was to provide the ideological basis by which the reforms were supported and justified. It was this idealogy which mobilized the wide support for the cause of reform during the later period of Mahmud II's rule.

Among the Orthodox beliefs, specially in Western Asia there was found the belief that all singular occurrences (al-umur al-juz'iyya)[1] followed God's will and that man has no freedom of choice as to which course of action to adopt; it was God who chose his way for him. Thus we find the historian Vasif Effendi commenting on a French offer in 1783/84 to train Ottomans in modern methods of warfare, saying: "These men hold the erroneous belief... that the exalted creator has...no influence on singular occurrences, and since the fortunes of war are included among the latter they advance that which ever side has superior means of waging war, will overcome the other".[2] That is to say success or defeat in war is decided by God, on whom reliance must be placed for its outcome.

This was a fatalistic attitude and it shows that when Vasif Effendi (d. 1806) wrote his history about the end of the eighteenth century, the Muslim community in

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[1] In Islamic terminology means actions of man, or particular matters.

[2] Cited in Mardin, p. 173.

Western Asia was still confident in its own traditions and beliefs. It is beyond the scope of this work to follow the origin and development of this belief, but as this question was much discussed in the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century Istanbul, it is necessary to refer briefly to it.

In sunni Islam the widely accepted views concerning the question of singular occurrences, were two:[1] That of the theological school of Abu-Hasan al-Ash'ari (d. 324/935-6) of Iraq, and that of the school of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 333/944) of Transoxania.

Both schools took an intermediate course between the two doctrines of Jabr (absolute predestination) and Qadar (that man produces his own actions).

But there are differences between them in a number of issues and especially in regard to the actions of man. The Maturidis maintained that man did possess "free choice" as to his actions. The action itself is created by God only after that man resolves to do it. This choice or resolve emanates from him by his own power and it is called "al-Irada al-Juz'iya"[2] (partial or limited free will). The Ash'arites on the other hand maintained that man has no power to create his choice. It is God

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[1] See Tritton, Muslim Theology (London 1947), pp. 174-5.

[2] It is called so because it is concerned with a singular action at a time.

who creates in him first the choice and the power to do an action, and then the action itself. Man is only the recipient of what God creates in him. Thus man could not choose his actions except when God so desired.[1]

This difference between the two schools of thought appears to be minor but from a social aspect it is significant. It is the difference between a static social concept of life nourished on irrational belief that everything depends on God's will as the Ash'arites held, and an activist concept of rational approach to social and political problems, as implied from the teachings of the Maturidite school.

Shaikh Khalid wrote a treatise on this difference between the Maturidis and the Ash'arites in which he stated the arguments of both with implicit preference of the Maturidite.[2] But the fact that Shaikh Khalid discussed this subject was in itself significant. The question was thus raised for discussion in which a number of important

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[1] D.B. Macdonald, Development of Muslim Theology (London 1903), p. 192; Tritton, p. 175.

[2] "al-Iqd al-Jawhari fi al-Farq bayn Kasbai al-Maturidi Wa'l-Ash'ari" (see al-Khani p. 256). It was printed in Istanbul in 1843 under the title "Risala fi Tahqiq al-Irada al-Juz'iya" together with Khalid's commentary on Siyalkuti on Khayali, pp. 132-147.
As'ad Sāhib wrote that his uncle had written it upon the earnest request of a number of Damascine ulema who were reading under him an interpretation of the 'Aqā'id of Nasafi. (see Bughyat il-Wājid, p. 88f, n.i.)

ulema took part and on which they wrote their own treatises. The discussion remained alive for several decades after the death of Khalid. Thus a Turkish ʿ<u>ālim</u>, Hamid Kharputi, published the treatise of Shaikh Khalid with interpretation.[1] An Arab ʿ<u>ālim</u> from Damascus ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Hamzawi (d. 1278 A.H.) wrote a response to it.[2] A leading Istanbuli ʿ<u>ālim</u> Şahhaflar Shaikhi Zade Es'ad Effendi (d. 1267 A.H.) wrote a treatise of his own on the subject.[3] Another ʿ<u>ālim</u> to write on it was Ahmet ʿĀsim Kütahiyevi.[4] Sulaiman Pasha, the general who took part in the deposition of Sultan ʿAbdulaziz translated into Turkish a treatise on the subject, written about the middle of the eighteenth century by a Turkish ʿ<u>ālim</u>, Aq-kirmani Mehmet Effendi (d. 1174/1760).[5] An ʿIraqi ʿ<u>ālim</u> ʿAbdullah al-Baitwati [Ḥ] wrote a commentary upon it which was published in Baghdad

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1 Brusali, I, 288; Baqdadli, <u>Iḍaḥ al-Maknūn</u> (Istanbul, 1945-47, II, 107. It was published under the title "<u>al-Simt al-'Abqari fi Sharh al-ʿIqd al-Jawhari</u>", (n.p., n.d.).

2 Called: <u>al-Risala al-Hamzawiya fi Bayan Hakikat al-Farq bain Kasb al-Ash'ariya Wa al-Maturidiya</u>. See Baqdadli, <u>Iḍāḥ</u>, I, 562; Biṭar, II, 920.

3 Called "<u>Irade-i Juz'iyye</u>" still in manuscript. See Brusali, III, 26; Es'ad Effendi was the author of "<u>Ussi Zafer</u>" on the destruction of the Janissaries.

4 "<u>Risale-i Irade-i Juz'iyye</u>" (Istanbul, 1285/1868)

5 Brusali, II, 250; Mardin (p. 214) without citing his source stated that the Pasha translated the treatise of Shaikh Khalid. According to Brusali, Sulaiman Pasha translated the above only. On Aq-Kirmani see Brusali, II, 214.

A.H. 1347.[1] It was also commented upon by a biographer of Shaikh Khalid--Ibrahim Fasih al-Haidari.[2]

Thus we might not be far from the truth in assuming that by his treatise (and presumably his other writings and his teaching) Shaikh Khalid contributed to the introduction in nineteenth century Muslim thought in Western Asia of the idea of "the free choice of man" in regard to singular actions which provided the reforms with the rational basis they needed, and produced a tendency among high ulema and functionaries to deal with social and political problems according to the "requisites of reason".

In any case we find Turkish ideologies of reform in the second quarter of the nineteenth century justify the reforms as part of the "ümur-u cüz'iyye" singular occurrences., in which the "irade-i cüz'iyye", the free choice of man, takes the decision. Such area of free choice of man included government measures and military planning.[3] In the eighteen forties, this area was enlarged to include all measures aiming at the increase of the well-being of individuals.[4] This is seen in the writings of Sadık Rif'at, the ideologue of the early

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1 See M.A. Zaki, Tarikh il-Sulaiminiya (Baghdad, 1951), p. 228, n.2.

2 See As'ad Sāhib, p. 89 and note.

3 Mardin, p. 173.

4 Ibid., p. 188.

Tanzimat period and an associate of Reshid Pasha.

It was probably due to the gradual acceptance of this concept that an activist rationalist attitude was felt in the Tanzimat period. However, the free choice of man was only relatively free, for it was bound by the shari'a.

As we have seen above the Naqshbandiya saw their mission as being to uphold sunni Islam and to reinforce the rule of the shari'a. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi was reported to have written that a Naqshbandi should adhere to the doctrines of ahl al-sunni wa'l-jama'a, to acquire a knowledge of the rules of the shari'a and to work accordingly.[1] In other words the virtuous state, according to Naqshbandiya, was that of the shari'a. Any act of man which was his free choice, in order to be virtuous, should fall within the bounds of the shari'a.

This was probably another concept to which Naqshbandi teachings contributed. The Ottoman state became weak because it was not virtuous. The requirements of the shari'a were disregarded. In order to become stronger, it had to follow those requirements. As we shall see, ideologues of the early reforms tried to show that the reforms they called for did fall within the framework of the shari'a, thus they were obligatory.

The impact of those two concepts can be traced

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1 M. al-Khani, al-Bahja, p. 9.

in a number of important reform measures and proposals for instance in the firman which declared the abolishing of the Janissaries. This firman, drawn up by Pertev Effendi, a devout Naqshbandi adapt, stated that, because of the defeats and humilations in war with the Christian powers "it became an obligatory act (farz)[1] [upon us] to find the means to overcome our enemies". Such means were proper discipline and instruction in military science. The Janissaries refused to submit to these obligations and "according to the requirements of the Qur'ān and the shari'a" they should be abolished. The ultimate goal of this reform, ended the firman, was "the preservation and exposition of religion and the holy law".[2]

Those words were not merely "lip service" to appease this group or the other.[3] They pointed to the existence of a trend of thought among the upper ulema and functionaries in Istanbul.

Further evidence of the existence of this trend was a memorandum which Izzat Molla (d. 1828) a high ranking 'ālim of Istanbul wrote shortly before his exile and death.

In later Islam, there was a deeply cherished popular belief that following a time of injustice or trouble to the Muslim community God sends the Mahdi (a

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1 Usually meant by the Ordinance of God.

2 For a copy of the firman see Cevdet, Tarih (Istanbul A.H. 1301), XII, pp. 311-315; a rough English Translation in H. Reed, The destruction of the Janissaries (an unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Princeton, 1951), pp. 242-249.

3 As Mardin saw it. See p. 173.

divinely guided one) to restore righteousness and peace. In such circumstances the Muslims should wait his coming. But Izzat Molla argued that while waiting they should not sit idle for "If the Mahdi is to appear tomorrow, let us work for justice and equity today so that He seeing us engaged in the strengthening of justice may give us praise".[1]

Justice in Islamic concept had a wide connotation. A just ruler was the one who upheld the shari'a, did nothing that went contrary to it, and respected and consulted the ulema, its savants, and interpreters.[2] Thus Izzat Molla, by exhorting Muslims to work for justice, indirectly called upon the sultan to uphold the shari'a: and to follow its requirements. At the same time it was a call for a rational and activist approach to problems of state and community. This approach was even more clear in the other sections of the memorandum.[3]

The idea that the weakness of the state was due to the laxity of the rulers in following the requirements of religion and (divine) law appeared again, this time expressed explicitly in the preamble of the Gülhane rescript: "It was when the Ottoman Empire strictly adhered to the requirements of the Qur'ān and the shari'a that it

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1 Ms. No. K 337 in Istanbul Municipal Library, quoted in Mardin, pp. 171-2. The emphasis is mine.

2 A. Hourani, "Near Eastern Nationalism" in Foreign Affairs, October 1963, p. 125.

3 See Heyd, p. 76.

achieved power and strength and its subjects reached a high degree of ease and prosperity." Only after that the shari'a and the kanuns (regulations) had been disregarded did the state start to weaken.

It is rather a simplification to explain this as a lip service on the part of Reshid Pasha the author of the rescript and those who stood behind him. Reshid it should be remembered spent many of his formative years under the influence of Pertev who was regarded his mentor. Pertev was also the patron of Sadiq Rif'at the associate of Reshid.[1]

In other words, the Gülhane rescript and the reforms that followed it until the early eighteen fifties may be better understood in the light of the two above-mentioned concepts: that those reforms were within the area of the singular occurrences, and that they either fell within the framework of the shari'a or did not form a breach of it.

This fact was true including the statement in the Gülhane rescript that "The Muslim and other peoples who are among the subjects of our imperial sultanate shall be the object of our imperial favour without exception". There is nothing in this statement to change the political status of the non-Muslims, a matter which would have been

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[1] Mardin, p. 174; Şeref, Tarih Müsahabeleri, pp. 75, 117.

regarded as a breach of the shari'a.

On the other hand the Gülhane rescript initiated the first step in restricting the arbitrary rule of the sultan. It was an old prerogative of the sultan, a Turco-Iranian government practice[1] to issue new regulations (kanuns) where the shari'a did not provide a solution in matters of state.[2] Those regulations should not be contrary to the shari'a. But this prerogative in the hands of powerful sultans or their grand vesirs was an excuse to absolutism a matter which the ulema, the guardians of the shari'a, resented.

In fact absolutism was strange to sunni Islam and against the spirit of the shari'a. Muslim jurists acquiesced with it only after the weakening and fall of the Abbasid Caliphate which was followed by a period of chaos. They did that on the principle that any form of government was better than chaos. But the Naqshbandiya with their strict adherence to sunni Islam and to the shari'a were, it seems, against any form of absolute government. Some Naqshbandi adapts suffered under Mahmud II, because his rule even in his later days tended to be absolute. Pertev Pasha for example, lost his life

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1 Mardin, p. 102.

2 On this question see H. Inalcık "Osmanli Hukukuna Giris", Ankara Universitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakultesi Dergisi (June 1958), XIII, pp. 102-126; see also Mardin, p. 102f; Gibb and Bowen, 1/1, 23, 197.

by an arbitrary order of the sultan.

To sum up, the Naqshbandi emphasis upon the need to restore the Islamic moral and legal basis of the state contributed to the stream of thought which led to the issue of the Gülhane rescript which included an engagement by the sultan "not to do anything which is contrary", and which led moreover, to the establishment of the Council of Judicial Ordinances which exercized a certain degree of control over the absolutism of the sultan.

CHAPTER III

ĀLI AND FUAD: THE OTTOMANIST TREND

1. The Ideal of Ottomanism

The preceding chapter has shown the degree to which Muslim "public opinion" both in Istanbul and the Asiatic provinces was affected by what may possibly be called an Orthodox revival. We have also seen that this trend contributed considerably in determining the course of reform in the early period. Thereafter, we tried to show that the purpose of the Gülhane period of reform was to reaffirm the Islamic basis of the state which in political terms meant ending the arbitrary rule of the ruling power and to assert Muslim political primacy in the empire. For Āli[1] and Fuad,[2] the successors of Reshid in the leadership of the reform movement, this purpose

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[1] On Āli see 'Ali Fuad (Āli's son), Rical-i mühimme-i siyasiye, pp. 56-140; Inal, Son Sadrıazamlar, 3 vols. (Istanbul, 1955), I, 4-58; Şeref, Tarih Musahabeleri, pp. 88-97; EI², I, 396-98; İA, I, 335-40; Davison, Reform pp.84ff.; Lewis, p. 115; Gövsa, Türk Meşhurları (Istanbul, n.d. [mid-nineteen forties?]), p. 34.

[2] On Fuad see 'Ali Fuad, op. cit., pp. 141-174; Inal, pp. 149-195; Şeref, 98-104; EI², II, 934-36; IA, IV, 672-81; Davison, Reform, p. 88f.; Lewis, p. 115f.; Brusali, Osmanli Müellifleri, 3 vols. (Istanbul, A.H. 1333-1342), II, 374; Gövsa, p. 144f.

did not appear to accord with the new social, economic and political realities of the empire at mid-nineteenth century.

They were in agreement with Reshid that the goal of reform was first of all the strengthening of the state, and that direct and centralized rule was the better system by which to achieve it. They also agreed that this system should be applied by a trained, able and loyal bureaucracy backed by the army. But they disagreed with him about the expediency of giving a large share in the government of the provinces to local notables. Instead they preferred a policy of excessive centralization in the provincial administration. Reshid in addition would not have dared to antagonize the Islamic forces but would have come to a compromise with them. Āli and Fuad, on the contrary, did not hesitate to follow a secular line in matters of state, suppressing all kind of opposition. Their rule also was marked with excessive authoritativeness which Reshid would not have liked.

They also differed from him on the question of non-Muslim communities. Reshid would not have moved on this matter except perhaps on a limited scale but Āli and Fuad took a definitive line of equality between Muslims and non-Muslims. Reshid, along with Rif'at, would have preferred to appease the non-Muslims and try

to gain their loyalty by a just and righteous rule[1] and to preserve the Islamic basis of the state and the sectarian structure of Ottoman society. But they put the need to observe the integrity of the empire above the wish to observe its Islamic basis, and they thought in terms of weakening the framework of the communal structure of the society and of integrating the non-Muslim communities into the wider framework of an Ottoman nation.

Āli and Fuad believed in this principle throughout their ascendency in the Porte, a period of office which ended only with their deaths (Fuad in 1869 and Āli in 1871): the more problems they encountered in this period, the more this belief held them. Along with equality they raised the principle of political fusion. Equality and fusion were, as we shall see, at the core of the Hatt-i Humayun, the second reform edict promulgated in 1856. At the end of the eighteen sixties Āli commenting on the revolution in Crete, and Fuad in his political testament, both thought "the absolute equality and fusion of all races"[2] should be the aim of the Ottoman administration.

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[1] Mardin, p. 188.

[2] Davison Reform, p. 92. (Curiously enough, while the Hatt-i Humayun dealt with equality between religious communities, Fuad here spoke about equality between races, which is more specific than religious groups). See also Berkes, p. 189; cf. E. Kuran, "The impact of Nationalism on the Turkish Elite in the Nineteenth Century" in Polk and Chambers (eds.), Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East (Chicago, 1968), p. 110; an important source for Ali's thoughts in his last years in his memorandum written in 1867 in Crete, a copy in Ali Fuad, pp. 118-127. See also Davison, p. 87f. and n. 21.

Thus, Āli and Fuad contributed a new principle and introduced a different policy for the salvation of the empire--the creation of a new political community of equal citizens having equal rights and inhabiting one country--the Ottoman empire, to which they assumed that all, Christians as well as Muslims would be loyal subjects. This ideal came to be known as "Osmanlılık"--Ottomanism.

2. The Economic and Political Impact of Europe at Mid-Nineteenth Century

The new social and political realities of the mid-eighteen fifties were two-fold: first was the economic expansion of the west European countries and the growth of their political influence both in Istanbul and in the provinces; secondly the non-Muslims, following this expansion became far wealthier and much better educated than were preceding generations, and in this sense outstripped the Muslims. Āli and Fuad had to face an increasing influence of the west European powers especially that of France during the era of Napoleon III on a much larger scale than Reshid had experienced. The policies and reforms undertaken in the period of their ascendancy (until 1871) had apparently been affected by these factors.

Indeed, the social and economic realities of the empire had already started to change by the later

decades of the eighteenth and the early decades of the nineteenth centuries at which time the non-Muslim communities on the whole were on the rise--in terms of wealth and culture--above the Muslims.[1] But after the second quarter of the nineteenth century this disequilibrium in Ottoman society started to accelerate. In western Europe, the industrial revolution, complemented by the revolution in transport, was reaching an advanced stage. Under its impact the economy of the various regions of the empire passed through a profound change which also left its mark upon social and political life.

Commercial relations between the European countries and the countries of the middle East were ages old, but until the first decades of the 19th century, they consisted either of the transit trade between India or Persia and Europe, or else they did not compete with local production. The introduction of the steamship brought about a large reduction in transport costs, trade finally taking a direct route by sea from the countries of origin to Europe,[2] first around the Cape of Good Hope and later in the century through the Suez Canal, whose opening dealt a heavy blow to such commercial centres as

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1 See above, p. x of the introduction; see also Hourani, "The Fertile Crescent..." in A Vision of History (Beirut, 1961), pp. 53, 61, 65f. cf. Gibb and Bowen, I/2, 249ff.

2 It should be remembered also that the occupation of central Asia by Tsarist Russia and the occasional insecurity in Persia were factors in diverting the trade routes.

Aleppo and Damascus.[1]

At the same time as the transit trade was declining, there grew in England and France, following the spread of the industrial revolution, the need for markets both for buying raw materials and for selling their industrial products. The provinces of the Ottoman empire provided them with such a market.

The capitulations which were originally given by the Ottoman sultans in the 16th century to encourage European merchants to trade with the empire, were not sufficient to serve the needs of the European countries in the 19th century. Thus the British government pressed the Porte to sign the commercial convention of 1838, as a result of which the markets of the empire were thrown wide open at favourable terms to English and other west European manufacturers.[2] The manufactured goods of those

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[1] See K. al-Gazzi, Nahr il-Dhahab fi Tarikh Halab, 3 vols. (Aleppo, n.d.), I, 147; see also al-Bustani, Dairat al-Ma'arif, VII, 141, VIII, 15 and X, 257-258.

[2] For the commercial convention see Ch. Issawi (ed.) The Economic History of the Middle East 1800-1914 (Chicago, 1966), pp. 38-40. "The convention....removed all monopolies, allowed British merchants to purchase goods anywhere in the Empire and imposed duties of 5 percent on imports, 12 percent on exports and 3 percent on transit. It was to apply to all parts of the Empire" Ibid., p. 38. Following England, France and other European countries signed a similar convention with the Porte. See also V.J. Puryear, International economics and diplomacy in the Near East: A study of British commercial policy in the Levant 1834-1853 (Stanford, 1935). For some statistics of the growth of British export to the Ottoman Empire (excluding Egypt) between 1827 and 1869 see J.L. Farley, Modern Turkey (London, 1872), p. 208; see also Berkes, pp. 138ff.

countries soon began to flood the markets of the empire. They were cheaper and apparently of better quality than those made locally, which were unable to compete and consequently a sharp decline in locally produced goods took place all over the empire.

As a set-off to these exports to the empire, the European countries imported the raw materials and other agricultural products they needed, and though this stimulated agriculture in the Ottoman lands, the balance was, it seems, in favour of the European countries.

In the long run this development was not only a source of economic weakness in the empire, it also had far reaching effects in the social and political fields. With the decline of local handicrafts, a great many craftsmen lost their livelihood. The Ottoman trading class was also ruined while a rather new class of merchants partly of foreign origin and mostly from the non-Muslim communities prospered. This class stood between the European trading firms and the local market. Moreover, some cities, which for many centuries had been centres of trade, suffered, while others, coastal towns inhabited by strong non-Muslim elements, such as Beirut, Izmir (Smyrna) and Salonika flourished. In other words, the sectarian cleavage in Ottoman society was sharpened by a corresponding social cleavage.

Following the growth of west European commercial interests in the empire, there came an increase in their political influence both at the centre and in the provinces. Consulates or consular agencies were established in every medium-sized or large town all over the empire. The activities of those consulates were directed to a large degree to the furthering of trade. According to all evidence those consuls, specially those of the great powers, enjoyed much influence over the vali and his subordinates which they used in protecting the non-Muslim commercial classes who were further helped by the security and the rule of law which the Tanzimat attempted to impose.

Consequently by the eighteen fifties this middle class of non-Muslim merchants had become powerful to such a degree that no responsible statesman could have ignored its existence. Indeed partly for the lack of an economic policy which should have aimed at protecting the old commercial classes and the handicrafts of the empire from the disastrous competition of European goods, the reformers of the early Tanzimat period defeated in practice their purpose of reasserting Muslim political primacy in the lands of the empire. This primacy which the Gülhane period brought about and which the Naqshbandi teachings nurtured, was undermined by the rise of this non-Muslim

middle class supported and protected by European influence.

It is probably a cause for resentment to any middle class that it should be treated as a marginal community in the state or even to be discriminated against and when, except through corruption, it could have very little official influence over the affairs of its region. Equally important, it is undoubtedly a source of weakness in any state that such a class should be alienated in this way. With the expansion of European economic and cultural influences and with the rivalry among the great powers to advance their political interests this state of affairs was indeed precarious for the security and integrity of the empire. Āli and Fuad it seems were aware of this and in this light the reform edict of 1856 (Hatt-i Humayun) may probably be better understood.

3. The Reform Edict of February 1856

The European powers were not satisfied with the Porte's treatment of the Christians. Russia, who demanded on the eve of the Crimean war the right to protect Greek Orthodox subjects of the sultan,[1] may have been aware of the implications of this treatment upon the Christian peoples of the Balkans. In the course of the war England, France and Austria pressed the Porte to improve this treatment. The outcome was the reform edict of February 1856.

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1 Temperley, The Crimea, p. 295f.

In January 1856, joint discussions were held between the ambassadors of these three powers to the Porte and Āli and Fuad, the Grand Vezir and Foreign Minister respectively. An Ottoman-Greek, prince Kallimaki also attended the discussions.[1] In this sense the edict could be regarded as a semi-dictat of those powers. However Āli and Fuad applied it without retreating in face of mounting opposition of a large section of the Muslim population, a sign that they themselves were apparently not unconvinced of the necessity of its contents.

During the war period several steps had been taken towards granting civil equality to the non-Muslims. Thus a firman was proclaimed according to which the testimony of Christians in some criminal actions was allowed, the Cizye tax was abolished, and theoretically non-Muslims were allowed military service--though in practice a bedel was paid instead. This later act was contrary to the word though possibly not to the spirit of the shari'a. But the most serious contradiction to the shari'a followed in the reform edict.

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1 Davison, p. 53; Cevdet, Tezakir (1-12), p. 73f.

In this edict[1] the sultan promised to grant his non-Muslim subjects equality with his Muslim subjects. Henceforth, the edict declared, public employment would be open to all subjects; civil and military schools would admit Muslims as well as non-Muslims each one on his own merit; mixed tribunals would be established to treat cases between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects; the same taxes would be levied from all "without distinction of class or of religion"; non-Muslims would be summoned "to take part in the deliberations of the Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances"; and the use of any "injurious or offensive term" against the non-Muslims by private persons or by officials of the state was forbidden. Moreover, reform in the constitution of the provincial and communal councils was promised in order to ensure fairness in the choice of deputies and freedom of voting in the council.

Much to the resentment of the Christian religious hierarchy the reform edict declared that "the

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1 Text in Ottoman Turkish may be found in Rasim, IV, 2048-2062, n. 291; a transliteration in Modern Turkish in Karal, Tarih V, 266-272; English translation in Hurewitz, I, 149-53; French text in Englehardt, I, 263-270.
See also, R.H. Davison, "Turkish Attitudes concerning Christian-Muslim equality in the Nineteenth Century", in A.H.R. vol. LIX, No. 4, July 1954, pp. 844-864, see especially p. 847f. and p. 852f.
See also N. Berkes, The Development of secularism in Turkey (Montreal, 1964), pp. 152ff. and n. 22.

powers conceded to the Christian Patriarchs...by Sultan Mehmet II..,shall be made to harmonize with the new position." Consequently the civil jurisdiction of the non-Muslim religious hierarchy over their followers was to be abrogated.

Following the edict the non-Muslim religious hierarchies virtually ceased to play the rôle of official intermedieries between the state and the members of their millet, though in practice they continued to exert local influence. In this way one of the major hindrances in the way of direct rule was removed. It meant in fact the breakdown of the millet organization in its old form and the destruction of the civil power of the non-Muslim religious hierarchies.

The millet system and indeed the old system as a whole was to a great extent responsible for keeping Ottoman society divided into closed groups, each member of which professed loyalty primarily to his group, and only secondarily to the ruling dynasty. Fusion of the population of the empire was thus deliberately prevented, and after five hundred years of Ottoman rule no political community that encompassed the whole population had emerged and no loyalty to the state had crystallized among the non-Muslims. Thus to form such a community and to switch the loyalty of the individual from the religious

group to the state, it was necessary, Āli deemed, to abolish many of the barriers of the millet system restricting it to communal matters only. The functions of the religious heads were confined to spiritual and doctrinal matters, and to some judicial matters in the sphere of personal status. Other functions such as the caretaking of church buildings, schools, hospitals and cemeteries of the millet fell under the responsibility of a combined council of religious and lay representatives.[1]

Every political community must have a country, a fatherland, in which its personality takes shape and to which every member is loyal. For the Ottoman community the empire, originally the conquests of the dynasty, was presented in the edict as the Ottoman fatherland. The edict applied to all the subjects of the sultan "who are united to each other by the cordial ties of patriotism." In this sense the edict contained the three elements of Cttomanism namely: equality, fusion, and fatherland. As such it could be regarded as the official birth certificate of the doctrine of Ottomanism.

But the proclamation of the edict aroused the resentment of the Muslim population all over the empire. They felt that their political supremacy was undermined. They also resented the fact that it was produced under

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1 Cf. H. Luke The Old Turkey and the New (London 1955), p. 94.

pressure from the European powers. In Istanbul at the time Muslims murmured that "today we lost our sacred national (milliye) rights which our ancestors gained with their blood" reported Jevdet.[1] In the eyes of Reshid it was a hasty act which would give to the empire a completely different colour from that of the past six centuries.[2] This was certainly true and what is more, was exactly the aim of Āli and Fuad, for in spite of the political circumstances in which the edict was drawn it was basically in harmony with their objectives and in the interests of the Ottoman state as they saw it.

Under the authoritarian rule of Āli and Fuad equality was gradually though not fully implemented. Non-Muslims were little by little accepted into public service as they had been in the eighteenth century and the first two or three decades of the nineteenth. Later in the century we find that some of them became ministers or ambassadors, but their number was small and the bureaucracy remained predominently Muslim-Turkish. Albeit when Āli died in 1871 the status of the non-Muslims was far better than it had been two decades earlier.

One of the achievements of Āli and Fuad in the last years of their rule was the reorganization of the

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1 Tezakir (1-12), p. 68; see also Mardin, p. 18.

2 The memorandum of Reshid concerning the edict in Jevdet, op. cit., pp. 76-82; see also Davison, p. 57.

High Council into two bodies, a Judicial Council and a Council of state (Şura-yi Devlet). In the case of the latter body, eleven non-Muslims were included out of a total of thirty seven.[1] Again we find a considerable number of non-Muslim deputies in parliament for the sessions of both 1877 and 1878.[2] Thus in spite of the reaction that took place in the policy towards the non-Muslims after 1871,[3] it appears that the policies of Āli and Fuad were still finding believers among some of the leading statesmen in Istanbul.

4. Autocracy and Centralization

The reform edict of 1856 was, as has been stated above, a major breakaway from shari'a rules and aroused much opposition to Āli and Fuad. Its opponents accused them, in addition to ruling in an autocratic manner, of violating in this way the attempt which had been made in the previous two decades to bind the ruling power by shari'a and laws. The opposition forces feared a return to the pre-reform methods of government when shari'a prerequisities were neglected and the ruling power went unchecked, a course which they believed would lead to a weakening of both the state and the community.

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1 Davison, Reform, p. 242, for the functions of this Council see p. 241; see also Lewis, p. 119.

2 R. Devereux, The first Ottoman constitutional period (Baltimore, 1963), p. 144 (Table 4).

3 See for instance in the case of Syria, below pp. 232ff.

That Āli and Fuad ruled in this manner was true, but it appears that they were to some extent forced onto this course and took it only partly from their own initiative. Both of them were realistic statesmen who believed that their way of reforming the empire would better guarantee its integrity.

It seems, however, that not all the bureaucracy were of their opinion and on this question there are a number of signs indicating that this class may have possibly been divided upon itself. Secondly, there existed the strong opposition to the course Āli and Fuad were taking among the Muslim population. This opposition may have been illicitly encouraged by certain elements in Istanbul and perhaps in Cairo and showed itself in a wave of protests and riots between 1855 and 1860. After being ruthlessly suppressed it remained as an undercurrent for some time. And thirdly, there was Sultan Abdulaziz, a man of violent temper who was eager to subjugate the Porte and the bureaucracy to his will.[1] Thus in the light of these circumstances Āli and Fuad chose to rule in an autocratic manner, at the same time remaining on their guard, in order to secure the implementation of their reforms. They showed their hand in the late 1850's when they dismissed some prominent adherants to the Reshid

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1 See Davison, Reform, p. 279; cf. Lewis, p. 118.

line such as Shinasi and Ziya.[1] Mütercim Rushdi Pasha, a colleague of Āli and Fuad, a Grand Vezir several times after their death, and a popular figure in Istanbul, remained in the shadow all through their ascendancy because he also disagreed with them.[2]

It was natural that Āli and Fuad were sensitive to criticism. In the early eighteen sixties, a local Turkish press emerged, published by young men who a little later joined in the Young Ottoman movement. When they began to criticise the regime, another measure to strengthen the hand of the statesmen was introduced in the form of strict press regulations (1865 and 1867).[3]

This autocracy at the centre was reflected in the provinces by the wide powers bestowed upon the vali and by the vilayet law of 1864 which organized the administration of the provinces on a centralized basis. Since 1852 as stated above, provincial governors had been given wide powers much to the resentment of many provincial notables who were aware through the experience of preceding generations that unchecked power was corrupting. In 1864 during the Grand Vezirate of Fuad, the provincial administration was reorganized on similar lines. The idea behind the law of that year was to group the

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1 Ibid., pp. 133-135; Mardin pp. 253f, 339f.

2 Cf. Şeref, p. 203; M. Celaleddin, Mir'at-ı Hakikat, 3 vols. (Istanbul, 1326-27), I, 108.

3 Lewis, p. 146; Davison, p. 209.

provinces into larger units and place them under the control of carefully chosen men who would be entrusted with extended powers that would allow them much freedom of action.[1]

Provinces were divided into sub-provinces (sancaks) and each sancak into kazas and each kaza into nahiyes and each nahiye into kariyes. At the head of each unit stood a representative of the vali assisted by a number of subordinates. The sancak was administered by a mütesarrif, the kaza by a kaimakam and the nahiye by a müdür. The kariye was headed by an elected local headman (muhtar). All of these officials were under the direct authority of the vali, though the first two were, like himself, appointed by the sultan. At vilayet level there was to be an administrative council (meclis) composed of ten members. Headed by the vali, the remaining members were the chief judge, the chief finance officer, the chief secretary, the mufti, and the metropolite all ex-officio together with four other elected members, two Muslims and two non-Muslims. Similar councils of similar structure were to exist at sancak and kaza levels. Moreover, an annual general provincial assembly to advise the vali on the affairs of the province was to be convened and to be composed of four elected delegates from each

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[1] Lewis, p. 381; Davison, p. 147.

sancak, two Muslims and two non-Muslims. It is not clear whether those assemblies met regularly and how long they existed.[1] The law did not spell out the powers of the meclis but beside the wide powers of the vali the meclis was much weaker than that formed by Reshid. Possibly in its new form it was no more than a deliberative and advisory body.[2] In this sense the fact that it had a Muslim majority was of little importance.

The law came to establish a centralised system of government in each province headed by a vali with wide powers and run by the bureaucracy with the aim of achieving a better provincial administration. But the achievement of this aim depended above all upon honest and able officials whose number was as yet few among the Ottoman bureaucracy.

The law was revised in 1867 and in 1870. But after the rise of Mahmud Nedim to the Grand Vezirate in September 1871, it was critisized by the semi-official La-Turquie as setting up "little absolute states".[3] Nedim, in an attempt both to weaken the power which the bureaucracy had gained during the preceding few decades[4] and to create a centralized system on state level, made

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1 Lewis, p. 382.
2 Davison, p. 147f.
3 Ibid., p. 168.
4 See below, pp. 218ff.

the vali more dependent upon the central government.

To sum up, the course of reform under Āli and Fuad led to the establishment of autocratic government. At provincial level, they tended to weaken the power of local notables and their influence upon the affairs of the provinces and to strengthen the hand of the bureaucracy. In addition to the policy of Ottomanism these measures aroused opposition on the grounds that they were opening the way for arbitrary rule thus contradicting the spirit of the shari'a.

5. Some By-Products of the Reform Period

The system of provincial administration which was implemented by Āli and Fuad and indeed their other reforms and policies bred perhaps unevitably, some side effects of far reaching consequences for the future of the eastern Mediterranean area. Those effects complemented by factors which were beyond the control of the Porte, such as the impact of the west European commercial expansion, the advent of the printing press, the news media, and "national" education, laid the foundation stone upon which the empire was to disintegrate within the next two generations.

First of all the reforms introduced a system of direct rule, a completely new practice that had never previously been followed. The pre-nineteenth

century Ottoman rule, following the pattern of Muslim administrative system, was centred on the towns and their rural areas. Each vali or sub-vali (sancak) was not appointed to a country, but to a city which he governed along with its hinterland. Other than this, many of the rural and mountainous areas were left to their local chiefs or emirs and the governor was satisfied as long as those chiefs paid their annual tribute and kept the roads between the cities safe for passage.

Even in the towns, the seat of their government, the rule of the Ottoman governors was not direct. The governor, sent usually for a short term and accompanied by a small number of officials, ran his government through the members of the local religious hierarchy the heads of the non-Muslim communities and other notables. In other words the pre-reform system of administration may possibly be described as government through intermediaries.

This unobtrusive and uninterfering Ottoman-Muslim system was changed by the Tanzimat into a uniform and centralized system broadened to touch every aspect of the subject's life and bring him into direct contact with the state. Thus, while formerly, the authority of the government filtered down through the intermediary forces and was modified and balanced by them, it was now

exercised directly, at the same time strengthened and given greater power by the reforms. The subject now stood face to face with an all-powerful government unshackled from its traditional checks.

This system was incompatible with the existence of intermediaries and they were gradually and systematically weakened or destroyed. Thus, instead of the local chief, emir, or notable whom the subject had known and generally trusted came the new government official who was a stranger to him and often ignorant and corrupt. And where the authority of the first was defined by shari'a and tradition and tempered by personal relation, the second, armed with wide powers, exercised his authority irrespective of the feelings of the people. Indeed the criticism of the Young Ottomans that the reform edicts had brought some changes in administrative procedures but had done nothing to protect the subject against arbitrary rule was very true.[1]

This system of direct rule had a dual effect. Formerly if an injustice was committed against a subject he blamed his immediate superior, but now the government official was blamed and consequently that subject's faith and loyalty to the state were affected. Secondly, the weakening or destruction of the local traditional

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[1] Lewis, p. 167.

leadership left behind a vacuum which was filled in some provinces by a stratum of city notables partly new and reared by the state, as happened in Syria[1] or by a new middle class largely of non-Muslims whose existence, already referred to, was a determinant factor in the emergence of particularist tendencies in certain regions when the policies of Āli were abandoned after his death.

The two other elements in the reforms of Āli and Fuad, namely centralization at provincial level and Ottomanism, contributed to the creation of a sense of regional unity among the people of many provinces. For the Tanzimat measures which opened the traditionally autonomous districts to direct government rule and united some provinces into one large unit under a single administration, coupled with the improvement in the means of communication and of security on the roads, unified regions which were inherently divided. Moreover the measures which blurred millet barriers and attempted to create fusion among the various racial elements, helped indirectly along with other factors to create a sense of patriotic unity within each of these regions based on linguistic as well as on territorial criteria. Again a clear case for this was Syria as we shall see below.[2]

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1 See below, pp.153ff.

2 See below, pp.255ff.

Two other factors beyond the control of the Porte but contributing directly to the process of the emergence of regional units and of a sense of patriotism among the inhabitants of each unit, were the commercial expansion of west Europe and the cultural revival which the various racial groups experienced during this period.

In the pre-nineteenth century era, the Ottoman lands enjoyed a certain economic integration. But with the economic expansion of western Europe the commercial links among those lands weakened, whilst their links with Europe became stronger than ever. As explained above, this led to the decline of local manufactures but there was a concomitant extension of farming and increase in agricultural productivity which followed the demand of European markets. Consequently several agricultural areas in the eastern mediterranean became linked to, and dependent upon, a particular European market. Broadly speaking this process created regions each of which was economically separated from the other and from the body of the empire.[1] In this way the growth of commerce with Europe had a contribution to make in the emergence of regional units within certain Ottoman territories.

These developments took place at a time of

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[1] Berkes, pp. 140-141.

cultural revival among the various racial groups in the empire including the "dominant nation",[1] namely the Ottoman Turks. This revival put the "national" language literature and pre-Ottoman history into the forefront. It was accelarated by the advent of the printing press and the news media, and was supported by the new commercial middle class which, as mentioned, was largely composed of non-Muslim elements[2] or, in the case of Turkey, by the bureaucracy.[3]

To sum up: as a result of the Tanzimat reforms especially during the ascendancy of Āli and Fuad and as a result of the commercial expansion of west European countries, a process of change in the structure of the Ottoman Empire started to take place. It became composed of regional units more distinctive than in earlier periods and which broadly corresponded to the racial divisions of the empire. In those regions the national culture started to revive. Indeed what kept the empire together in the later decades of the nineteenth century were the bureaucracy and the army and a sense of loyalty

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1 This term was used in the first editorial of the Ottoman-Turkish weekly "Tercüman-1 Ahval" cited in Lewis, p. 144.

2 For the cultural revival in Syria see below, pp.171ff.

3 For Turkey see E. Kuran "Ottoman Historiography of the Tanzimat Period" (in Lewis and Holt (eds.) Historians of the Middle East (London 1962), pp. 427-28); D. Kushnir Expressions of Turkish National Sentiment During the Time of Sultan Abdulhamid II (an unpublished dissertation (University of California, 1968), pp. 105-106. See also Davison, p. 177f.

among the Muslim population for the sultan-caliph more than anything else.

As matters stood at the death of Āli, there was wide discontent among Muslim "public opinion", whilst at the same time a large section of the non-Muslim population was enjoying prosperity. A degree of economic disintegration of the empire was felt, due to which, and to the policy of administrative centralization, regional units began to emerge. This process, coupled with a "national" cultural revival among some if not all of the various racial groups of the empire made the continuation of Āli and Fuad's political line imperative for the preservation of the integrity of the empire. But after Āli's death his line was in some aspects to be discontinued which led perhaps to the crises of the latter half of the decade.

CHAPTER IV

OTTOMAN CALIPHATE AND MUSLIM REACTION IN ISTANBUL

1. A New Phase in the Ottoman Assumption of the Title of Caliph

The reassertion of the supremacy of the shari'a in the state during the first period of reform and the willingness shown by the sultans to abide by its rules, brought with them, it seems, a fresh emphasis on the title of Caliph of the Ottoman sultan. In the course of the century it was to become their main appellation alongside that of sultan.

In the early period of Ottoman history, Ottoman sultans assumed this title possibly following the idea of the caliphate that prevailed in the Muslim world in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, namely that a Muslim ruler who possessed de facto sovereignty, who governed with justice, and who implemented the shari'a was entitled to be called a "caliph of God".[1] In the golden age, however, Ottoman sultans claimed an

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[1] The most famous exponent of this idea was the Persian jurist Jalal al-Din al Dawwani in his ethical treatise Akhlaq-i Jalali. On him see EI^2, II, 174; see also Gibb, Studies on the civilization of Islam, ed. by Shaw and Polk (London 1962), p. 145.

extended form of this title for themselves. They regarded themselves as possessors of "the great Caliphate and the exalted Imamate".[1] They did this by virtue of their being the defenders of the faith in face of Christian Europe, of their being the protectors of the holy sanctuaries of Islam and of the pilgrimage routes to them.[2] As such their claim to this extended title was based on the power they actually exercised.[3] Professor Inalcik maintained that this title "served a policy seeking to establish Ottoman influence and mastery over the world of Islam".[4]

In the nineteenth century, it appears that the assumption of the title by the Ottoman sultans entered a new phase, possibly from the last decade of Mahmud II's reign. It may however, have been used before that date, as for instance in the treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) when the sultan claimed the right to religious jurisdiction over the Muslims of the Crimea who fell under Russian rule by virtue of his "capacity of Grand Caliph of Mohametanism".[5] But this claim seems

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1 See H. Inalcık "The Ottomans and the Caliphate" in Holt, Lambton and Lewis (eds.) C.H.I., 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1970), I, 320-323.

2 Ibid.

3 This was the argument of Lutfi Pasha; see H.A.R. Gibb, "Lutfi pasha on the Ottoman caliphate" in Oriens, XV, (1962), pp. 287-295.

4 Inalcık op. cit., p. 322.

5 C.H.I., I, 677; Lewis, Emergence p. 317f.

to have been a means to political ends. In the nineteenth century the assumption of the title had a different content. As a just and virtuous Muslim ruler, the sultan was entitled to it. His protection of the Muslim holy places was undoubtedly important for his caliphal posture, but in the eyes of his Muslim subjects it apparently coming only second to his being virtuous and just and a shari'a-abiding ruler.

In any case it is noticed that at about the third decade of the century Sultan Mahmud II was described in official documents of the Shaikh al-Islamate as "Imam of the Muslims" and as "Caliph".[1] Moreover, it seems that the Caliphate of Sultan Mahmud II was also recognized by ulema of the Arab lands. An early nineteenth century prominent Damascine jurist, Muhammad Amin 'Ābdin (d. 1836) and a disciple of Sheikh Khalid, discussing the ways in which a Muslim ruler was entitled to the Imamate, wrote that "it could be [acquired] by force (taghallub) with pledge of allegiance (mubay'a) as the case is with present day [i.e. Ottoman] Sultans".[2] Mahmud al-Ālusi, (1802-1854) a mufti of Baghdad for over twelve years (1835-47) wrote a commentary on the Qur'an,[3]: in the

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1 Lutfi, II, 14 and IV, 48. See also Husri, Al-Bilad al-'Arabiya wal-Dawlah al-'Uthmaniya (Beirut, 1960), pp. 53-54.

2 M.A. Ābdin, Radd al-Muhtār 'Ala al-Durr al-Mukhtār, 5 vols. (Cairo, A.H. 1286), III, 479.

3 Rūḥ al-Ma'ani, 30 vols. (Cairo, A.H. 1345).

introduction to which he stated that he began writing it "at the time of the Caliphate of the grand Caliph of God,...the restorer of Mohammedan rules and the establisher of the ordinances of Islamic justice..., Sultan Mahmud the just."[1]

This new phase in the usage of the title by the Ottoman sultan was demonstrated symbolically by the ceremony of the girding of the sword on the accession of Sultan Abdulmejid. In 1808 his father Mahmud II was girded with the sword of the Prophet and of Sultan Osman I the founder of the dynasty. In 1839 however, Abdulmejid was girded with one sword only--that of Omar, the second Arab Caliph. His two successors Abdulaziz and Abdulhamid II were girded with the same sword.[2]

Like his father in the last decade of his rule,[3] he tried to enhance his prestige and function of Caliph by acts of piety. Thus by his orders and at his expense a large zāwiya (lodge) was erected over the tomb of Shaikh Khalid in Damascus (completed 1846).[4] Like his father, too, Abdulmejid showed special care for "the people of the holy cities". He issued an edict concerning

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1 Ibid., I, 4.

2 Lewis in Middle Eastern Studies, I, No. 3, April 1865, pp. 292-293.

3 Biṭār, III, 1466-7; Lutfi, Tarih, IV, 72, 160, 166, V, 10-11, 21, 70; Heyd, p. 93; cf. Gölpinarlı, Mevlanadan Sonra Mevlevilik, pp. 75-6.

4 A. Sāhib, p. 194; M. ibn Sulaiman, p. 81; Biṭār, I, 586.

those of them who visited Istanbul. The Ministry of Evkaf (religious endowments) was to take care of them; the ministers, ulema, and high functionaries were to receive them in their houses; and money and garments were to be presented to them.[1]

But the most important of these acts was probably the restoration of the Prophet's mosque at Medina and adding an extension to its northern side. The work lasted almost five years and ended in 1858-9.[2] The last time this mosque had been re-built was in the later Mamluk period.[3] Since that time until the mid-nineteenth century it does not seem that full scale repairs to the mosque ever took place. Speaking about this act, Biṭār, a Damascine historiographer of the nineteenth century, called Sultan Abdulmejid "the commander of the faithful"[4] a title which hitherto had been used only by Arab Caliphs of the classical period.[5]

Such acts naturally strengthened the Sultan's

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1 Lutfi, VIII, 101-102.

2 A. ibn Zaini Dahlan, Al-Futuḥāt al-Islamiyya, 2 vols. (Cairo, n.d.), II, 242; Biṭār, III, 1036. For the date of completion see Şabri, Mir'āt-ül-Haremeyn, p. 816f.

3 By Sultan Ashraf Qā'it Bey (1468-95), see Biṭār, III, 1036; S.E.I., p. 298.

4 Biṭār, III, 1036; throughout his collection of biographies of men of the thirteenth/nineteenth century. Biṭār referred to the Sultan as Caliph on a number of occasions. See for instance: I, 143, 145-146, 192, 468, II, 966 etc. However, as he wrote during the Hamidian period he may have been influenced by later developments.

5 Gibb, "Lutfi Pasha..." p. 295. Idem, Studies on the Civilization of Islam, pp. 146ff.

claim to the Caliphate in the eyes of his Muslim subjects, until as we shall see, the crisis of the later eighteen fifties shook the belief of many of them in him. In the Muslim lands beyond the empire, the Ottoman Caliphate was gradually gaining recognition among the various Muslim communities. This was possibly due to his being the protector of the Muslim holy places as well as to the growing expansion of the European powers in those lands. The more Muslims fell under non-Muslim rule, the more they looked towards the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph for protection and aid, and the more the belief spread that on the Ottoman state, the fate of the Umma and the future of Islam hung. An early manifestation of the request for protection was the arrival in Istanbul in the eighteen-forties of a deputation from Java to solicit the Sultan to use his influence on their behalf with the Dutch Government.[1] Another and much more significant example was the case of Yakub Beg of Kashghar who applied for and received some help from the Sultan, had the khutba read in the name of Sultan Abdulaziz, and even struck money in his name. Requests for aid from other central Asian states such as Khiva, Khokand, and Bokhara remained unheeded.[2]

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1 J. Redhouse, A Vindication of the Ottoman Sultan's title of "Caliph" showing the...Universal Acceptance (London, 1877), p. 7.

2 Davison, pp. 272ff.

Moreover, with Muslim communities falling under non-Muslim rule, those communities were confronted with new and unprecedented realities which were opposed to their religious needs. First among these was the need to read the Friday sermon in the name of the Caliph or ruler of the day. Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph as the protector of the holy cities of Islam was also the only surviving Muslim ruler with international prestige. Thus many of the world's Muslims turned to him in their prayers.

Nowhere was this feeling stronger than in India. The support for the Ottoman Caliphate there came originally from the followers of the school of Shah Wali Allah,[1] members of his family, and other conservative elements.[2] It seems that the tendency to recognize the Ottoman Caliphate started before the abolition of the Mughal Sultanate following the mutiny of 1857. It possibly started after the failure of the Mujahidin movement in the early eighteen-thirties. Sayyid Ahmad the leader of this movement and a disciple of Shah Abdulaziz is said to have established a "Khilāfat" in Peshawar in 1830-1.[3] In 1841 a grandson of

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1 On him see E.I.^{2}, II, 254-55.

2 Such as the Seminary of Deoband (founded 1866) and late in the century the seminary of Nadwat-ul-ulema'. See Ahmad, Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan (Oxford, 1967), p. 20.

3 See W.C. Smith "The 'Ulamā' in Indian Politics" in C.H. Philips (ed.) Politics and Society in India (London, 1963), p. 49.

Shah Abdal-aziz son of Wali Ullah, Shah Muhammad Ishaq (1778-1846), immigrated to Hijaz with a number of followers and was known to have advocated an alliance with the Ottoman Empire. He apparently supported the Ottoman claim for the Caliphate.[1]

But it was the abolition of the Mughal Sultanate which turned a great many Indian Muslims towards the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph. There is an opinion which attributed a share to the British authorities in India for the wide recognition and support which the Sultan's Caliphate enjoyed in the sub-continent, for it seems that both during and after the mutiny the British authorities in India emphasized their friendship with the Sultan-Caliph in order to pacify or gain the affections of the Indian Muslims.[2] This might have been so to a certain extent but undoubtedly the British were doing no more than attempt to exploit a feeling which was already in existence.[3] In any case support and acknowledgement of the Ottoman Caliphate continued to grow in India even after Anglo-Ottoman friendship had virtually ceased at about the end of the eighteen

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1 Smith, op. cit., p. 50. A. Ahmad, op. cit., p. 123.

2 D.E. Lee, "The Origins of Pan-Islamism" in A.H.J. XLVII (1941-42), p. 286; Davison, p. 275.

3 cf. Nikki R. Kedie "Pan Islam as Proto-Nationalism" in J.M.H. (Chicago), XLI, No. 1, (March 1969), p. 19. See also pp. 20-21: "Pan Islam...was largely an indigenous reaction against growing Western encroachments and conquests...".

seventies. By the end of the century the question of the Caliphate became a subject of much intellectual and political activity and a rallying point for Muslim-Indian particularism

To sum up, there appears to have been a new phase in the nineteenth century in the assumption of the Caliphate by the Ottoman sultan. It possibly started with Sultan Mahmud II in the last decade of his reign following the reassertion of the supremacy of the shari'a in the state. It gained wide recognition in the Muslim world as a result of the political expansion of Europe into Asia. After the late 1850's it appears that externally it was more popular than internally because, as we shall see in the following section, the sultan's caliphate suffered as a result of the course which the reforms took under Āli and Fuad.

2. Muslim Reaction in Istanbul--The Kuleli Affair

The disregard that Āli and Fuad had shown for the commands of the shari'a, divided Ottoman Muslim society between those who shared or followed their views and those who desired the restoration of the supremacy of the shari'a in the state. A large section of the Muslim population believed that the course of reform and the autocratic regime which Āli and Fuad had established were incompatible with the fundamentals of a Muslim state,

violating the norms established in the first generation of reform, and undermining Muslim supremacy in the state. Many felt that this supremacy was further undermined by the intervention of the representatives of the western powers in the internal affairs of the empire which increased rapidly after mid-eighteen fifties. It was felt also that the sultan, who was entrusted with the Caliphate in order to safeguard the observance of shari'a rules in matters of society and state, had betrayed his trust when he endorsed the reforms and policy of his two senior ministers.

The anxiety which this aroused in many Muslims in Istanbul found expression in the two decades between 1856 and 1876 in several attempts to conspire to overthrow the government by violence and restore the Muslim basis of the State, in a movement which tried to define the ideology of the opposition. The first known attempt to overthrow the government by violence was the Kuleli affair.[1]

The "Society of Zealots" or the "Society for the Preservation of the Şeriat" which came to be known as the Kuleli incident[2] was secretly organized by a

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[1] On this affair see U. Iğdemir, Kuleli Vak'asi Hakkinda bir araştirma (Ankara, 1937); T.Z. Tunaya, Turkiyede Siyasi Partiler (Istanbul, 1952), pp. 89ff; Berkes, p. 202f. and Davison, pp. 100-103.

[2] After the name of the military barracks (Kuleli) where the members were tried.

certain Shaikh Ahmad, a Kurdish ʿālim, originally from Sulaimaniya in the province of Baghdad. He was assisted by a general of Circassian origin, Huseyn Daim Pasha. The movement was, it seems confined to Istanbul.

The motive behind the organization as reported by the British Ambassador, was "the little regard shown by the present government to the holy law, the prescriptions of which according to them [i.e. the society] are trampled underfoot."[1]

The society was secret and aimed at using violence to replace Āli and Fuad and the ministers who supported their line by "men of the fanatic party."[2] Some observers believed that it also aimed at the establishment of a constitutional regime[3] which in Islamic terms would mean the restoration of the supremacy of the shari'a and the establishment of a counterbalance to the governing body. However, it was uncovered by the authorities and its members were arrested.

A study of the background of the thirty-three members of the society who were convicted reveals that almost all of them came originally from the provinces.

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1 Bulwer-Russel, F.O. 78/1435, desp. 164 and inclosure by Fisani to Bulwer, Istanbul, September 20, 1959; see also Iğdemir, pp. 34, 43ff.

2 Ibid,

3 Berkes, p. 203 and n. 2.

A second important fact about the society was that it apparently depended heavily on sufi support. One of those convicted, Shaikh Ismail, undertook, we were told, to secure the assistance of his "six thousand disciples and adherants".[1] Another convicted sufi shaikh, Hizargradli Faizullah Efendi, also pledged the support of his "nearly one thousand disciples and followers".[2] One of the convicted members thought that Shaikh Ahmad wanted "to establish a society like Shaikh Shamil".[3] The latter was a Naqshbandi-Khalidi shaikh who led a revolt against the Russians in the eastern Caucasus and fought them for more than a quarter of a century and who founded his rule on the commands of the shari'a.[4] A third fact about this society was that almost half of the convicted members were army officers largely of lower grades.

Seen from these angles, it seems that the opposition to the line of Āli and Fuad drew substantial strength from provincial elements residing in Istanbul who largely belonged to the upper classes in the provinces, from the army, and from a large sector of the sufi movement. This shows also that sufi shaikhs enjoyed wide influence and were taking a lead against the new political

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1 Iğdemir, pp. 31, 64.

2 Ibid., pp. 30, 62-63.

3 See the testimony of Sinekli Mehmet (No. 11), ibid., p. 56.

4 On Shaikh Shamil see Barthold, E.I.[1], IV, 306-307.

line. It was probably not an accident that this was so. The ulema class was weakened by the control of its livelihood by the state and by the rise of the new bureaucratic class who now fulfilled many of their traditional functions. In this way they had lost much of their influence in society. For this and for other reasons, the sufi shaikhs gained in terms of power and influence, not only in Istanbul but in the provinces as well. However, a section of the ulema and the softas (students of the Medresses) also supported the opposition. Thus we find one or two ulema among those convicted in the Kuleli incident. After the unearthing of the attempted coup by the Patriotic Alliance, three ulema were arrested in Istanbul.[1] Another distinguished 'ālim, Sarıyerli Sadik Efendi known also as Khoja Pravadi after his birthplace in Bulgaria, was in 1869 exiled to Acre in Palestine for four years for preaching against the policies of Āli.[2] He was said to have been a sympathizer of the Young Ottomans.[3]

Facing this mounting opposition from several quarters, Āli and Fuad had to seek support for their regime. This they found in the Mevlevi order of which they themselves were followers.[4] From 1856 the head of

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1 Mardin, pp. 42, 221-222.

2 Brusali, I, 344; S.O., III, 196; Mardin, p. 225.

3 I.A. Gövsa, p. 335; Mardin, p. 130.

4 Gölpinarlı, Mevlanadan Sonra Mevlevilik (Istanbul, 1953), pp. 256-257.

the order became a recipient of favours of the state. In 1858 for instance a house was built for him in Qonia, the expenses of which were covered by the state.[1] The shaikhs of the various Mevlevi lodges in Istanbul also gained from this special relationship between Āli and Fuad and the order.[2]

However the support of the Mevlevi order, though undoubtedly useful to Āli and Fuad, could not have outweighed the forces of opposition mainly because the Mevlevi was an order usually detached from the general public, while it seems the opponents of Āli and Fuad found a wider following because they defended the cause of the shari'a and opposed the autocracy of the government and the influence of the European powers. This probably was the reason behind the revival of the Baktashi order in Āli's last years: "...by the year 1869 Bektashis felt assured that in the government there existed influences that were being exerted powerfully in their defence".[3] With its wide following among the lower Turkish classes, Bektashism was a useful instrument in the hands of the supporters of Āli's political line.

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[1] B.A. Dahiliye Iradeleri, No. 26793 cited in Gölpinarli, p. 176.

[2] On this relationship see Dahiliye Iradeleri Nos. 25208, 26481, 26593, 26863 all cited in Gölpinarli, pp. 176, 259.

[3] Birge, The Bektashi Order of Dervishes (London, 1937), p. 80.

The rehabilitation of the Bektashi order continued in the early seventies until, it seems, it was stopped by Sultan Abdulhamid.[1]

3. Mustafa Fazil Pasha and the Egyptian Emigrés in Istanbul

What was called the "fanatic party" was not as the term might suggest a party of reactionary minded men who were against reform and progress. As we shall see below, this "party" was simply various groups who saw in the reforms of Āli and Fuad and their autocratic attitude, a danger to the Ottoman State.

A leading figure of one of those groups in the mid-eighteen-sixties was Mustafa Fazil Pasha. The third son of Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt, he was born in that country in 1829. At the age of sixteen (1845/6) he was sent to the Ottoman capital and admitted into the secretariat of the Grand Vezirate at the time when Reshid Pasha was Grand Vezir. Between that date and 1862 when he became Minister of Education, little is known about his life.[2] In that period he twice returned to Egypt. His first return to Istanbul, in 1851, was probably the result of the estrangement between ʿAbbas I and his

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1 Ibid., pp. 80-81.

2 For a biography of Fazil see M.Z. Pakalın, Tanzimat Maliye Nazirleri, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1940), II, 3-62; S.O., IV, 481; E. Kuran in E.I.^{2}, II, 728.

kinsmon of the family of Muhammad 'Ali. His relations with the French go back to that date when France supported the other members of the family, against 'Abbas and wished to see some other of them as viceroy.[1] In Istanbul, Fazil soon became a member of the High Council of Judicial Ordinances. But after the rise of Said Pasha to power in Egypt, he returned there and for a while in 1857 became the Minister of Finance charged with the responsibility of reorganizing that ministry.[2] On the whole he was very close to Said Pasha. "He was the only one of the family of Muhammad 'Ali" reported the British Consul General, "with whom Said kept up a semblance of intimacy. Fazil exercised at times a certain influence over the viceroy".[3] At the beginning of 1861 Fazil was still in Egypt as it was reported that he was to accompany Said Pasha in his visit to Medina.[4] At this stage he was described by the British Ambassador as "restless, talented and said to be intriguing...".[5]

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1 A.A. Mustafa, Some aspects of Egypts Foreign Relations under Abbas I (in The Annals of the Faculty of Arts, VIII ('Ain Shams University , Cairo, 1936), p. 67.

2 A. Sami, Taqwim al-Nil, III, pt.1 (Cairo, 1963), p. 213 and p. 225.

3 Colquhoun-Russel, F.O. 195/642, desp. 77, confd. Alexandria, July 2, 1860.

4 Sama-Same, F.O. 195/681, desp. 1, Cairo, January 3, 1861.

5 Bulwer-Russel, F.O. 195/722, desp. 7, Alexandria, January 4, 1863. Bulwer visited Egypt at the end of 1862.

At the end of 1862 we find Fazil as Minister of Education at the Porte. This was the first ministerial post to which he was appointed in Istanbul, and it is rather curious that after an absence of about four years to see him in such a post. Early in 1863 he became Minister of Finance, a post which he occupied for a little more than a year. In 1864 he was in Paris and met Napoleon III, a matter which worried his brother Ismail Pasha of Egypt.[1] For more than a year and a half he was apparently without a post, during which time he played a major role in the establishment of a secret society known as the Patriotic Alliance.[2] In November 1865 he was appointed chairman of the newly founded Council of Treasury (Meclis-i Hazain) a post which he held for only four months, during which he presented a memorandum to the Sultan criticizing the financial policy of Fuad Pasha the Grand Vezir.[3] As a result, hostility developed between the two statesmen and in February 1866 Fazil was dismissed from his post.[4] On April 4th., for reasons which we do not know, he was ordered to leave Istanbul within twenty four hours.[5] He chose to go to Paris.

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[1] Davison, p. 198.

[2] See below p. 99.

[3] Mardin, p. 30. On the financial crisis of the early 1860's see 'Ali Fuad, Rical-i Mühimme-i Siyasiye (Istanbul, 1928), p. 160f.

[4] Pakalin, II, 6.

[5] Mardin, p. 30 citing "The Times" of April 6, 1866, p. 10.

Within a month Ismail obtained the change in the law of succession which had been previously denied him, thus dealing a second blow to Fazil who was now denied the opportunity of ever becoming a viceroy in Egypt.

Dr. Mardin presumed that the reason for his exile "most probably involved some plot...against Fuad".[1] But if Fazil did plot against Fuad, to be exiled in such a manner seems a graver punishment than an offence of intrigue by an ex-minister against another minister would warrant.

Mustafa Fazil Pasha was not the only Ottoman statesman who was forced to emigrate to Istanbul after the rise of 'Abbas I. Notably among the distinguished emigrés were Yusuf Kiamil Pasha, Abdulraham Sami Pasha, and his son Subhi Bey who, on reaching Istanbul, were welcomed by the Grand Vezir Reshid Pasha and employed in high office in government service. In the 1860's they became powerful and influential but on the whole they were disliked by Fuad and Āli especially in the case of Kiamil who it seems was closer to Fazil than Sami and his son.[2]

Several issues determined the relations between Kiamil and Āli and Fuad. Kiamil first of all was a friend

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1 P. 31 citing Mehmet Memduh,. Mir'at-i Suunat (Izmir 1328/1910), p. 33.

2 Kiamil happened also to be the husband of Fazil's aunt.

of Reshid Pasha whom he accompanied on his visit to Said Pasha of Egypt in 1856. Nor did he sympathise with the desire of Āli and Fuad for autocratic power. Thus for instance in 1863 they and other prominent ministers agreed between them to decline to accept the office of Grand Vezir in order to force a decisive confrontation with Sultan Abdulaziz and limit to the minimum the power of the Palace. But Kiamil Pasha, when offered the office accepted it thus foiling their attempt to grasp full power.[1] This affair caused estrangement between him and Fuad the outgoing Grand Vezir.[2] Another sign of Kiamil Pasha's lack of sympathy with bureaucratical autocracy was his translation into Turkish of Fenelon's Télémaque (1862). Being a criticism of the despotism of Louis the Fourteenth, it could well be taken in Istanbul of the 1860's both as an indirect attack on the autocratic attitude of Āli and a warning against it.[3]

A glimpse at Kiamil Pasha's outlook towards the course of reform may be seen in the fact that he supported the establishment of the lycée of "Daruşşafaka".[4] This school was founded in 1864-65

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1 Inal, M.K., Osmanlı Devrinde Son Sadrıazamlar (Istanbul, 1940-1953), I, 216ff.

2 'Ali Fuad, p. 162f. See also Inal, I, 23, on an incident in 1867 that shows the lack of sympathy of Kiamil towards Āli when the latter was in Crete. See also Midhat, Mir'āt-i Hayret, p. 6.

3 A. Hourani, Arabic Thought, p. 74; Davison, p. 182.

4 Inal, I, 248 and n. 2.

independently of the Porte by a group of government employees. In it instruction was carried on along modern lines, but Islamic ideals prevailed. When seen side by side with the lycée of Galatasaray founded a few years later by the Porte, where instruction was carried out in French and where little emphasis was given even to the Turkish language,[2] it might be seen to what extremes the Porte had gone under Āli and Fuad and where Muslim public opinion stood. The activities of Kiamil Pasha in this field were numerous.[3]

Himself a poet, Kiamil Pasha opened his house to young poets like Shinasi, Namik Kemal, and Ziya who later became prominent members of the Young Ottoman movement in Europe. In fact he and Mustafa Fazil were regarded as protectors and patrons of these young men.[4]

Another literary salon which the young poets and writers of the 1860's frequented was that of Abdulrahman Sami Pasha who was a man of letters with a wide knowledge of Islamic culture.[5] His son Subhi Pasha was the author of a published work on the history of the first century of Islam and a work on the Prolegomena of Ibn Khaldūn.[6] These salons contributed considerably to

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1 Mardin, p. 219.

2 Davison, p. 247.

3 Inal, I, 246f; Brusalı, Osmanlı Müellifleri, 3 vols. (Istanbul A.H. 1333-42), I, 288.

4 Inal, I, 236; Mardin, p. 13, n. 5.

5 Brusalı, II, 240; Mardin, pp. 191ff.

6 Brusali, III, 81.

the political education of the Young Ottomans which reached maturity as a result of their observations in Europe and the influence of Europe upon them.

There were other Ottoman statesmen or residents in Istanbul, of Egyptian background. Among those who particularly concern us was Prince Halim, the fourth son of Muhammad 'Ali who arrived in the later eighteen sixties; Halil Sherif Pasha, sometime Foreign Minister, was also there. They were a powerful and very wealthy group and though it is difficult to say that they were united in one purpose, a common factor among them other than their origin was their dislike of the rule of Āli and Fuad. However, the most prominent among them and the most extreme in his opposition to Āli and Fuad was Mustafa Fazil.[1]

4. A Second Phase of Opposition: Mustafa Fazil and the Young Ottomans

(a) The Patriotic Alliance

For some years in the later 1860's Mustafa Fazil took a leading part in the opposition to Āli and

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[1] It should be noted that the presence of this group in Istanbul may have served another purpose. Because of a previous connection between the administration of Muhammad 'Ali and Syria and Arabia, it is possible that they played the role of intermediaries between notables of these provinces and the Porte. This was perhaps more true in the case of Fazil than the others. Direct evidence, however, was not to be found on this point.

Fuad. We find him implicated in several events. It seems that he stood behind the Patriotic Alliance, supported the Young Ottoman movement, and was implicated in an attempt to arouse an insurrection in Syria. Sultan Abdulhamid moreover, in his notes on the fall of Sultan Abdulaziz accused Fazil and some other "prominent Egyptians of his views" to have started to work towards that end some years after the rise of that ill-fated sultan.[1]

After his return from his visit to Paris in 1864, Mustafa Fazil it seems was determined to promote an opposition movement to Āli and Fuad. Thus in the summer of 1865 he helped to found the "Patriotic Alliance". This society was composed of a group of young men who were for the most part employed by the government and who resented the autocracy and the policies of Āli and Fuad.[2] It was probably difficult to organize open opposition thus the society remained secret. Though reported to have been a founding member,[3] Fazil remained behind the scenes and Mehmet Bey, a nephew of Mahmud Nedim Pasha, was said to have been "the spirit and chief"

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1 I. Mahmud Kemal [Inal], "Abdulhamid-i Saninin notlari" in TTEM, no. 13/90, p. 60f.

2 On the Patriotic Alliance the names of the founding members and their antecedents, see Mardin pp. 10ff; see also Inal, Son Asır Türk Şairleri, 12 pts. (Istanbul, 1930-1942), p. 148f.

3 Mardin, p. 10, n. 1;

of the group.[1] However a steward in Fazil's household, Azmi Bey, was reported to have been "the political and financial manager of the society".[2]

In April 1866, Fazil, as we have seen, was ordered to leave Istanbul and went to Paris. From there, choosing the opportunity offered by some political difficulties facing the Porte,[3] he addressed a letter to the Sultan (March 1867) urging him to grant a constitution to the empire.[4] But it should not be understood that he had suddenly become a constitutionalist. Fazil did not advocate a constitutional government. His main concern was to guarantee the rights of the individual and to create checks upon government authority and upon those who practised it, because the decay of state and society in the preceding centuries was due, he believed, to injustices to which the population had been subjected. However in Islam such guarantees and checks are embodied

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1 Şeref, Tarih Musahabeleri, p. 173; Inal, p. 149. It should be noted that Mehmet's father, Sağir Ahmet Bey remained unemployed by Āli for about ten years (A.H. 1278-1288) until his brother Nedim made him Minister of Posts and Telegraphs during his Grand Vezirate in A.H. 1288-9/ 1871-2, (see S.O. I, 303); moreover Mahmud Nedim himself asked for the governorship of Tripoli in North Africa where he remained vali for seven successive years. (See below p. 219).

2 Inal, p. 149; cf. M.Z. Pakalın, II, 34.

3 For some detailed discussion of the difficulties see Mardin pp. 24ff; see also Lewis p. 146; Davison pp.186-187,for the reaction of the Porte to Turkish press criticism.

4 Davison, p. 202-205, for an analysis of the letter see Mardin,chapter IX, pp. 276ff.

in the shari'a. To demand other guarantees was a sign that the ideas set forth in the letter partly had a non-Muslim source. It is believed that they "were inspired by Emile de Girardin...the editor of the daily Liberte"[1] and the letter was published in this newspaper in March 1867.[2] At about the same time that the letter was published, Napoleon III granted an audience to Fazil who submitted to him his scheme.[3]

When the letter reached Istanbul in March 1867, it was translated into Turkish, printed and distributed clandestinely by Fazil's friends and when Āli took action against them, three escaped to Paris, (May 1867). They were Namık Kemal, Ziya Bey, and 'Ali Su'avi and they escaped with the help of the French ambassador through the good offices of Giampietry the editor of a French newspaper in Istanbul.[4]

While this was taking place, the members of the Patriotic Alliance were preparing a coup to get rid of Āli and Fuad[5] but their plan was denounced to the police and the plot failed. Fuad Pasha informed the British Ambassador that Fazil "was not altogether unconnected"

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1 Mardin, p. 39; see also Davison p. 202, n. 108.

2 See Davison p. 203, n. 109; on Emile de Girardin see E. Britanica, 1966 edition, X, 431b.

3 Mardin, p. 39.

4 Ibid., p. 42.

5 Şeref, p. 174.

with the attempt.[1] Some suspects were arrested but Mehmed Bey and several others escaped to Paris (June 1867) and were received by Fazil. In August the whole group, those who escaped in May and those who escaped in June met together under the chairmanship of Fazil and it was decided to create a new society to be known as the New or Young Ottoman Society.[2]

A few weeks later, the sultan came on a state visit to France, Fazil met him and made his peace with him and with Fuad Pasha who accompanied him. He was allowed to return to Istanbul but he continued secretly to provide financial support for the Young Ottomans and their publications. This support ceased in 1869, perhaps when Fazil's prospects of being appointed viceroy of Egypt became suddenly bright following a serious disagreement between the Porte and Ismail Pasha.

(b) <u>The Young Ottomans and their views</u>

The Young Ottomans were the most eloquent of the opposition groups to the duumvirate of Āli and Fuad. Their political convictions were influenced from a number of quarters. We have already mentioned one, namely the salons of Kiamil Pasha and Abdulrahman Sami Pasha. Others were sufi influences especially in the case of Kemal, who,

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1 Lyons-Stanley, F.O. 78/1961, desp. 245, Constantinople, June 13, 1867.

2 Mardin, p. 44 where also the name of the participants are mentioned.

although only twenty years of age was a member of the short lived Society of Poets (1860-1) where he fell under the influence of Leskofçalı Galib, a follower of a Naqshbandi-Khalidi shaikh, Faizullah, one of those convicted in the Kuleli incident.[1] In addition he had been influenced by another member of that society, a well known and highly regarded sufi shaikh in Istanbul called Sayyid Osman Shems.[2] Shems, who knew Āli personally, refused his suggestion of an office with good prospects and chose to adhere to the sufi way of life which in his case meant poverty. He was described as one of the leading figures of the 'ummet" who "in all his actions and movements . . . followed the [commands] of the exalted sunna."[3] Ziya was also a member of the Society and knew Shems.[4]

Thus the views that Kemal, Ziya and their friends expressed, represented what was felt and thought by a large section of the Muslim population of Istanbul and they were also the views that circulated among the opponents of the regime of Āli and Fuad.

From our point of view, these views may be

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1 Gölpinarlı, "Namik Kemalın Şiirleri" in N.K. Hakkinda (Istanbul, 1942), p. 19; Mardin, p. 204; on Shaikh Faizullah see above, p. 90.

2 Mardin, pp. 58, n. 106, 288, n. 11. See also Inal, Son Asır Türk Şairleri, 12 pts. in 3 vols. (Istanbul, 1930-42), p. 1797f; on Shems see also Gövsa, p. 367.

3 Inal, loc. cit.

4 Inal, op. cit., pp. 803, 1410; Mardin, p. 204.

arranged under four headings: the dangers involved in abandoning the shari'a, their desire to see checks put on the autocratic rule of Āli and Fuad, their grievances against the economic policies of the Tanzimat, and their resentment at foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the empire.

It is interesting to note that in several respects their views were similar to those voiced in some Arab provinces, especially those voiced by Bustani, a matter which shows a certain degree of influence upon him such as, for instance, their ideas on the rights of the subject and their grievances about the state of the economy. Moreover, there may have been some influence in the opposite direction. The central issue in their argument, namely the necessity to preserve the shari'a as the basis of the system of government was sounded more than a decade earlier by Grand Sherif Abdulmuttalib. Even the future solution that they perhaps envisaged--to entrust the Caliphate to one of the descendents of the Prophet, was according to some observers, talked about in Syria some years before the Young Ottomans. In the following we shall confine our discussion to the ideas of Ziya and Kemal as more representative of the movement than those of their colleagues.

(i) The Shari'a and the Ottoman State

In a sense the Young Ottomans were the heirs of the approach of Reshid towards matters of state and reform. Like him they regarded the reform of the state as an absolute necessity, but like him too they believed that reform should conform with the shari'a. For the shari'a properly interpreted could accommodate the reforms needed to strengthen the Ottoman state and the Muslim community.

Following Reshid in the preamble of the Gülhane rescript, they attributed the decline of the Ottoman Empire to negligence in following the requirements of the shari'a. "Every Islamic government" wrote Ziya, "as long as it exercised its duty of providing justice and right by way of conforming to the principles of the shari'a, reached a state of progress and happiness, and the people had richness and repose".[1] Again, according to Ziya, the first period of the Tanzimat fulfilled the requirements of the shari'a. "If we put the Gülhane rescript letter by letter under scrutiny" he wrote, "not a word could be seen out of the rules of the shari'a, and all the matters which are called reforms followed its commands".[2]

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1 Hürriyet of January 4, 1869, cited in Mardin pp. 343-4.

2 Hürriyet no. 41, Zilh. 22, 1285 (= April 5, 1869) quoted in I. Süngü, "Tanzimat ve Yeni Osmanlılar" in Tanzimat (Istanbul, 1940), p. 801. See also similar view of Kemal, p. 807 of the same source.

Reshid, in the eyes of the Young Ottomans, proved that it was possible to reform the state within the bounds of the shari'a. But Āli and Fuad had abandoned this course and the reforms under them came to limit its jurisdiction. As a result of this deviation, both the Islamic basis of the state and the cultural identity of the empire were in danger.[1] The Young Ottomans did not fail to connect this with the growth of western political influence over the Porte. Where Reshid called in the aid of European powers, Āli and Fuad had been led by those powers when they issued the edict of 1856.[2]

The Europeans, noted Ziya, were much under the apprehension that as long as the rules of the shari'a prevailed among and were believed by the Muslims they would not be able to take part in modern civilization. They claimed, continued Ziya, that the entrance of the Muslims into the circle of civilization depended on their abandoning and abolishing the shari'a and on their adopting and using rules and laws current in Europe.[3]

Kemal was sure that such a course would bring about the destruction of the Ottoman Empire. The European states, he wrote, were unaware that the present retarded state of the empire had occurred because the

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1 Mardin, p. 352f.

2 Davison, p. 222; cf. Süngü 785f.

3 Hürriyet no. 41, Zilh. 22, 1285, quoted in Süngü, p. 801.

Ottoman government "failed to follow the commands of the shari'a which is the foundation and the structure of our state". The Europeans should know, he added, that the survival of the Ottoman state was absolutely connected with the preservation of this foundation. The Ottoman state was established as a Muslim state and it should remain so. "If we want our state to survive" he concluded, "we should never stop from following the shari'a or depart from the status of a Muslim state. The shari'a is the soul and the spirit of our state".[1]

In other words, the Young Ottomans saw in the political course followed by Āli and Fuad a sure way to the destruction of the Ottoman Empire. The empire had held together for so long because it preserved the framework of a Muslim state. But if this framework were destroyed, they believed that the dangers involved in such a course, whether political or cultural, were inconceivable.

(ii) The ruler and the subject[2]

Another aspect of the dangers involved in abandoning the shari'a was the growth of the autocratic power of the ruler. Sovereignty according to Kemal lay with the people. They set up the state and delegated

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1 Hürriyet no. 9 (no date stated), quoted in Süngü, p. 808.

2 There was a striking similarity between the views of the Young Ottomans and Bustani in this question. See those of Bustani below pp.207ff.

their sovereignty to it.[1] The relation between subject and state was regulated by the shari'a. Kemal believed moreover that the shari'a included all that could be regarded as a constitution, both the fundamental structure of the government and the fundamental rights of the subject.[2] The subjects were endowed by nature with certain rights, Kemal maintained, and the state was to provide the authority for the preservation of these rights.[3] But in consequence of the violation of the shari'a an important check on the powers of the ruler was removed and subject and society were exposed to the unrestrained authority of the government. The shari'a guaranteed justice and protected the subject from arbitrary rule. It was the best available means for keeping the ruler from oppressing the people.[4] But under the new system which gave the bureaucracy wide powers, the common man suffered many injustices. Thus the call of the Young Ottomans could be summed up as "a cry for justice".[5] Āli was regarded by them as the first of this new class of tyrants. Here lies the most serious failure of the later Tanzimat reforms. By disregarding shari'a norms, which secured in a Muslim state the rights

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1 Berkes, p. 210f.
2 Mardin, p. 313.
3 Berkes, p. 210.
4 Davison, p. 225; Mardin, p. 346.
5 Mardin, p. 313; see also Lewis, p. 140.

of the individual, they failed to provide a counterbalance to government authority which was invested in the bureaucracy. No wonder then that they called for some kind of popular check to the power of this class.[1]

(iii) Ottoman economy and the Young Ottomans[2]

Another subject which moved the Young Ottomans to castigate the policies of Āli and Fuad were the economic difficulties which came upon the empire during the Tanzimat. In a previous chapter we have discussed the state of the economy in general lines. Here we shall review the arguments of the Young Ottomans on the subject.

Both Namik Kemal and Ziya dealt with this question in a number of articles in the Hürriyet. "All our needs" wrote Kemal "our looms fulfilled". But those looms were ruined in a matter of twenty to thirty years. The reason no doubt was the freedom of commerce which was granted to the Europeans by treaty. Consequently added Kemal, craftsmanship and skills disappeared from the country, the looms stopped and the skilled labourers escaped.[3] A few months later Ziya also touched on the

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1 Davison, p. 223.

2 In their views on this question the Young Ottomans did not take into consideration that what happened in the Ottoman lands was a part of a world wide movement.

3 Hürriyet no. 7, Rabi; II, 21, 1285 (= August 10, 1868) quoted in Süngü, p. 826.

same subject. "Because of our ignorance" he wrote, "we prefer the products of the factories of Europe upon the products of our country". He accused the government of encouraging this situation by lavishing privileges upon the foreigners. Because of that, Ottoman manufacturers were ruined, the merchants became bankrupt and the craftsmen whose livelihood depended on these manufacturers became impoverished. Ottoman riches, concluded Ziya, had passed to foreign countries and a crisis had fallen upon the treasury.[1] Similar grievances were also heard from Beirut and Damascus at about the same time.[2] This economic crisis was one of the factors that enraged the masses of Damascus in 1860.[3]

(iv) Foreign intervention

According to Ziya this situation would not have occurred without the growth of the influence of the European ambassadors and consuls who took to the habit of interfering in the internal and governmental affairs of the empire. Neither did Ziya hesitate to blame Reshid for that. Reshid, in order to be able to face his opponents at the court opened the door for such interference.[4] Since then the door had remained open.

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1 Hürriyet no. 42, Zilh. 29, 1285 (April 12, 1869) quoted in Sungu p. 787; see also Sungu p. 837f.

2 See al-Jinan, I (1870), pp. 371-373 and p. 688. cf. Hourani Arabic Thought, p. 263.

3 Hadiqat al-Akhbar of May 17, 1860. See also that of January 5, 1860.

4 Hürriyet no. 42, Zilh. 29, 1285 (= April 12, 1869) cited in Sungu p. 786.

Those ambassadors had used their influence to further the commercial interests of their countries. The consulates in the provinces followed the example of the embassies in Istanbul and interfered in every act of local government.[1] No governor or other official was able to withstand their pressure. In fact governors were vulnerable. If a consul did not get along with a governor, his ambassador would put pressure on the Porte to dismiss that governor, and the Porte would do so without listening to the governor's self-defence.[2] This situation becomes more humiliating when we know, added Ziya, that in many areas of the empire, those consuls or their consular agents and their staff were local people and belonged to the non-Muslim communities. To add to all this, the foreign trade was centred in the hands of those local inhabitants who used their position to serve their own interests.[3] No wonder then that the Muslim population was so bitter both against their government which allowed such a thing to happen, and against the non-Muslim locals and foreigners.

These were the major issues that the Young Ottomans raised against some of the Tanzimat policies and especially against the policies of Ali and Fuad. But

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1 Hürriyet no. 48, Saf. 12, 1286 (= May 24, 1869), Süngü pp. 788-789.

2 Ibid., p. 789; see also Süleyman Hüsnü, Hiss-i Inkılab (Istanbul, A.H. 1326), p. 4.

3 Süngü, p. 789.

what solution did they suggest?

In their eyes the source of evil was the autocratic rule which Āli and Fuad had established. In Islam the ruler was under an obligation to consult his people, or more precisely the leading figures in the community, in the affairs of government. This obligation was based on the Quranic verse "wa-shawirhum fi'l-amr". What the Young Ottomans called for was the creation of a system of consultation. In this sense they did not mean a constitutional system because for them the constitution of the Muslim state was the shari'a.[1] They most probably meant a sort of a consultative body "Meclis-i Şuray-i Ümmet"[2] beside the ruler which would be the sole legislative authority and which would supervise the actions of the government as a check on despotism.[3] Such a system was equated in their view with a return to the rule of law as embodied in the practice of the shari'a.[4]

This was the immediate solution the Young Cttomans called for, but this was not the only solution they had in mind. It should be remembered that when the Patriotic Alliance was established in 1865 "a program based on that of the Carbonari" seems to have been

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1 Mardin, p. 313.

2 Süngü, p. 846f. citing Hürriyet no. 4 (no date). See also Süngü, p. 811.

3 Davison, p. 224; Lewis, p. 140; cf. also Mardin, p. 309.

4 Mardin, p. 105.

adopted.[1] And the Carbonari was known to have republican tendencies. Later, the Young Ottomans, who in a sense were the heirs of the Patriotic Alliance, advocated indirectly the cause of republicanism. Was not Islam in its beginning a sort of a republic, asked Kemal.[2] In every nation, he wrote, there was first a general administration called a republic, then for some reason it became the rule of one person. "In the Islamic nation 'millet' this shift occurred with the rise of the Ummayads".[3] Ziya also expounded at length the virtues of republican government in contrast to personal autocracy.[4]

This was no passing view in the minds of Ziya and Kemal and probably others of their friends. As the references show, they raised the question on three different occasions in the Hürriyet between 1868 and 1870. Moreover, there existed two independent authorities who talked to a number of Young Ottomans in Europe and their evidence confirmsthe above mentioned view. The first was the orientalist Vambery who claimed that he met them in London in the later eighteen-sixties. He stated that they criticized the ruling clique for their betrayal of

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1 Lewis, p. 149.

2 Hürriyet no. 12, Cemaz. I, 27, 1285 (= September 14, 1868), quoted in Süngü p. 853.

3 Hürriyet no. 36, Zilq. 17, 1285 (= March 1, 1869), Süngü, p. 854.

4 Hürriyet no. 99, I, 14, 1287 (= May 14, 1870), Süngü, pp. 855-856.

the shari'a, and he compared them to the Germans "who yearned for a republic with a Grand Duke at its head".[1] The second was L. Cahun who had certain contacts with the Young Ottomans in Paris.[2] He wrote that "their project was to sieze the Sultan and replace him by another member of the imperial family under whose name they at first will establish a constitutional government and later on a republic". He added that "The Arabs upon whom they [the Young Ottomans] reckoned, would elect...a true Caliph who would have Mecca as his seat and who would give investiture to the Ottoman republic..."[3]

Cahun probably gave us an insight of what was in the minds of some of those who took part in the events of 1876. In any case, the Young Ottomans may have talked in such terms. There is strong evidence that Kemal in 1876-7 talked of choosing ex-Grand Sherif Abdulmuttalib as Caliph.[4] Indeed Abdulmuttalib had a certain complicity with the group that organized the deposition of Sultan Abdulaziz and he appears to

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1 A. Vambéry, "Freiheitliche Bestrebungen in moslemischen Asien" in Deutsche Rundschau, LXXVII, October 1893, p. 65.

2 Şeref, p. 185, cf. Mardin, p. 61, n. 113.

3 L. Cahun in Lavisse and Rambaud, Histoire General, XI, (Paris, 1899), p. 548.

4 M.C. Kuntay, Namık Kemal, 2 vols. (3 pts.) (Istanbul, 1944-57), II, pt. 2, p. 165f; Mahmud Celaluddin, Mir'at Hakikat, 3 vols. (Istanbul, A.H. 1326-7), I, 267-270; see also S. Story (ed.), The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey (London, 1920), p. 147.

have known about the event in advance.[1]

In the light of this it is possible to understand what Mordtmann, a German orientalist who served as a private tutor in the mansions of Abdulrahman Sami Pasha, meant when he defined the aims of the Patriotic Alliance as "medieval" in nature.[2]

It seems then that the opposition groups in Istanbul and possibly elsewhere in the empire, in face of the growing autocracy of Āli and Fuad and of their disregard of shari'a rules, actions which had the tacit consent of the Sultan-Caliph, may have been having second thoughts about loyalty to the Ottoman dynasty. They may even have considered a separation of the Sultanate and the Caliphate, entrusting the latter to a descendant of the Prophet while substituting an Ottoman "republic" for the Sultanate which would conform with the requirements of the shari'a. Did they in this envisage the fall of the Ottoman dynasty?

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1 See a letter written by him to Sultan Abdulhamid concerning Heyrullah Effendi, Şeyh-ül-Islam at the deposition of Sultan Abdulaziz, B.A. Yıl. Ev. 31/1846/5, cf. Yıl. Ev. 15/1126. See also Kurd 'Ali, Khitat al-Sham, 6 vols. (Damascus, 1925-8), III, 101; Inal, Son Sadriazamlar, I, 524; cf. Moncrieff-Duferrin, F.O. 195/1415, desp. 6 (confd.), Jedda, 1 February, 1882, where it is stated that Midhat even suggested to him the Caliphate.

2 Mordtmann, Istanbul, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1877), I, 66, quoted in Mardin, p. 21.

5. Mustafa Fazil and Syria

Hand in hand with the attempt of the Patriotic Alliance to stage a coup in Istanbul in early summer 1867, there was according to one report a plan for an uprising in Syria. The plan was reported by Palgrave, a former Jesuit monk who had spent some years in Syria in the late eighteen fifties and who served Napoleon III in a mission to Arabia in the early eighteen sixties. He had left the church shortly afterwards and entered the British Consular Service and in 1867 was British consul at Trebizond in Anatolia.[1] In a memorandum which he wrote in 1867, he informed the British Amabassador of a plan for detaching the province of Syria from the Ottoman Empire which, according to him, had failed to materialize in 1860. The plan had been seriously taken up again in 1865 "by a knot of private adventurers or men at least acting in their private capacity at Constantinople." Fazil had been "designed for the nominal head of the revolutionary movement . . . European capitalists have offered their resources; arms men and officials have been got ready." In Syria itself "the elements to be worked on . . . remain pretty much the same" as in 1860, some bedouin tribes, the Ansaris, Mutewallis, Ismailis, and a certain faction in the large towns. The uprising,

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1 On him see D.N.B., XV, 109-110.

claimed Palgrave, was planned to take place in summer 1867, a little before he wrote his memorandum.[1]

However, a similar attempt to that which Palgrave described did take place a year later, in late summer 1868. The leader of the attempted uprising was Eugene O'Reilly who served in the Ottoman army under the name of Hasan Bey and reached the rank of Colonel.[2] With money paid by Fazil, O'Reilly told his interrogator afterwards, he was to form and arm a body of about one hundred men and to smuggle them into Syria.

If Fazil was involved, it is possible to understand why he had made his peace with the Sultan in Paris in 1867, although we do not in fact know for certain what had gone between him and the Sultan there. But to say that "he had received assurances that he would be allowed to prepare the groundwork" for representative reform[3] was probably more than he was promised. This did not mean that he did not care for such a reform. But whatever he was promised, it was more important for him at that phase to be in Istanbul rather than in Paris.

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1 Palgrave-Lyons F.O. 78/1961 conf. desp. Constantinople, 18 June, 1867, encl. in Lyons-Stanley very conf. 19 June, 1867.

2 Of Irish origin he had escaped from Great Britain after participating in the abortive insurrection of O'Brein, the leader of Young Ireland party in 1848. Eliot-Stanley, F.O. 78/2023, desp. 368, 2 October, 1868. It appears that before the attempt O'Reilly resigned from the Ottoman Service (ibid.).

3 Mardin, p. 46.

However, after Fazil returned to Istanbul he continued it seems to work for this aim. Thus it was reported from Aleppo in December 1867 that somebody in disguise, suspected to have been Fazil himself, visited the city secretly and stayed three days after which he proceeded to Damascus. During his short stay "he employed his whole time in getting into conversation with the inhabitants of every rank and questioning them as their being satisfied with the present system of government which he frequently insinuated was likely soon to be changed." The reporter added that "a report had previously been spread here of his being thought of as a viceroy for the whole of Syria."[1]

A few months afterwards, late in the summer of 1868, O'Reilly arrived in Syria with his men. He was once close to Fuad Pasha and served as his A.D.C. when the latter came to Damascus on a special mission in 1860.[2] Believing in the militaristic qualities of the bedouins he sought to establish a commanding position among some tribes of central Syria.[3]

Financed, as has been said, by Fazil and possibly others, O'Reilly was able to buy two small

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1 Skene-Elliot, F.O. 78/1991, desp. 21, Aleppo, 12 December, 1867.

2 The Times, 19 October, 1868, p. 8c.; see also al-Jinan, VI, 766.

3 Elliot to Stanley, F.O. 78/2023, desp. 368, 2 October, 1868. See also al-Jawaib of 22 December, 1868 and 16 February, 1869.

field pieces and rifles of high quality. He smuggled these and his men into central Syria, anticipating, it seems, the active support of some of the bedouin shaikhs in that area. But no sooner had he reached there than his camp was encircled by government troops and he was seized along with 73 of his men.

In his evidence in Damascus,[1] he disclosed his plan. The preparations had started a year earlier in Europe, several people whose names he did not disclose joined in to finance the project, the aim of which was to start a political movement in Syria and force the Porte to create a viceroyalty in that country with Mustafa Fazil as viceroy.

C'Reilly, in his evidence, tried to exonerate Fazil saying that after the Sultan restored him to favour and he had returned to Istanbul, he had disengaged himself from the plan. But the Porte did not accept this and continued to believe in Fazil's complicity in the whole affair.[2]

It was probably no accident that just at that time some sixty persons were arrested in Istanbul and charged with conspiracy against the Government.[3]

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1 See separate statement in F.O. 195/806 dated 30 September, 1868. See also Douin, II, 92f.

2 Elliot-Stanley, F.O. 78/2023, desp. 419 (confd.), Istanbul, 10 November, 1868.

3 The Times of 5 October, 1868, p. 7d; 7 October, p. 7c; 19 October, p. 8b.

This episode suggests the possible existence of some links between the Young Ottomans and certain Muslim Arab Notables in Syria, which in the light of Āli's policies in that country, as we shall see below,[1] is understandable.

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1 See below, chapters V and VI.

CHAPTER V

SYRIA IN THE PERIOD OF ĀLI AND FUAD: THE FIRST PHASE, 1855-1860

1. Muslim Arabs and the Shari'a

For the Muslim Arabs, the supremacy of the shari'a in the Ottoman state meant probably more than it meant for other Muslim groups in the empire. In this they were at one with the Young Ottomans. Above all they were aware that the enforcement of shari'a rules puts the ruler under checks, guarantees justice, and protects the rights of the individual. They knew moreover that by maintaining the supremacy of the shari'a the local ulema and notables retained a considerable share in running the affairs of their provinces, thus helping to create a counterbalance to government authority.

In addition to this, Muslim Arabs in general had other motives in wanting the shari'a to be maintained supreme in the state. It secured for them a respected place in the Muslim community as the language of the law and learning was Arabic. It embodied their traditions and values, and defined their religious and social duties.

According to Muslim belief, the survival or disappearance of Islam as an organized system "is linked

with the maintainance of the shari'a."[1] Thus at a time when the Muslim community was facing a challenge from a hostile civilization as had never happened before, if the shari'a was neglected and disregarded by the state, the dangers which such a course would involve for Islam would be great. To Muslim Arabs, Islam meant everything, for "in a sense it had created them, given them unity, law, and culture."[2]

No wonder then that their reaction to the measures that contradicted shari'a rules and to the policies of Āli and Fuad that ended the supremacy of the shari'a in the state, was more violent than other expressions of reaction in the empire.

Muslim Arab reaction was first manifested in the revolt of Grand Sherif Abdulmuttalib in Mecca in 1855-6. Because little is known about this revolt, and because it was important in demonstrating the feelings of the ulema and notables of Mecca at that time--and possibly

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1 Gibb, Studies on the Civilization of Islam, ed. by Shaw and Polk (London, 1962), p. 201.

2 A. Hourani, Arabic Thought, p. 297; see also Bazzaz, "Islam and Arab Nationalism" in S. Haim (ed.), Arab Nationalism, an Anthology (Berkley, 1962), pp. 172ff.

also reflected the feelings in other Arab Muslim cities, at the same time influencing them--we must make a brief examination of it.

2. The Revolt in Mecca (1855-6)

Grand Sherif Abdulmuttalib ibn Ghalib was appointed to the sherifate of Mecca in 1851 by Reshid Pasha. He had earlier filled the post for a few months in 1827 but was dismissed by Muhammad 'Ali, who then ruled Hijaz, and who wished to appoint Muhammad ibn 'Awn, one of his supporters in Mecca, instead. Abdulmuttalib fled to Istanbul where he remained on a stipend provided by the Sultan.

On his return to Mecca, he found an Ottoman Vali there with whom he had to share the government of Hijaz. In the pre-Tanzimat period (indeed until 1812 when Muhammad 'Ali occupied Mecca, wresting it from the Wahhibis), the Grand Sherifs possessed full autonomy[1] and no Vali resided in Mecca, but following the restoration of Hijaz to the Porte in 1840 there was a duality in the government of the country. Although no doubt Abdulmuttalib resented this, it would not have led him to revolt. The main reason for the revolt seems to have been the change that took place at Istanbul in the mid-1850's, for earlier, Abdulmuttalib was close to Reshid[2] and apparently

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1 See below, pp.306ff.

2 Dahlan, Khutaşat al-Kalam fi Umarā' al-Balad al-Ḥarām (Cairo, A.H. 1305), p. 313.

a supporter of his reform policy. With the rise of Āli an attempt took place to undermine Abdulmuttalib's position by building up a local notable of equally noble descent to rival him,[1] which added a personal element to a conflict which was basicallyideological.

The growing tension burst into open revolt at the end of 1855. Under pressure from western states the Porte agreed to prohibit the slave trade and orders were sent to the Vali of Hijaz to implement this agreement there also.[2] On 18 Safer 1272 (30 October 1855) the order was proclaimed in the Mahkeme (shar'i court) of Mecca to the ulema and sherifs, apparently without first consulting or informing Abdulmuttalib who was absent in Ta'if. This proclamation was the beginning though not the only reason for the revolt.

Jevdet, the Turkish historian, who described the events at length taking as his source the papers of Rāshid Pasha, the general who carried the order and who suppressed the revolt, accused Grand Sherif Abdulmuttalib of planning the whole affair months in advance. According to him, the order to make an end to the slave trade was only a "pretext" which Abdulmuttalib used at a time when the Porte was occupied in the Crimean war. Jevdet might

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1 He was Ishaq ibn 'Aqīl the shaikh of the Saiyids, the descendants of Husain, second grandson of the Prophet (Dahlan, p. 317).

2 Cevdet, Tezakır (1-12), p. 111.

3 Ibid., pp. 102-103.

have been right but on the other hand he either ignored or misunderstood the deep resentment of the population not only over this measure but also over other measures of reform that the Porte was seeking to impose.

It seems that word of a forthcoming order to prohibit slave trading had reached Jedda a few months before it was actually proclaimed. The merchants of that town were directly concerned because of vested interests and the news moved them to write a letter to the leading ulema in Mecca in which they raised not only the question of slavery but the whole issue of the Tanzimat. They saw in the reforms a danger to the shari'a and a threat to their traditions and values. They believed that the measures that were to be implemented--other than the prohibition of the slave trade--would "include the abolishing of the shari'a obligations (hudud-iser'iyenin ibtali)"; permission for "enemies of the faith" to erect buildings wherever they wished in Arabia; freedom for women "to define their position in relation to their husbands and parents"; and freedom for "non-Muslims to marry Muslim women". In this manner "the rules of infidelity" would prevail among them.[1]

The letter caused much anxiety among the ulema and sherifs. That they should share the anxiety of the

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[1] An abridged Turkish translation in Tezakir, pp. 102-103.

Muslim merchants of Jedda about the slave trade is understandable. As to the social status of women however, it appears that they and the notables of Jedda feared for their own traditions and social values in the face of new ideas and habits which a small group of Christian merchants in Jedda may have introduced and which the new class of officers and bureaucrats, partially and immaturely westernized, carried to Jedda and Mecca--and indeed to all the other centres of the Arab province.

Jevdet said that the letter had been planned by Abdulmuttalib. Shortly after it had been written the Grand Sherif asked Shaikh Jamal, the head of the ulema in Mecca, to go and see him in Ta'if. There he told him that "the Turks had apostatized from Islam", a matter which they would declare soon after the war. This war (the Crimea) would be disastrous for the state which in any case would be crushed under the burden of its debts. It was, he added, an opportunity to restore to their hands "the government which was our privilege in the past."[1]

Whether Abdulmuttalib meant by this to "restore the semi-independent status (istiqlal) of Hijaz"[2] enjoyed for many centuries by his ancestors, or whether he

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1 Ibid., p. 103.

2 King 'Abdullah, Mudhakkarati, (Jerusalem, 1945) p. 239. He used the phrase "فحاولوا اعادة استقلال الحجاز اليه"

aspired for more than this is not absolutely clear. Jevdet does not say what the aim of the Grand Sherif was except that he was planning a revolution. But at the end of his essay, after describing the surrender of Abdulmuttalib, Jevdet made the accusation that "by maintaining the exalted tradition 'the Imams are from Quraish'," he "was advancing a claim for [Caliphal] authority."[1] Jevdet continued his argument by refuting this tradition and by defending the right of the Ottoman sultans to the Caliphate declaring that only the Ottoman state remained in that age to defend Islam.[2]

If we understand properly the implication of Jevdet's argument, Abdulmuttalib seems to have had the ambition not only to restore his istiqlal but also, and as early as the mid-eighteen fifties, the Caliphate.

Whatever may have been the case, we are told that Shaikh Jamal was convinced by Abdulmuttalib's argument, that he returned to Mecca where he secretly put out the call for his cause, and that many of the ulema of Mecca afterwards went to Ta'if and gave their bi'at (oath of allegiance) to the Grand Sherif.[3]

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1 Cevdet, op. cit., p. 148, "saltanat daiyesine düşüp". In a letter to the ulema of Mecca, Şeyh-ül-Islam accused Abdulmuttalib of ambition for ri'āsa (ibid., pp. 133-135).

2 Ibid., p. 149. He also used the argument that the last Abbasid Caliph in Cairo "left and yileded" the trust of the Caliphate for Sultan Salim I.

3 Ibid., p. 104. The term bi'at is used with reference to the Caliph.

Two days after the proclamation of the order concerning the prohibition of the slave trade, Shaikh Jamal assembled the heads of the quarters of Mecca and incited them, according to Jevdet by stating that "the prohibition of the slave trade is contrary to the shari'a" and enumerated a few other measures which would be applied and which were all contrary to the shari'a such as the replacement of the adhan by a cannon shot, and the freedom for women to go out unveiled and to have the right of divorce. Because of this he gave a "fetva" that "the Turks" had become polytheists, "Mushrikūn".[1]

They left the meeting, carrying a banner, headed by Shaikh Jamal and a number of ulema, and followed by a crowd proclaiming that the "Turks" had apostatized from Islam (murtadd) and that it was the duty of every believer to join in a holy war (jihad) against them.[2] They headed for the court but the qāḍī rejected the demand of Shaikh Jamal to repeal the order and ruled that it must

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1 Ibid., pp. 111, 133. It is interesting to note that information of similar content about the causes of the revolt reached Najd and that Shaikh Abdullatif, a grandson of M. ibn Abdulwahhab wrote a letter to the ulema of Mecca encouraging them to stand fast in their resistence to such heretical measures which would endanger the faith. He assured them that "all Arabs in the countries" were denouncing and rejecting such innovations and of the sympathy and support of "all the people of Islam". See Majmu'at al-Rasā'il al-Najdiya, III, 292-293.

2 Cevdet, op. cit., p. 112.

be obeyed. A turmoil started on the spot which soon developed into a rebellion against Ottoman rule in Hijaz and which took the army about eight months to suppress.[1]

During the first few days of the clashes between the troops and the rioters, the latter attacked government offices and demolished a new police station and the houses of the two commanders. It was clear that they had the upper hand.[2] Then a meeting was held attended by the crowds and emissaries of Abdulmuttalib in which it was decided to send a petition to the Vali, who was in Jedda, asking first for troops to be withdrawn from Mecca and replaced by others (later Abdulmuttalib added to this demand that the number of fresh troops to be allowed to enter Mecca should be left for him to decide); secondly, to repeal the order prohibiting the slave trade; and thirdly, to close the British and French consulates in Jedda and to take down their flags.[3]

At this phase Abdulmuttalib decided to move from Ta'if to Mecca. But in Jedda the Vali and Rāshid Pasha, the general who had arrived from Istanbul with the order concerning the slave trade, put the blame for the

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1 Ibid.; cf. Marston, p. 216.

2 Cevdet, op. cit., p. 117.

3 Ibid., p. 118; cf. Marston, p. 217. It appears that Abdulmuttalib had asked the Porte two or three years earlier to close the British consulate "on the ground that an infidel should not hold a position in the holy land." Burton, Personal Narrative, II, 150-151n.

uprising upon Abdulmuttalib and proclaimed his dismissal and the appointment of Muhammad ibn 'Awn as Grand Sherif. With the troops at their disposal they started to move towards Mecca to re-occupy it.[1]

In Mecca the relatives and supporters of Ibn 'Awn started to leave the city and either join the camp of Rāshid Pasha, or go to Ta'if away from all the trouble. Abdulmuttalib, for his part, began to assemble his supporters among the bedouin tribes and several times attacked Rāshid Pasha on his way to Mecca in an attempt to hinder his progress. But the bedouin warriors were unable to stand up to the organized and far better equipped troops. Eventually, just before Rāshid entered Mecca, Abdulmuttalib retreated to Ta'if. Depending mainly on bedouin levies he continued hostilities against the Ottoman troops and their allies of the 'Awn clan from there, but still unsuccessful after several months he finally abandoned the struggle and was taken back to Istanbul.[2] However this was not the end of his career for twenty four years later he was again to become Grand Sherif.

There is some evidence that the hostilities were not confined to Hijaz. While the clashes between the forces of Abdulmuttalib and the Turkish troops were in progress, the highland tribes of 'Asir led by their

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1 Cevdet, op. cit., p. 121.

2 Siba'i, Tarikh Makka, 2 vols. (Mecca, A.H. 1385), II, 162.

chief 'Aiḍ ibn Mar'i descended from their strongholds and launched an attack on Hudaida.[1] Jevdet attributed their move to the incitement of Abdulmuttalib.[2]

The revolt clearly shows the extent to which the Arabs of Hijaz--chiefs, ulema, and people--resented the policies of the Porte. It was an outburst of a deep feeling of resentment over a number of issues: concern about the shari'a, the change in the system of government, the growth of foreign influence, and fear for their traditional social life and beliefs. As such it voiced the issues that Muslim Arabs elsewhere felt. Sherif Abdulmuttalib might have had personal motives in that he wished to restore the prerogatives of the Sherifate to what they had been at the beginning of the century under his father. But having lived in Istanbul throughout the eighteen thirties and eighteen forties he probably understood the meaning of the change in the political scene there in the mid-eighteen fifties. He undoubtedly was aware of its effect on Islam and Muslim society. If Jevdet was correct in attributing to him the wish to revive the Caliphate in his own person, it meant that Abdulmuttalib recognized that with the rise of the new class of bureaucrats, the Sultan-Caliph under the new influence of

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[1] Raşid, Tarih-i Yemen ve San'a, 2 vols. (Istanbul, A.H. 1291), I, 313; R.B. Winder, Saudi Arabia in the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1965), p. 183.

[2] Tezakir (1-12), p. 142.

the Christian powers, was unable to do this and thus defend Islam and the shari'a.

Even though the revolt was suppressed and the order prohibiting the slave trade was, it seems, suspended,[1] the resentment remained, and before the end of the Tanzimat period, Hijaz saw two other outbursts on a smaller scale but equally symptomatic of the new feeling that prevailed in the Arab provinces; the first took place two years later in Jedda and the second in 1871 in Mecca.[2]

3. The Jedda Event of 1858[3]

As we have seen in the preceding section, one of the demands of the people of Mecca during the revolt was the closure of the English and French consulates in Jedda. Two years later, the Jedda mob, led by some of the leading notables, attacked the two consulates and killed the consuls and nineteen other Christians living in the town (15 June 1858).

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1 Cevdet, op. cit., p. 118.

2 This was a riot known as the "Hawwa" event in which the population clashed with troops over the arrest of a person of that name. During the clashes the call of the population was "Kill those Christians" meaning the Ottoman troops, which echoed the clamour of 1855. (See B.A. Mec. Mah. Irad. no. 1698/3 dated 16 Reb. I, 1288. See also Yıl. Ev. no. 15/1126 for an alleged connection between the rioters and Abdulmuttalib).

3 On this affair see Dahlan, pp. 321-323; Marston, pp. 265-268; Cevdet, Tezakir (13-20), p. 51; see in particular F.O. 78/1402, despatches No. 103 (dated 16 August, 1858), No. 125, inclo. 2 (29 July, 1858), No. 137, inclo. 2 (16 August, 1858), and F.O. 78/1488 despatches No. 6 (3 November, 1858), and No. 10, inclo. 1 (2 January, 1859).

There is no evidence of any explicit connection between the two events. However, the motives behind both would appear to have been the same. We have already noted that it was a group of merchants from Jedda who first wrote a letter to the leading ulema of Mecca in which they complained of the prohibition of the slave trade and "the abolishing of shari'a obligations." Three out of the eight signatories to the letter were among the convicted ringleaders of the Jedda affair.[1] Thus we might assume that the reform policies of the Porte were at least in part behind the outburst of the population. It could be partly attributed also to the growing influence of the foreign representatives and the establishing by Christians of commercial firms in the town which was a direct challenge to the Hadrami merchants who it seems controlled its commerce.

Curiously enough, in addition to the local ringleaders, the Kaimakam (governor of the town) appears to have taken a leading part in organizing the event.[2] A colonel and an officer in charge of the zabtiya (police) were also implicated. More curious still was that the Vali, Namık Pasha who was in Mecca at the time, took no serious steps to investigate the matter or arrest the

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[1] Compare the names of the signatories in Cevdet, Tezakir (1-12), p. 102 and the list of those convicted in F.O. 78/1488, desp. No. 10, inclo. 1, 2 January, 1859.

[2] Ibid.; cf. Dahlan, pp. 321-323.

culprits, and it was not until a general was sent from Istanbul who was accompanied from Egypt by about 500 Egyptian troops to garrison the town, that any severe measure was taken.[1] Shortly afterwards Namık Pasha was recalled.[2]

The event brought direct intervention from the western powers. A British warship bombarded the town and later a mixed commission of British, French, and Turkish representatives investigated the affair on the spot and sentenced three of the ringleaders (one of them was the Kaimakam) to death.[3] Seven others, all of whom were leading notables of the town, were sentenced to life imprisonment, sentences for a number of others being for a varying number of years.[4]

4. Muslim Grievances in Syria

The grievances and fears voiced in Mecca and Jedda were probably shared by the Syrian Muslims, especially in such a traditionally Muslim city as Damascus. The acts of violence which occurred may have aroused similar thoughts in Syria. However, two other basic issues of the Porte's policies aroused much discontent among the Syrian

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1 F.O. 78/1402, desp. 125 of 29 July, 1858.

2 S.O., IV, 539-540. It is probably not out of context to note that Namık Pasha belonged to the Khalwati Order (see ibid.). Ahmad Pasha, the Vali of Damascus at the time of the massacre of 1860, belonged also to the Khalwatiya (see Biṭār, I/260).

3 His sentence was later commuted by the Porte.

4 See F.O. 78/1488, desp. 10 of 2 January, 1959; F.O. 78/1402, desp. 125 (inclo. 2) of 29 July, 1858. See also Siba'i, p. 164.

Muslim notables.

The first was the wide powers which had been bestowed upon the Vali since 1852, a sign that the Porte, as we shall see, was aiming at curbing their power and their ability to act as a check upon government authority. This system as we have seen was developed under Reshid in the form of a local council (meclis) with wide powers--possibly as a modern counterpart of the balance which the religious hierarchy provided in the old Ottoman system.

Second, was the granting of equal civil rights to non-Muslims. This was a particularly sensitive matter for the Muslims both on the grounds of its being against shari'a rules and against their interests. It was against their interests because the non-Muslims were growing in power and wealth as we shall see later and because this measure was granted at a time when the consular body was increasing its influence in the country and using this influence to protect the non-Muslims. Those consuls who interfered most were, it seems, the French who after the Crimean War assumed a pretentious manner towards both governors and subjects.[1] This question of consular influence would have been less harmful in the eyes of the Muslim notables had the Vali's powers been counterbalanced

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[1] [Anonymous] Ḥaṣr al-Litham 'an Nakabāt al-Sham (Cairo, 1895), pp. 128-129; cf. Moore-Clarendon, F.O. 78/1385, inclo. in desp. 8, 19 February, 1858.

by themselves; an all powerful Vali who weakened in face of foreign consular pressure was more likely to serve the interests of others.

The Muslims of Damascus, then, who took part in the massacres were motivated by resentment of the Porte's policy as well as by a certain fear for their own status and position.

5. The New "Middle Class"

Muslim antagonism in Syria towards the non-Muslims had been growing since early nineteenth century, and as we have seen was intensified by Naqshbandi teachings. However, until 1840 there was no serious outburst against Christians. Indeed until that date the Christians enjoyed considerable influence and they were well treated by the governors and rulers of the country.[1]

But when Syria was restored to the Porte in 1840 Muslim supremacy was re-affirmed. The Porte sent as Vali, Nejib Pasha, a prominent functionary and a supporter of Shaikh Khalid with whom he was in correspondence during the latter's life time.[2] The restoration of the Porte's rule was a blow to the Christians. Firstly, the Emir Beshir of Mount Lebanon who probably symbolized the rising power of the Christians, fell and the emirate came to an

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[1] See above, p.xif.

[2] S.O., IV, 545-546; Sahib, pp. 128f, 144, 181f; see also Mashaqa, al-Jawāb 'ala Iqtirah al-Ahbab, ed. by Rustum and Abu-Shqra (Beirut, 1955), p. 152.

end. His fall weakened the Christian position in the country. Not less important however was that this reassertion of the Porte's authority narrowed, it seems, the opportunities for Christians in public service for some time to come. Moreover, the Tanzimat strengthened in practice the hands of Muslim urban notables who were not satisfied at the course of events in the pre-Tanzimat period and who, moved partly be self interest and partly by Islamic sentiment, were not eager to see Christians rising to influential positions in the provincial service.

Nevertheless, the Christians found prosperity and increasing influence in the growing commerce with Europe and in all that was connected with it--working in the service of the European consulates, trading firms, and cultural institutions which, since the eighteen forties or a little earlier, were being established in Syria. In order to have a general idea of the degree of influence the Christians obtained in the second half of the nineteenth century we shall here make some brief reference to one of these sources, namely the consulates.

In order to serve their commercial and political interests, the European powers had established by mid-century, a wide net of consulates in every town of middle size and above, throughout the Ottoman lands. In Geographical Syria, the British Government for instance

had in the second half of the century about ten consulates or consular agencies[1] and wherever there was a British, there was undoubtedly a French Consulate--and to a lesser degree a Russian or Austrian or German one etc. The local officials of these consulates were chosen largely from among the Christians including the dragomans who by the 1870's were managing a considerable part of the daily work of the consulates with the authorities. In fact since the eighteenth century quite a number of non-Muslims had acquired the status of Dragoman for commercial and political advantages through the Berat system.[2]

In the nineteenth century this system fell into disuse. The new consular dragomans were officials, paid or unpaid, of the consulates and they used their position to advance their own interests. Moreover, many of the vice-consuls or consular agents in the towns of the sub-provinces were local inhabitants and largely Christians. In one case, the Consul General of Iran in Beirut in the 1860's, was a local Christian.[3] In other words many

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1 About the British consular service and establishment in Syria see Kennedy-Granville, F.O. 424/27B no. 20, Cairo 30 January, 1871; see also Drummond Hay to Salisbury, F.O. 78/4825, desp. 16 (confd.), Beirut 10 May, 1897. It includes also remarks on the consular services of the other European states in Syria.

2 On this system see Lewis, p. 448f. For Syria, see Haddad, pp. 32f, 46f.

3 He was Ilyas Bey Sursuq (see Hadiqat al-Akhbār of 29 June, 1865). Some Jewish families also held consular posts, such as E. Farhi was with the Danish consul in Beirut (ibid., 13 April, 1865).

prominent Christians in the Syrian towns were attached through employment to the consular service and by virtue of long service and knowledge of the country they exerted not a little influence over their foreign staff, and through them, over the Ottoman authorities.[1] The evidence of the British Ambassador in Istanbul might illustrate this point. ". . . our consuls and vice consuls have immense powers" he wrote, "some of them are entirely ignorant of the languages of the country and of the habits and nature of the people. They consequently run the risk of falling completely into the hands of their dragomans . . ."[2]

If we take the number of these consular officials and add other groups such as merchants, brokers, accountants, teachers, writers, journalists, advocates, etc., their number must have been considerable and it was growing rapidly. There was emerging then, in the second half of the nineteenth century, a new middle class composed mainly of Christians (but also of a small proportion of Muslims, especially a number of Muslim families in Beirut).[3] It

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1 On the influence of the consular corps over the Ottoman authorities see A. Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables" in Polk and Chambers (eds.) Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East (Chicago, 1968), pp. 64ff. It should be noted also that many others obtained the citizenship of one or the other European states, or secured the protection of one of the consulates, a practice which was not uncommon in those days.

2 Layard-Currie, Salisbury Papers, A.XVII, 95 dated 1 March, 1880.

3 On the prominent Muslim families in Beirut in the early 1880's see Qayāti, Nafḥat al-Bashām fi Riḥlat al-Shām (Cairo, A.H. 1319). Qayāti was exiled to Syria after the 'Urabi revolution and stayed mostly in Beirut for 3 years. (Ibid., p. 2. See also Zirikli, A'lām, VII, 56-57).

was found mainly in the rapidly developing coastal towns, but particularly in Beirut, a city which by the 1860's at the latest acquired a Christian majority and which became the main port and the commercial and cultural centre of Syria.

The growth of this middle class, as we have seen, was much enhanced by the commercial expansion of the European powers and their presence in Syria. It was also protected by the representatives of those powers (for their own ends) and by the new laws and regulations of the Tanzimat against the arbitrariness of governors. Being composed mostly of non-Muslims, it was a new factor on the Syrian scene, relatively powerful, influential, rather wealthy, and politically conscious, and no statesman could have prudently ignored it.

This was a phenomenon which developed all over the empire and as in Syria it was largely made up of Christians (and of Jews in other places such as Baghdad and Salonica). The reform edict of 1856 was in a sense a recognition of this class and an attempt to open the way for its integration into a new structure of the Ottoman empire, an evidence of the good statesmanship of Āli and Fuad. However, in practice the edict meant giving more power to this class.

Taking into consideration that the rise of this

class was accompanied by the impoverishment or even destruction of the traditionally commercial classes, composed for the most part of Muslims,[1] the reform edict was more than the Muslims could tolerate. Fundamentally it contradicted the rules of the shari'a and it also removed the last barrier which guaranteed Muslim supremacy in the country. Granting equal civil rights to the Christians with the sources of power they controlled, and backed and protected as they were by the European powers, meant in practice, putting the Muslims at a disadvantage.

6. Muslim Reaction

What enraged the Muslims and led to the events of 1860 in Syria was probably a feeling of insecurity which grew out of the circumstances described above. In the face of a combination of a Vali possessing wide powers, influential consuls, and a large powerful Christian minority nourished on a growing trade with Europe, not only was their political primacy in the country threatened but also all that this loss meant in practice. Indeed their well-being (much reduced as we have seen following the decline of traditional trade and handicrafts), the position of their leading notables, and their hold upon the affairs of the province were in danger. They had been challenged

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[1] Cf. D. Chevallier, "Western development and Eastern crisis . . ." in Polk and Chambers (eds.), Beginnings of Modernization, pp. 217, 219.

on their own ground and the behaviour of the Christians, after the proclamation of the edict, only served to exacerbate the situation.[1] This situation aroused, on the one hand, strong fanatical tendencies in them, the existence of which we have witnessed a little earlier. On the other, people may have wondered, as happened in Mecca, whether the Sultan and his government by falling under the influence of the Christian powers, were any longer able to defend the interests of Islam and the Muslims and indeed if they were themselves any longer faithful to the shari'a and Islam.

The belief held in Mecca, as we have seen, was that "the Turks" were planning to abolish the obligations of the shari'a, that they had apostatized from Islam; in Aleppo they were regarded as "degenerate Mahometans"[2] and in Jerusalem they were looked upon as "one of the European family of nations."[3] In the same city the title of Khan which usually followed the names of the Ottoman Sultans was heard to have been pronounced as Khā'in (i.e. the betrayer of trust) with the inference that he had betrayed the shari'a of Islam.[4] Following this many Arabs, it seems,

1 On the behaviour of the Christians, see Ma'oz, p. 202f.; Tibawi, A Modern History of Syria (London, 1969), p. 128.

2 Skene-Alison, desp. 20, 31 July, 1858 (inclo. in Skene-Malmesbury, F.O. 78/1389, desp. 33, Aleppo, 7 August. 1858).

3 Finn-Malmesbury, F.O. 78/1384, desp. 46, Jerusalem, 13 September, 1858, cited in Ma'oz, p. 246.

4 J. Finn, Stirring Times, 2 vols. (London 1878), I, 215, cited in A. Hourani, Arabic Thought, p. 267.

began to think in terms of an Arab government which would be faithful to Islam.[1]

In this context, King Abdullah of Jordan in an essay on Arab nationalism had the following to say which might illustrate this view. The Arabs, he wrote,[2] were contented to remain under the rule of non-Arab rulers only because those rulers were Muslim and submitted to the Islamic teachings and Muhammedan brotherhood. "If the teachings of the Quran prevailed, and the sunna was acted upon, then the Arab was indifferent whether his Sultan was an Arab or belonged to non-Arab Muslims . . ." But the Turks, he added, following the proclamation of the Tanzimat decree, started to break away from the teachings of the Qur'ān and the sunna in favour of alien western practics. ". . . from that moment, the reversals, quarrels, falterings in course and dilatoriness in action, occurred."

We are told that in Damascus, Beirut, Saida, and Aleppo, Muslims started to establish secret committees. They "were determined to restore the glory of Islam at any price, deciding to overthrow the Turkish Government which was the cause that brought the Muslims to such a degraded situation."[3] They were motivated by the belief that the

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1 Ibid., p. 297.

2 'Abdullah b. al-Husain, Mudhakkarati (Jerusalem, 1945), p. 237; cf. C.E. Dawn, "Ideological Influences in the Arab Revolt" (in Kritzeck and Winder, The World of Islam (London, 1960), p. 235);

3 Haşr al-Litham, p. 129.

sultan had betrayed the cause of Islam and that he had therefore forfeited their allegiance.[1] Moreover, there is some evidence, though not confirmed by other contemporary sources, that secret contacts took place between Muslim Syrian notables and Said Pasha, the viceroy of Egypt.[2] At the same time there was heard a certain desire for the restoration of the Arab Caliphate in the person of the Grand Sherif of Mecca,[3] a desire which it seems remained as an undercurrent throughout the following decades and which at the end of the century was voiced again by Kawakibi.[4]

It may have been the case that there was a movement against the Porte and the Sultan the nature of which is still obscure. Following that, the Porte it seems started to take a repressive line against prominent Arab notables in the Syrian cities. In Jerusalem, we are told that the governor had succeeded in dismissing "representatives of ancient families [from the membership of the meclis] and put in their place shopkeepers from the bazaars."[5]

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1 Cf. L. Farley, The Massacres in Syria (London, 1861), p. 69, cited in Ma'oz, p. 244.

2 Mashaqa, Mashhad al-'Ayān (ed. by Abdo and Shakhashiri) (Cairo, 1908), pp. 170-171; cf. Kurd 'Ali, Khitat al-Sham, III, 85-86, 94; cf. Tibawi, p. 128.

3 Skene-Alison, desp. 20, 31 July, 1858 (inclo. in Skene-Malmesbury F.O. 78/1389, desp. 33, Aleppo, 7 August, 1858).

4 A. al-Kawakibi, Umm al-Qura (Cairo, 1931), p. 207; A. Hourani, Arabic Thought, pp. 272-273.

5 Finn-Russel, Jerusalem, 19 July, 1860, No. 7 in acc/pap. 1861, Vol. 34.

In Aleppo, where the notables were powerful enough not to be removed in this way, the Porte effectively removed their two leaders by appointing them governors in the provincial service.[1]

Additionally in Damascus and Aleppo, the authorities in 1859 began to organize an auxiliary force of irregulars called 'awniya.[2] In Damascus this force, together with its commander, Muhammad Said Shamdin[3] was totally composed of Kurdish settlers in the city. This may have been a cause of anxiety for the Damascine Arab notables who still remembered their sufferings from a similar Kurdish force a few decades earlier.[4] The fact that a small but warlike community was now being given the means of power may well have aroused their misgivings further. Be that as it may, in the attack on the Christian quarter in Damascus in July 1860 which ended in the massacre of several thousand Christians, the 'awniya played a major role.[5] As a result of this they were disbanded, many of them being put to death and their commander sent into

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1 Skene to Malmesbury, F.O. 78/1452, desp. 11 of March 31, 1859, and desp. 42 of 30 June, 1859. They were Yusef Shurayyif and Bahā' al-Din al-Qudsi (see Tabbakh, I'lām al-Nubalā', 7 vols. (Aleppo, 1923-6), VII, 310, 399f and 441f.

2 Ma'oz, p. 51.

3 Salibi, "The 1860 upheaval in Damascus" in Shaw and Polk (eds.), p. 189, citing the MS. of Hasibi an eye-witness to the event.

4 See al-'Awra, p. 178; al-Basha (ed.) Mudhkkarat Tarikhiya (Harisa n.d.), pp. 4-5.

5 Ma'oz, p. 237 and Salibi, p. 195.

exile. Could it be that those Damascine notables who were suspected of instigating the riots wanted to kill two birds with one stone--the Christians and the Kurds?

Soon after the event, the French Ambassador in Istanbul proposed to the Porte, so Said Pasha said, "that Egypt should sent ten thousand men to Syria" to keep order. Presumably Said knew about the offer in advance because we are told, that when the Porte turned down this offer, he regarded it as a "slight".[1]

If it were true that the Damascine notables were in contact with Said Pasha before the event, was it Egyptian troops that they wanted or had they other plans?

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1 Colquoun-Russel, F.O. 195/642, desp. 97, Alexandria, 29 July 1860, and desp. 114 of 24 August, 1860.

CHAPTER VI

SYRIA IN THE PERIOD OF ĀLI AND FUAD:

THE SECOND PHASE, 1861-1871

The policy that was followed in Syria after the extraordinary mission of Fuad Pasha in 1860-61 appears to have had three objectives:

i. To weaken the old powerful families and destroy their influence.

ii. To cultivate a new group of notables dependent on the state, more loyal to and more co-operative with the authorities.

iii. To cultivate the good will of the Christians and to integrate them on a wider scale than in the last two decades into the new govermental system of the province.

In this chapter we shall try to see to what degree the Ottoman Government succeeded in implementing this policy and who were the new leading notables.

1. The Porte and the Damascine Notables

Whatever the motives behind the event of Damascus were, the Porte took the opportunity to consolidate its control in Syria and to assert its authority over the city much more strongly than before. Until then it had been

difficult for the Porte to weaken the hold of the notables over the city, as it had succeeded in doing to a certain degree in Aleppo and Jerusalem. In Damascus a powerful oligarchy had come into being which did not hesitate to defy the orders of the Porte.[1] Until the rise of Āli and Fuad it seems they enjoyed the support and protection of certain influential circles at Istanbul who sympathised with them and shared their connection with the Naqshbandi-Khalidi order. But even without such protection they still held much power within Damascus. Many of them belonged to powerful and old established families in the city. Moreover it was from them that Naqib al-Ashraf and the traditional offices of the religious hierarchy such as that of Mufti, and other functions connected with the mosques were chosen. Some of these offices they had held through inheritance for several generations such as the shafi'ī muftiship in the Ghazzi and the Niqaba of the Ashraf in the 'Ajlani--and until 1850 the ḥanafi muftiship in the Muradi families.

Moreover, as any traditional Middle Eastern city, Damascus was composed of quarters each of which had a degree of inner social cohesion and was looked after by a shaikh. This compartmenting of the city made the hold of the notables over it easier. But above all, in the

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1 Cf. Biṭār, II, 1135; see also Ma'oz, pp. 95ff.

Tanzimat period, the notables drew much power from controlling the Meclis, which gave them paramount influence in the city and the province. Even though the vali, after 1852, was given much wider powers than before, in Damascus the Meclis continued, in practice, to hold the real power.[1]

Some two weeks after the event, Fuad Pasha, the Foreign Minister, on his way to Syria on a special mission concerning the affairs of Mount Lebanon, reached Damascus preceded by several thousand troops.[2] According to all accounts he had no hesitation in taking harsh and oppressive measures. It was an opportunity to crush the spirit of defiance which had manifested itself since 1856, and open up the city to more effective Ottoman rule. Nine leading notables, members of the administrative council (meclis) were sent into exile[3] together with many others of lower rank. Some of them died there and those who returned after five years[4] were never allowed to hold any influential post again; at the same time other members of their families were left in the shadows. Speaking of the acts of Fuad Pasha, Biṭār a contemporary chronicler stated bitterly that the Pasha had "degraded its heads, humiliated its people, broken up its gathering and made heavier its

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1 Ma'oz, p. 96f.

2 Salibi, "The 1860 Upheaval in Damascus", in Polk and Chambers (eds.) p. 197; see also Ma'oz, p. 240.

3 Biṭār, I, 168 where a list of names is given, and Hadiqat al-Akhbār, November 1, 1860.

4 Biṭār, II, 749.

burden."[1] Indeed, the effect of Fuad's measures upon the future of Syria was considerable. The upper stratum of notables which formed the city leadership and which was largely confined to a number of established families and to the upper ulema class, was practically destroyed. The Ottoman Government, as we shall see, tried to raise a new caste of notables from the lower ranks of society. In the words of a Damascine Historiographer, after the banishment of the notables, "notability (wajaha) passed to the lower stratum."[2]

A word should be said about the posts of Hanafi Mufti and of Naqib al-Ashraf. These posts bestowed upon their incumbent much status and power[3] and added to the power and influence of powerful families holding them. In the second half of the nineteenth century, these positions, though deprived of some of their influence by the reforms, still enjoyed (especially the former) considerable power in the city. They were ex-officio members of the Meclis and in some cases--as in Jerusalem--

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1 Ibid., III, 1469; cf. Mashaqa, Mashhad al-'ayān, pp. 192-193; see also Hasibi, Hādithat al-sittin, MS. ed. by Salibi under the title "Lamahāt min tārikh Dimashq fi 'ahd al-Tanzimat", in Abhath, XXI, March and June, 1968 (hereafter Hasibi in Abhath), see p. 61.

2 Hisni, Muntakhabāt al-Tawārikh li-Dimashq, 3 vols. (Damascus, 1927-34), II, 691-692.

3 For functions and powers see Gibb and Bowen I/2, p. 136 for the first, and pp. 93f. 100f. and Biṭār, II, 1042-4 for the second.

we find them deputizing during the governor's absence.[1] In Damascus after 1860, the Porte took care to allow no repetition of the situation whereby these and other, minor, positions passed by inheritance and were confined to only a few families. Muftis were now appointed by the state and until the end of Ottoman rule in Syria it is observed that no two persons of the same family held the office of Ḥanafi Mufti in Damascus.[2] The same may be said of the post of Naqib al-Ashraf. Amin al-Jundi, the first mufti to be appointed after the event was not even a Damascine. He was a minor ʿālem from the small town of Maʿarra and at the time of the event was the Arabic scribe of the Fifth Army Corps. He filled the post for seven years.[3] This is probably a good indication of the degree to which effective Ottoman rule was established in Damascus following the measures which Fuad Pasha had taken. Indeed from that moment the upper hand in the city was tilted in favour of the Ottoman authorities.

However, Syrian notables continued to hold considerable power but within the new framework. The application of the administrative reforms brought with

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1 Thamarāt, 15 June, 1876.

2 In Damascus between 1860 and 1898 Muftis were Amin al-Jundi, Mahmud Ḥamza, and Muhammad Manini. This information is based upon the biographical collections of Biṭār and Shaṭṭi.

3 Biṭār, I, 349-353; Shaṭṭi, Rawḍ al-bashar (Damascus, 1946), p. 54.

them the establishment of new posts of high standing such as that of mayor, secular judges, chief justices, provincial sub-governors, and many others; filled by notables of the lower strata. As the reforms took root in society these posts rose in importance but their holders were never to possess the influence and powers of the class which had been destroyed. For whereas the former were primarily state functionaries who depended to some extent on the favour of the ruler, the latter were public figures of long standing in urban society who drew their power from traditional local source.

2. The New Leading Notables

Among those exiled were two who were taken to Istanbul where they soon found contacts and favour among high functionaries. They were Sa'id Bey Shamdin the ex-commander of the disbanded 'awniye irregulars and Sa'id al-Kilani, a member of the family which headed the Qadiri order in Damascus.[1] The first accompanied Namık Pasha to Baghdad when he was appointed Vali there in 1861,[2] and the second apparently remained for a while in Istanbul and then returned to Damascus. When early in 1865 the Porte pardoned those who had been exiled Sa'id Shamdin returned to Damascus. Both were to become prominent notables of

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1 Hasibi in Abhath, XXI, 149.

2 On Namık Pasha see S.O., IV, 539-540; his tenure in Baghdad lasted between 1861-7.

the city. Sa'id Shamdin however achieved the higher status and in the 1870's became the most influential man in Damascus.[1]

Sa'id Shamdin was by origin a Kurd and a relatively newcomer to Damascus.[2] Most of the other prominent notables were of similar origin as we shall see and it appears that they drew their power partly from belonging to leading families of the Kurdish community in the city;[3] for it was mainly from this community that the authorities recruited the para-military forces of the province who were used for internal security. In addition to its military tradition, it was apparently beyond the influence of the Muslim-Arab notables, and as such a more loyal instrument in the hands of the Ottoman authorities.

Sa'id Shamdin was the son of Shamdin Agha, who was earlier a mercenary commander in the service of the Valis of Acre,[4] before finally settling in Damascus. After the return of Sa'id Bey in 1865 he entered government service. We find him in the late 1860's governor (mütessarif) of Balqā' (Nablus)[5] and in 1871-2 a governor

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1 Malet-Layard, F.O. 195/1265, a report dated 26 January, 1879. See also below, p. 271

2 On him see Shaṭṭi, Tarājim a'yan Dimashq fi nisf al-qarn al-rab'i'ashar al-hijri (Damascus, 1948), p. 88f. (hereafter Shaṭṭi, Tarājim).

3 According to a contemporary Damascine source this community whose quarter was Salhiye numbered about 6,000 people (see Qaṣṣatli, al-Rawḍa al-Ghannā' (Beirut, 1879), p. 8.

4 Al-'Awra, pp. 222-223.

5 Al-Jawaib, October 1868, 7 September, 1869 and 6 December, 1871.

of Ma'an.[1] The most senior post that Sa'id occupied was that of governor of the Ḥaj Caravan, in the early 1870's.

Formerly, the Ḥaj Caravan was led by the Vali of Damascus himself, with the rank of Emir-ül-Ḥaj. This caused him to be absent for about four months of the year from his work of directing the affairs of the province. In the later Tanzimat period his increased duties demanded that he stay in Damascus. Consequently in 1866 the post of Emir-ül-Ḥaj was finally abolished and a governor (maḥafiz) of the caravan was appointed instead.[2] This appointment was entrusted to the cerde emini, the commander of the irregular horse who escorted the caravan.

It appears that the first to fill this post for a few years may have been Aḥmad al-Yusuf, a Kurd of Damascus.[3] He was followed by Maḥmud Ajelyaqin, of similar origin.[4] When he died in 1869, he was succeeded by Aḥmad Bozo[5] for some years and he in turn was followed by Sa'id Shamdin who held the post of governor of the caravan for 18 successive years.[6] After him the post passed to his grandson, Abdulrahman al-Yusuf, who held

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1 See below p.236,n.1 . See also B.A. Dah. Irad., 45202/1-2.

2 R. Tresse, Le Pélerinage Syrien aux villes saintes de L'Islam (Paris, 1937), p. 85.

3 Ḥisni, II, 852 and Badrān, al-Kawākib al-Durriyya (Damascus, A.H. 1339), p. 9.

4 Ḥisni, II, 897.

5 Tresse, p. 85, n. 2.

6 Ibid., Shaṭṭi, Tarājim, p. 88; Ḥisni, II, 853.

it until the World War.[1] This means that the Haj Caravan was controlled by Kurdish notables throughout the last half century of its existence, which was a source of much influence and power to them throughout Syria and over the bedouin tribes on the route to Hijaz.

The above mentioned were not the only Kurds of Damascus who became prominent after 1860. There was the Yusuf family, whose founder Muhammad was the first to settle in Damascus at about the beginning of the nineteenth century as a sheep merchant.[2] His son Ahmad[3] was in the service of the Emir Bashair II. After 1840 he served in the irregular cavalry and around 1860 may have been the governor of the Ḥaj Caravan. But after 1860, it was his son Muhammad and his grandson Abdulrahman who became leading notables of the city. Muhammad's route to notability was similar to that of Sa'id Shamdin: Kaimakam of Hums, Mütesarrif of Acre, Balqā', Tripoli (Syria), and a member of the Administrative Council.[4]

Another family which achieved high rank in the city after 1860 was that of al-'Ābid, also possibly of Kurdish origin. Before 1860 'Umar Agha al-'Ābid was a chief police officer (Tüfekçi Başi) in Damascus.[5] But it

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1 B.A. Dah. Irad., 98584; Badrān, pp. 28-29, 36.
2 Ibid., p. 8.
3 On him see Ḥisni, II, 852 and Badrān, p. 8f.
4 Ibid., pp. 10ff.
5 Ḥasibi in Abhath, XXI, 144.

was his son Muhi al-Din, nicknamed Hollo, who was the first of this house to achieve prominence.[1] Hollo's son Izzet became the famous second secretary of Sultan Abdulhamid. Again, Hollo's way to notability and influence was similar to that of Muhammad al-Yusuf: membership of the Meclis, governorships of various sancaks, etc.

In addition to Shamdin, Yusuf and ʿĀbid, there were the two brothers ʿAli and ʿUthman Mardam Bey who were of Turkish extraction but born in Damascus. Like the others they became leading notables after 1860 in much the same way as we have seen above.[2]

At the end of the 1870's we find the group holding high posts in the administration of the province. All of them accumulated much wealth and became very influential throughout Syria. However they were, on the whole, a source of much complaint by the population because of their corruption and abuse of position. Midhat Pasha, when governor of Syria (1878-1880) tried to challenge their influence and to diminish their importance.[3] After that their influence started to subside as Sultan

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[1] Zaki, Mashāhīr al-Kurd, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1947), II, 219; Shaṭṭi, Tarājim, pp. 54-55; Hadiqat al-Akhbār of 14 February, 1861; 27 March, 1862; 8 January, 1863; 16 November, 1865; 24 December, 1867. See also al-Jawaib, 12 December, 1871; 7 February, 1873; 27 February, 1879; The Times, 2 July, 1878, p. 5a.

[2] On them see Shaṭṭi, Tarājim, pp. 14, 23. It was said of 'Ali that "he had a good command of Turkish . . . and some knowledge of Arabic" (ibid., p. 23).

[3] See below, pp. 270-272.

Abdulhamid tended to establish Ottoman authority in Syria more upon a group of Muslim-Arab notables. However, the above mentioned group and their descendants continued to enjoy influence for many years to come.

3. Ottoman Policy Towards the Christians in Syria 1861-1871

This policy towards the Christians was possibly due to French influence at the Porte after 1856 on the one hand, and on the other to the wish of the Porte to appease the Christians lest they, after 1860, gave their loyalty to one of the foreign powers, and to France in particular, whose interest in Syria was growing.

This policy of appeasement could be seen in the attitude towards them of two governor generals, that of Shirvani-zade Mehmed Rushdi, and especially of Mehmed Rāshid who between them covered almost the whole decade of the eighteen-sixties.

Shirvani-Zade[1] was a protegé of Fuad Pasha.[2]

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[1] On Shirvani-zade see S.O. II, 385; Gövsa, p. 331; Shaṭṭi, Rawḍ, pp. 106-107; Cevdet, Tezakir (13-20), p. 155; Pakalın, Tanzimat Maliye Nazırları, 2 vols. (Istanbul, n.d.), II, 104-150; Inal, Son Sadrıazamlar, 3 vols., 2nd ed. (Istanbul, 1955), I, 436-482; see also Evkaf-i Humayun Nazaretinin Tarihçe Teşkilatı ve Nuzzarin Teracüm-i Ahvalı (Istanbul, A.H. 1335), pp. 129-131. He was the son of Ismail Seraj al-Din of Shirvan, a Naqshbandi Shaikh, and a disciple of Shaikh Khalid. Apparently expelled by the Russians in 1242/1826-7 Shaikh Ismail settled in Amasya in central-eastern Anatolia where his son Mehmed Rushdi was born in 1244/1828 (see Inal, I, 436, n. 1). On Shaikh Ismail see also M. ibn Sulaiman, al-Hadiqa al-Nadiya, p. 80 on the margin of Ibn Sanad, Aṣfa al-Mawārid.

[2] Pakalın, p. 106.

When the latter was sent to Syria on a special mission in 1860 he was one of his aides. Originally he belonged to the ulema corps, but after he returned to Istanbul from this mission and upon the recommendation of Fuad he left the corps and entered the service of the Porte. In 1863, at the age of thirty five he was appointed governor of the province of Sham (Damascus), and when that province was united in 1864 with the province of Saida to form together the province of Syria he remained the governor of the enlarged province which included the area from central Syria to the borders of Sinai excluding Mount Lebanon.

By having Shirvani-zade sent to Syria, Fuad Pasha clearly wished to ensure that the steps he had taken in that province were followed up. "The times were delicate and the place was of great importance," was said in the decree of his appointment.[1] He served there a little less than three years and was recalled to Istanbul only to be promoted to the Ministry of Sacred Endowments (evkaf). His successor, Sa'ad Mukhlis was transferred after a short term because he, it seems, showed signs of diverting from the Porte's policy.[2] He was replaced by Mehmed Rāshid, whose governorship in Syria of five and a half years was brought to an end only by the rise of Mahmud Nedim Pasha to the Grand Vezirate.

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1 A copy of the decree in Inal, I, 438.

2 See Hadiqat al-Akhbār, 15 February, 1866.

Mehmed Rāshid was thought to have been a protegé of Āli.[1] He was one of the seven or eight Ottoman politicians in the later Tanzimat period with an Egyptian background. Born in 1240/1824-5 in Cairo where his father, a Turk from Drama, was in the service of Muhammad 'Ali, in about the mid-eighteen forties he was sent to Paris to follow up his education and spent five years there. In 1850 he came to Istanbul where he was first employed in the Translation Bureau. Afterwards he served as governor in various provinces, and in 1866 was appointed Governor General of Syria. He was killed when Foreign Minister, in the affair of Hasan the Circassian.[2]

Both Shirvani-zade and Rāshid treated the Christians well. Thus for instance a British vice-consul wrote from Damascus that Rāshid Pasha had accorded "great protection . . . to the Christian communities" while at the same time Muslims complained of "an abasement . . . of Mohammeden prestige and influence." He added that "it became almost a by word in Damascus that the Christian was more favoured than the Muslim."[3]

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1 According to Consul Burton in F.O. 424/27B, p. 45.

2 On Rāshid Pasha see, Govsa, p. 315; S.O., II, 356-357, al-Jinan, VII, 473-475; Salim Faris, Kanz al-Ragha'ib, V, 332-334 and al-Bustani, Da'irat al-Ma'ārif, VIII, 480-482. No full biography of him in Turkish could be found. On the affair of Hasan the Circassian, see Davison, p. 346.

3 Jago-Green, a report entitled "Ottoman Conservatism in Syria" inclosure in Green-Elliot, F.O. 195/1027, desp. 66, Beirut, 15 December, 1873, pp. 7-8 (hereafter "Jago, Report").

This attitude showed itself in various forms but principally in the public service where a number of Christians were again given positions in the highest ranks open to locals, although after the withdrawal of Ibrahim Pasha and the restoration of the Porte's authority, some Christians who held senior positions were dismissed[1] others continued in the service especially in the department of Treasury. Some, as in Tripoli, continued to be treasurers as was the case before the Tanzimat though under a different title.[2] But on the whole they appear to have served in lower grades. However, after the late eighteen fifties a change for the better was felt in the attitude of the Porte towards the Christians and their employment in government service[3] and after 1860 this change became much more noticeable.

One of the Christians who rose in government service in the eighteen sixties was Khalil Khuri, the owner and editor of Hadiqat al-Akhbār. Knowing Turkish, he was employed with other Christians by Fuad Pasha to translate into Arabic his orders and proclamations and sometimes he acted as his dragoman.[4] He also put his

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1 A.H. Nawfal, Tarājim 'Ulamā' Tarablus wa-Udabā'iha (Tripoli, 1929), pp. 64-65.

2 Ibid., p. 62.

3 Ma'oz, p. 192; see also Moore-Clarendon, F.O. 78/1219, desp. 25 (pol.) 2 June, 1856.

4 Ma'aluf in al-Muqtaṭaf, January 1909, XXXIV, 13. For more on Khuri see Tarazi, I, 102-105; Zaidan, Mashāhīr al-Sharq 2 vols. (Cairo, 1911), II, 137-142; Hourani, Arabic Thought, p. 276; see also 'Awad, al-Idara al-'Uthmaniya fi Wilayat Suriya, 1864-1914 (Cairo, 1969), p. 341. B.A. Dah. Irad. no. 62749 dated Recep 9, 1295.

newspaper at the service of the Pasha. From then and for a long time afterwards Hadiqat al-Akhbār remained a semi-official journal. In 1866 he was entrusted with the editing of the official newspaper of the province, called Surya. Khuri was destined to achieve prominence in the Vilayet service.

Another example of this policy was Nawfal Nawfal who came from a Christian Orthodox family of Tripoli, several members of which achieved prominence in the nineteenth century both in the service of Muhammad 'Ali and of the provincial service of Syria. Nawfal became chief customs officer of the Vilayet after serving many years in the customs department of the Porte in Beirut.[1] A third case, which was probably more significant, was the career of Anton Shami. He was a Christian notable of Damascus and was raised in office to become assistant accountant of the Vilayet.[2] In 1868 he left this position when chosen as one of the two appointees from Damascus to the Sura-ı Devlet, the Council of State in Istanbul.[3] He was replaced by another Christian notable--Mitri Shalhoub. Shami and Shalhoub were but two of a number of senior Christian officials at that department.[4] Moreover

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1 A.H. Nawfal, Tarājim, p. 76; Zaidan, II, 174.
2 Hadiqat al-Akhbār, 3 September, 1867.
3 Al-Jawaib, 14 July, 1868.
4 Ibid., 27 April, 1865; 21 October, 1867; cf. al-Jawaib, 19 May, 1868.

the chief clerk in the Arabic bureau in the Vilayet secretariat was also a Christian.[1]

Moreover, we read of many prominent Christians being granted the Mejidi medal, a high award reserved for eminent Ottomans or foreign personalities.[2] At the same time we hear of very few Syrian Muslims receiving it until the following decade. On one occasion four Maronite Bishops were granted the Mejidi medal of the third class.[3] A month later we read of the same medal being granted to one Muslim only and that was the Mufti of Damascus.[4] Another sign of this favour was that both Shirvani-zade and Rāshid took care to visit Christian schools, and Patriarchs and Bishops, and even accepted invitations to dine in Christian houses in Damascus.[5]

Undoubtedly the Muslims bitterly resented this "exaggerated influence" to use the words of the British vice-consul,[6] which the Christians enjoyed. They did not fail to show their feelings. Hasibi, a Damascine notable who left us an eye-witness description of the events in Damascus in 1860, added a few remarks on the events of

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1 He was Khalil Ayyub. See Hadiqat al-Akhbār, 4 January, 1866, 10 December, 1867; see also 'Awad, p. 348.

2 See Hadiqat al-Akhbār, 26 October, 1865, 2 November, 1865, 3 September, 1867, 21 October, 1867, and 3 February, 1868.

3 Ibid., 27 February, 1868.

4 Ibid., 31 March, 1868.

5 Ibid., 13 April, 11 May, 1865, 5 April, 1866.

6 See Jago, Report, p. 9.

the following decade. He informed us of a party held in Damascus in 1869 in honour of Rāshid Pasha to which Muslim and Christian notables were invited.

> ". . . the dinner was served at a table which seated all the guests. The seating was by order of precedence; but . . . Christians and Europeans, patriarchs and bishops were given [undue] precedence. . . . The fact that the ulema abstained from attending was a meritorious act from all points of view, since the Wali showed preferential regard to the Christians and the consuls, which was a grave humiliation to the Muslims. There is no strength nor support except from God."[1]

On the other hand the Christians were naturally satisfied with this attitude of the authorities towards them. "The Christians in Syria hardly desire any further change" was the view of the British vice-consul in Beirut.[2] It is probably not without significance that the two Yazijis, Nasif and Ibrahim--father and son, wrote poems in praise of the Sultan and his government about the end of the eighteen sixties,[3] or that Fuad Pasha remained, all through, the hero of the Christians.[4]

No wonder then that the dismissal of Rāshid Pasha in September 1871 was regretted by the Christians (and the Jews). The spiritual chiefs of their respective

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[1] Quoted by Salibi "The 1860 upheaval in Damascus", p. 202. See Arabic text in Hasibi in Abhath, XXI (1968), pp. 70-72.

[2] Rogers-Lyons, desp. dated 12 April, 1867 in Acc. and Pap. 1867, LXXV, p. 653.

[3] Hadiqat al-Akhbār, 12 November, 1867 for Nasif; for Ibrahim see Muqtaṭaf XXXIII, 486-487 by Ma'aluf.

[4] Tarazi, I, 104, 128; Hadiqat al-Akhbār, 28 May, 1867.

communities despatched telegrams to the Porte praying it to reverse its decision,[1] little knowing that the whole policy, now and for a long time to come, was changed.

4. The Publication of al-Jawaib

In the light of the violent reaction which the reforms of Āli and Fuad encountered in Hijaz and Syria, they tended it seems, in order to gather support for their policies, to establish modern means of communication with readers of Arabic. The traditional method, which at mid-nineteenth century was still confined to sufi shaikhs, ulema of various ranks, and to pilgrims, was as we have seen in the course of this work undependable.

We have noticed that Fuad Pasha succeeded in gaining the support and services of Khalil Khuri, the owner and editor of the Beirut weekly Hadiqat al-Akhbār and that this journal became a semi-official organ. More important however was the establishment of al-Jawaib in 1861 in Istanbul, owned and edited by Ahmad Faris (al-Shidyaq).

Ahmad Faris (1801-87)[2] was a Lebanese Maronite by origin who became a Protestant some time in his early

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1 Jago-Elliot, F.O. 424/27B, desp. from Damascus dated 28 September, 1871.

2 On Shidyaq see Sarkis, Mu'jam al-Matbu'āt al-'Arabiya (Cairo, 1928), pp. 1104-1107; Zaidan, Mashāhir, II, 81-92; Tarazi, I, 61-64, 96-99; Hourani, Arabic Thought, pp. 98-9 and E.I.^{2}, II, 800-802 where additional bibliography is given.

life. He served the Protestant missionaries in Egypt and Malta and in 1848 he came to England to help in a translation of the Bible into Arabic. After spending about two years in England, he settled in Paris where he remained until 1857 when he entered the service of the Bey of Tunis.

Shidyaq was basically a linguist and along with B. Bustani and N. Yaziji he contributed much to adapt the Arabic language to modern needs.[1] In Tunis he embraced Islam for unknown reasons, but possibly as a result of some experience in Europe. Following his conversion he adopted the name Ahmad, keeping his Christian name Faris and dropping his family name. His sojourn in Tunis was very short for at the end of 1857 he was invited to go to Istanbul where he stayed for the rest of his life.

Blessed with a powerful pen and an extensive knowledge of world politics, Ahmad Faris was a valuable instrument for the defence of the Porte's acts and reforms. Al-Jawaib started to appear in July 1861. The Porte covered the cost of printing and the salaries of the printers only, for which it received three hundred copies of each issue which were distributed "in Aleppo, Damascus, Baghdad, the Yemen, in Tripoli of North Africa and in other places."[2] The editing was wholly in the hands of Faris and was done mostly by himself. He may have received

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1 Hourani, Arabic Thought, pp. 95ff.

2 Al-Jawaib, 22 December, 1868.

some financial support from the Porte or the Sultan[1] but it appears that his income was largely derived from the remaining sales of the paper. At a certain stage, perhaps after the death of Ali or a little earlier, Faris started to receive a subsidy from Ismail, the Khedive of Egypt.[2]

In his editorial role he obviously had to follow a line favourable to the Porte and he did so until the late eighteen seventies when, because of old age, editing passed finally into the hands of his son Salim who it seems found it difficult to continue to support unreservedly the policies of Sultan Abdulhamid II. This brought him into occasional dispute with the censor and in 1884 the paper was finally suspended.

Like many enlightened Arabs of his age, Ahmad Faris saw that the best alternative for defending the Arab lands and for protecting their interests lay in adhering to Istanbul and in strengthening the Ottoman empire. On the other hand, being of Christian origin, he obviously supported the policy which gave equality to the Christians. Thus like Bustani and Khalil Khuri he was an ardent Ottomanist.[3] Like them too, his Christian origin made it

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1 Tarāzi in Tarīkh al-Sahafa al-'Arabiya, 4 vols. (Beirut, 1913-33) states that Faris used to receive from Sultan Abdulaziz an amount of 500 Ottoman lira yearly (see I/61).

2 A.Sami, Taqwīm al-Nil, III/3, 1527; see also Tarazi, loc.cit., and Bustani in al-Jinan, IV, 691.

3 On Bustani see below chapter VII. On Khuri see Muqtaṭaf, XXXIII, 995 of December 1908 and XXXIV, 13f. of January 1909 by I.I. al-Ma'aluf.

easy for him to accept the Tanzimat reforms and even to defend them. Nowhere were the Tanzimat better defended than by him in al-Jawaib.

Under the title "The Necessity of the Tanzimat" Faris wrote that some Muslims disapproved of the Tanzimat and regarded them as an innovation (bid'a), but they, he added, do not take into consideration the political requirements of the times. He emphasized that the Tanzimat were not incompatible with the shari'a because the purpose of both was to strengthen the Umma and to enforce justice. The shari'a he pointed out was laid (wuḍi'at) when the Islamic state was strong and victorious, while at present foreign states were becoming stronger and relations and trade with them was increasing. Thus it was necessary to lay down regulations in order to make "the state of Islam" stand along with the other states. Such regulations he mair ined were needed in matters of this world and in political affairs only; they had no implication upon religious belief or doctrine. The purpose of the Tanzimat (and of 'Ahad al-Aman in Tunis) he continued was to guarantee the security of life, honour, and fortune of the people; to defend religion and country; and to give a share in the political affairs to knowledgable persons. This by no means contradicted the requirements of the shari'a. Faris concluded by equating the attack on the

Tanzimat with an attack on shari'a rules and on the interests of the Umma.[1]

Ahmad Faris's practice was to publish translations of the new laws and regulations in Arabic, to cover the news of the Porte, to explain its actions and interpret world politics. He opened his pages to writers from the Arab provinces even if they criticized the acts of the Government. He was willing, he wrote, "to devote al-Jawaib to the service of the Arabs (abnā' al-'Arab)", and he stated that "it is dedicated for their benefit, to pursue their welfare, and to improve their conditions."[2] Of the Arab lands he was particularly concerned with the conditions of Syria. He gave more space to its news than to any other part except probably Egypt wo which he allotted several columns, partly in response to Ismail's subsidy and partly to satisfy his numerous readers there.

Al-Jawaib had it seems during the first few years of its existence a second mission which was to support the claim of the Sultan to the Caliphate,[3] a sign that the Sultan's Caliphal posture was meeting with a lack of sympathy among certain groups in the Arab provinces. Al-Jawaib was comparatively widely read in these provinces. But it appears that it also met with success among the Muslim communities in India and south

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1 Salim Faris (ed.), Kanz al-Ragha'ib, I, 175ff.

2 Al-Jawaib, 14 September, 1869.

3 Cf. Tarazi, I/61

east Asia. The evidence of the Rev. G.P. Badger,[1] an Englishman with a wide knowledge of the Orient and a friend of Ahmad Faris, might illustrate this. Badger wrote that the paper "has an enormous circulation throughout India and the East, [and] has been a consistent and thorough-going advocate for the claims set up [by the Sultan] in behalf of that institution [i.e. the Caliphate]." He added that Faris told him when he saw him in Istanbul in 1865-66 "that he was overwhelmed with letters" from the notables and ulema of those parts asking for advice on political and religious questions touching the Caliphate.[2] These efforts of Ahmad Faris came at a time when the European powers were strengthening their grip over the Muslim countries of central and south-east Asia. Thus al-Jawaib contributed to the creation of favourable public opinion and in convincing wider circles of the idea of an Ottoman Caliphate.

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1 On him see D.N.B., suppl. I, 94.

2 Memorandum by Badger inclosed in Frere-Granville, F.O. 424/32, p. 126f. (Private) dated 26 November, 1873.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHRISTIANS BETWEEN OTTOMANISM AND SYRIAN NATIONALISM: THE IDEAS OF BUTRUS AL-BUSTANI

1. The Cultural Revival of the Mid-Nineteenth Century

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards Syria witnessed a cultural revival the centre of which was Beirut. In fact it was more of a shift of cultural emphasis than a revival. The tradition of learning never ceased in the Medresses, the mosque schools in the larger cities of the Arab lands. But this learning was confined to the studies of Islam. To take the Azhar as an example, until late in the nineteenth century, the subjects taught in it were mainly Theology, Hadith, Jurisprudence, and Sufism. With them came subjects like philology, metre, rhetoric, logic and astronomy. Other subjects such as literature, history, geography, physical sciences etc. have receded since the middle ages into the background.[1] It was those neglected subjects, and in particular Arabic literature and history (and European languages) which found more interest among the learners in such a new centre as Beirut, in the last few decades

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[1] K. Vollers in E.I[1] I,534; see also Mubarak, Khiṭaṭ, IV,28; Khaffaji, Al-Azhar fi Alf-i'ām (Cairo, A.H. 1374), 2 vols., II, 113-114.

of the century.

The forerunners in learning and diffusing these new subjects were in the first generation mainly, though not only, Christians. To them should be attributed the cultural revival in Syria in the last century. In this section we shall discuss the origin of this revival and its impact on the rise of patriotic feeling in Syria in the last few decades of the century.

Many of the Syrian Christians may have been descendants of the Arabian tribes that settled in Syria before the rise of Islam and were converted to Christianity but many others, originally non-Arabs, became Arabised in the course of time. In the later centuries Arabic became the language of their liturgies, their records, and the medium in which they expressed their thoughts and feelings.

Since the early eighteenth century, a marked cultural activity was felt among the Maronites and Uniate Melkites (Greek Catholics). Modern research had shown a direct relationship between this activity and their attachment to the Roman See and their coming in contact with European Catholic culture.[1] It is not therefore strange that in addition to their numerous writings and

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[1] On this see A. Hourani, Arabic Thought, pp. 55 ff.; see also Robert Haddad, Syrian Christians in Muslim society (Princeton, 1970), pp. 52, 60f., Iliya F. Harik, Politics and change in a traditional society, Lebanon 1711-1845 (Princeton, 1968), p. 103.

translations of theological works into Arabic, a number of them studied the sciences of the Arabic language and were fascinated by its literature.[1]

This cultural activity was reinforced about the end of the century by the opening of a Maronite secular high school in a monastery at 'Ayn Waraqa (1789) in Mount Lebanon and of a Greek Catholic school in 'Ayn Traz a few years later.[2] This movement of establishing high schools continued in the nineteenth century with the Greek Orthodox joining in. They established a school in the monastery of Balamand near Tripoli in 1833.[3]

Around the mid-nineteenth century, a number of graduates of those schools, plus some others who acquired their education by the customary method of private tutoring, settled in Beirut where they were in demand. Normally, they would have sought employment as scribes at the court of the Emir of the mountain or of the semi-independent Ottoman governors of the country. But after 1840, when the emirate was abolished and Syria, restored

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1 See for instance the life of Germanus Farahat (1670-1722), Maronite Bishop of Aleppo in Dibs, Tarikh Suriyya, VIII, 543f.; of Butrus al-Ṭulāwi (1657-1745), ibid., p. 552f.; and of Ni'mat-ullah al-Halabi (? -1755), ibid., p. 483f.; see also A. Hourani, "The Fertile Crescent..." in A Vision of History, p. 61.

2 Dibs, VIII, 604f.; Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon (London 1965), p. 125f.; Asad Rustum, Bashir bain al-Sultan Wa'l-Aziz, 2 vols. (Beirut, 1956-7), II, 232-3.

3 Ibid., p. 233; Salibi, p. 126.

from Ibrahim Pasha to the Sultan, was put under direct and centralized rule from Istanbul, their opportunities for employment in this field became limited.

At the same time, Beirut started to grow as an important commercial centre and to become the major port of Syria.[1] It offered various opportunities for educated young men. The members of the group with whom we are concerned found employment as teachers, clerks, employees at the newly established European consulates, and with the missionaries. Though small in number, they formed a nucleus of a new stratum. Beirut contributed as much to their intellectual development as to the shaping of their political and social outlook. It was a prosperous town with a rather liberal atmosphere. Muslims and Christians of various denominations found it possible to co-operate easily in forming a number of cultural societies in the eighteen sixties and seventies. Even a Muslim 'alim of Azhar background Yusuf al-Asir,[2] could assist the Protestant missionaries in the translation of the Bible unmolested.

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1 On Beirut at this phase see al-Bustani, Da'irat al-Ma'ārif, V, 744-753; see also al-Jawaib of June 15 and 30, 1880. Thamarāt al-Funūn of August 22, 1878; E.I^2, I, 1137-38; M. Bairam, Safwat al-I'tibār 5 vols. (Cairo, A.H. 1302-11), V, 35ff. On it in the early eighteen forties see W.K. Kelly, Syria and the Holy land (London, 1844), pp. 4-7; Ma'oz, pp. 180-181.

2 Salibi, p. 145. On Asir see Zaidan, Mashāhīr, II, 185-187.

Moreover, Beirut which developed following the growth of trade between Western Europe and the eastern mediterranean countries, was exposed to European influence. This was reflected in the thought and writings of the members of this stratum who thus were the first among the Syrians in the mid-nineteenth century to come in direct contact with European culture. It was largely through them that the knowledge and values of this civilization was brought home to the people of Syria. "Beirut," wrote Butrus al-Bustani about 1880 "has become a general school for sciences and arts for Syria and beyond."[1]

The abolishing of the emirate of the mountain from where many of them had come, eliminated a focus of loyalty for them. On the other hand, their contact with Europe took place at a time when the tides of nationalism were high in that continent. Those two factors combined together had undoubtedly given them an incentive to define and shape their own national identity. It was probably one of the reasons that led them to study with much zeal the cultural heritage of the Arabs. Moreover, the spread of education among wider classes on the one hand and the advent of the printing press and of journalism on the other helped them to share their feelings and knowledge with a wider circle. A number of

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1 Da'irat al-Ma'arif, V, 751.

Syrian Christians had already in the previous century found great interest in classical Arabic literature but around the mid-nineteenth century the interest in it became wider and the first studies about it started to appear.

The first work written by a Syrian in the nineteenth century on Arabic literature was that of Iskander Abkarius in 1858 on pre-Islamic and early Muslim poets.[1] In February 1859, Butrus al-Bustani gave a lecture on the subject which he published under the title "A lecture on the literature of the Arabs".[2] In it he dwelled on the glory of past history and suggested means to promote its revival.[3] The ideas of Bustani met with a ready response. Only a few months after his lecture, a group of prominent Christians and Muslims in Beirut formed a cultural association for the publication of Arabic books.

Its members were motivated "by the desire of reviving what time had almost obliterated,"[4] and their plan was "to print and sell in a reasonable price [Arabic]

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1 "Rawdat al-Adab fi Ṭabaqāt Shu'ara' al-'Arab," See Dibs, VIII, 695; Hadiqat al-Akhbar of August 14, 1858.

2 B. al-Bustani, Khutba fi Adāb al-'Arab (Beirut, 1859), 40p.

3 Tibawi, 'The American Missionaries in Beirut and Butrus al-Bustani", in St. Antony's papers, No. 16, ed. by A. Hourani (London, 1963), p. 165.

4 Hadiqat al-Akhbār of February 23, 1860.

literary and historical works".[1] One of its first publications was the <u>divān</u> of al-Mutanabbi,[2] the famous poet whose poetry symbolized Arab pride and resentment in an age when Arabs lost effective political power in the lands of the Caliphate. Al-Mutanabbi was also the subject of a rather lengthy study in Bustani's fortnightly <u>al-Jinan</u> in 1870.[3] The eighteen sixties and seventies witnessed the publication of a number of <u>divāns</u> for other poets, and many articles on classical Arabic literature written with undertones of pride by various writers of Beirut.

It was probably not a coincidence that Ismail Pasha, the Khedive of Egypt, ordered about the same time, the Būlāq Press of Cairo to print some of the classical books of Arabic literature and history.[4] It is interesting to note that during the reigns of Muhammad 'Ali, Abbas I, and Said Pasha, very little attention was paid to such material. Muhammad 'Ali had no interest in classical Arabic literature.[5] In Said's time a number of books taught at al-Azhar, for the benefit of its students, were printed only after the intervention of Shaikh Rifa'a

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1 <u>Ibid</u>.

2 <u>Ibid</u>., of May 31, 1860. It was edited by Butrus al-Bustani, see Tibawi, <u>op.cit</u>., p. 166.

3 By a certain Salim Diyab. See <u>Jinan</u> I, 114ff., 140ff., 171ff., 240ff., 496ff.

4 <u>Al-Jawaib</u> of March 22, 1870.

5 A. Radwan, <u>Tarikh Matba'at Bulāq</u> (Cairo 1953), p. 254.

al-Tahtawi with the Pasha.[1] Thus, Ismail's order was an innovation, and in the early seventies a number of the highly regarded classics were printed.[2] On the other hand, both Said and Ismail Pashas supported Bustani, who as we have seen was one of the leading advocates of the revival of Arabic classics. Bustani dedicated his dictionary Qutr al-Muhit to Said Pasha "as a reminder...for his favours...in the revival of culture and knowledge".[3] And Ismail supported him in publishing his volumes of Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif.[4] Since then, Beirut and Cairo have been great centres of modern Arabic culture.

It is not our aim to give an account of the history of the Arabic cultural revival, but only to state the fact that by the end of the eighteen fifties, there already existed in Beirut among a wide circle of Christian thinkers and writers a consciousness of belonging to an Arab people by virtue of common language and culture but not of religion. This consciousness found a clear expression by Khalil Khuri the founder (in 1858) and editor of the first privately owned newspaper in

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1 Ibid., p. 257.

2 Ibid., pp. 194, 204.

3 The preface of Qutr al-Muhīt (Beirut 1869). It should be mentioned that his other dictionary Muhit al-Muhit was dedicated to Sultan Abdulaziz for which he was amply rewarded.

4 A. Hourani, Arabic Thought, p. 102; see also A. Sami, Taqwīm al-Nīl, III, Pt. 3, pp. 1217, 1404.

Arabic--the weekly Hadiqat al-Akhbar. Khuri, a Greek Orthodox Christian, was also a poet of note. He was a member of the above mentioned association. In his commentaries we find him speaking of the "Arab Umma (People)" as a distinct group within the Ottoman Empire.[1] He used the term as if it was commonly known and used. In one of his editorials for instance he called upon the people to restrict their borrowing from Europe to "sciences and skills, and to revive eastern civilization in a way that conforms with the spirit of the Arab Umma, rooted in its literature and intellectual arts (funun 'aqliyya) over forty generations, because we want to be civilized Arabs and not incomplete Franks...."[2]

As we have said above, this was a self-identification of the Christian element based on linguistic and cultural criteria. As for the Muslims (in Syria), they were, on the whole, aware of their identity as Arabs and proud of it. But to be an Arab for them was to be a Muslim as well. On the other hand those Christian thinkers and writers in Beirut thought that it was possible to be an Arab and a non-Muslim at the same time.

However, the event of 1860 in Damascus had shown them the weakness of their argument. Thus they

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[1] Hadiqat al-Akhbar of June 5, 1858. Other issues in which the term was used: August 7, 1858, January 1, 1859, October 20, 1859, November 17, 1859 etc.

[2] Ibid., September 4, 1858.

sought to emphasize a third tie with their Muslim brethren and thus was conceived the idea of Syria as a common fatherland together with ideas of Syrian Patriotism.

2. The Rise of the Concept of Syria and of Syrian Entity

The name "Syria" as a geographical entity that extends from the Taurus mountains in the north to the desert of Sinai in the south came into use about mid-nineteenth century. It partly replaced previous names such as Sham or Barr al-Sham, or Arabistan which were in use in the east until and during Muhammad 'Ali's occupation of the country. We do not know definitely how this name came into use and what was its origin. There are perhaps two possibilities. First, the name Suriyya (سورية) appeared in Arabic with the translation of the New Testament from Greek. It appears from the context that it was used primarily for the northern part of the country.[1] It was transliterated into Arabic as it appeared in the Greek text. Another variation in Arabic is Surya (سوريا) which might have been transliterated from the French "La Syrie" in which it was written from middle ages, or from the English equivalent "Syria". Both usages were apparently used by European diplomats during the crisis of the above mentioned occupation.

In any case, the name was in use in Arabic in

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[1] See Acts 15, v. 41 and Galatians 1, v. 21. My thanks are due to Dr. D. Hopwood for drawing my attention to this.

Beirut about the end of the eighteen fifties. It was often used in Hadiqat al-Akhbār,[1] and when Bustani, following the events of 1860 issued a short-lived broadsheet he called it Nafir Suriyya. Khalil Khuri moreover, gave a lecture in Beirut in March 1859 on the ancient monuments of the country, which he published under the title Kharābāt Sūriyya.[2]

The first official use of the name came in 1864. Following the Vilayet law of that year the province of Damascus was unified with that of Saida to form together a new province called the Vilayet of Syria.[3] It enclosed the area south of Aleppo down to the Sinai desert including the sub-province of Jerusalem. The official news sheet of this province, first published in May 1866 was also called Surya.[4] As it was at the beginning edited by Khalil Khuri,[5] it is probably not strange to find in its first issue that Syria was defined as the area "between the Euphrates in the east and the Mediterranean in the west, and between Arabia in the south

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1 See for instance the issue of July 31, and of August 7, 1858.

2 See Khalil al-Khuri, Kharābāt Suriyya, (Beirut, 1860), 56 pages; see also A. Hourani, Arabic Thought, p. 276.

3 Hadiqat al-Akhbār, April 20, and May 11, 1865.

4 Tarāzi, Tarikh al-Ṣaḥāfa al-'Arabiyya, 4 vols. (Beirut 1913-1929), see I, 67. For the date of its publication see Hadiqat al-Akhbar of May 19, 1866.

5 Ibid., April 5, 1866.

and Anatolia in the north, 700 Km. by length and 450 Km. by breadth...including Aleppo...."[1]

This was probably the first attempt in modern times to define Syria as a geographical entity. Soon it was to be conceived as a distinct historical entity too. And the question is, what made the people of the country conceive it as such?

To answer this question, it must be borne in mind that the Christian communities of Syria had always had an image of an area larger than the district in which they lived. Each one of these communities had a patriarch and a church hierarchy whose jurisdiction was spread over a wider area than this or the other province of Syria. Thus, even though the country was divided into three and sometimes four provinces, one independent of the other, the communal administration of the Christian communities cut across this division and had a centralized basis.

This was not, however, sufficient to create an image of a united country in the eyes of all the population but it did contribute to it. Another contribution in this direction was the short lived rule of Ibrahim Pasha in the eighteen thirties during which Syria formed a single administrative unit governed from Damascus. But

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1 According to Hadiqat al-Akhbār, May 19, 1866.

it appears that the most important contribution came in the period of the Tanzimat. The policies followed by the Porte during this period helped more than any other factor in creating modern Syria as an integrally united country. It was not only that the greater part of the country was united under one governor, namely the province of Syria, but the whole administrative and economic structure led to that result. This is not to say, however, that the country was socially united.

The movement of administrative reform and the economic transformation that came upon the country as a result of the economic expansion of Europe, led to an important social and political result--that of the domination of the city, over the rural areas and the more remote districts. There is no doubt that this development determined the integral unity of Syria more than any other factor. This domination was achieved as we shall see below.

The administrative reforms in Syria from 1840 onward were primarily motivated by the desire of the Porte to consolidate its authority in the country. The fact that an economic change was taking place at the same time only strengthened this desire and probably influenced its direction, it did not create it. In any case, under the impact of European economic expansion, the economy of the Syrian provinces started to pass from a subsistence

to a market economy which reached, after mid-century, an advanced stage.[1] In these circumstances the rural areas and the more remote districts became more and more attached to, and dependent on, the city and the peasant became dependent on the merchant for marketing his crops or for lending him money in times of crisis. A few cities virtually controlled the economy of the country. Beirut for instance had become not only the port but also the financial capital of Syria[2]--as it was culturally.

But the unification of the country, the basis of which was laid by the economic process, was supported and enhanced by the gradual implementation of the new administrative system and the improvements in communication. The essence of this system was the direct and centralized rule which had evolved gradually over a number of decades. But for the time being it gave the opportunity to city notables to gain wide powers, both political and financial. The application of this system is described elsewhere in this work[3] and here we shall only follow the administrative aspect of that domination of the rural areas by the city.

In the old system, government authority was most effective only in the cities. Rural areas and hill

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1 See above, p 59.

2 Bustani, Da'irat al-Ma'ārif, V, 752; see also Hadiqat al-Akhbār of August 24, 1858.

3 See above, p.20f.

districts were governed by their own chieftains or emirs on a semi-autonomous basis. On the whole these emirs were hereditary tax-farmers, and they were left undisturbed by the authorities as long as they paid the annual taxes and observed relative quiet. In the new system those chieftains and emirs were either destroyed or their power was greatly undermined, their areas then being subjugated to the central authorities of the Vilayet who henceforth administered them.

At the centre of the Vilayet or sub-Vilayet the notables played a very influential role either through the local council whose members were taken from among their ranks or by personal influence upon the Vali. Tax farming now passed to their hands for a long time to come: so did the administration of those districts. In fact, the more administrative modernization was applied, the more did the sons of city notables fill the new posts for officials of various grades that were created. Thus the notable families of Damascus, Aleppo, and to a lesser degree, of Jerusalem, Sidon, and Tripoli, provided the core of the middle and lower grades of Ottoman administration in Syria in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The hold of the city notables over the rural areas was strengthened yet more with the application of the new land code of 1858. This code necessitated the

registration of land by the owners and the payment of annual taxes on it. It thus facilitated by various means the control of great tracts of the rural lands by city notables. Whole villages passed into their possession and the inhabitents of them, previously unbound, became their tenants. These families of notables formed a caste in the country which as time went by bound itself together with ever-strengthening ties. They have also become the virtual arbiters of the fate of the country.

We see then, that in a course of a few decades the various districts of Syria became more integrated than ever before from both the economic and the administrative aspect and this largely helped to create a sense and vision of a geographic entity. Socially speaking there was no integration among its inhabitants who belonged to many religious communities. But the changing after 1856 of the traditional millet system, the change of status of the individual from a member of a millet to a subject of the state, and the equal civil rights bestowed upon non-Muslims together with the tendency to take them into Government service, all helped to lay the foundations of social integration. However this integration was again disrupted after the death of Āli as a result of the policies followed in Syria by the Porte.

On the other hand, the literary renaissance

in which the Christian element took the lead, and which raised interest in Arabic literature above all other intellectual interests, produced a sense of cultural homogeneity in Syrian society.

To sum up, the changes that took place in Syria, economically and administratively during the Tanzimat period, the rise of Beirut, the abolishing of the emirate of the mountain, and the opening up of the other semi-autonomous districts, all interacted to create a new sense of entity which became known as Syria, a Syria which was the creation of the Tanzimat period. In that period the concept was formulated of a country inhabited by one people differing in religious belief, but united in territory, in language, and in culture. The Christian litterateurs of Beirut were the first to formulate this concept and the first to regard the country as a fatherland (watan). But, before the century ended, the concept was generally accepted by educated classes and leaders of public opinion in the country.

3. Bustani and the Rise of Syrian Nationalism

If anyone envisaged Syria as a fatherland, no one did so more clearly than Butrus al-Bustani, and if anybody worked for that cause, no one did better service to it in the second half of the nineteenth

century than him.[1]

A Maronite by origin and a graduate of the seminary of 'Ayn Waraqa, Bustani settled in Beirut in 1840 where he found employment with the American Protestant missionaries as a teacher at their seminary in the vicinity of Beirut. His association with them lasted for almost twenty years in the course of which he accepted the Protestant faith and helped them in the translation of the Bible into Arabic, learning Hebrew and Greek for that reason. Through the good offices of Eli Smith of the mission, he secured, in the late eighteen forties, the post of dragoman of the American Consulate in the city.

In spite of Bustani's long association with the mission his personality was not submerged. On the contrary, it can be noticed that in the eighteen fifties, he started to show increasing intellectual independence

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[1] On Butrus al-Bustani see: A. Hourani, Arabic Thought, pp. 99-102, 276f.; A.L. Tibawi, "The American Missionaries in Beirut and Butrus al-Bustani", in St. Antony's Papers No. 16, ed. by A. Hourani; Bustani, (ed.) Dairat al-Ma'arif, VII, 589-593, 599-608; al-Muqtaṭaf, VIII, 1-7; J. Zaidan, Mashāhir al-Sharq (Cairo, 1910-11), 2 Vols., II, 25-33 where the author drew heavily on the article of al-Muqtaṭaf; M. Saways, al-Mu'allim Butrus al-Bustani, (Beirut, 1963); K. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon (London, 1965), p. 144f.; G. Antonius, The Arab Awakening (London, 1938), pp. 47-51. R. Haddad, op.cit., p. 71, 73. For additional references see Zirikli, A'lām (Cairo, 1959), 10 Vols., I, 31.

of the mission, and after the death in 1857 of Eli Smith, his friend and patron, Bustani's work for the mission virtually ended[1] although a relationship with them, "friendly but not intimate",[2] continued.

In dissociating himself from the missionaries Bustani was probably guided by two considerations. First, he looked for a wider and freer scope for his talents. Secondly, he might have felt that further connection with them might compromise his wish to devote his energy for the service of his country as he saw best. There was, it seems, a basic difference of attitude between him and the mission. "The purpose of most of the schools is religious," we read in an article on education signed by his son Salim in the mid-eighteen seventies. "They were established to influence the minds religiously, and each [mission] is concerned to teach its own language at its schools." Our children, he added, were being taught about remote countries but nothing about ours, they were learning the history of the English or the Germans but were ignorant of our history.[3] So, while the missionaries were primarily concerned in spreading the faith and the

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1 Tibawi, p. 167.

2 Ibid., p. 168.

3 See al-Jinan, VII, 594, 638. Upon evidence of missionary sources Tibawi (op.cit., p. 175) cited a prominent missionary that their schools were simply "a convenient method of inculcating a knowledge of the gospel", thus confirming Bustani's argument.

language and culture of their country,[1] Bustani's vision was to spread the knowledge of Arabic and its culture, and that part of the civilization of Europe which was good for, and suited his country.[2]

From the late eighteen fifties up to the very night of his death in 1883, he worked for this aim aided in his latter years by his sons and relatives. When he died he was considered "the most learned...as well as the most influential man of modern Syria."[3] We have already referred to his contribution to the cultural revival in Syria in the second half of the century. In this section we are more concerned in his social and political views which left a lasting impact on the political reasoning in Syria in the next generation or two.

To start with, Bustani was primarily a teacher and a man of letters. That he was a political thinker of considerable importance in the last two decades of his life is less known. A glance at his work by the beginning of 1860, shows that he was conscious of belonging to a larger group than his community and to a wider country than his native district. In this he was

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1 This attitude of the missionaries was partly modified after they established, in 1866, the American Protestant College.

2 A. Hourani, op.cit., p. 100f.

3 H.H. Jessup, Fifty-three years in Syria (New York, 1910), 2 Vols., I, 483, quoted in Salibi, p. 145.

not alone and we might well assume that his partners in the association for the publication of Arabic books were of similar opinion.

Moreover, many of those members were of the younger generation. Short biographies of seven out of the fourteen members are known to us.[1] Five of these seven were, in 1860, under forty,[2] and Bustani was forty one; a generation in fact that had grown up in the period of the Tanzimat.

It was, however, the events of 1860 in Mount Lebanon, and especially the massacre of Damascus in July of that year that shocked Bustani profoundly and moved him to think about the future. Instead of sectarian fanaticism flaring up in him he spoke loudly for forgiveness and unity and love for the fatherland. Sectarian fanatics were in his view "enemies of the fatherland".[3] There is no advantage he wrote in looking at the past; we should care for the future.[4]

These and other views he voiced in a broadsheet which he significantly called Nafir Suriyya (A Call for

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1 For the names see Hadiqat al-Akhbār, February 23, 1860.

2 Those were Khuri of Hadiqat al-Akhbār who was in his middle twenties, Husain Baihum in his late twenties, Ibrahim al-Ahdab and Niqola Naqqash in their mid thirties, and Michael Mudawwar in his late thirties.

3 Nafir Suriyya, No. 4 of October 25, 1860.

4 Ibid., No. 3, October 15, 1860.

Syria), of which he published eleven issues between September 1860 and April 1861. Written in a simple and sincere style, each number was signed by "him who loves his country" and addressed to his "fellow countrymen".[1] He opened the first sheet by emphasizing the common marks of patriotism. "O sons of the fatherland, you drink the same water, breathe the same air, and speak the same language. The land upon which you walk, your common interests and your customs are one..."[2] In the fourth sheet he touched again the same idea: "Syria, known as Barr al-Sham or 'Arabistan is our fatherland...and the population of Syria, whatever their creed, community, racial origin (ajnas) or groups are the sons of our fatherland."[3] There should be internal unity and friendship among them. "The backwardness of the Syrians is the outcome of lack of unity and love among them, and of the lack in them of earnest concern for the welfare of their country, and of their surrender to the power of sectarian fanaticism."[4] He quoted in the same sheet a tradition attributed to the Prophet: "Love of country is an article of faith", and he added that those who substitute the love of country by sectarian fanaticism do not deserve to belong to Syria.

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1 A. Hourani, op.cit., p. 101.
2 Nafir Suriyya, No. 1, September 29, 1860.
3 Ibid., No. 4, October 25, 1860.
4 Ibid., No. 9, January 14, 1861.

He recommended justice, equality, and separation between religious and secular realms,[1] a theme which he expounded a decade later in his periodical al-Jinan. At the end he criticized "those who claim" that Arabic was not a good enough vehicle for civilization. He was anxious to preserve the general cultural features of Syria. Syria should have one language he wrote (meaning Arabic), "it must not become a Babel of languages...as it is a Babel of religions...."[2]

These were the main views of Bustani in 1860. The need to create internal unity, to forget the differences and emphasize the common aspects; to love Syria and to work for its welfare and progress. In this sense he was probably the first Syrian nationalist. He was a fanatic only in his love for his country, and was led only by the patriotic principles, wrote a contemporary biographer.[3]

Bustani put his ideas into practice when in 1863 he opened a school which he called "the national school", (al-madrasah al-waṭaniya).[4] Apparently, he was of the conviction that "as long as most of the schools in the country were in the hands of the Franks, there is no

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1 Ibid., No. 7, November 1860, and No. 10, February 22, 1861.

2 Ibid.; see also, A. Hourani, op. cit., p. 102.

3 Al-Muqṭaṭaf, VIII, 6.

4 On it see, al-Jinan, IV, 626-9 and Dibs, VIII, 779.

way for the desired reform,"[1] as his son wrote later meaning by "reform" the internal unity. The school took a non-sectarian line. The teaching of Arabic was emphasized, and it was taught by the best teachers in the field, Nasif al-Yaziji and Yusuf al-Asir. Turkish was also taught along with French and English.[2] Probably not less important were Bustani's weekly talks in which he preached his views to the new generation.[3] It was reported that a year after its foundation it had 150 pupils,[4] certainly a large number for those times. It had also a boarding section with pupils from many parts of Syria, from Iraq, and from Egypt.[5]

4. Bustani and the Ottoman Authorities

Bustani's school would appear to have enjoyed the blessings of the Ottoman authorities[6] as he did their favour and respect. Being undoubtedly aware of his patriotic ideas (Syria as a fatherland inhabited by one Arab nation, and the revival of Arabic culture and pride in it), the question arises, why did those authorities show him favour instead of frowning at such a trend of thought? In fact those ideas were only one side of Bustani's thinking, the other side being well in line with

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1 Al-Jinan, VII, 595.
2 Ḥadiqat al-Akhbār, June 16, 1864.
3 Al-Muqṭaṭaf, VIII, 3; Zaidan, II, 27.
4 Ḥadiqat al-Akhbār, loc.cit.
5 Zaidan, loc.cit.
6 Al-Muqṭaṭaf, VIII, 3.

the later Tanzimat reformers. He advocated progress and secular reform, but above all it was his support of political Ottomanism, the need to rally around Istanbul, which gained him the favour of the Ottoman authorities in Syria and in Istanbul--except for a short while during the first grand vezirate of Mahmud Nedim Pasha. For them it was a question of political priorities, the question of keeping their control over Syria. One major factor was that the Ottoman Sultans were the guardians of the Muslim holy places and the protectors of the pilgrim land routes to Mecca a duty from which they derived special pride and for which they enjoyed special status in the Muslim world. This status was guaranteed by the predominant position they enjoyed in Syria. To have such a position was a traditional policy of the Porte, because "it was control of the Vertile Crescent which determined that Istanbul not Cairo or Isfahan should dominate the heart of the Muslim World."[1]

Other factors, political and strategic, made the Porte's predominance in Syria at mid-nineteen century onwards an absolute necessity. First of all, there was the need to have an eye on Egypt. Secondly, the Ottomans could not in any circumstances have allowed Syria to fall

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1 A. Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables" in Polk and Chambers (editors), Beginning of Modernization in the Middle East, The Nineteenth Century (Chicago, 1968), p. 52.

into other hands because he who controls Syria imperils the position of Istanbul in southern Anatolia and Iraq. In short Syria was the key to the whole Asiatic dominions of the Sultan except possibly Western Anatolia.

After the events of 1860 there was a danger that the Christian communities in Syria, losing their confidence in the Ottoman authorities, might turn against them and give their allegiance to one of the great powers, especially to France who was gradually and systematically spreading its influence in the country. And when Napoleon III sent a detachment of troops to Beirut in summer 1860, he, not the Sultan, appeared to be the protector of the Christians in Syria.

There was good reason then to suppose that Ottoman rule in Syria was in danger after 1860. There was first of all a strong rivalry between France and England for influence there. Napoleon III in addition appeared to have some plans for the Arab lands.[1] Some members of the ruling family of Egypt also had their own ambitions over Syria, which may have been supported by the French Emperor and Haleem Pasha (fourth son of Muhammad 'Ali) put forward a claim for the viceroyalty of Syria after the events of 1860.[2] There is some

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1 See Hogarth's memo. on Syria in F.O. 882/17, p. 21.

2 Colquhoun-Russel, F.O. 195/681, desp. 39, Alexandria, May 10, 1861, and the minutes of H. Bulwer on the back of the despatch. See also Colquhoun-Bulwer, desp. 18, Cairo, April 29, 1861.

evidence too that Mustafa Fazil worked actively for it in the later 1860's.[1]

Besides England and France other powers managed to strengthen their presence in Syria. Even the Russians, in spite of their defeat in the Crimean war, were promoting their position in the country, especially in the Sanjaq of Jerusalem.[2] In 1858 the first Russian bishop reached Jerusalem,[3] the annual number of their pilgrims was steadily growing and reached eleven thousand by the end of the century.[4]

All this made it necessary for the Porte to preserve a paramount position in Syria, and after 1860 the good will of the Christian element of the country was particularly necessary. This probably explains the very favourable disposition of the Ottoman authorities in Syria towards the Christians in the decade of the eighteen sixties, a policy which was very marked during the long governorship of Rāshid Pasha (1866-1871) who was appointed shortly after the inauguration of the Vilayet law and the unification of the two vilayets of Sham (i.e. Damascus) and Saida.[5]

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1 Elliot-Stanley, F.O. 78/2023, desp. 419 (conf.), Istanbul, November 10, 1868. See also above, pp.117ff.

2 On this question see D. Hopwood, Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine 1843-1914 (Oxford, 1969).

3 Ibid., p. 55.

4 Ibid., p. 116; cf. Hogarth's memo. on Syria, F.O. 882/17, p. 21.

5 On the Porte's policy towards the Christians in Syria in the 1860's see above pp.158ff.

Bustani, not only showed good will towards the authorities, but also advocated allegiance to them. It was for him the best guarantee to check Muslim aggressiveness on the one hand and foreign interference and domination on the other. He was probably one of the few Syrian Christians who regarded any kind of European domination as disadvantageous to the future of Syria. This attitude suited the Ottoman authorities perfectly.

After he had finished his dictionary Muhit al-Muhit, a gigantic task for any single individual[1] and when his eldest son Salim was old enough to assist him (he was 22 in 1870), Bustani launched a fortnightly called al-Jinan apparently with the blessing and encouragement of the Vali, Rāshid Pasha.[2] In the same year he also published a newspaper al-Janna twice a week edited by his son Salim,[3] and in 1871 another newspaper called al-Junaina, four days a week, in the editing of which his young kinsman Sulaiman participated. All these publications were under his supervision.[4]

Bustani founded al-Jinan because as he put it, of the need for such a publication in Syria and the neighbouring countries.[5] He assured his readers that it

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1 Vol. 1 was published in 1867 and Vol. 2 in 1870.

2 See al-Jinan, I, 1, January 1870 and IV, 363; see also Tarāzi, II, 45-47.

3 Ibid., II, 10.

4 Ibid., II, 22; Zaidan, II, 28; Tibawi, p. 178. On Sulaiman al-Bustani see G.N. Baz in Tarāzi, II, 159-168.

5 Al-Jinan, I, 515-6.

had two basic rules: "the truth and the interest of the country (bilad)." Its purpose was to foster knowledge and promote progress. It would not side he pledged, with this or that group but only "with our fatherland and with our people (qawm)...."[1] He was true to his word and al-Jinan reaching all Arab cities in Asia, and in Egypt met with success.[2]

In the first twenty one months, as long as Rāshid Pasha was governor, Bustani enjoyed freedom to write. In editorials signed by his son Salim, but which obviously contained his own views, he expounded in a simple and clear style on the theme of government and subject, the need for internal unity, and the separation of the religious from the civil realms. On the whole he supported the sovereignty of the Ottoman Turks, though at times it was not an unqualified support. But after the death of Āli Pasha and the rise of Mahmud Nedim to the Grand Vezirate, (September 1871), Rāshid Pasha was recalled. He was ordered to quit his office within twenty four hours and to take the first steamer to Istanbul.[3] He stayed there for ten months unemployed, until the fall of Mahmud Nedim.[4] Following that, Bustani stopped

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1 Ibid.
2 Ibid., III, 433; IV, 363.
3 Al-Jawaib, October 11 and December 12, 1871.
4 Al-Jinan, VII, 474; al-Jawaib, September 6, 1876.

discussing internal politics. His editorials changed and dealt with European politics and in general terms. After the fall of Mahmud Nedim (July 1872) he explained why. He could not write freely, he said, while the Pasha was in office and he complained of press censorship.[1] "Silence in such circumstances is better"[2] he added. Bustani then resumed his commentaries as before but he was again to be interrupted. In 1873 during the governorship of Halet Pasha, a man known for his traditional Islamic tendencies,[3] censorship was again imposed on publications in Beirut by order of the Ministry of Education at the Porte.[4] Presumably Bustani found it necessary to modify his language. But even after Halet Pasha was transferred and especially in the years 1874 and 1875, Bustani's arguments were of unqualified support for the policies of Istanbul and as we shall see he, on the whole, supported the argument of Sultan Abdulhamid against the constitutionalists.

5. Patriotism and Ottomanism in Bustani's Thought

Some of Bustani's views in al-Jinan had in their essence been expressed already in his first publication, Nafir Suriyya. But in some other views there was a

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1 Ibid., III, 541-542. On the policy initiated by M. Nedim in Syria see below pp.232ff.

2 Ibid., III, 579.

3 Al-Jawaib, October 29, 1873; on Halet Pasha see below p.237f.

4 Ibid., July 2, 1873.

certain similarity between him and the ideas of the Young Ottomans. They both were unhappy about European interference in the internal affairs of the state; both deplored the decline of the Ottoman economy in face of the commercial expansion of Western Europe; and there was broad similarity between their views and his on the privileges and rights of the ruler and the ruled.

If this was the case, had Bustani been influenced by the Young Ottomans? It is difficult to regard such similarity as merely accidental. However, there is no clear evidence for that, although an indirect influence might have been present.

On the other hand, it should be mentioned that in 1868, a cultural society called al-Jam'iyya al-'Ilmiyya al-Suriya (Syrian Scientific Society

sufficiently important in the eyes of the Ottoman authorities that they should choose its president, the Druze Emir Muhammad Amin Arslan, as a member of the Shura'i Devlet (Council of State) in Istanbul which was founded later in 1868.[1] The existence of this society was a sign for a growing awakening in Beirut for cultural advancement which Bustani, by establishing al-Jinan hoped, it seems, to influence and direct.

Bustani's views as they appeared in al-Jinan may be grouped under three main headings: patriotic solidarity, the rights of the subject vis-à-vis the ruler, and his idea of Ottomanism. Roughly speaking these views correspond chronologically to the shifts in his arguments. In the first year of al-Jinan he dealt mainly with the first; from 1871-1873 the second busied him most; and from 1874 he concentrated largely on Ottomanism.

(a) The case for patriotic solidarity

In 1870 as in 1860 Bustani saw much evil in the fragmentary structure of Syrian society formed as it had been of closed religious communities. In an editorial entitled Ruh al-'Asr[2] (the Spirit of the Age), Bustani wrote that the nineteenth century had three main characteristics, namely: equality, absolute liberty that does not harm others, and progress. Calling upon

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1 Al-Jawaib, August 4, 1868.

2 Al-Jinan, I, (1870), 385-387.

his readers to follow it, he stated that religion when mixed with politics was against the spirit of the age. Religion in itself however "does not prevent [its believers] from following the spirit of the age in secular matters." What he meant was not religious belief but the establishment of social and political life on religious solidarity (_'usba diniyya_). Such a solidarity he believed was hindering equality and progress and he reminded his readers that in their age, religious solidarity had been replaced by patriotic solidarity (_'usba wataniyya_).[1]

Such views had apparently aroused the resentment of some people, and when Bustani returned to the subject again a little later, he stated that he could not resist from returning to it. He added "I do not fear the attacks of the armies of oppression and tyranny."[2]

Religious solidarity, he wrote in a forceful style, drove us into disaster and distress, and planted weakness and discord among us, because instead of one sect there were twelve, each one was trying to promote its own interests and trample on the interests of the others. The result was retardation and ruin.[3] But this was the heritage of the past, the outcome of the policy

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1 _Ibid._, p. 386.
2 _Ibid._, p. 641.
3 _Ibid._, pp. 645, 706.

of the past, based as it had been on religious solidarity. "The world today is constituted on national (jinsiyya) and patriotic (wataniyya) solidarity".[1] Religious solidarity should be abandoned if the Syrians desired progress. "There is no way of success...except by adhering to patriotic solidarity and to unite in Arab solidarity ('usba 'arabiyya)".[2]

To have one Arab identity was imperative for him. "We should overlook our past racial origin and accept one national identity which was the last to prevail in our country and whose language and customs we have adopted--that is the Arab nationality (jinsiyya) to which originally many of us had belonged".[3]

Bustani defined a nation (umma) as a people united together in one nationality (jinsiyya) like the French or the German nation who, according to him, have fulfilled the conditions of being a nation which were "to live in one country and to speak one language".[4] Following this definition, he regarded the Syrians as a nation on its own. They speak the same language and inhabit the same country. Bustani had no doubt too that they were Arabs. The Arab nation (umma), he assured his readers, did not vanish, it only lost its vigour, but it

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1 Ibid., p. 643.
2 Ibid., pp. 674, 675.
3 Ibid., p. 673.
4 Ibid., p. 642.

could be restored "in union, by means of national solidarity that corresponds to patriotic solidarity".[1]

To abandon religious solidarity and to establish Syrian society on a new basis of national and patriotic solidarity, was Bustani's message for the Syrians. It was in his view the only guarantee for progress and the only hope for the future of Syria. But would the ruling (the Ottoman) State agree to that?

He was rather optimistic. He was aware that the aim of the Tanzimat statesmen was to create an Ottoman nationality, thus he had reason to believe that the sovereign state would not dispute what he was calling for, because it had foreseen that "this [course] was inevitable, and history leads it to this recognition, so it would join us and would associate us with itself in one solidarity, like the association of the various European nations when settled in America".[2] Certainly it was inevitable and the Turks themselves at the time he was writing, were becoming more conscious of their past history and culture,[3] just as were the Syrians. This Bustani thought would not contradict the ideal of Ottomanism which the Porte was trying to implement,

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1 Ibid., p. 675: " بالاتحاد بواسطة العصبة الجنسية الوافقة للعصبة الوطنية "

2 Ibid., p. 676: " ولذلك تنضم الينا وتضمنا اليها عصبة واحدة "

3 See E. Kuran "Ottoman Historiography in the Tanzimat Period" in Lewis and Holt (eds.) Historians of the Middle East (London, 1962), pp.427-428; see also Davison, p. 177f.

hence his illustration using the American example.

The Americans were a nation (umma). The fact that they shared common interests and one country led them to accept "by their free will" one nationality (jinsiyya) irrespective of their previous nationalities.[1] The American nation was progressing well because America was "one fatherland (waṭan) composed of many fatherlands".[2] All the states (wilaya) together form one common father-land for the whole people of the republic. But each state had its own laws because the interests of each differed from the other. These were private laws; there were however general laws that defined the relations between those states and there was a central government that looked after the interest of the common fatherland.[3]

Obviously, the example of the United States did not correspond exactly to the state or the structure of the Ottoman Empire, but it was near to it. This idea casts a light on Bustani's thinking and leads us to believe that at that stage he might have had in mind a federal system for the empire based on union among autonomous units. This opinion and his attack on religious solidarity probably explains why Mahmud Nedim Pasha frowned at al-Jinan when he rose to the Grand Vezirate a

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1 Ibid., p. 646.
2 Ibid., p. 644:
3 Ibid., p. 644.

year later. However, Bustani was not alone in his notions of a federal system, for two years later we find Halil Şerif, at times Ambassador to Vienna and a Foreign Minister, of similar opinion.[1] Midhat Pasha too might have had a similar idea in the early eighteen seventies.[2]

(b) The ruler and the ruled

Another theme which Bustani commented upon widely in his editorials was the rights of the subject. Under the title of al-Ḥuquq (the rights) he wrote that "nowadays each individual has rights" and the duty of the state was to protect those rights and should never try to deprive the nation (umma) of them, because people have now awakened and are conscious of their rights. He warned the government that what moved the French people to revolt was their belief that their rights had been violated. "This revolution" Bustani concluded, "was the beginning of the age of rights," it aroused the nations of Europe to demand their rights and protect them. "This spirit has penetrated the east and we have felt that".[3]

The people, he was saying, would not allow despotic and arbitrary rule. "Who is afraid now to challenge the highest functionary and to tell him that he

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1 Davison, pp. 290-291.

2 Ibid.

3 Al-Jinan, II, 573-574 (1871); cf. L. Zolondek, "Socio-Political Views of Salim al-Bustani (1848-1884)," in Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 2, No. 2 (January, 1966), p. 150.

had no right to oppress him. Many people prefer to talk... in defence of their rights even if they were put in prison, than accept oppression silently".[1] A year later he for some reason changed this attitude completely and advocated quietism and silent forebearance of injustice in the hope of better times.[2]

Basically however, Bustani was against despotism. "Despotic governmentwhich cares first of all to consolidate its rule irrespective of the interest of the nation (umma) leads the people (sha'b) to weakness and failure."[3] It was the nation who established the state (dawla) in order to have its interests well served. Thus proper politics (siyasa ṣaḥiḥa) were those that combine the interests of the nation with those of the state.[4]

Sovereignty lies in the people, "It is the nation that defines the prerogatives of the state".[5] But in spite of that, it should not be understood that Bustani was in favour at that stage of a democratic regime or a constitutional government. Rather, more in the tradition of the east, he wanted a government for the people but not of the people. He did not think that at his time the Ottomans were adequately prepared for such

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1 Al-Jinan, IV, 362 (1873).
2 Ibid., V, 111 (1874).
3 Ibid., II, 141.
4 Ibid., II, 789.
5 Ibid., III, 758; cf. Zolondek, p. 147.

a system. 'We aspire that we shall have the qualification to exercise constitutional government (hukuma muqayyada)," but, he added, the Ottomans were still not sufficiently united or sufficiently enlightened for such a task.[1] He remained with this conviction till the end, and more so under Sultan Abdulhamid who put forward a similar argument against the constitutionalists. True to his conviction, Bustani was non-commital towards the constitution and the parliament of 1876-78.[2] Again when in 1881 'Urabi and his associates in Egypt demanded that the Khedive should establish a parliament, Bustani wrote that "the country should [first] be prepared for that.... It was preferable to enact laws for the spread of education and the reform of the judicial system, than to establish a council of representatives".[3] Only when the people (ahāli) have reached an adequate degree of knowledge, he wrote just weeks before his death, would they be able to participate in running their affairs by the medium of an elected chamber. "If they were not prepared for that, the harm is greater than the benefit."[4]

However, for the time being a way should be found to prevent the violation of the rights of the people ('ibād),[5] and this could best be achieved through

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1 Al-Jinan, II, 142; VI, 195.
2 Ibid., VII, 434.
3 Ibid., XII, 578 (1881).
4 Ibid., XIV, 130-131, 193-194 (1883).
5 Ibid., II, 574.

a just and fair administration, and by appointing in government posts educated and qualified people of good reputation and not people of powerful families--only because they were so.[1] In addition he consistently attacked corruption and corrupt officials.[2]

In any case, Bustani believed that a constitutional regime was inevitable and should be the aim of the Ottomans, because man's actions and the politics of his society would inevitably conform to the spirit of the age.[3] In the West, republicanism and constitutional monarchy were the prevailing systems. Both forms of government conform to the spirit of the century. Bustani, however, was in favour of constitutional monarchy but it should be instituted gradually.[4] Indeed it would depend on the growth and spread of knowledge among the people, the more they achieve that, the more they would be liable to it.

(c) The Ottomanism of Bustani

If Bustani in the first year of al-Jinan showed some signs of a tendency for the establishment of a federated state, he never returned to this argument again. On further thought he advocated the continuation

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1 Ibid., I, 614.
2 Ibid., II, 180, V, 35.
3 Ibid., I, 388; cf. Zolondek, p. 149.
4 Al-Jinan, XI, 321; XIV, 130-131; see also Zolondek, p. 150.

of the existing system, though it is not clear what he exactly meant by that. He believed that the interests of the Ottoman peoples and the interests of the state were identical in the question of preserving the unity of the empire. The politics of the Ottomans should be based on "power through union". All what might weaken this union would undermine the power of the state.[1]

The people of the east belong to many racial groups (ajnas), but each one of them is small in number, therefore "they should be united in one policy"[2] in order to occupy a respected position in the family of mankind. "If the Armenians, the Greeks, the Syriacs etc. were to become separated from the Ottoman Empire, they would be states without a centre [of established rights] and they would be unable to achieve any political gain or to stand firm in the face of danger".[3] Recently, Bustani added, an event had occurred which proved that. A difficulty arose between Tunis and a certain foreign state. Tunis prudently leaned upon the Porte and was thus protected from the intentions of that state. Istanbul, as a centre of a big country of acknowledged and respected rights was much less vulnerable than a small state. Bustani asserted that this was a sufficient

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1 Al-Jinan, V, 110 (1874).
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.

proof of the advantage for the Ottomans in their union with Istanbul in political matters irrespective of their nationalities (jinsiyyāt).[1] "The present situation" he assured his readers "is the most suitable for the people of the east. It has strong guarantees and a proper centre".[2] He solemnly concluded:

> "Therefore, it is the duty of each easterner to say that I like to preserve the present [political] situation and avoid all causes of split (inshiqāq) in order to remain [a member] of a great nation called the Ottoman nation (umma), which even though composed of many racial groups (ajnās) but it is one in [common] interests."[3]

However, Bustani was aware that what might undermine the union of the Ottoman peoples was the oppression of the ruler or his functionaries. But he believed that it was better to suffer oppression and remain in union within the framework of the empire than otherwise. "We do not hear" he added "that wise men who know the real state of affairs, prefer another state to their Ottoman state even though they suffer injustice at the hands of a governor or a [local] council."[4]

Bustani did not lose hope for better things to come and he tried to calm his readers many of whom, as we have seen had become by the time of his writing (1874) largely disenchanted by Ottoman rule and had lost hope

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1 Ibid., p. 111.
2 Ibid.,p111, cf. IV, 794-795.
3 Ibid., V, 111.
4 Ibid.

in the reforms. He told them that he was quite content with gradual improvement and he would never lose patience in waiting for necessary reform because "the reform of nations could not be achieved in one stroke".[1]

In all his writings Bustani inspired a belief in the good intentions of the ruler and called for quietism. The question is what moved him to recommend such an attitude?

As we shall see below[2] there existed among the Syrians a tendency to move away from the government of Istanbul. He possibly feared that such a move would weaken both the central government and the Syrians. The latter would loose the protection that the former offered and would be exposed on a much wider scale to foreign intervention and domination. Whatever the misdeeds of the Ottomans, it was better in his eyes to be ruled by them with expectations of reform than otherwise. Such a domination would certainly perpetuate the cleavage between Muslims and Christians in Syria and the Muslim majority would become

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1 Ibid.

2 See chapters IX-XI.

more dissatisfied, and would feel more antagonistic towards the Christian communities.

Bustani referred to the subject again a year later (1875) conducting it seems an argument with some people. "Power is in union" he retorted, "in split and separation nations are trampled by the greedy, their rights are lost by the aggression of the powerful, and their people are humiliated by the behaviour of the foreigner".[1] He again raised the same issue at the rise of Sultan Abdulhamid. The European powers, with a passion for expansion and greed for wealth, would not spare any country divided upon itself from occupation and humiliation and from economic explotation.[2]

Obviously, Bustani was against the European interference in Egypt (in 1879). What was happening he wrote "was the removal of a despotic but national government, by a despotic government of the foreign element."[3] He foresaw that this would end with the physical occupation of the country by one of the European states.[4] He attacked vehemently the joint British-French naval demonstration in Alexandria: "...the country is not theirs...only the possessor of the Supreme Caliphate (al-khilafa al-kubra) has the right of interference in it at times of

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1 Ibid., VI, 577 (1875).
2 Ibid., VII, 650 (1876).
3 Ibid., X, 257 (1879).
4 Ibid., p. 258.

trouble such as the present one"[1]. By Summer 1882 his support of the Khedive was unequivocal and he attacked 'Urabi on the bases that he was revolting against legitimate authority and because, Bustani felt, his actions would be taken as a pretext for foreign intervention.[2]

To conclude, Bustani strongly supported Ottoman legitimacy as the least evil for the people of the east. But he repeatedly demanded reform and just and better qualified state functionaries. The state should look after the interest of its subjects, if it did not it would inevitably fall, he wrote on the occasion of the fall of Sultan Abdulaziz.[3]

The reforms should be based on secular basis, "religion and state should be completely separated"[4] because "in this century any nation which tries to uphold religious solidarity would inevitably fall,"[5] and he praised Reshid, 'Āli and Fuad for their reforms.[6]

However, when he felt that those exhortations were not heeded and that on the contrary, it appeared to him that government circles were trying in the summer of

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1 Ibid., XIII, 386, 481.
2 Ibid., XIII, 193-4, 257-8, 321, 323, 514, 545.
3 Ibid., VII, 594.
4 Ibid., IV, 506.
5 Ibid., I, 656.
6 Ibid., IV, 362.

1878 to encourage sectarian cleavage in Syria, he again touched on the subject of religion and state. "Our times," he wrote "are those of equality...of observance of rights and privileges of the whole population (al-umūm)...and of repudiation of fanaticism."[1] He appealed to "all those who love their government and desire the preservation of the sultanate,...always to think of strengthening the means of concord and unity and avoid any fanatical act..."[2] He then appealed to the people of Syria saying that "fanaticism is the cause of our weakness...it left behind a great split among us..." which gave oppressive and corrupt officials an opportunity to use it for their own benefit.[3] Indeed, he saw the salvation of Syria through the promotion of internal unity, in secular reforms, in the spread of education through non-sectarian schools, and in fostering patriotic feeling. If in 1870 he leaned towards some sort of autonomy, he seems to have changed his mind afterwards because he saw in the continuation of Ottoman rule--provided that reform continued--the best guarantee for the future of Syria, for he was afraid that if the system changed, then Syria would fall under foreign domination, a thing which he liked least.

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1 Al-Jinan, IX, 703.
2 Ibid., IX, 673, the emphasis is mine.
3 Ibid.

In spite of Bustani's exhortations, it was autonomy that some Syrian patriots asked for in 1880, and at the beginning of this century. With the rise of Syrian patriotism which Bustani himself was the first to call for, this step was probably inevitable. Nevertheless, it would not be an exaggeration to assert that Bustani's ideas greatly influenced the rising generation in Syria and beyond, and that he should be regarded as the father of modern Syrian nationalism.

CHAPTER VIII

ISLAM AND TRADITIONALISM: THE ANTI-TANZIMAT CONCEPTS OF MAHMUD NEDIM

The principle of Ottomanism in which Āli believed and to which he devoted much attention, especially in his last years, and which as we have seen in Bustani's thoughts, was met with favour by the non-Muslim population, was apparently reversed by his successor Mahmud Nedim. Where Āli saw that the empire might be preserved by a trained and powerful bureaucracy and by granting equal rights to all subjects irrespective of creed, Nedim, in the contrary, saw its preservation in a restoration of Muslim supremacy, represented and safeguarded not by the supremacy of the shari-'a itself, as in the first period of reform, nor by disregard for it as during Āli's rule, but by an all-powerful sultan who respected it after the fashion of the sultans of the Ottoman golden days.

Mahmud Nedim was the son of Nejib Pasha, an Ottoman high functionary of Georgian origin. Like Āli, he started his career in the Grand Vezirate secretariat and was a disciple of Mustafa Reshid.[1] But unlike him, he spent more time as a provincial governor than at

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[1] Cevdet, Tezakir (1-12), p. 16; see also Karal, Osmanli Tarihi, VII, 69.

Istanbul. He never left the empire, nor did he know any European language. His second language after Ottoman Turkish was Arabic. His experience of provincial government when he became Grand Vezir in 1871, consisted mainly of about three years in Syria (Beirut and then Damascus, 1885-7), six months in Izmir (1857-8), and seven successive years in Tripoli in North Africa (1860-7).[1]

Mahmud Nedim returned to Istanbul from Tripoli at the time when a conspiracy of the Patriotic Alliance led by a nephew of his was uncovered. The aim of the conspiracy was to remove Āli and other leading ministers by violent means and bring Mahmud Nedim to the Grand Vezirate.[2] Falling into disfavour he soon succeeded in restoring the good will of Āli and a little later the confidence of the Sultan, and his influence in the palace grew simultaneously.

Enjoying the favour of the Palace, it was not surprising to see Nedim stepping into the shoes of Āli after the latter's death early in September 1871. There is certain evidence that Āli was aware of what would happen.[3] At the time, the British Ambassador remarked that Nedim "had been so long upon intimate terms with Āli and knew well his opinions upon most public matters."[4]

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1 Inal, Son Sadrıazamlar, I, 265-67.
2 Ibid., p. 269; Şeref, Tarih Musahabeleri, p. 173.
3 Inal, p. 274.
4 Elliot-Granville, F.O. 78/2177, desp. 329, Istanbul, 11 September, 1871.

He was soon to be disappointed.

It was not the opinions of Āli that guided Nedim in political matters, but his own political principles and understanding of Ottoman history. In an essay entitled "Ayine-i Devlet"[1] (The Mirror of the State) written in 1278/1861-2, ten years before he became Grand Vezir, Mahmud Nedim revealed his thoughts about the system best suited in his view to the state and about the Tanzimat. This essay sheds a light not only on his actions as Grand Vezir, but also on the tendency of Sultan Abdulaziz for absolute power, and on some aspects of the Hamidian rule.

The ideal government in the opinion of Nedim was the old Ottoman system before the decline started. That system, he thought, brought about the progress and prosperity which the state enjoyed in those days.[2] "The Sultans of those days enjoyed absolute power (müstakil) and their government was carried out according to their will." They were determined and they gave full attention and care to the affairs of the state. Consequently their ministers and aides did not overstep the limits of justice and moderation.[3] The laws and regulations were kept within the framework of the divine law (şeri'at). Eventually, there existed a religious and communal (milli) zeal, and

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1 Printed in Istanbul at the Karapet press in A.H. 1327 (1909-10), 61pp.

2 Ibid., pp. 7-8.

3 Ibid., p. 8.

a union of hearts bound together the state and the Muslim community (millet). But when those Sultans ceased to give personal attention to the affairs of the state and the control of those affairs passed into the hands of officials who kept the Sultans uninformed about the state, or about the people, or the lands, the result was that the state fell into disorder and confusion.[1]

In other words, the weakening of the Sultan's power, and the rise of the power of the bureaucrats and ulema was in the opinion of Mahmud Nedim the cause of the weakness and decline of the Ottoman state and of the Muslim community.[2] Once those groups secured the upper hand, abuses crept into the administration and a general decline in morals followed. Consequently, there occurred a breach in the union of hearts and the zeal of the community cooled.[3]

The Tanzimat made things worse. Mahmud Nedim had some praise for certain aspects of Sultan Mahmud II's policies, but for the Tanzimat he had only severe criticism. There was a mania (heves) to apply European practices in the Ottoman state, he wrote. The fundamentals of six hundred years were being destroyed and new ones had not yet been found.[4] The rules of the shari'a were not

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1 Ibid., pp. 9-10.
2 Ibid., p. 11.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid., p. 15.

observed, and were regarded as a hindrance for the performance of state affairs.[1]

Mahmud Nedim did not spare the bureaucratic class from his criticism. It had grown in numbers and in power. While in the past there was one secretariat of the Porte, now each Ministry had its own secretariat and the cost of maintaining such an inflated bureaucracy was enormous.[2] Moreover, this new class was incompetent, corrupt, and extravagant. As a result the finances of the state had suffered greatly.[3] Offices should be given to capable persons whose loyalty (sadakat) to the state, justice (adalet), and public zeal (gayret), were beyond doubt.[4]

Another aspect of the Tanzimat period which Nedim bitterly criticized was that it opened the way for foreign interference, in consequence of which "the Sultanate lost its independence."[5]

Mahmud Nedim obviously had much apprehension about the fate of the empire if the Tanzimat were to continue in the way they were going.[6] On the other hand,

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1 Ibid.
2 Ibid., p. 27.
3 Ibid., pp. 27-31.
4 Ibid., pp. 35ff.
5 Ibid., p. 12.
6 On the views of Mahmud Nedim when Governor of Damascus in 1856 about the politics of the Porte and the influence exerted upon ministers by representatives of the powers see a summary of a conversation between him and Moore, the British Consul General at Beirut in F.O. 78/1219, desp. 31 (pol./conf.) of 7 July 1856.

he felt that the Ottoman state had a mission towards Islam and the Muslim Umma. The Ottoman state, he wrote, had in the past united Muslim society after it had been divided, and preserved and protected it. What was good in the past was still good today. The well being of the Muslim community depends on the well being of the state, but the well being of the state depended on the existence of an all powerful Sultan.[1]

It is an obligation upon the Muslim he concluded, to obey the ruler and to have religious and communual zeal, and to love the country (Vatan), because the Ottoman Padishahs who fill the seat of the Grand Caliphate (Hilafet-i Kubra) are the protectors of the faith, community, and state. Submission to their orders is the first requirement for the survival of the power of the state and of the Islamic community.[2]

That the Sultan himself should have full control over the affairs of the state, that the bureaucracy should be weakened and put under his control, that justice and equity should underline the acts of government, that the union of hearts that bound the Sultan and his people should be restored, that foreign interference should be stopped, and other recommendations, are implied from Mahmud Nedim's essay, and when he became Grand Vezir in

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1 Ibid., pp. 60-61.

2 Ibid., p. 53.

1871 he tried to put them into practice. All these aspects are of interest to us, but the Sultan's prerogatives and the restoration of the link between him and his people are of particular concern since they were at the core of Nedim's policy and meant, in practice, a reversal of the policies of the Tanzimat towards society and state.

Sultan Abdulaziz might have had the will to rule autocratically, but it was Nedim's political principle that power and authority should stay in the palace, which encouraged him on that course. The first step was to hammer at the bureaucracy entrenched in the Porte which gathered much power during three decades of reform, at the expense of the Palace. Thus a number of leading politicians were exiled. At the top of the list stood Husein Avni a former War Minister, and Shirvani-zade Mehmed Rushdi a former Justice Minister.[1] The first, a military man, who was the link between the army and the Porte, emerged a little later as the strong man after Āli. Modern Turkish historians regard the exile of these two statesmen as the first act in the drama which led to the deposition of the Sultan.[2]

On the provincial level Nedim worked for the weakening of the powers of the Vali and strengthening the

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[1] Davison, p. 281; I.H. Uzunçarşili, Midhat Paşa ve Yildız Mahkemesi (Ankara, 1967), p. 19.

[2] Ibid., p. 20.

control of Istanbul over him. According to the provincial law in its 1867 version,[1] governors of provinces enjoyed wide powers which represented considerable centralization in the Vilayet but viewed from Istanbul, the law represented a decentralization of authority.[2] The semi-official La Turquie criticized the law harshly as facilitating the setting up of "little absolute states" in which the Vali acted like a quasi-independent vassal prince.[3]

The top-ranking bureaucratswere stronger than Nedim imagined and at the end, they used the occasion of financial failure and of troubles in the Balkans to oust Nedim from his second term of Grand Vezir and to depose the Sultan himself. It was left to Sultan Abdulhamid to put the bureaucracy under the control of the Palace but not without harsh measures.

In spite of his being a Minister and possibly close to Ali in the last three years of his life, Mahmud Nedim belonged ideologically to the opposition forces to Āli and Fuad. The wish of his nephew, who it seems led the Patriotic Alliance,[4] to have him appointed Grand Vezir in 1867 was thus not without foundation. But even though

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1 Text in Dustur I (Istanbul, 1289), pp. 608-624, see above p.71.

2 Davison, p. 147.

3 Ibid., p. 168.

4 Mardin, p. 23; Şeref, p. 173.

M. Nedim shared with the Young Ottomans some of their ideas, there was still a gap that separated them from him. Essentially, while they wanted to restore the supremacy of the shari'a in the state, he, as we have seen, wanted to restore the absolute powers of the Sultan as he thought them to have been in the early Ottoman period. To achieve that, Mahmud Nedim had first of all to strengthen the Sultan and weaken the bureaucracy, because as we have seen the reforms strengthened the hands of the bureaucracy and diminished the influence of the Sultan in state affairs. Secondly, he sought to enforce the loyalty of the Muslims to the Sultan-Caliph or in his words to restore "the union of hearts between the state and the [Muslim] community (devlet ve Millet)".

The loyalty to the Sultan as defender of the faith and protector of the Muslim lands which was enforced during the first half of the century by the revival of the Caliphate suffered a set back following the reforms in the second period of the Tanzimat. Those reforms as we have seen aroused active opposition in which the person of the Sultan was denounced and he lost the affection if not the loyalty of many of his Muslim subjects.[1] Moreover, Mahmud Nedim probably felt that the policy of Ottomanism on the one hand and the close relation of Āli and Fuad with the

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[1] See above pp.122ff.

Western powers, the allies in the Crimean war, on the other, were irreconcilable either with the idea or with the state of a Muslim Caliphate and were bound to affect Muslim loyalty to the Sultan. Thus to strengthen the position of the Sultan and to restore the confidence of the Muslim believers in him, he tried to make use of popular Islamic sentiment which, by the time he became Grand Vezir in 1871, was becoming a dynamic force in Ottoman society.

A sign of this policy of Nedim's was the impressive celebration that took place in May 1872 on the occasion of the finding of the second shoe of the Prophet, and bringing it to Istanbul.

This shoe we are told was found in Diyarbekir with one of the Sherifs living there. The government sent a special naval steam vessel which carried it and its possessor to Istanbul. On the day of its arrival, the Grand Vezir and Namık Pasha, the president of the Council of State, a number of Ministers, and many ulema in green mantles received it at the landing place of Sirkiji in Istanbul and put it on a special carriage drawn by four horses; on both sides of the carriage walked about fifty persons carrying torches and about fifty special guards and the Mayor. Behind the carriage rode the possessor of the shoe on a horse and behind him the Ministers and ulema, all mounted. The procession went up the hill to Top Kapı

Saray and on the way the attendants on both sides of the carriage declaimed "Allāh-u Akbar, la ilāha illa-llah". On arrival at the Palace grounds, the Grand Vezir solemnly carried the shoe to the hall in which the relics of the Prophet were kept and put it near the other shoe. Then the Ministers and ulema entered the room for blessing. The Sultan was to visit the place after Friday's prayers. Afterwards it was to be opened to the public for three days.[1]

Obviously, the object of Mahmud Nedim was to play upon the sentiments of the Muslim public and such an act undoubtedly impressed the deeply religious feelings of the Muslim public of Istanbul. He was not alone in this approach. A group of Ministers who were known to have been of a conservative outlook[2] sat with him in the Government. One of these was Namık Pasha, appointed when Nedim became Grand Vezir, to the presidency of the Council of State.[3] Late in his long career, Namık Pasha fell under the influence of a mystic group of the Halveti sub-order of Ibrahimiya[4] and consequently his beliefs and acts took an ultra-religious turn. In his office at the Council of State he assigned a room and ordered his subordinates to

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1 Al-Jawaib, May 15, 1872.

2 For a list see Salname of the year 1288.

3 S.O., IV, 539f.; Gövsa, p. 274.

4 After the name of its founder, Ibrahim Kuşadali. See Sadik Vicdani, Tumāı -ı Turuk-ı 'Āliye 4 vols. (Istanbul, A.H. 1338-1342) III, 77ff.

interrupt their work at prayer time and assemble in that room for prayer led by himself as Imam[1] an event which seems to be unusual on a group level in the reformed offices of the Porte. Another Minister was Yusuf Kiamil Pasha, Minister of Justice, a son-in-law of Muhammad 'Ali of Egypt who reached Istanbul in 1850 and who tended to side with the Palace against Āli and Fuad. Kiamil was known to have been a protector of Shinasi, Namık Kemal and Ziya who became later prominent members of the Young Ottoman movement.[2] Other members were Ibrahim Edhem Pasha,[3] and Ahmed Vefik[4] who both became Grand Vezirs under Abdulhamid II. There was also Abdullah Galib Pasha[5] also a minister under Abdulhamid.

On his appointment as Grand Vezir, Mahmud Nedim brought to the post of Şeyh-ül-Islam his friend Ahmad Muhtar Mulla Bey who was known for his strong sufi tendencies.[6] He and Nedim were possibly of Bektashi leanings.[7] At all events Nedim, it seems, enjoyed the

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1 Mardin, pp. 58-59. We hear also of an exactly similar act by 'Ali Pasha the Governor of Aleppo in 1873. See Skene-Granville, desp. dated (Aleppo) 30 September, 1873, in Acc. and Pap. 1877/XCII, pp. 732-733.

2 Inal, I, 236; Mardin, p. 13, n. 5; on his relation with Āli and Fuad see Ali Fuad, pp. 162f., Inal, I, 23. See above pp. 102ff.

3 Gövsa, p. 125; Inal, pp. 600-635.

4 Ibid., pp. 651-738.

5 Gövsa, p. 148; Pakalin, pp. 224-235.

6 Şeref, p. 307; Brusali, II, 40.

7 A. Sa'ib, Vak'a-i Sultan Abdulaziz, 2nd ed. (Cairo, A.H. 1326), p. 76; Inal, I. 284 quoting Atif Bey, a chief of the Sultan's secretariat.

company of sufis and when governor of Adana (October 1873--April 1875) it was reported that some sufi shaikhs kept his company.[1] Having such tendencies, Nedim probably recognized the degree of influence that sufi shaikhs had had on the general public. It was during his first Grand Vezirate (1871-2) that two Arab shaikhs, Muhammad Zafir al-Madani of the province of Tripoli in North Africa, and Abulhuda al-Sayyadi of the province of Aleppo, first reached Istanbul.[2] The arrival of these two shaikhs in Istanbul at that particular time was probably not an accident, especially when we know that they were both to play an important role under Abdulhamid.

Thus we might possibly attribute to Mahmud Nedim the idea of using sufi shaikhs as instruments of propaganda and mobilizers of public opinion among the lower classes which was used with a considerable degree of success by Sultan Abdulhamid II.

Mahmud Nedim remained in the Grand Vezirate only for eleven months, during which time he had laid the foundations for a number of policies, namely absolute power for the Sultan and his personal attendance to the daily affairs of the state, and the attempt to recreate a harmony between the prevailing ideas among Muslim public opinion in the empire and the political system. He

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1 Al-Jawaib, 4 October, 1876.

2 Both of them were later to become very close to Sultan Abdulhamid for many years.

probably thought that by doing so the position of the Sultan would be strengthened and his prestige as Caliph enhanced. But Sultan Abdulaziz lacked sufficient ability to make better use of this policy and the trend that Nedim it seems represented was not strong enough as yet to face its opponents in Istanbul. It was left to Abdulhamid II to build on these foundations. No wonder then that once Sultan Abdulhamid secured his position, he recalled Nedim from exile. He sent a steamer and a special emissary to carry him back to Istanbul and appointed him Minister of the Interior in 1879.[1]

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[1] Inal, I, 306; Ali Haidar Midhat Tabsıra-i ibret (Istanbul A.H. 1325), I, 216; al-Jawaib, 18 June, 1879; The Times, 9 July, 1879, p. 5a and 10 September, 1879, p. 10a; see also Layard-Salisbury, F.O. 424/98, desp. 461 (Secret), Istanbul 27 April, 1880. On public satisfaction of this appointment see B.A., Yıl. Ev. 15/1150, no date.

CHAPTER IX

REASSERTION OF MUSLIM ASCENDANCY IN SYRIA AND CHRISTIAN REACTION

As we have seen above, partly because of the growing interest of France in Syria especially under Napoleon III, the Forte took care, after 1860, to treat the Christians well, even if it was sometimes at the expense of the Muslims. But the death of Āli in September 1871 opened the way for a change in this policy towards the Christians of Syria. In Damascus this was explained by the fact that by his death "a drag on the Sultan's ardent religious sentiments had been removed."[1] On the other hand the fall of Napoleon and the temporary weakening of the international position of France in 1870-1 deprived the Christians of a strong protector at Istanbul. The Muslims were not unaware of the implication upon their country of the events of 1870 in Europe. "In Syria the disasters of France have been diligently held up as a providential interference on behalf of Mohammedanism "[2] wrote the British vice-Consul in Damascus.

However, this change was not simply due to the

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1 K. Green-Granville, F.O. 195/1027, a confidential desp. dated Damascus, 17 September, 1873.

2 Ibid.

assertion of the Sultan's sentiments but to a calculated policy on the part of Mahmud Nedim, the new Grand Vezir. Soon after his rise Rāshid Pasha was dismissed. He was instructed to give up his duties within twenty-four hours and take the first steamer to Istanbul where he stayed, disgraced and unemployed, until the fall of Nedim.[1] The new governor was Abdullatif Subhi Pasha (1818-1886).

Like Rāshid, Subhi reached Istanbul through Egypt.[2] But while Rāshid's father went to serve Muhammed 'Ali, Subhi went there in his childhood, his father reaching Egypt with his family as refugees from Tripoliça in the Morea in 1239/1823-4[3] an event which perhaps never left Subhi's mind. Again, Rāshid studied in France for five years while Subhi never left the empire, though in his own way he was well educated, as his writings show.[4] However, if Rāshid was thought to have been a protegé of Āli, Subhi, whose mansion in Istanbul was a meeting place for a number of the Young Ottomans, and of the Patriotic Alliance might have had some sympathy with their criticism of Āli and Fuad's policies.[5] No wonder then that Nedim

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1 Al-Jawaib, October 11 and December 12, 1871; see also Isabel Burton, The Life of Captain Sir Richard F. Burton (London, 1898), p. 355; Faris, Kanz al-Ragha'ib, 7 vols. (Istanbul, A.H. 1288-98), II, 333.

2 On Subhi Pasha see S.O., III, 320-321; Gövsa, p. 358, Evkaf-i Humayun Nazaretinin Tarihçe-i teşkilatı, pp. 104-110.

3 Ibid., p. 104.

4 Brusalı, III, 81.

5 Mardin, pp. 192-193.

chose him to be the instrument of his policy in Syria. This appointment was Subhi's first and only provincial governorship.

In contradistinction to his policy towards other provincial governors, Nedim granted Subhi, about two months after he reached Damascus, unlimited authority in the government of Syria, similar to that wielded by his predecessor.[1]

Under Subhi the previous policy was almost immediately reversed and this was nowhere more clear than in the public service where many Christian officials were dismissed. It is true however, that there was a general economy drive by the new Grand Vezir and that the office of governor (mütesarrif) of the capital cities of Vilayets was abolished, both of which resulted in the dismissal of many functionaries all over the empire. But this was not all that happened in Syria. According to all accounts there was discrimination against the Christians, a tendency to dismiss Christian functionaries and replace them by Muslims.[2] "The times are those of raising one group (qawm) by lowering another" wrote Bustani and warned Subhi "who has no experience in provincial politics" that he was denying himself the services of old and experienced

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1 Al-Jawaib, 3 January, 1872.

2 Eldridge-Granville, desp. dated [Beirut] 2 October, 1873 in Acc. and Pap. 1877/XCII, p. 735; see also K. Green-Granville, above, p.232, n.1.

functionaries before he had trained others capable of filling their place properly.[1]

But Subhi would not listen to Bustani's exhortation. He was commissioned to weaken the influence of the Christians and to gain the sympathy of the Muslims, and he was determined to fulfil this mission. We are told that he fulfilled his religious duties in a strict manner, and that he treated the ulema with distinction and consideration, that at the same time he showed indifference to the ecclesiastical dignitaries. Moreover, he demonstrated a certain spirit of antagonism towards the consular body and a desire to root out the system of foreign protection to natives.[2]

Observers in other towns of the province reported similar occurrences.[3] Such a policy naturally satisfied the Muslims; "votre temps est passé," Muslims were reported to have told Christians in Lataqia.[4]

Subhi remained in Syria until the end of 1872. His recall was due not to a change in the new policy, but probably to the occupation of al-Jawf, a territory of Ibn Rashīd of Ha'il at the southern end of the Syrian desert

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1 Al-Jinan, II, 791 (December, 1871).

2 Jago, Report, pp. 10-11.

3 Vitali-Eldridge, desp. dated (Lataqia) 2 December, 1872, Acc. and Pap. 1877/XCII, pp. 699-700.

4 Ibid.

by Syrian irregulars.[1] The Christians expressed "considerable contentment"[2] upon his recall, but their content was to be short-lived.

Subhi's successor, Halet Pasha, followed the same policy, a sign that the policy of Mahmud Nedim had not been abandoned by his fall. Indeed, the whole political and cultural atmospheres in Istanbul were distinguished after the last days of Āli by a rise in Islamic sentiment. Politicians, writers, and journalists showed tendencies towards a policy more orientated towards Islamic values than had been the case in the last two decades. The British Ambassador did not fail to notice that even the central government was being affected by these tendencies.[3] This undoubtedly found its reflection in the provincial

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1 Al-Jawf and two other neighbouring oases originally belonged to the Rwala tribe of the Syrian desert. About the mid-eighteen fifties they were conquered by the Emir Ibn Rashid. In summer 1872, a small force of horsemen under Muhammad Said Shamdin, the Mütesarrif of Ma'an, accompanied by the Rwala occupied the place. (B.A. Dahiliye Iradeleri No. 45202; see also Doughty Travels in Arabia Deserta, 2 vols. (London, 1923), II, 34-35; and Anne Blunt, A Pilgrimage to Nejd, 2 vols. (London, 1881), I, 118). The question it seems led to a certain pressure on the Porte by the British Embassy in Istanbul. Consequently Subhi was recalled and the oases were returned to Ibn Rashid. (See Evkaf-i Humayun Nazaretinin tarihçe-i teşkilati, pp. 108-109; Green-Elliot, F.O. 195/994, desp. 34, Damascus, 11 October, 1872. See also the remarks of Pisani, the chief dragoman of the Embassy on the back of this despatch).

2 K. Green-Granville, see above p.232, n.1.

3 Elliot-Derby, Acc. and Pap. 1877/XCII, desp. dated Therapia, 20 October, 1874, p. 757.

government, but in the case of Syria it was, in addition, a deliberate policy. The Christians were favoured in the previous decade; the Muslims, except a few favoured families, were resentful. With the particular and extremely important position of Syria for the Porte, it was necessary to restore their confidence in the Ottoman Government and to gain their support for the Ottoman Caliphate. Thus there is no doubt that the policy in Syria in the early eighteen seventies should be attributed to directions from headquarters.[1]

Mehmet Halet Pasha[2] reached Damascus early in 1873. He was probably closer to the view of Mahmud Nedim than his predecessor and like him he enjoyed the company of Sufis and showed them "veneration".[3] He grew up at the offices of the Porte or in provincial service and received no other than the customary education of an Ottoman bureaucrat of the more conservative type. After his service in Syria he became the superintendent (kethuda) of the household of the Sultan's mother, which suggests that he was close to the Saray.[4]

Under Halet Pasha "an excessive show of religious

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1 Jago, Report, p. 14; K. Green-Derby, F.O. 195/1047, desp. 17 (Political), Damascus, 19 September, 1874.

2 On him see S.O., II, 103. I was not able to find any other biography of him.

3 K. Green-Elliot, F.O. 195/1027, desp. 31, Damascus, 12 July, 1873.

4 S.O., loc. cit.

fervour" was adopted by the authorities,[1] which was reflected by the rising spirit of intolerence among government functionaries.[2] Christians were not only discriminated against in government employment, but there was, it seems, a tendency to place obstructions in their way (and in the way of foreigners) when seeking to acquire real estate and at the same time to accord favour and protection openly to their Muslim compatriots.[3]

Observing this policy at the centre of the province, vice-consul Green of Damascus stated that

> "It is my belief shared in . . . by most of those who are frequently brought with the local authorities of Damascus, that there is a determination on their part to make apparent to the public that foreign and native Christian influences are to give way before Mohammedanism . . ."[4]

About the same time another British observer described it as

> "a conservative . . .[policy] in its general tendencies possessing no leaning to religion other than that dictated by the necessity of appealing to and making use of the sentiment."[5]

This was the beginning of a new policy in Syria, which except for a short while in the later eighteen seventies continued to a large extent until the end of the century.

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1 K. Green-Derby, F.O. 195/1047, desp. 17 (political), Damascus, 19 September, 1874.

2 Cf. al-Jinan, IV, 614.

3 Jago, Report, pp. 16-17; cf. al-Jinan, IV, 254, 470-471, 542.

4 K. Green-Granville, F.O. 195/1027, a confidential desp. dated Damascus, 17 September, 1873.

5 Jago, Report, p. 14.

This policy of reasserting Muslim ascendancy naturally satisfied Muslim public opinion, but it led to the disruption of the work of the previous decade in the sense of integrating the non-Muslim communities into the new system of government. Christians viewed it with much apprehension. The young and educated element among them found the way into public service shut, or almost so. In their place came either Turks who on the whole did not know the language and customs of the country, or their Muslim Arab compatriots who were neither as experienced nor as competent as they were, nor always possessed of a tolerant spirit. Moreover, the merchant class, whose prosperity depended upon security, sympathetic government, and respected laws, found in the new policy no security, unfriendly government, and arbitrary rule.

We find no better reflection of the feelings of the Christians than in the comments of Bustani in al-Jinan. Corruption and fanaticism were growing he wrote, and when any of these elements is practised, laws were trodden underfoot.[1] The people, he said, started to equate their times with those of the pre-reform period when arbitrary rule such as that of Jazzar prevailed. People of those times used to say that "our government does not wish us progress but does its best to weaken us lest we become

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[1] al-Jinan, IV, 614.

powerful . . ."[1] People of our time thought the same. "Some of them even say that the intentions of the government did not change."[2] Bustani rejected this and with his unshaking support for Ottomanism attributed these "shortcomings" to functionaries and not to a general policy at the centre.[3] The Sultan and his ministers had good intentions but misrule was the act of "those who come to our country taking hold of our affairs."[4] He called for the punishment of those who transgressed the laws or tried to execute a policy incompatible with the spirit of the age,[5] (which he defined as "equality, freedom of conscience, and the supremacy of regulations and laws").[6] But even though he did not accuse other than the local authorities of promoting this policy he still hinted at the Porte saying: "It is the interests which motivate states and not religion or creed".[7]

However, looking for a remedy, public opinion (al-nās, meaning undoubtedly the Christians) according to Bustani, was divided between two groups: those who said that our affairs could not succeed "without the assistance of the state" and those who believed that

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1 Ibid., p. 469.
2 Ibid., p. 470.
3 Ibid. See also V, 37.
4 Ibid., IV, 181, see also p. 471.
5 Ibid., p. 571 and V, 74.
6 Ibid., IV, 685.
7 Ibid., p. 469.

"without unity" we could not have our way:[1] in other words between those like himself who wanted to exert pressure upon Istanbul to bring about a change in this policy in Syria, and those who wanted to organize and stand up and challenge this policy. Here probably lay in part the origin of the political agitation which we meet at the end of the eighteen seventies.

In short, the Porte's policy in Syria applied after the death of Āli, led to a change of heart among many Christians. Disillusioned, some of them turned towards a kind of political agitation even before the rise of Sultan Abdulhamid. There were several examples of this. Teachers like Elias Ḥabbalin, who was among the first Christians to be favoured with a medal from the Sultan (even before B. Bustani who was awarded the same medal two years later)[2], turned it seems after 1871 to advocate anti-Turkish ideas. He taught French between 1871-4 at the Syrian Protestant College before he emigrated to Egypt a year later, never to return. Faris Nimr, a student of his at that college recalled that "after going briefly over the French lesson in his class . . . [Habbalin] would turn to politics and talk about getting rid of the Turks with their injustices and corrupt government."[3]

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1 Ibid., p. 469.

2 See Hadiqat al-Akhbār, 2 November, 1865 and 3 February, 1868.

3 Z. Zeine, The Emergence of Arab Nationalism (Beirut, 1866), p. 60, n. 1; on Ḥabbalin see also Tarazi, I, 116.

Another example of this change of heart was Ibrahim al-Yaziji (1843-1906), a prominent man of letters in the last few decades of the century. In 1869, Ibrahim wrote in praise of Sultan Abdulaziz and of the Ottoman state.[1] In the seventies he became, we are told, a member of a nationalist secret society.[2] Probably belonging to this period are two intensely anti-Turkish poems attributed to him in which he appealed to the Arabs to awake and shake off the Turkish yoke.[3] Zaidan suggested that Yaziji "had written them at the instigation of a group or a big man."[4] He also ended by emigrating to Egypt where he died.[5]

The first organized Christian agitation to be reported was the formation in Beirut about 1875 of a secret

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[1] This is what a biographer of his, I.I. al-Ma'aluf believed, see Muqtaṭaf, XXXIII, 486-487.

[2] Zeine, p. 60, n. 1; Antonius, The Arab Awakening (London, 1938), p. 54.

[3] See Cheikho, al-Adāb al-'Arabiya fi al-Qarn al-Tasi' 'Ashar, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Beirut, 1926), II, 43.

[4] Mashāhīr al-Sharq, II, 130. Yaziji wrote another poem which he recited in a meeting of the Syrian Scientific Society in 1868. In it he recalled the past of the Arabs, their glory and their achievements (Cheikho, II, 40-41, and Antonius, p. 54). This was not a new theme in Beirut of the later eighteen fifties and the sixties when the Christians tried to find a common identity with their Muslim compatriots based on a common language and culture and history, as we have seen when talking about Bustani. Yaziji in this p >m did not attack the state nor incite Arabs against Turks as he did in his two other poems. In 1868, when the Christians were completely satisfied under the government of Rāshid Pasha he had no cause to, as Antonius (p. 54) suggested.

[5] For more on I. Yaziji see Kurd 'Ali, "Ibrahim al-Yaziji, 1848-1906" in Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmi al-'Arabi (1953), XXVII, 3-17; Tarazi, II, 88-98.

society by five young Christians who were also graduates of the Syrian Protestant College.[1] We are told that this society established branches in Saida (Sidon), Tripoli and Damascus.[2] A limited political agitation of nationalistic colouring which took place in 1880 was attributed to it as we shall see, but no more is known about it. No accounts exist of its activities, the names of its members, or its branches. "Sometime between 1882-3" it burned its records and dissolved itself.[3] Our knowledge of it comes from Antonius and Zeine who received the information verbally from Faris Nimr (1855-1951) one of the founders.[4]

Such a society might have come into existence about 1875. The editorials of Bustani in al-Jinan in 1873-4 suggest that a tendency for such grouping was growing at the time. The zeal of his exhortations from 1874 for political quietism and for preserving the union with Istanbul[5] may be a sign that such a grouping was taking shape on a wider scale than the above mentioned group.

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1 Antonius, p. 79; a list of 5 members is given in Zeine, p. 60, n. 1.

2 Antonius, p. 79.

3 Zeine, p. 62. Antonius, p. 81.

4 On Faris Nimr see Tarazi, II, 138-142; see also N. Faraj, al-Muqtataf 1876-1900 (an unpublished doctoral thesis submitted in 1969 at the University of Oxford), pp. 42-47. It is probably not out of place to ask here why some of the members such as Nimr or others who lived well into the twentieth century did not tell us the story themselves after the fall of the Ottoman Empire.

5 See above pp.211-213.

In any case, the news of the deposition of Sultan Abdulaziz was received with much satisfaction by the Christians all over Syria,[1] an event which took the wind out of the sails of the agitators. But they were soon to be disappointed and by 1878 agitation was, it seems, resumed, apparently in common with Muslims as we shall see in the following chapter.

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[1] Thamarāt al-Funun, 8 and 22 June, 1876; see also Moore-Elliot, F.O. 195/1113, desp. 5, Jerusalem, 2 June, 1876.

CHAPTER X

OTTOMAN RULE AND THE QUEST FOR AUTONOMY IN SYRIA IN THE LATE 1870'S

1. A Muslim Cultural Awakening

A look at the social life of the Muslims of Syria in the later 1870's, shows a beginning of a cultural and educational revival among them which started in Beirut but gradually spread into other towns and was encouraged, as we shall see, by Midhat Pasha during his governorship in Syria (end of 1878-1880).

In 1873 the Muslims of Beirut had decided to found a printing press and to publish a newspaper of their own.[1] In 1875 a society called "the society of Arts" (Jam'iyat al-Funūn) was founded which published a newspaper called Thamarāt al-Funūn.[2] The paper, which was the first unofficial Muslim newspaper in Syria and indeed in the eastern Arab lands, was edited by 'Abdulqadir al-Qabbāni, a graduate of Bustani's al-Madrasa al-Waṭaniya .[3] It was well edited for those times and was well received in Syria and the other Arab provinces. "In publishing this

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1 al-Jawā'ib, January 15, 1873.

2 See Thamarāt al-Funūn (hereafter Thamarāt) No. 1 April 20, 1875 and December 30, 1878; See also Tarāzi, II, 25-27, 99ff.

3 Ibid. p. 100; On Qabbāni see also Zirikli, A'lām, IV, 171,

newspaper" wrote the editor, "we have no object other than raising the voice of the inhabitants of the fatherland and helping our people (qawmūnā) and uniting them".[1] Thamarāt was in fact the mouthpiece of a new Muslim "middle class" in Beirut, and lasted for thirty three years.[2]

The example of Beirut was soon followed in Aleppo where a newspaper al-Shahbā' appeared in 1877 owned and edited by two Muslims.[3] However, it was short lived and two years later one of its editors, Kawākibī published it under a new name al-I'tidāl (Moderation) in Arabic and Turkish but again it was soon shut by the authorities.[4]

In Damascus, the young 'Izzat al-'Ābid who later achieved fame as second secretary to Sultan 'Abdulhamid II published early in 1878 Dimashq in Arabic and Turkish which lasted off and on for about a decade.[5]

This activity was paralleled by a movement for opening modern schools for Muslim children in several towns. To start with, government authorities opened Rüşdiye schools (upper elementary) in several towns since the 1860's. Thus in 1861-2 such a school was opened in Aleppo;[6]

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1 Thamarāt, December 29, 1879.

2 Tarāzi, IV, 6, n. 2.

3 They were Hāshim al-'Aṭṭār and 'Abdulrahmān al-Kawākibī see Tarāzi, II, 200-1. Shut by the authorities, it reappeared in 1878 with a Christian, Saqqāl joining its board (see Thamarāt, July 11, 1878).

4 Tarāzi, II, 201-2 and 223; Thamarāt, August 4, 1879; B.A. Dah. Irad. No. 64342 dated Şevval 14, 1296.

5 Tarazi II, 198 and 215ff; Thamarāt, January 3 and 10, 1878.

6 Gazzi, Nahr al-Dhahab..., I, 165-6.

a year later one was established in Tripoli:[1] about the same time a number of these schools was opened in Damascus and Beirut:[2] and in the course of the 1870's a number of such schools opened in other towns of Syria and Palestine. In 1866 an I'dā i school (secondary) was established in Damascus.[3] But it appears that these schools attracted only few pupils. Some of the teaching in them was, it seems, done in Turkish and their headmasters were usually Turks appointed by the Ministry of Education, from Istanbul.[4]

The editor of Thamarāt al-Funūn who called upon the Muslims of Beirut to establish a school of their own wrote that the Ruşdiye school of the city "was inadequate because it was elementary...and specially because it was not national(ghaịr waṭaniya)".[5] This possibly was the feeling of Muslims in other towns.

At all events, in Summer 1878 the Muslim community of Beirut established The Society of Benevolent Intentions (Jam'iyat al-Maqāsid al-Khairiya al-Islamiya) with the object of establishing modern schools and looking after the poor.[6] It proceeded without delay to establish

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1 Hadīqat al-Akhbār, August 13, 1863.

2 Thamarāt, October 27 and November 10, 1879. See also Qassaṭli, al-Rawḍa al-Ghannā' (Beirut, 1879), p. 119.

3 Ibid; and Ḥadīqat al-Akhbār, October 23, 1866.

4 al-Jawā'ib, August 4, 1868.

5 Thamarāt, March 29, 1877. See also al-Jawā'ib, April 12, 1877; Bairam, Ṣafwat al-I'tibār, V, 39.

6 Thamarāt, September 9, 1878.

schools for boys and girls being dependant at first on donations from the community. In the course of the following year similar societies for similar aims were established in Damascus, Jerusalem, Tripoli, Saida, Lataqia, Aleppo and Acre.[1]

When the Maqāsid society (as it was commonly known) of Beirut was established, Midhat was still in exile in Europe, but the other societies were established during his governorship which started late in November 1878 and apparently with his encouragement. He also supported the society of Beirut by granting it some disused endowments. Whatever the degree of the encouragement of the Vali, the will of the people was already there especially as Aleppo and Jerusalem were beyond his authority. Moreover independently of him, one of the ulema of Tripoli Husein al-Jisr established in January 1880 his own school, the National Islamic school (al-madrasa al-waṭaniya al-Islāmiya), supported by local donations.[2] In these schools instruction was in Arabic and the new sciences were taught at least equally alongside the traditional ones. Turkish and French were also taught.[3] A Muslim Arab

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1 Ibid, December 9, 1878; March 24, April 21, September 8, October 7 and November 24, 1879 respectively. See also 'Ali Haydar Midhat, Tabsıra-i 'Ibret (Istanbul A.H. 1325) hereafter Tabsıra, p. 209-10; al-Zain, Tārikh Ṣaida (Ṣaida, 1913), pp. 110-111.

2 Thamarāt, January 26 and February 16, 1880.

3 Cf. A. Hourani, Arabic Thought, p. 223; Qayāti, p. 48.

awakening for culture and progress in Syria in those years is thus clear for all to see and it was this that Midhat apparently recognized and,[1] not simply because of his desire for reform, but possibly also as an outlet for communal activity. After his recall from Syria all these societies were incorporated into the board of education of the province and education was put under the control of the state.

2. Ottoman Rule in the Province of Syria in the Later 1870's

While such a movement was taking place among the Muslim population of Syria, the Ottoman government followed an administrative policy in the country which tended to arouse the patriotic feelings of a sector of the Muslim population. Those feelings which had manifested themselves on more than one occasion in the past, had been overshadowed by the rise in Islamic sentiment since the early decades of the century. They were thus channelled towards the main stream of the dominant idea--the strengthening of the Muslim state. There the re-emergence of these feelings at about the end of the eighteen seventies was thus a matter of grave concern for the authorities, especially because of collaboration with a Christian element who in the past few years had already shown patriotic and national inclinations.

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[1] Cf. A. Sulḥ, Sutūr Min al-Risāla (Beirut, 1966), pp. 135ff.

It is noticed that in the late 1870's there was a tendency at the Porte to diminish the share which Syrians had had in the civil and judicial administration of the country touching even the lower grades of officialdom. Many such officials had been "sent from Istanbul" to replace natives.[1] Even "nā'ibs" (Judges of shar'i courts) were now being replaced by others of Turkish origin. The niyāba was one of the senior posts opened for local ulema. Formerly, all nā'ibs were natives and only the chief Qāḍī of Damascus was sent from Istanbul.[2] In the 1840's the nā'ib of Beirut was dismissed[3] after which its nā'ib became a Turk.[4] By the late 1870's more than half of the Syrian towns, largely in the coastal areas had nā'ibs of Turkish origin.[5]

This policy of the central government which apparently was intensified in those difficult years aroused much resentment in Syria because it was felt that it was inconsistent with local interests, those officials

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1 For cases were local officials were replaced see Thamarāt: June 21 and October 6, 1877; November 18, 1878; April 21 and May 5, 1879.

2 In the province of Syria. However, Aleppo and Jerusalem had also a Turkish Qāḍī.

3 He was Muhammad al-Tarabulsi who filled the post for nine years and after his dismissal became mufti of Beirut for about thirty years until his death in 1879 (Thamarāt, July 7, '79).

4 Ibid.

5 Thamarāt, March 29 and August 23, 1877, September 26 and October 17 and November 21, 1878, January 6, 1879.

being regarded, quite naturally, as strangers who competed with native officials for jobs that the latter were capable of doing--and which they regarded as their own special privilege. Besides, these new officials were generally ignorant of local customs and many of them did not know of the language of the people. Worse still it was believed that they were open to corruption on a much wider scale than were the locals. Commenting on this Thamarāt pointed to the imprudence of despatching them, especially those among them in the lower salaried group (who as strangers, needed house rent and other expenses). Their expenses usually exceeded their salaries and moved them to abuse their authority. Formerly, added the editor of Thamarāt low salaried positions were offered to locals; and he expressed his hope that the question would be carefully examined "so that it should not be said that Arabs were being denied even minor posts".[1]

It seems that this question was one of the main grievances which Layard, the British Ambassador to the Porte who visited Syria in Autumn 1879, heard and which he passed on to the Sultan. Reporting to London, he wrote that he had told His Majesty,

> "that I had had opportunities of conversing with persons of all creeds and classes including Cadis and Mufties and that I had found that the same discontent and dissatisfaction at the way in which

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[1] Thamarāt, November 18, 1878.

> the country was now governed prevailed on every side. His Syrian subjects I warned him would not much longer submit to be sacrificed to a small clique at Constantinople and to see the whole of the administration confided to men sent from the capital, who were ignorant of their language, their habits and their wants and who for the most part were corrupt and unscrupulous and only thought of enriching themselves at the expense of those whom they were sent to govern...."[1]

In his reply Layard continued the Sultan had admitted that

"the complaints of his Syrian subjects, that they had no share in the government and administration of their own affairs and were sacrificed to the official class at Constantinople....were just and well founded."[2]

However, this was not the only administrative blunder which the Porte committed in Syria. In 1877-78, two difficult years of war which caused much misery, the Porte had failed to send capable and honest governors to such an important and sensitive province. Early in 1877 Ziya, one of the leaders of the Young Ottomans was sent by Midhat who was then Grand Vezir to remove him from Istanbul.[3] Ziya, who was a writer and a poet of note lacked, it seems, administrative skill.[4] His four months presence in Damascus were not satisfactory. Moreover, his behaviour might have not been above

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1 Layard-Salisbury, F.O.424/91, desp. 882, Constantinople, October 15, 1879.

2 Ibid.

3 S. Story (ed.) The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, (London, 1920), p. 137.

4 Jago-Jocelyn, F.O,195/1153, desp. 7, Damascus, March 18, 1877.

suspicion and the British consul general considered his "further presence highly dangerous to public peace and general security" and advocated his recall regarding it "an absolute necessity for the maintenance of order in Syria".[1] Soon after Ziya was transfered to the vilayet of Adana.

After Ziya, the province was governed by the military commander of the fifth army corps for about ten months. Professedly, he was ignorant of all matters of civil administration and the condition of the province deteriorated during his rule.[2]

He was followed by Jevdet Pasha, the famous historian and canonist. It was a poor choice, for the nine months (March-November 1878) of his government made things worse. It was a hard year, with high conscription, high taxation, and high prices and it needed a skilful, honest and dedicated administrator but though Jevdet had considerable experience in provincial administration in Damascus he did not show adequate ability to handle the situation or the required integrity to be above temptation.

Only a week after his arrival in Damascus Jevdet was confronted with a demonstration of women protesting

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1 Eldridge-(Layard), F.O.195/1153, desp. 52, Beirut, May 12, 1877.

2 Jago-Malet, F.O.195/1263, desp. 13, Damascus April 14, 1879.

against the bad quality and high price of bread. They "stormed the Serail...[and showered] bitter curses upon the Sultan and his government for the evils which have lately fallen upon the land".[1] A demonstration of women against the government is scarcely possible in Damascus even in present times and the fact that it happened then should have been a matter of grave concern for any ruler a fact which suggests some manipulation behind the scene. "Bread riots have not unfrequently been the forerunners of important political movements" was the comment of another observer.[2]

If there was such a movement, Jevdet certainly was not the man to tackle it and if he was comissioned to do se, it does not seem that he succeeded having, it would seem, played into the hands of a corrupt clique of notables and receiving bribes without scruple. "It is said by all that Jevdet Pasha was the most corrupt Vali who has ever been in Damascus"[3] wrote Edward Malet the secretary of the British Embassy at Istanbul who was on a special mission to Syria late in 1878.

The women's riots were followed about three months later by hand written placards posted up the

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1 Jago-Derby, F.O.195/1201, desp. 5 (political) Damascus, March 27, 1878; Thamarāt, March 21, 1878.

2 Eldridge-Derby, F.O.195/1201, desp. 24 (pol.-conf.) Beirut, March 26, 1878.

3 Malet-(Layard), F.O.195/1201, Damascus, December 5, 1878.

public places in the city complaining first against the commander of police Hasan Agha Bozo,[1] a Kurd of Damascus, and a little later, against the vali himself.[2] The language in which the placards was written was "anything but complimentary to the vali who is invited to amend his ways before worse consequences ensue".[3] One of these placards invited the people of Syria to take matters in their hands if there will be no improvement. It concluded with the following passage

> "Do not fancy Syrians that you are left alone to reform these abuses, You have friends who are willing and ready to assist you.[4] Awake then from your lethargy!...personal interests must be set aside when the prosperity and progress of your country are in question....the reins of government will soon pass into your own hands..."[5]

3. Organised Agitation

The women's riot and the placards that followed undoubtedly indicated the existence in Damascus of an insurrectionary spirit in the country. Sir Henry Layard, who visited Syria in Autumn 1879 came away with a similar impression. He noticed

> "that the population, Mussulmans and Christians are rapidly coming to resolution not to be governed as they have hitherto been from Constantinople, that the idea of an Arab autonomy if not an Arab independent state is gaining ground amongst them,

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1 Thamarāt, July 4, 1878.

2 Ibid, September 19, 1878.

3 Eldridge-Layard, F.O.195/1202, desp. 74, Aleih, August 2, 1878.

4 The emphasis is in the original.

5 As translated in Eldridge-Layard, Ibid.

> and that unless such reforms and rights as they justly insist upon rapidly conceded to them, they will endeavour to obtain them by themselves..."[1]

This situation provided an opportunity to organise a movement led by the Emir Abdulqadir, possibly with the encouragement and support of France, for since the days of Napoleon III, France may have been desiring to see Abdulqadir installed in some capacity in Syria. After the events of 1860 there appeared a number of propagandistic pamphlets in Paris in favour of the Emir.[2] The war with Russia and its aftermath gave a last chance for the aged Emir and he it seems was ready to seize the opportunity. A nephew of the Emir informed the British Embassy in Istanbul in 1880 that during the Russian war, Abdulqadir formed a plan to lead Syria into revolt on behalf of France. The French, added the informant, promised the co-operation of vessels of war. Locally, the Emir depended upon the support of Algerian immigrants settled in the sancak of Acre and possibly upon the Maronites.[3]

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1 Layard, Memoirs, VII, B.M. Add. MSS. 38938 f. 146a.

2 Ch. R. Ageron, "Abd el-Kader souverain d'un royaume arabe d'Orient" in Revue de L'occident Musulman... (Aix-en-Provence), Numero Special, 1970.

3 There was it seems a trend among the Maronites including a faction of the clergy who were not happy about the settlement of 1861 and who desired to see a Christian Lebanon fully autonomous if not independent. In the late seventies, agitation took place in the mountain against Rustum Pasha, the mütessarrif, and led by Bishop Bustani (see Spagnolo, French Influence..,chapters IV, VII and X). At the same time Abdulqadir was in correspondence with Y. Karam the exiled Lebanese leader, possibly through Bishop Dibs of Beirut (see Sulh p. 104f.) cf. B.A. 'Ayniyat Defterleri no. 907 document dated Muharram 27, 1294 (no number is given).

Commenting on this intelligence Layard added that "the information received by Her Majesty's government and this embassy tend to confirm them to a certain extent".[1]

That such a movement existed and was led by Abdulqadir, appears to have been substantially true. A recent publication, written by a grandson of one of the leaders, re-told the story as he heard it many years before from his father, who as a young man took part in it.[2]

The movement, claimed the author, started upon the initiative of his grandfather Ahmad al-Sulh, who was living at that time in Beirut as ex-qaimaqam of Bilan.[3] Late in 1877 he opened discussions with some of his friends concerning the future of the country. A group was it seems formed which spread its activities to Saida and to Jabal ʿĀmil two places where Sulh had some connections. Meeting with success they moved next to Damascus. There, at the house of Hasan Taqi al-Din the

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1 Layard-Salisbury, F.O.78/3081, desp. 229 and inclo; dated February 24, 1880.

2 Adil al-Sulh, Sutūr min al-Risāla (Beirut, 1966).

3 Thamarāt May 9, 1878. Ahmad al-Sulh belonged to a Muslim family of notables of Saida which held sometimes the office of Sunni Mufti of the town. Since the early Tanzimat period he served in the Ottoman civil service in Syria, at one time he was a dragoman of the vilayet of Saida before it was merged with the vilaya of Damascus (1864) (B.A., M.M. Irad, no. 2973). He was married to a daughter of Hasan Taqi al-Din, one time a mufti of Damascus. Following the event of 1860 he was exiled to Rhodes for a while. (Hisni, II 840-1; al-Zain, Tarikh Saida, (Saida 1913) 159. On Hasan Taqi al-Din see Bitar, I, 488-9,

in-laws of Sulh, they met several Damascine notables and met, we are told, with a favourable response. Their second step was to discuss the question with Abdulqadir of Algier, who gave them his support. After these initial contacts they moved on to the central and northern parts of Syria. A secret conference was held in Beirut which was continued in Damascus and ended in a second meeting with Abdulqadir when it was suggested to him that he should stand at the head of the movement and in the event of success he would be a future prince of the country.[1] Abdulqadir agreed and set out on a journey to secure the support of the Algerian immigrants and other elements in the Sancak of Acre.[2]

More confirmation of the existence of the movement is found in a publication on the history of Jabal ʿĀmil.[3] The author, who was only a few years old at that time, related the names of those from that district who participated in the movement.[4] Because of his participation a leading ʿĀlim in the Jabal was, according to his nephew and biographer, later exiled.[5]

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1 Sulh, 92-98.

2 Sulh 102-104, Bitar confirmed that the Emir had performed such a trip "for about forty days" and that he (i.e. Bitar) had accompanied him on it, but he gave it a later date--1299/1881-2 see Hilyat al-Bashar II, 904.

3 Muhammad Jabir, Tarikh Jabal ʿĀmil (Beirut 1963).

4 Ibid, p. 208.

5 He was Muhammad al-Amin, see Sulh, p. 124 quoting Muhsin al-Amin al-ʿĀmili, Aʿyān al-Shīʿa, XLIII, p. 300.

Moreover, when Midhat was appointed governor of Syria, he, it seems, was told by the Porte of the existence in Syria of a movement the object of which "was inconsistant with the duty of allegiance to the Ottoman state".[1]

The object of the movement, we are told, was two fold. Firstly, if in consequence of the war with Russia, any foreign power showed ambition over Syria, the movement would work for full independence. But if Syria stayed Ottoman, the way to end the oppressive rule of the government of Istanbul was, they believed, by seeking autonomous status for the country within the framework of the Empire.[2]

In any case, it appears that the growth of the movement was checked by the end of 1878. According to Sulh the authorities took repressive measures against the participants.[3] Moreover, what seems to have exasperated those participants was the British possession of Cyprus and the pledge of England to uphold and defend Ottoman rule in the Asiatic provinces of the Empire. Equally important in checking and weakening the movement were the political measures which the Porte took, one such being the appointment of Midhat as governor of Syria (November 1878) who attempted to conciliate the population.

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1 Sulh, p. 134.
2 Ibid, p. 92 and p. 101.
3 Ibid., p. 126.

An example of this was the appointment of Ahmad al-Sulh who reportedly played a leading role in the movement as mütesarrif (governor of a Sancak) of Lataqia (July 1879).[1]

4. A Demand for Autonomy

Inspite of these checks, the desire for autonomy survived. Such a demand is found in a petition "addressed by certain of the inhabitants of Syria to the Sultan", which was presented to Midhat soon after his arrival to Syria.[2] Unfortunately I was unable to find the original version of the petition and what we have at hand is an English translation which left behind the names of the signatories. Whether it was drafted by the above mentioned movement or by a different group, it is hard to say. Presumably, however, it was the former.[3]

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1 B.A., M.M. Irad. no. 2973 dated Şa'ban 2, 1296, see also Thamarāt, July 21, 1879.

2 Layard-Salisbury, F.O. 424/79, desp. 63 inclo. Constantinople, January 17, 1879.

3 In this context it might be proper to mention that a year earlier a petition was drafted by some notables of Beirut and other coastal towns and was addressed to the Porte with a copy for the Parliament. In it they demanded the separation of the coastal areas from the Vilayet of Syria, and the re-establishment of the Vilayet of Saida which since 1840 had had its seat at Beirut. Their demand was rejected. (See Thamarāt, February 14, 1878; a summary of the discussions in the Parliament in its meeting of Muharram 25, 1295 in al-Jawā'ib February 6, 1878). The petitioners undoubtedly felt that their interests were suffering by the unification of the two Vilayets of Damascus and Saida in 1864, because whenever they needed to refer to the Vali he was far away. In addition, the fact that the Vali's residence was Damascus put him under the influence of notables of that city,-- ignorant of the needs of the coastal towns, and often jealous of their prosperity.

The petition opened with the following paragraph "Ottoman [1] direct rule is becoming more unpopular in this country in consequence of recent enactments...and the unpatriotic and inefficient mode of carrying them [out] by.....functionaries.....little qualified either by proficiency in the knowledge of the language or the wants of the population and other requisites of education or integrity".

This was probably the main problem of Ottoman rule in those times. The success of the system of direct rule which the Tanzimat tried to establish, depended primarily on capable, knowledgeable and honest functionaries. Such officials were few. The majority either did not understand the new regulations or did not possess a sufficiently high standard of integrity. Consequently what was intended to be reform brought, so the petitioners believed, much harm to the country. However, this belief gave rise to another grievance which was that those functionaries were foreigners to the land. The native element , they asserted, had been "deprived of any important office" and that "posts of trust" were confined "to persons living in the capital".

Following these grievances about functionaries and reform, there came grievances concerning the economic

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[1] "Turkish" in the English version.

policy of the Porte. The ports of the Empire were opened indiscretly to imports of foreign manufactured goods a policy which led to the death of local industries. Taxation had increased and was still increasing. The regulations of the "Tapu" were "intricate and most illiberal" and "has inflicted upon agriculture a deadly blow". They had changed the lands of the peasentry from freehold into Empire lands, an act which enormously depreciated [the value of] those lands. On the other hand, the land in Mount Lebanon and Egypt remained "Mulk" (freehold). People wondered how the Porte could have enacted such a law "without consulting with them". In short, the direct rule of Constantinople had ruined the country and "the inhabitants cowed by long arbitrary rule, seem afraid to raise their voice or to publicly utter a remonstrance".

The remedy for these "evils under which Syria is growing" was, suggested the petitioners:

> "A curtailment of the connection with the capital in regards administrative arrangements that is, an assimilation dictated by expediency...to the system under which Mount Lebanon, the centre and the backbone of Syria has already been placed, or the incorporation or amalgamation thereof".

They expected however that the Sultan would reject such a drastic move, so in addition to a number of minor points they proposed five major points, according to which they demanded that the vilayet of Syria should

be run in the future. Essentially however, those proposels did not differ much from the above except that there was no suggestion of amalgamation with Lebanon.

They demanded that the governor general should be appointed for a period of not less than five years; that he should have full powers to choose or dismiss his subordinates (except judges and police officers who would be appointed by the central government upon the Vali's recommendation, but they would discharge their duty under his authority); that he would regulate taxation "with the concurrence of the deputies of the people", and the approval of the central government (who would continue to control the custom houses at the ports); that a limited native military force be maintained at the expense of the country; and that the system of land registration followed in the Lebanon also should be followed in Syria.

The petitioners concluded that in Syria the pre-Tanzimat system of government "is not unfrequently recalled to mind with regret" because since then "Syria with the exception of Beyrout and Lebanon...has been impoverished, degraded, and depopulated from the effects of misrule and owing to conflicting legislations". They ended by praying that the "reforms" they asked for "be granted as soon as possible, more especially when it is remembered that similar arrangements are not inconsistent with the methods prevailing in former periods until 1840".

As we have seen, the petition was concerned with the well-being of Syria. What made the petitioners more aware of their situation was the example of Mount Lebanon under its special status run by an orderly administration, all native except the governor and controlling its own finances and taxation system. Moreover, with no conscription and no comparatively large army to sustain, Mount Lebanon was relatively prosperous. "The Syrians" wrote consul Eldridge "have long been exceedingly jealous of the better administration which exists in the Lebanon".[1] This letter dated end of October 1878, probably reflected the mood of the people at the time the petition was being drafted.

And indeed the petitioners did not aspire to other things. The petition was not concerned with the separation of Syria from the Empire, but with the restoration of a system of indirect and decentralised rule similar to that which existed before the Tanzimat, believing that the source of the evil was the very system of direct and centralised rule which the Tanzimat enforced. Under the conditions which prevailed in Syria at the time, it is probably not far from the truth to assume that the petition reflected the opinion of a comparatively large section of the population.

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1 In a private letter to Ambassador Layard B.M. Add. Mss 39022 f. 338 dated October 27, 1878.

It is unfortunate that we do not know the names of the signatories, but reading the contents carefully one does not fail to get the impression that quite a number of Christians took part in its drafting. Though the petition speaks for all the Syrians and not for one sect or group, the fact that the petitioners demanded amalgamation with the Lebanon, coupled with our knowledge of the existence of a secret society in Beirut composed of Muslims and Christians that two years later put forward similar demands, tends to confirm this impression.

5. The Mission of Midhat in Syria

We do not know to what degree the Sultan took this petition into consideration. He obviously opposed any suggestion that would have led to the weakening of Istanbul's direct authority over Syria or indeed over any other of the remaining parts of the Empire.

It is against this background of a Syrian movement demanding autonomy (and of an 'Arab movement' to be discussed separately) that the Sultan's policy in Syria and indeed in the Arab lands for many years should be understood. The beginnings of this policy were already felt at about this time. The first moves of his pan-Islamic policy had been taken. This policy with its emphasis upon the Islamic character of the state had as one of its objects to divert the attention of Muslim public opinion and to regain their loyalty to himself as Caliph.

Indirectly however, this policy hindered the emergence of a united Syrian society (which was a necessary step for any political action). Secondly the Sultan tried to gain the sympathy of Muslim notables in particular, continuing on a wide scale the practice of conferring upon many notables[1] grades of honour both civil and religious and bestowing upon some of them grants and emoluments and inviting a number of Shaikhs, regarded as prominent in their towns, to visit Istanbul where they were received with marked honour.[2] Moreover, orders were given for a number of mosques, sacred sites and tombs to be repaired.[3] This policy which was followed through-out the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid was already clear at that phase of his rule.

Sultan Abdulhamid was not alone in his worries about the affairs of Syria; the British government too shared in this anxiety. It was still in the British

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1 A list of about 35 was prepared by me for the late 1870's but the number must have been larger. See also a long list of 33 notables, Muslims and Christians, who were granted a degree in 1881 (B.A., D. Irad. no. 66897).

2 For example Shaikh Abdulrahman el-Sinn [ ] from Saida see Eldridge-Layard F.O. 195/1154, desp. 108, Beirut September 30, 1877. See also Qayāti, p. 57.

3 B.A., Dah. Irad. nos. 60229 dated Zilk. 20, 1293;
50378 " Şab. 19, 1293;
61334 " Rec. 13, 1294;
B.A., Şura-í Devlet Irad. no. 1714 dated Cem. II 27, 1294;
B.A., ʿAyniyāt defterleri 907/517 " " 24, 1294;
see also Qayāti, p. 86.

interest to see Istanbul keeping full control over the provinces in Asia. First, in order to enable Turkey to stand against Russian expansion, and secondly to safeguard British interests and the route to India. In the eyes of Lord Salisbury the Foreign Minister, "Turkey-in-Asia" was the true source of Turkish power, the "nursery of her troops".[1]

To have the situation in Syria closely examined, Layard sent Edward Malet, the secretary of the embassy to tour the country (November-December 1878) and he himself made a similar trip ten months later. To both of them it appeared that much of the discontent and alienation was due to a corrupt and unscrupulous officialdom.[2] Taking this into account and following the advice of Lord Salisbury that "good men" were better than "paper institutions" to apply "good government",[3] Layard who had "prevailed upon the Sultan" to call Midhat from exile,[4] also had him appoint the ex-grand Vezir as governor of Syria.[5]

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1 Quoted in L. Penson "The foreign Policy of Lord Salisbury 1878-1880.,." in Coville and Temperley (eds.) Studies in Anglo-French History, (Cambridge 1935) p. 128.

2 Malat-Layard, F.O. 195/1265, desp. dated January 26, 1879; Layard-Salisbury (private), S. papers vol. A17, letter 55 dated October 14, 1879.

3 Penson, op.cit. p. 134; see also Salisbury-Layard dated June 25, 1878 in G. Cecil Life of Robert Marquis of Salisbury, 2 vols. (London, 1921) II, 304-5.

4 Layard's Memoirs, VIII, f. 22a.

5 Ibid., see also Layard-Salisbury, F.O. 78/2943 desp. 56 (conf.) Constantinople, January 15, 1879.

However, when Midhat reached Damascus on the 3rd December 1878, he found that his powers and prerogatives defined in the firman of investiture were no more than the usual.[1] He it seems, believed that he could not fulfill his mission without having full powers similar to those he had in his former provincial governorships (the Danube and Baghdad).[2] In addition, he apparently demanded security of tenure for five years.[3] But the Sultan could never have allowed him full powers. The demands of Midhat were the equivalent of a demand for autonomy, commented the Tercüman-i Hakiket, the mouthpiece of Abdulhamid.[4]

Indeed, Midhat believed in the necessity of wide powers for provincial valis as the Vilayet law of 1864, in the drafting of which he took part along with Fuad, had shown. He probably maintained that the Ottoman Empire could never be efficiently governed without a certain measure of decentralization. But the Sultan and a strong conservative trend at Istanbul could never have accepted that. Indeed, this was one of the questions which caused the division between the Ottomanist trend

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1 See text in A. Cilician Vassif, Son Altesse Midhat Pasha...(Paris, 1909), pp. 153-4; see also Shamir, 354-5.

2 Cf. B.A., D. Irad. no. 64458/2 dated Ekim II, 1295; I.H. Uzunçarşili Midht.Paşa ve Yildiz Mahkemesi (Ankara, 1967) p.133f.

3 Tercüman-i Hakiket, February 20, 1879.

4 Ibid.

represented by Midhat, and the Islamist trend represented by Mahmud Nedim. Apparently because of this the Sultan distrusted Midhat.[1]

Moreover, Abdulhamid it seems, disliked Midhat's style of government.[2] Midhat's concept of reform was not simply the reforming of the machinery of the government which then would pose as the agent of modernisation. His reputation as a distinguished reformer lay in his ability to activate the governed to work for the modernisation of their society and institutions with his beneficent guidance. Ultimately, this approach would lead to the emergence of a public spirit and of a desire by the provincial population for a greater participation in their own affairs. A further element in Midhat's concept of provincial government which Abdulhamid possibly opposed was his conviction that all subjects were equal irrespective of creed. "Midhat Pasha is a very liberal man and without religious prejudice" the French ambassador at Istanbul, was reported to have said.[3]

The Sultan, afraid of the bureaucracy, denied his officials wide and independent power. Moreover, he

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1 The Sultan "had profound distrust and suspicion of him and believed him to be at heart a republican and socialist and ready to upset dynasty and monarchy", wrote Layard in his Memoirs, VIII, f. 24a.

2 On Midhat's character see Davison, p. 145, 360-1.

3 A. Clician Vassif, Son Altesse Midhat Pasha...(Paris 1909) p. 171.

believed that the power of the state lay in the power of the sultanate and in its ability to keep full control over the affairs of the empire. The idea of a provincial governor possessing wide powers was utterly unacceptable to him, It was more so in the case of Midhat.

For all these reasons we can imagine to which degree Sultan Abdulhamid compromised with Ambassador Layard in sending Midhat to Syria. But he refused to allow him much wider powers than those granted to other governors. However, under pressure from Midhat, the Sultan did grant him the right to appoint mütessarrifs[1] (sub-governors).

The government of Midhat in the Syrian province ' d been already discussed by Dr. Shamir.[2] Here we shall discuss some aspects of it which did not receive due attention by that author where it appears, Midhat disregarded the policy of the Porte and followed a line of his own.

One of the first steps that Midhat took in Syria was to curb the influence of a local clique of Damascine notables who exercised much influence upon the affairs of the province. These notables who had become

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1 Jago-Malet, F.O. 195/1263 desp. 13 dated Damascus April 14, 1879. See also the Times, February 7, 1879, p. 5e.

2 Shimon Shamir, "The modernization of Syria..."in Polk and Chambers (eds.) Beginnings of Modernization in the middle East (Chicago, 1968), pp. 351-381.

rich and powerful since the mid-1860's due to their unreserved support of Ottoman policy,[1] held most of the senior offices that locals were allowed to fill. Three of them were mütesarrifs, the first locals ever to hold this office since the Tanzimat. They were Muhammad al-Yusuf,[2] who was at the end of 1878, governor of Hama; 'Uthman Mardam Bey,[3] governor of Houran, and Hollo al-'Ābid[4] governor of Nablus. A fourth, who was regarded as the most influencial man in Damascus, was Muhammad Said Shamdin,[5] the governor of the Haj caravan. They were not only upstarts but also newcomers to Damascus, and in most of the cases the first generation in the city. Al-Yusuf, Shamdin, and possibly al-'Abīd were of Kurdish origin while Mardam Bey was of Turkish extraction.[6] In any case all of them were notorious for their corruption and abuse of power. Midhat dismissed the first three[7] and tried unsuccessfully to abolish the Haj caravan on grounds of economy.[8] But by doing so he possibly brought

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1 See above pp.254ff.

2 On him see Shatti, Trajim A'yan Dimashq...(Damascus 1948) pp. 59-61.

3 See Ibid., p. 14.

4 Ibid., pp. 54-55.

5 Ibid., pp. 88-89; see also Malet-Layard, F.O. 195/1265, a report dated January 26, 1879.
"This man" wrote Malet "uses his power to stir up troubles in the provinces if the Vali does not submit to his dictation".

6 See above p. 157

7 Jago-Layard, F.O. 195/1262, desp. 6, February 15, 1879; cf. Thamarāt, March 3, May 12, and December 15, 1879.

8 Jago-Layard, F.O. 195/1263, desp. 16, June 6, 1879; Shamir, p. 363. al-Nahla February 15, 1879.

upon himself much trouble at home[1] and no doubt caused much displeasure at the Porte because his act contradicted the official policy in Damascus of thé preceeding fifteen years and because those notables were well protected in high places.

On the other hand, using his prerogative to appoint mütesarrifs and other subordinates, Midhat appointed quite a number of natives to administration posts. For example Ahmad al-Sulh and Ahmad Abaza of Beirut, who were regarded as men of integrity[2] were appointed mütesarrifs, the first of Lataqia and the second of Hama.[3] About ten others were appointed Qa'imaqams including a Christian[4] (Lutf-allah Nawfal of Tripoli) for the first time since the beginning of the Tanzimat period, excluding Mount Lebanon.

Another aspect of Midhat's government in Syria was, as we have seen above, the encouragement of the cultural and educational progress of the Muslim community the will for, and the beginnings of which, were already present on his arrival. Here again Midhat followed a policy of his own. As a representative of the Porte, one

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1 It is noticed that the troubles with the Druzes in the Houran occurred after the dismissal of Mardam Bey from his post of governor of that Sancak.

2 Thamarāt, January 13, 1879 (in case of Sulh).

3 Ibid., July 21, and December 15, 1879.

4 A Cilician Vassif p. 185-186; Jābir, p. 172; Thamarāt, January 1, March 31, June 23, September 8, October 20, 1879, Shamir, p. 358; Nawfal, Tarajim p. 94.

might have expected him to care for and enlarge the official schools (Rüşdiye and I'dadi) but instead, with his approval or in some cases by his instructions, committees were formed in many towns for the establishment of community schools while government schools were half empty.

Midhat treated the Christians well, as distinct from his predecessor Jevdet whose acts apparently aroused Bustani to denounce the fanaticism of the Officials.[1] In 1878 during Jevdet's government a new municipal council in Damascus was elected which contained no Christians.[2] Under Midhat, the council was re-elected and three non-Muslims found their place among its members.[3] Beside the appointment of a Christian Qàimaqam, Midhat employed a number of Christians in the judical service[4] and appointed a Christian as head of the commercial tribunal of Tripoli instead of a Muslim.[5] In addition he did not hesitate to hang publicly in the bazaar Muslims who murdered Christians.[6] This policy was well remembered by contemporaries.

Such a independent policy would not have endeared Midhat to the Sultan or allay his suspicions of

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1 al-Jinān, IX, 703-4 and 735-6.

2 Thamarāt, July 11, 1878.

3 Ibid., June 23, 1879 (apparently, one a Greek Orthodox, one a Greek Catholic and one a Jew).

4 Ibid., September 8 and 15, 1879.

5 Ibid., April 7, 1879; see also Nawfal p. 91.

6 Jago-Malet, F.O. 78/2985, desp. dated March 2, 1879; see also Shamir, p. 369.

him. Since the early seventies Ottoman policy in Syria had been aimed at preserving the supremacy of the Muslims and hindering Muslim-Christian collaboration and in fact Midhat was despatched because such collaboration took place in a political cause, and one might assume that the Sultan desired him to reverse the trend. But nothing in the acts of Midhat suggests that he was ready to do so. On the contrary "the most important aspect of his governorship was that he brought together the various elements and united between their hearts irrespective of their belief....in an unprecedented form",[1] was the impression of a contemporary Syrian writer. The result was that when the political movement renewed its agitation in summer 1880 the Sultan immediately recalled Midhat.

Midhat was not given full powers, nor were the reforms that he suggested accepted except the formation of a new police force and new gendarmerie, the object of which was to enforce better security in the country.[2] He was unable to combat corruption and the abuses in administration for a number of reasons not least of which was a lack of sufficient funds. Less than half of Syria's revenue was actually spent for the benefit of the inhabitants.[3] In short he was unable to bring about the

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1 Zaidan-Mashahīr, I, 380.
2 Shamir, p. 368.
3 Ibid., p. 363.

reforms that he regarded necessary to conciliate Syria.[1]

Moreover, Midhat probably felt that his work of conciliation had been undermined by the rising influence of the conservative trend which became dominant in Istanbul. In the summer of 1879, Mahmud Nedim, a leading figure of that trend was recalled from exile and in October he was appointed Minister of the Interior. His trend went hand in hand with the Islamic policy of the Sultan that was beginning to take shape. Abdulhamid probably felt that such a policy would gain him the sympathy of his Muslim subjects more than would the reforms of his Vali. As to the Christians, the Sultan, it seems felt that many of them would not be reconciled short of autonomy, something that he would not allow.

This development, coupled with his inability to bring about needed reforms disheartened Midhat and moved him to tender his resignation after less than a year in office. But the Sultan declined to accept it. However, the zeal of Midhat waned and he started to neglect his

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[1] For a rather unsympathetic assessment of Midhat and his government in Syria see Jago-Goschen, F.O. 78/3130, desp. 14, August 16, 1880. Another Englishman W.S. Blunt who visited Syria at the time, and who met Midhat wrote that he was not favourably impressed by him. "....on Ottoman regeneration I found his ideas shallow...His ideas of reform...of the Syria Vilayet...as he expounded them to me were wholly material ones...he did not speak nor did he show himself in the smallest sympathy with the people of the province he had come to govern..." (Blunt Secret History... p. 51.)

duties and when nothing came out of further demands on the Porte for more powers he submitted his resignation again (May 31, 1880) and again it was rejected.[1]

6. The Renewal of Agitation

Because of the Sultan's determination to keep full control of the affairs of Syria in his hands and because of his suspicion of Midhat, the mission of the latter ended in failure and the high hopes of a large section of the population ended with disappointment. Consequently echoes of the discontent were again loud and political agitation by a secret society was renewed.[2]

Thamarāt al-Funūn, the mouthpiece of the Muslim notables of Beirut once more raised the issue of corruption among officials and again demanded a larger share for natives in the administration of the country. The writer complained that the state had no interest in appointing officials who knew the language and customs of the people. The children of the country were not appointed to important posts, either in Syria or in the capital, Istanbul. Arabs (al-jins al-'Arabi) were barred from such posts. We are neglected, wrote the editor in another editorial. The time has come to take matters into our

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1 Jago-Goschen, F.O. 424/99 Telegraph 7 dated June 2, 1880; see Goschen-Granville telegraph 12 and 18 of June 3 and 7, 1880.

2 See B.A., Yıl. Ev., no. 18/1604 dated Şev. 21, 1297; see also no. 18/417/9 (not dated).

own hands and improve our situation. We should awake form our slumber.[1] "The notables of the people (Umma) must give sincere council how to rescue the country from its distress and suffering".[2] Bustani, consistently preaching his gospel of Ottomanism, added his moderating voice to this journalistic campaign, and referred pointedly to the new Islamic policy of the Sultan.

> "Our requests are based upon rules...that conform more to the spirit of the age, which His Majesty the Sultan had laid down in the constitution and which made of all the inhabitants of the sultanate one Ottoman nation" wrote Bustani in an important editorial in August 1879.[3] The first of these demands was that the population as a whole irrespective of creed should have a share in the administration both local and not local (Maḥallī wa ghayr maḥallī) following the principle of the unity of the Ottoman nation and in order to strengthen the ties of national brotherhood throughout the sultanate. "In administrative, judicial and other affairs", he added "sectarian affiliation should be disregarded. Our purpose should be the creation of a national solidarity that is the Ottoman solidarity. The laws that were enacted in

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1 Thamarāt May 31, June 14, 1880; see also al-Jawā'ib, August 14, 1880.

2 Thamarāt, June 16, 1879.

3 al-Jinān X, 482-3 (August 15, 1879); see also IX, 673, 703 (1878).

which religious affairs had been separated from administrative and judicial affairs, should be put in practice".

In addition he called for fixing adequate salaries for all officials and members of police so that they abandon corrupt methods. His other recommendations were concerned with development, tax gathering and a demand for compulsory education. He ended his editorial with a warning for the people of Syria and for the state. Progress, he said, cannot be achieved until religious differences were left behind and until the people realise that the furtherance of fanaticism and of other causes of schism would eventually lead to their backwardness and loss of their wealth and repose. Addressing the authorities, he concluded that a state, the inhabitants of which were not looked upon as brethren in a common fatherland, was a state divided upon itself. Such a state of affairs undoubtedly involved much danger.

In this atmosphere of renewed discontent, somebody was it seems trying to assemble a "national council" (majlis Waṭanī). Nothing is known about this attempt except a letter in Thamarāt signed by a Damascine notable, Sa'id al-Kilāni denouncing the idea and its originator. Whom the writer meant he did not reveal, but as he ended his letter by praising the Sultan and the Vali we can safely assume that it was not

Midhat.[1]

It appears however, that when the idea of such a congress failed, a series of revolutionary placards went up in Beirut, Tripoli, Saida and Damascus at short intervals between June and December 1880.[2]

The appearance of placards was no novelty and we have seen that two years before placards were posted against Jevdet Pasha in Damascus. In 1883 more placards appeared in that city.[3] Again placards appeared in Mecca in 1885 against the Vali Osman Pasha.[4] It seems that it was a way of expressing discontent which not necessarily followed by a violent action. However, what made the placards of 1880 in Syria noteworthy was that they threatened such an action, that they denounced not this Vali or the other but the "Turks" by name as a ruling nation and that they included specific demands of a political nature. More important still was that the "society" which stood behind them seems certain to have included both Muslims and Christians.[5] We are not here

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1 The letter was published in Thamarāt May 3, 1880. Kilāni was the head of the Qādiri order in Damascus and sometime Mayor of the city. (See Shaṭṭi, Tarājim, p. 69).

2 Three placards (2 copies and one original) have been collected by the British consulate in Beirut but there is information about more (see al-Jawa'ib of November 3, 1880 quoting al-Miṣbāḥ of Beirut).

3 Block-Windham, F.O. 195/1448, desp. 26, October 12, 1883.

4 See below p. 332f.

5 Antonuis p. 79; Zeine p. 61.

going to discuss the contents of the placards; this has already been done.[1] We shall only concentrate on the society itself and on the last placard which was posted by night on December 31, 1880. Significantly, it was the night of the new year.

Faris Nimr told Dr, Zeine that the society to which he belonged was responsible for these placards, that it included Muslims, and that they along with the other members were "agreed on combating Turkish injustices and despotism, on asserting their Arabism and insisting on equal rights for the Arabs and the Turks".[2] This statement was confirmed by contemporary observers.[3]

This collaboration in political agitation between Christians and Muslims was a new and a striking phenomenon. It was however preceded by collaboration on a social and cultural level as was the case in Beirut. As we have seen the membership of the cultural societies in that city cut across the communities,[4] so did the membership of the masonic lodges which were introduced to Syria in the 1860's.[5] This was a sign that among the Muslim population a middle class was emerging with

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1 Antonius Chap. V; Zeine pp. 59-67; Tibawi, pp. 163-167.

2 Zeine.p. 62.

3 Layard to the Foreign Minister, F.O. 424/98 desp. dated April 27, 1880.

4 See above p.

5 Such lodges were known to have been found in Beirut. For Damascus see Qassatli p. 92.

interests similar to those of the Christian middle class.

There is other evidence that by the later 1870's Muslims and Christians were joining together in various sorts of activities. Beirut took the lead but such activities were found in other towns too.[1] Christians were no longer regarded as objects of hatred as the events of 1860 had shown. The impression of Layard from his visit to Syria in 1879 that "the spirit of intolerence and fanaticism has greatly diminished....amongst the Mussulmans"[2] might have been substantially true. Joint political action was only one step away from collaboration at such levels.

A strong Christian element as we have seen had already been alienated from the Ottoman government in consequence of the policies of Mahmud Nedim Pasha. In the late 1870's as a result of the Porte's policy in Syria plus other factors, especially the circumstances created by the war, a section of the Muslim community started to reassess its attitude towards the Sultan and his government as the editorials in Thamarāt had shown.

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1 Non-Muslims in Damascus joined a committee for collecting contributions for poor families of conscripted soldiers. (See Thamarāt, March 29, 1877). In Aleppo the weekly Shahbā' re-appeared in 1878 edited by two Muslims and one Christian (see Tarazi II, 200 and Thamarāt, July 11, 1878).

2 Layard's Memoirs, VIII f. 145a. See also Layard-Salisbury F.O. 424/91 desp. 900 (conf.) October 20, 1879 about the impression of the former in Beirut.

They, it seems, joined hands with the Christians "in demanding good and just government and in insisting upon political rights...".[1] However, it does not seem that all these Muslims had a similar objective to that of the Christians. But the fact that Muslims and Christians joined in a patriotic cause was a sign of the beginning of solidarity in Syrian society. Had these beginnings been allowed to grow, the social and political split from which Syrian society suffered in the preceeding two or three generations would have come to an end, and modern Syrian history would have taken a different course.

But this association of Muslims and Christians in a secret society did not last long. Many of the Muslim members it seems joined in protest at the mis-government and oppression of the authorities. But when the Sultan showed signs of willingness to restore a better government (such as the appointment of Midhat), and especially when he began his Islamic policy, many Muslims lost their zeal for political action against him.[2] On the other hand, the Islamic policy of the Sultan scared the Christians more because they were afraid that it would fan the flames of fanaticism. Thus they were more eager for a system similar to that of Lebanon

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[1] Ibid.; see also B.A., Yıl, Ev. no. 18/1604 dated Sev. 21, 1297.

[2] Cf. Ibid.

to shelter them from the possible effects of such a policy. But the Muslims would not agree on this. Muslims and Christians, remembered the aged Nimr, agreed on combating Turkish injustices but "they disagreed on the ultimate goal of the society".[1]

The last placard, that of December 31, 1880, seems to indicate this change in the Muslim attitude towards the society. It reads like an appeal to them not to abandon the cause:

> The "Turks" went the placard to say,
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> "have abolished your sacred law (shari'a) and despised the sanctity of your [revered] books, they have even passed regulations to destroy your noble language, they have taken you as slaves... But you were the rulers in the past...with you the lands [of Islam] were populated and through you the wide [Islamic] conquests were achieved... the Turks had stolen (the Caliphate) from you. Look how your men are sent to the battle field and exposed to death and what [ill-] treatment they receive. Then look at your religious foundations how they are managed and in what manner [their income] is spent".[2]

Then the placard proceeded with demands, the first of which was autonomy, and threatened violent action if they were rejected. Of course nothing happened. The demands were not accepted neither did disturbances in the settled areas of Syria follow. On the contrary, observers reported that the placards caused little or no stir[3] and

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1 Zeine, p. 62.

2 As translated by Tibawi, p. 165.

3 Dickson-St.John, F.O. 195/1368, desp. 1, January 3, 1881; Jago-Goschan F.O. 195/1306, desp. 13 (conf.) August 3, 1880.

from Damascus and Beirut and other towns in Syria petitions were despatched to Istanbul assuring the Sultan of loyalty.[1] This last placard then was the final outburst of a dying movement. It needed two decades for the Muslims to become disenchanted with the Hamidian policy. When the agitation started all over again about the end of the century it then took an Arab more than a Syrian character.

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1 Dickson-St. John, F.O. 195/1368, desp. 2, January 14, 1881 for Beirut no. 66403 dated Reb. I, 24, 1298 for Nablus and Hama and B.A. Dah..Irad..and.Damascus.

CHAPTER XI

OTTOMAN CALIPHATE AND ARAB CALIPHATE

1. The Khedive and the Grand Sherif of Mecca

Relations between the rulers of Egypt and the Emirs of Mecca had been in existence for many centuries but in the nineteenth century they became stronger than they had been throughout the preceding centuries of Ottoman overlordship over Hijaz. They also assumed an important political character. The start of this new relationship came with the wresting and occupation of Mecca from the Wahhabis by Muhammad 'Ali who ruled the city in the name of the sultan for about three decades, and where he apparently had a free hand in his government there. In 1827 he found it more convenient for him to change the ruling clan of Grand Sherifs, the Zaid clan, who had ruled Hijaz for almost two centuries, and appoint in their place a member of the 'Awn clan--Muhammad ibn 'Awn--who was one of his supporters in Mecca. The Grand Sherifate stayed in Muhammad's family almost without interruption until the end of the Ottoman empire.[1]

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[1] It is probably not irrelevant to mention that the Hashimite Kings of Iraq and Jordan were descendants of this new Grand Sherif.

Having formerly enjoyed full autonomy in the government of Hijaz, the Grand Sherif, in 1850 after the withdrawal of Muhammed 'Ali, had to acquiesce in the appointment of an Ottoman Vali. As the powers of the Vali and the Grand Sherif were not defined, a convert struggle between them was the logical outcome, and while the Porte backed the Vali, the Grand Sherif found in Muhammad 'Ali a defender and protector.[1] Since then, we might say that an unwritten alliance was founded between the two rulers which lasted many years.

All through the Tanzimat period the Ottoman policy was to strengthen the Vali vis-à-vis the Grand Sherif. But partly because the Valis were changed often, and for other reasons[2] the Grand Sherifs managed to retain much of their previous authority though they were kept under the watchful eyes of the Vali.[3]

In 1264/1847-8 the Sultan started to bestow the title of Pasha on the sons of Grand Sherif Muhammad.[4] Later, another innovation was instituted--the heir to the Sherifate was ordered to take up residence in Istanbul

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1 Dahlan, Khulāsat al-Kalam fi Umarā' al-Balad al-Ḥarām (Cairo, A.H. 1305), p. 313; cf. 'Abdullah b. al-Husain (King Abdullah), Mudhakkarāti (Jerusalem, 1945), p. 239.

2 See appendix below, pp. 331ff.

3 For the prerogatives of the Grand Sherif and the Vali at this phase see Bayram, Ṣafwat al-I'tibār, V, 13-14. A Turkish view can be seen in a memorandum by Osman Nuri Pasha, Vali of Hidjaz (1882-1886), Yıl. Ev. 31/991-22.

4 Dahlan, p. 314.

where he was appointed a member of the Council of State (Şura-ı Devlet), with a large salary. This was "a kind of honourable captivity"[1] which provided the Ottoman Government with a ready-made person, already somewhat "Ottomanized" to fill the post. Consequently, from the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century, all those who filled the post of Grand Sherif had spent some years of their life in Istanbul. In this way they acquired considerable experience of Ottoman politics and became acquainted with many Ottoman statesmen. Though of use to them, this experience did not ease their fear of the Porte's objectives. These fears seem to have increased after the opening of the Suez canal in 1869 which made it easier for the Porte to put western Arabia under tighter control than had hitherto been the case.

2. Ismail Pasha of Egypt and the Porte

Following the death of Muhammad 'Ali, the Porte, it seems, cherished the hope of reasserting its authority over Egypt and during the next thirty years several attempts were made to exert pressure upon the viceregents, including threats to depose them. All three of them, namely 'Abbas I, Said and Ismail succeeded in maintaining their position largely due to the wish of the European powers to uphold

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[1] H.Snouch, The Revolt in Arabia (New York, 1917), p. 23.

the agreement of 1841 which defined the relations between Muhammad 'Ali and the Porte.

The first to encounter the Porte's pressure was 'Abbas. Mustafa Reshid, the Grand Vezir, took advantage it seems of the quarrel between him and some members of his family and of his estrangement from France, and planned to get rid of him or even of the dynasty altogether, hoping thereby to end Egypt's special status within the empire. In the event Reshid failed because of British intervention in favour of 'Abbas at the Porte.[1]

Said, the successor of 'Abbas also fell under the Porte's pressure in connection with the concession granted to the Suez Canal Company.[2] Equally so was the case with Ismail in 1869, when he by-passed the Sultan and invited the royal heads of Europe to attend the celebrations of the opening of the Canal. His relations with the Porte at that time reached their lowest ebb and Āli may well have deposed Ismail had he found any sign of approval from the powers concerned,[3] as was to happen under

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1 Rivlin, "The Railway question in the Ottoman-Egyptian crisis of 1850-52," in M.E.J. (1961), XV, 367f. See also Mustafa, "Some aspects of Egypt's foreign relations under Abbas I", in Annals of the Faculty of Arts ('Ain Shams University, Cairo), VIII (1963), p. 69.

2 A.A. Mustafa, 'Alāqāt Misr bi-Turkiya fi 'Ahd al-Khidawi Ismail (Cairo, 1967), p. 15; Rafi'i, 'Asr Ismail, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1948), I, 63-64; cf. E. Dicey, The Story of the Khadivate (London, 1902), pp. 26, 32.

3 Cf. Douin, Histoire du règne du Khedive Ismail, 2 vols. (Rome, 1933-4), II, 337; see also Mustafa, 'Alāqāt, chapter 6, pp. 115ff.

Sultan Abdulhamid in 1879.

Ismail's fears of the ultimate aims of the Porte rose again in 1870-71. The weakening of France after the 1870 war with Germany and the subsequent fall of Napoleon III in the same year was followed by a diminution of France's position in the eastern Mediterranean. This also robbed Ismail of a check on the Porte's policy towards Egypt, thus affording Āli the opportunity to follow a policy that Ismail believed was aimed at his own position. In this attempt Āli seems to have used, for the first time, the Sultan's status as Caliph as a political weapon. This policy caused grave concern to Ismail as he felt that the Sultan could appeal to his people and state servants behind his back in the name of Islam and Muslim unity. This was a matter of concern to Ismail because the majority of the senior functionaries and army officers were Turks and Circassians who were most likely to be influenced by such a call and of whose ultimate loyalty Ismail had, apparently, some doubts.

The first sign of this policy can be seen in an article in the Başiret, an influential newspaper in Istanbul in early 1871.[1] The article which perhaps reflected the opinion of upper circles in the capital was written following the formation of the German Union. It

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[1] Başiret no. 279 of Zilk. 13, 1287/February 4, 1871, English translation in F.O. 195/969; see also Davison, p. 275.

advocated a Muslim Union between Istanbul, Cairo, and Tunis. The writer believed that this should be possible to achieve because the people of those countries belonged to one Umma and their rulers were under the suzerainty of the Sultan, whom he called upon to follow the example of the German Princes and unite with the Sultan because "We Turks and Arabs [sic.] have sufficiently bowed down" and they should avoid falling under Christian rule. He suggested that an unlimited number of Ottoman troops should garrison fortresses of some Egyptian ports and one in Tunisia and Egyptian troops could garrison Ottoman fortresses. In a word, he advocated pan-Ottomanism based on Islam.

The semi-official journal La Turquie soon followed with the statement: "Our weakness springs from our lack of unity . . . [it is a necessity] to bind the various Muslim elements in a very tight manner and to base the state on the most solid foundations." And it called upon Egypt and Tunis "to return to the lap of the mother country" instead of living under the influence or even the pressure of foreign governments. "Islam is not only a religion but a nationality" continued La Turquie and it saw no difficulty in a union between Arabs and Turks especially because they both "recognised the sultan of Istanbul as legitimate sovereign and caliph."[1]

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[1] Douin, II, 586-587; see also Davison, p. 275.

Ismail, believing that these articles represented the views of Āli was much alarmed. What increased his alarm was that they coincided with the Ottoman expedition to western Arabia in 1870-1 which occupied 'Asir and the Yemen.

What provoked this expedition was an attack, launched by some tribes on 'Asir on 30 November, 1870, on Hudaida, which was governed by an Ottoman mütesarrif. It was said that the attack was led by the emir of highland 'Asir, Muhammad ibn 'Ā'iz. Āli, the Grand Vezir, accused Ismail and the Grand Sherif of Mecca of instigating the assault.[1]

Ismail was on friendly relations with Ibn 'Ā'iz.[2] In the preceding few years he had established Egypt's authority over the African coast of the Red Sea[3] and it appears that he was intent on increasing his influence over the Arabian coast.[4] But the Porte was unwilling to let him have his way there as they had done on the African coast because, among other things, of the importance of

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1 Elliot to Granville, F.O. 78/3186, desp. 384, 28 December, 1870. See also Rāşid, Tarih-i Yemen ve San'ā, 2 vols. (Istanbul A.H. 1291), I, 317; Douin, II, 584.

2 Al-Jamal, al-Watha'iq al-Tarikhiya li siyasat Misr fi al-Baḥr al-Aḥmar 1863-1879 (Cairo, 1859), pp. 425-430; Stanton-Granville, F.O. 195/962, desp. 129, conf. Cairo, 2 December, 1870.

3 Al-Jamal, pp. 29-42.

4 Ibid., p. 3; see also Marson, Britain's Imperial Role in the Red Sea Area, 1800-1878 (Hambden, 1961), p. 376 and Sandison-Reade, F.O. 195/879, desp. 31, conf., Jedda, 7 June, 1867.

Hijaz for the Porte, control of which was essential for the sultan's assumption of the title of Caliph.

Though the attack upon Hudaida was repulsed by the governor of the town, the Porte, a few weeks later, despatched about ten thousand troops to western Arabia through the Suez Canal.[1] 'Asir was occupied and Ibn 'Ā'iz was put to death.[2] A year later San'a was reconquered thus putting the whole of Yemen once again under Ottoman rule. The existence of such a large force in the Red Sea area caused Ismail to look upon the Porte's move as a menace to his own security and moved him to fortify the port of Suez.[3]

The death of Āli in 1871 gave rise, as we have seen, to a new political trend in Istanbul. More emphasis came to be placed on the Islamic character of the state and on the sultan's title of Caliph.[4] This claim of the sultan for the Universal Caliphate was, moreover, used to justify and strengthen the newly gained Ottoman predominance in Arabia. This is shown in a memorandum which Musurus, the Ottoman Ambassador to London submitted in January 1874 to Lord Granville, the British Foreign

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[1] Sourian-Stanton, F.O. 195/956, desp. 30, 29 December, 1870 and desp. 4, 17 January, 1871; cf. Douin, II, 585.

[2] Dahlan, p. 325; Rāşid, II, 48; cf. Yıl. Ev. 31/2041-160.

[3] Stanton-Granville, F.O. 195/956, desp. 10, Cairo, 14 February, 1871; same-same, F.O. 195/956, desp. 20, Cairo, 3 March, 1871; see also Douin, II, 584.

[4] See Lewis, p. 121; Davison, pp. 270-278.

Minister:

> "Arabia is the cradle of Islam. His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, is the successor of the Prophet and the head of the Universal Caliphate, who as such, and as the possessor of the Holy Cities, is entitled to exercise [his authority] over all the Arab Peninsula which is a duty to perform towards all Muslims in general and his subjects in particular."[1]

This military predominance in Arabia, in its turn, further supported the sultan's claim to the title of Universal Caliph because it eliminated the independent Arab Emirs and because of Arabia's stronger connections with Muslim communities in India and south-east Asia.

As a result of the above mentioned expedition the only remaining autonomous chieftain in western Arabia was the Grand Sherif of Mecca but with the strengthened presence of Ottoman authority his position and influence in the area suffered and he felt insecure. We do not know if there were any secret understandings between the Sherif and the Khedive but Ali Pasha, the Grand Vezir, suspected that this was so.[2] The traditional relationship between the Khedives of Egypt and the Princes of Mecca--of the 'Awn clan--was not a secret but apart from that, was there under the force of the new circumstances any sort of secret understanding between Ismail and the Grand Sherif? It is highly probable. This is so because the

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[1] Cited in Marston, p. 429 (original in French). Cf. Blunt, The Future of Islam (London, 1882), p. 100f.

[2] Cf. Marston, p. 398.

sultan was now able, much more easily than he had been before, to undermine the position of both the Khedive and the Grand Sherif, not by force--which would have been regarded as an act of aggression--but by virtue of his status as Universal Caliph of Islam who claimed a special loyalty to himself from Muslims both in the empire and beyond.

3. The Rise of the Idea of an Arab Caliphate

Ismail and Grand Sherif Abdullah, gravely concerned, seem to have worked for the revival of the Arab Caliphate in the person of the Sherif possibly with the aim of weakening the impact of the Sultan's Caliphate on the Muslim public and thereby strengthening their position vis-à-vis the central government. If the idea had been previously considered, it seems that in the early eighteen seventies they worked for it with more determination. In this attempt they perhaps found sympathy and support among the widely discontented Arab Muslim notables in Syria and other parts of the Arab provinces of the empire and perhaps among a section of the leading bureaucracy of Istanbul because the sultan, who was determined to achieve absolute power and weaken them, found in the title of Caliph an additional means towards that purpose. Thus it may have been that a section of the bureaucracy saw in such a claim as that of

the Grand Sherif a way to combat the sultan's purpose.

The ultimate aim of those circles, whether the bureaucracy or Ismail, may have been the desire to separate the Caliphate from the Sultanate with the aim of weakening the sultan: an idea which was not strange to Young Ottoman thought, though the motives were, it seems, different.

The Grand Sherif of Mecca until the beginning of the nineteenth century and probably after that, was merely the ruler of Mecca with a shakey authority over Hijaz (Jedda excluded). Although his claim to be a descendant of the Prophet's grandson Hasan was not disputed, he was not more distinguished than other rulers of Arabia in prestige nor more distinguished in descent than other old sherifian families in Syria or Iraq. In addition, his political authority in Mecca and Hijaz suffered hard blows at the hands of the Wahhabis and Muhammad 'Ali and during the Tanzimat period. But in spite of that he gained in prestige in the Ottoman Empire and in reverence in the Muslim world.

There are perhaps three factors that explain this apparent paradox. First of all there was a renewed emphasis on the study of ḥadīth in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries [1] which may have started in Muslim India. This and the spread of Naqshbandi teachings in

[1] A. Ahmad, Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan 1857-1964 (London, 1967), p. 114.

various parts of the Muslim world in the nineteenth century may have led to a general wave of renewed veneration for the Prophet and the early period of Islam. The Prophet became an example of the virtuous life to be followed, which might have indirectly brought a growing respect for his descendants.

In addition, the weakening of the powerful and leading families in the Arab lands and the destruction of all the other important chiefs of Arabia left the Grand Sherif of Mecca the only notable Arab chief in the Asiatic provinces.

Hand in hand with that, the Grand Sherifs themselves started to put forward a claim to be the true descendants of the Prophet and in some sense the spiritual leaders of the Muslim world.[1]

The enchanced prestige of the Grand Sherif on the one hand and the shaken confidence of a wide section of Muslim public opinion in the Arab lands in the Caliphate of the sultan and a desire to limit his powers on the other, both served to promote the idea of an Arab Caliphate in the person of the Grand Sherif.

That Ismail and the Grand Sherif worked for an Arab Caliphate may be implied from two pieces of evidence which in themselves cannot be regarded as

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[1] Hourani, Arabic Thought, p. 270.

conclusive but because of the secret nature of such activities, their existence cannot be disregarded. Firstly the British Ambassador, Elliot, in 1875 enquired of Safvet, the Turkish Foreign Minister at that time, about a rumour that Ismail Pasha was going to receive the concession for the administration of Yemen, but Safvet denied this exclaiming, "This would be the first step to the end of the Kaliphate."[1]

Secondly, it is alleged that a secret society existed, the centre of which was Medina, which had as its object the restoration of the Caliphate to the Arabs of the Hijaz. Each member of this society was required to swear an oath on the tomb of the Prophet to maintain secrecy of the existence of the society but at the same time to work for its objective. The foundation of this society was attributed to Grand Sherif Abdullah (1858-77). Our source does not mention the date of its foundation but as Abdullah died in 1877 it should therefore have been prior to this date.[2]

The idea of an Arab Caliphate was based not upon political considerations but upon an Islamic tenet. According to an authentic widely-known ḥadīth "the Caliphate is in Quraish" that is, the tribe of the Prophet

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1 Elliot-Derby, F.O. 78/2756, desp. 298, Constantinople, 20 June, 1875. See also Elliot to Granville, F.O. 78/2220, desp. 280 of 3 December, 1872.
2 Zohrab-Grenville, F.O. 78/3314, desp. 7 (Pol./Sec.), Jedda, 7 February, 1881.

and the Arab Caliphs. It follows that the sultan was a usurper of the office which he was using for political purposes. Indeed this ḥadīth became the motto of the opposition to the Ottoman Caliphate. It was so effective that when in the early Hamidian period the collection of ḥadīth, Saḥīḥ Muslim, was printed in Istanbul, the volume that included this ḥadīth was ordered to be collected from bookshops and destroyed.[1]

About the mid-eighteen seventies there was it seems among certain circles in Istanbul some resentment against the Grand Sherif. This appears from the publication of a book called Nawādir al-Usul fi ma'arifat akhbār al-Rasul (by Tirmidhi, a famous medieval Muslim tradition transmitter (muḥaddith)).[2] He interpreted some Qur'anic verses and traditions upon which the distinction of the Prophet's off-spring in the eyes of the Muslims was based. In his interpretation Tirmidhi denied the Prophet's off-spring any distinction based upon ancestry and put them on the same level as ordinary Muslims.[3]

The publication of the book was regarded by the

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1 K. al-Ghazzi, Nahr al-Dhahab fī tarikh Ḥalab, 3 vols. (Aleppo, n.d.), III, 500; the same happened with a book by 'Abdulghani al-Nabulsi entitled al-Ṭariqa al-Muhammadiya which was collected from bookshops because the same ḥadīth appeared in it. (See [Muwailiḥi], Ma Hunālika (Cairo, 1896), p. 19f; cf. also Dah. Irad. no. 80948 dated Rec. 20, 1304).

2 Istanbul 1293/1876.

3 See Nawādir al-Usul, pp. 263-266.

Sherifian family as an attack upon them and a young Arab ʿālim of Palestine, Yusuf al-Nabhāni, who was working in Istanbul at that time, was asked by one of the Sherifs to write in his family's defence.[1] Nabhāni wrote a book in their praise refuting the arguments of Tirmidhi, and glorified the Arabs as founders of Islam, and Quraish, the tribe of the Prophet.[2] But even though the book was finished in 1298/1880-1, Nabhāni dared not at that time publish it in Istanbul or elsewhere and it was eleven years later that it was eventually published in Beirut.[3]

It was perhaps in the later 1870's that a book in defence of the Ottoman Caliphate was published, ascribed to a Turkish ʿālim, Munif Effendi, who was later to become a Minister of Education. In this book, possibly the first in a series of books and pamphlets of this sort, the story of the institution of the Caliphate was told, asserting its obligations and duties and justifying the rights of the Ottoman Sultan for it.[4]

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[1] Y. Nabhāni, Jami' Karāmāt al-Awliyā', 2 vols. (Cairo, A.H. 1329), II, 333. For the life of Nabhāni see Biṭār, III, 1612; see also Nabhāni, op. cit., II, 332.

[2] The book was entitled al-Sharaf al-Mu'abbad li āl-i Muhammad (Beirut, A.H. 1309), see pp. 2-5, 41f., 88-95.

[3] Nabhāni, op. cit., II, 333.

[4] G. Charms, "La Situation de la Turquie I" in R.d.d.M., November 1881, p. 742. In the list which Brusali gives of Munif Pasha's writings, such a book is not found (see O.M., II, 428f.).

4. Sultan Abdulhamid and the Caliphate

In his memoirs, the British Ambassador Sir Henry Layard, who during his mission of about three years in Istanbul (1877-80), appears to have been close to Sultan Abdulhamid II, had the following to say about the Sultan's Caliphate:

> "There is no question on which the Sultan was more susceptible than that of his position as Caliph. He deeply resented any attempt to question it and one of his principal aims was how to uphold it. This was the key to much of his domestic and foreign policy . . . His fear of losing his supreme influence and power as Caliph over the Mohammedans in all parts of the world instigated and controlled most of his actions . . . In his intimate conversations with me he frequently gives me to understand that he considered his inheritance as Caliph as even more sacred than that to which he succeeded as sovereign of the Ottoman Empire . . ."[1]

The Caliphate was a source of much power to the Sultan and Abdulhamid was clearly determined to hold tightly to it, for to lose the one might mean losing the other. On the other hand the forces that deposed Sultan Abdulaziz because of his tendency towards absolutism were equally determined to put checks upon the power of the Sultan. How these checks were to be imposed seems to have divided the group, some like the young general Süleyman Hüsnü Pasha advocating a constitution, others like Muterjim Rushdi and Huseyn Avni opposing this method.[2] All we know

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[1] VIII, 181a, 181b.

[2] S. Hüsnü, Hiss-i Inkilab (Istanbul, A.H. 1326), pp. 60-63. See also Mardin, p. 70f.; Uzunçarşılı, Midhat Paşa, p. 123.

is that they were concerned to restore power to the Porte,[1] but the method whereby they were to guarantee this is not known. However, the hand of the constitutionalists was strengthened it seems due to the tragic death of Avni two weeks after the coup and a little later by the rise of Abdulhamid whom they feared.

Abdulhamid suspected that there was a faction among the forces that deposed his uncle who were possibly working against him also. In December 1876 " a division or a brigade" of the Egyptian army, led by Ismail's son Hasan, arrived in Istanbul apparently at the invitation of the Grand Vezir, Muterjim Rushdi, in preparation for the war with Russia. They were lodged in a military barracks in the city taking the place of a Turkish division which on the arrival of the Egyptian troops was sent to the Danube on the pretext that as it was winter the Egyptian soldiers would be unable to withstand the cold. The Sultan suspected that their presence in Istanbul was part of preparations to depose him especially when on the day that Sultan Abdulaziz was deposed, a brigade of Syrian soldiers had arrived in Istanbul. He ordered the Grand Vezir to send the Egyptians out of Istanbul and when he refused the Sultan dismissed him.[2]

If it is true that there was a plot against

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1 Hüsnü, loc. cit.; cf. Mardin, p. 72f.

2 Uzunçarşılı, Midhat Paşa, pp. 126f., 128 n. 221.

Abdulhamid, this event shows the extent to which he suspected Ismail of being in league with some circles of the higher bureaucracy in Istanbul. It is also good evidence that he could not feel secure without having greater control over Egypt.[1]

It may have been the sultan's intention to replace Ismail with Prince Haleem, Ismail's uncle and at one time heir presumptive to the Khedivate. Ismail however had succeeded in changing the system of inheritance in favour of his elder son. Whether or not Ismail was aware of the Sultan's intentions the fact that Abdulhamid succeeded in consolidating his position and seizing full power may have alarmed him more than he had been in the early seventies. In the light of this we can possibly better understand his activities in Syria and Yemen in the later eighteen seventies. In this respect we are told that Ismail sent emissaries to Syria to arouse a rebellion against the sultan[2] and that there was a "strong tendency for annexation to Egypt" especially among the Muslims.[3] As we have seen in the preceding chapter there was much

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[1] Over the Sherifate of Mecca, see appendix.

[2] Uzunçasılı, op. cit., pp. 131, 132 n. 229. About Egyptians visiting Syria who were probably agents of Ismail see Thamarāt, 18 July, 1878, 30 June, 1879.

[3] Skene-Elliot, F.O. 195/1113, desp. 6, Aleppo, 11 February, 1876; Eldridge-Elliot, F.O. 195/1067, desp. 54 (Secret and Confidential), Beirut, 28 December, 1875; Eldridge-Layard (Private), Layard Papers, 38019, 21 March, '78; Eldridge-Derby, F.O. 195/1201, desp. 24 (Polit. Confd.), Beirut 26 March, 1878.

discontent among the Syrians which Ismail it seems endeavoured to turn to his own advantage. If he were to control Syria, this would create serious difficulties for the sultan's continued assumption of the Caliphate because Syria was the key to the Holy Cities of Islam. This is possibly what Ismail was aiming at.

After the war with Russia ended, Sultan Abdulhamid moved to achieve his aim. In the summer of 1878 he invited Khair al-Din, ex-Grand Vezir of Tunis to come to Istanbul. Significantly, it was reported that Prince Haleem played a certain role in this matter.[1] It was, however, a calculated policy on the part of the Sultan.[2] Khair al-Din was the architect of the rapprochement between Tunis and the Porte in 1871[3] and a firm believer in the need to strengthen the ties between the dependent states (i.e. Egypt and Tunis) and Istanbul, and to close the door to European intervention in those countries.[4] Some two months after the arrival of Khair al-Din in Istanbul, the Sultan appointed him Grand Vezir in spite of his being "a stranger and almost a foreigner . . . [who] was scarcely acquainted with the Turkish language."[5]

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1 Thamarāt, 24 October, 1878.

2 It was reported that Shaikh Zafir al-Madani of Tripoli in North Africa and close to Abdulhamid was the one on whose advice Khair al-Din was called (Inal, II, 898; Layard, Memoirs, VIII, f.11b.).

3 I.A., V, 392f.; Davison, p. 275, Hourani, Arabic Thought, p. 85.

4 Ibid., p. 86.

5 Layard, op. cit., f.46a. See also The Times of 5 December, 1878, p. 51, 5 July, 1879, p. 7c, 10 September, 1878, p. 10a.

It is probably no accident that Ismail was deposed on 26 June, 1879, during the Grand Vezirate of Khair al-Din. Whilst in the past, the European powers had stood between the sultan and the viceroys, in the case of Ismail in the later seventies both England and France were against him and approved the Sultan's action. Despite their approval of the deposition of Ismail they were apparently opposed to Abdulhamid appointing Prince Haleem to the post of viceroy.[1] Nevertheless, Abdulhamid had lost nothing by deposing Ismail and this act, we might assume, marked the final stage in the consolidation of his power.

However, agitation in the Arab provinces continued for a while. "The Arab movement is gaining ground" wrote Layard early in 1880.[2] It was also his belief that Palace quarters were not ignorant that there were secret attempts "to induce the Arab population of the Empire to transfer their allegiance from the House of Osman to the Sherif of Mecca."[3] In a private letter to Lord Salisbury, Layard touched on the question again. He spoke of an idea prevalent among "certain musulmans and no doubt extends to the Arabs that . . . it would be

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1 For Abdulhamid's intention see Blunt, Gordon at Khartoum, p. 302; Mustafa, p. 205.

2 Layard-Salisbury, Salisbury Papers, Vol. A/17, letter 93, 25 February, 1880.

3 Same-same, F.O. 78/3038, desp. 344 (sec.) Constantinople, 26 March, 1880.

to the advantage of Islam to replace the Sultan by the Sherif of Mecca who would then universally be accepted as the . . . true Caliph."[1]

At about mid-March 1880, Grand Sherif Husein while on a visit to Jedda was stabbed by an old man of Afghan origin, and died the next day . The motive behind this action is likely to have been one of personal revenge[2] rather than to have been from political reasons. But at the time it was interpreted as having political motives. Writing one year after the event, a French reporter, G. Charms, stated that "all well-informed people" explained it by the involvement of Sherif Husein in the bid to "separate between Caliphate and Sultanate."[3]

In the light of these events, we can possibly understand the policy of Sultan Abdulhamid towards the Arabs and especially towards Syria and the Grand Sherifate in the next decade or two of his reign.

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1 Layard-Salisbury, Salisbury Papers, Vol. A/17, letter 98, 24 March, 1880; see also same-same, F.O. 78/3081, desp. 182 (sec.), Constantinople, 9 February, 1880.

2 See Siba'i, II., 170

3 G. Charms, "La situation de la Turquie," I, R.d.d.M., 1881, p. 741.

APPENDIX

SULTAN ABDULHAMID II AND THE GRAND SHERIFS OF MECCA (1880-1900)

At first sight the policy of Sultan Abdulhamid II towards the Grand Sherifs of Mecca appears inconsistent and even contradictory. On the one hand he started his reign with the intention of substituting Istanbul's authority for that of the Grand Sherif. But during his rule he relaxed the application of this policy to the extent that the Grand Sherif was able to restore many of his prerogatives and powers. How then is both this apparent inconsistency and policy to be explained?

Before attempting to answer these questions it is necessary to outline the prerogatives and powers of the Grand Sherif on the eve of the Hamidian rule.

1. The Powers and Prerogatives of the Grand Sherif at the End of the Tanzimat Period

Before the Tanzimat and indeed before the advent of the Wahhabis in 1805 the Grand Sherif enjoyed complete autonomy in Hijaz. In a firman issued in the year A.H. 1010 (= 1601-2) on the occasion of the coming into office of a new Grand Sherif we read that the Sultan bestowed upon him "the governorship of those places [i.e. Hijaz]

with all the troops in them; all the higher and lower functionaries offices and ranks...are charged to...Sherif Abu Talib...whom we appointed in that position in substitution for us".[1] On another occasion we find that the domain of the Grand Sherif was defined as "from Khaibar to Ḥali" which included the whole of Hijaz except Jedda which was under the government of Istanbul.[2]

This state of affairs passed through a radical change under Muhammad 'Ali who appointed a military governor for Mecca and subjugated the Grand Sherif to his will. With the restoration of Ottoman rule in 1840 the Porte following the new policy of reform of putting the provinces of the empire under a uniform and centralized rule, instituted a new practice whereby a Vali for Hijaz was appointed who took up residence in Mecca where he had a considerable number of troops under his command.[3] Thus after the Tanzimat period there was a duality in the government of Hijaz. This last phase of the Sherifate was marked by the wish of the central government to limit the prerogatives and powers of the Grand Sherif while the later was determined to preserve them.

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1 Dahlan, p. 62; Hamza, Qalb Jazirat al-'Arab (Cairo, 1933), p. 312. M. Abdul Bari, "The Early Wahhabis and the Sherifs of Makkah" in J.P.H.S. III (1955) pp. 91-92.

2 Dahlan, p. 55.

3 In previous centuries however there existed a small Ottoman garrison in Mecca but according to the above firman it should have been under the command of the Grand Sherif.

However, the Tanzimat statesmen found it either inexpedient or inadvisable to abolish the Grand Sherifate possibly out of veneration for Grand Sherif and because he was indispensable for the success of the annual Haj celebrations and the safety of the pilgrims. For it was a matter of great satisfaction to the Ottoman dynasty that Hijaz was within its dominions, and the Sultans were proud to carry the title of "servant of the two sanctuaries". Thus it was a sacred duty for them to ensure the performance of the Haj celebrations in full and to secure the safety of the participants.

But the pilgrim's routes (Jedda-Mecca-Medina-Yanbu' and back) passed through areas inhabited by bedouin tribes without whose co-operation the pilgrim's caravans would suffer much hardship and loss of life, if indeed they were permitted to pass at all. These tribes detested all authority, not least the newly established Turco-Ottoman, but they were traditionally subject to the influence and even in some cases to the control of the Grand Sherif.

Had the Porte abolished the Grand Sherifate, it would have been extremely costly for it in terms of troops and money to control Hijaz effectively enough to safeguard annually the performance and termination of the Haj successfully. This meant that the Grand Sherifate was a

necessity and due largely to this reason the Grand Sherif of Mecca was the only chief in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire who survived the Tanzimat policy--a fact of undoubted importance in the future history of the area.

The Grand Sherif not only survived but also succeeded in retaining many of his prerogatives and powers and was able to keep the Vali in a secondary position, a matter which shocked some of the Valis of the post-Tanzimat period. There were several reasons for their successes. The Grand Sherif was not so weak in face of the Ottoman Vali or the pressure of the Porte as might be thought. The bedouin tribes were a weapon in his hands. To make the road between Jedda and Mecca unsafe for instance would irritate any Vali and force him to compromise with the sherif. In addition, the Grand Sherifs of the 'Awn clan had maintained close ties with the viceroys of Egypt since the days of Muhammad 'Ali. In these viceroys the sherifs found their best protectors at Istanbul throughout the Tanzimat period.

There was yet another factor which helped the Grand Sherif to keep most of his powers in Mecca in his hands. Osman Pasha, a governor of Hijaz from 1881-1886, complained in a memorandum to the Sultan that "most of the Valis [before him] did not take upon themselves to put the Grand Sherif in his proper place. Those who

wished to do so, have been recalled and the matter remained where it was".[1] In many cases we may safely attribute the recall of such Valis to the pressure of the Grand Sherifs or to the intervention of their protectors at Istanbul. But even accepting that all Valis were equally eager and equally persistent in applying the Porte's policy, the fact that they served for short periods while the Grand Sherif was there for life undoubtedly helped the later to keep control of his wide prerogatives.

In his memorandum Osman Pasha stated that in the investiture firman of the Grand Sherif "no limits or conditions are set to his prerogatives and functions".[2] From this memorandum we learn that the Grand Sherif was still the highest authority in Mecca and that the authority of the Vali was indeed narrow. This judgement of Osman was generally confirmed by the observations of Muhammad Bayram, a Tunisian traveller who visited Mecca two years before the arrival of Osman.[3]

In any case according to Osman Pasha the Grand Sherif controlled, apart from bedouin affairs, the social and economic life of Mecca. One of his prerogatives was to appoint the Muḥtasib, the Shaikhs of the guilds, and the Shaikhs of the quarters of Mecca and he was the

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1 B.A. Yıl. Ev. 31/991-22.

2 Ibid.

3 See Bayram Ṣafwat al-I'tibar, 5 vols. (Cairo, 1302-1311), V, 12-15.

ultimate administrator of the endowments of the Haram (the great Mosque of Mecca). It was his prerogative to appoint the Naqib al-Ashraf,[1] the muftis of the four schools through whom he controlled the ulema of the city. The Grand Sherif also possessed judicial functions, and dispensed justice.[2] In addition he had his own police-guards known as Bawardis (rifle carriers) who used to police the town.

Undoubtedly, the Tanzimat statesmen were aware of the weakness of the Vali's position in Hijaz. This moved them to try and tie the Grand Sherif more to the Ottoman system and to narrow his prerogatives. Thus in addition to appointing a Vali in Mecca the sultan also began to make the direct appointment of the Grand Sherif.[3] In the late eighteen forties the Porte began to grant the sons of Muhammad ibn 'Awn, the incumbent Grand Sherif, the title of Pasha.[4] Later the heir to the Sherifate was ordered to take up his residence in Istanbul where he

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[1] This was the head of the Sayyids i.e. descendants of Husein the grandson of the Prophet. The Grand Sherif and the Sherifian clans were descendants of Husein's elder brother, Hasan.

[2] Especially in criminal offences undefined by the shari'a and thus beyond the functions of the qaḍī.

[3] During the pre-Muhammad 'Ali period there was occasional interference in the appointment of the Grand Sherif especially through the Emir of the Ḥaj caravan of Damascus or Egypt but this was not the rule; normally the Grand Sherif inherited his position or was appointed by an oligarchy of Sherifs in Mecca, and confirmed by firman.

[4] Dahlan, p. 314.

lived on a large stepend and was appointed a member of the Council of State (Şura-ı Devlet). It appears moreover, that by this time Medina was no longer following the Grand Sherif as had been the case previously but was governed by an Ottoman governor under the Vali of Hijaz.[1]

The Grand Sherifs of Mecca, then, lost their autonomy in the Tanzimat period and apparently lost their control over Medina. Nevertheless they still held wide powers. This matter was of great concern to Sultan Abdulhamid especially on the light of Grand Sherif Husein's suspected intentions which have been discussed in a previous chapter.

Moreover by virtue of their control over the Haram of Mecca (Ka'aba), and of their organization and supervision of the annual Haj celebrations the Grand Sherifs came in contact with many Muslim princes and dignitaries from all over the Muslim world who were regarded by them with reverence and esteem.[2] As visits of such dignitaries increased after the second quarter of the century due mainly to the advent of steamership, the reputation and esteem of the Grand Sherif in the Muslim world also increased. The Grand Sherif thus held a privileged position and this was another question of concern

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1 Cf. Bayram, V, 12-15.

2 Cf. S. Faris, The Decline of British Prestige in the East (London 1887), pp. 136-137; see also M. Abdul Bari, pp. 92-93.

for the Sultan.

2. Sultan Abdulhamid and the Grand Sherifate

Ahmet Muhtar Pasha, the conqueror and governor of San'a in the early seventies and later commissioner to Egypt for many years, wrote to the Sultan "on various occasions" and warned him of the Grand Sherifate as "a source of much trouble (iğtişaşat)", and counselled his master to remove the Grand Sherif from Mecca to Istanbul and to transfer the administration of the province of Hijaz completely into the hands of the Vali.[1]

But Sultan Abdulhamid was a more cautious politician than that. To transfer the Grand Sherif to Istanbul would not have been a prudent act because he might have become a focus for discontented opinion and a centre of intrigue. Moreover it would be interpreted as a preliminary step to abolish the Grand Sherifate and would arouse the vexation of a great many of the Sultan's subjects if not a large section of world Muslim opinion, and it would be used as a weapon in the hands of his enemies. Thus, taking the advice of Jevdet Pasha, the Sultan prefered to keep the Sherif in Mecca,[2] but decided at the same time to deal with the question in a manner different from that of the Tanzimat period.

Sultan Abdulhamid was concerned about the

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1 B.A. Yıl. Ev. 11/1165.

2 Ibid.

Sherifate because a Grand Sherif in such a strong position could be a danger to his assumed character of Universal Caliph of the Muslims and the only guardian and protector of the faith. He was extremely sensitive to any possibility of attack on this role which formed an important basis of his internal policy and the corner stone of his Islamic policies. Being undoubtedly aware that more than one Grand Sherif in the previous few decades, had cherished hopes of the Caliphate and possibly worked for it, he wished to prevent any repetition and to impede the way of potential claimants or rivals for the title.

One of the aims of Abdulhamid's Pan-Islamic policy was to gain the devotion of the Indian Muslims for him as Caliph and their adherence and support for the Ottoman Empire should it be threatened by Great Britain. Some British officials were aware of the repurcussions of this policy among the Muslims of India and of the probability that their loyalty to the Queen might be undermined. Several of these officials believed that Britain would be justified in countering this policy of the Sultan, using the Grand Sherif as a weapon. If assisted by England and provided with protection he were to declare himself caliph, a great many Indians would regard his Caliphate more legitimate than the Sultan's. And without control of the Holy cities the Sultan's claim for the leadership of Islam

would be weak.[1]

It is doubtful however whether the British Government gave any serious consideration to the proposal at this stage. But Sultan Abdulhamid was under such an impression. He told the British Ambassador in the spring of 1880 that England was "wishing to acquire the Hijaz, as by possessing the Holy cities of Mecca and Medina she could more easily maintain her rule over her vast Mussulman population in India.[2] In fact throughout his reign Sultan Abdulhamid continued to suspect England of such intentions though his suspicions were most probably unfounded. In 1891 for instance, when his Caliphate was widely recognized and secure from rivals, the Sultan telegraphed the Vali of Hijaz to enquire whether, as had come to his knowledge, England was secretly conspiring with the Grand Sherif so that he would revolt and proclaim himself Caliph.[3] Thus, Sultan Abdulhamid regarded it most necessary to establish a strong rule by the central government in Hijaz, to break the power of the Grand Sherif, and by degrading his status render him harmless.[4]

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1 Zohrab-Alston F.O. 78/3131 (private letter) dated Cairo 12 January 1880. See also Moncrieff-Granville F.O. 539/21 desp. 9 (confd.) Jedda 10 May 1882. See also Moncrieff-Sanderson F.O. 195/1415 private letter dated Jedda 19 August, 82. See also The Times of 12 June 1877, p. 8; cf. W.S. Blunt, Gordon at Khartoum (London 1912), p. 333.

2 Layard--F. Minister. F.O. 424/99, desp. 461 (secret) conple 27 April 1880.

3 B.A. Yıl. Per. Ev. 1308/2653.

4 See B.A. Yıl. Ev. 31/1721-2.

3. The Zaids and the 'Awns

On receiving the news of the assassination of Grand Sherif Husein, Sultan Abdulhamid appointed to the post Sherif Abdulmuttalib of the Zaid clan of Mecca, an old enemy and rival of the 'Awns. The new Grand Sherif had already served in the early 1850s in the same capacity, but following his revolt against the Sultan during the Crimean war he had been deposed and removed to Istanbul where he had remained ever since.[1]

The Sultan was at the time cautioned against Abdulmuttalib. Layard, the British ambassador who preferred to see an 'Awn in the position of Grand Sherif reminded the Sultan that Abdulmuttalib "was known to be at the head of a party which had been the cause of serious disasters to Turkey...".[2] Mahmud Nedim Pasha, who enjoyed at the time the confidence of the Sultan also warned his master against this appointment,[3] his opinion concerning Abdulmuttalib being known from a memorandum written a little later. In it Mahmud Nedim reminded the Sultan of Abdulmuttalib's revolt in 1855, that he was in league with Husein 'Awni Pasha and Midhat Pasha in deposing Sultan Abdulaziz, that Namık Kemal was under his influence when he

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1 See above, pp. 124ff.

2 Layard-Salisbury F.O. 424/97, desp. 342, Istanbul 25 March 1880.

3 Thus he "sent to tell" Layard at the time. See Layard-Salisbury F.O. 424/97, desp. 359 (secret) Istanbul, 29 March 1880.

(i.e. Kemal) hinted during the last Grand Vezirate of Midhat that the Caliphate should be restored to its origin (meaning to Quraish), and that Abdulmuttalib should be elevated to it.[1]

Sultan Abdulhamid undoubtedly knew all this, but still he refrained from appointing an 'Awn (or some other from a third clan) to the post of Grand Sherif, and in spite of Abdulmuttalib's old age (he was almost ninety), the old man was appointed. By doing so, Abdulhamid proved once again his high political skill.

First of all it was probably an opportunity for him to remove Abdulmuttalib from Istanbul, his presence there in the recent past having proved to be an annoyance to the Ottoman dynasty.[2] Secondly, by once again putting the Zaid clan in power in Mecca, the Sultan hoped that the two rival clans would confront each other, and ultimately the only winner as a consequence of their struggle would be the Ottoman authorities. Having this aim in mind he ordered Abdulmuttalib "to subject them to

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1 B.A. Yıl. Ev. 15/1126.

2 It is interesting to note that Abdulmuttalib was to be transported to Hijaz on board the Sultan's Yacht "Izzedin" (cf. Layard, desp. 361 of 30 March 1880, Siba'i, II, 170) but his predecessor Husein, when he was appointed Grand Sherif in 1877 was refused transport by the Sultan and he had to travel on his own. Reaching Egypt however, Ismail Pasha received him with the due respect and provided him with a special steamer which took him to Jedda. (See al-Jawaib No. 884 of 12 August and No. 889 of 13 September 1877; cf. Sami, Taquim al-Nil, III, pt. 3, p. 1533.

observation and examination",[1] which however he was unable to do since the leaders of the 'Awns escaped from Mecca on his arrival. They returned only after his authority had been undermined.[2]

All through the months between the death of Sherif Husein and the arrival of Abdulmuttalib, Ottoman authorities in Hijaz took, it seems, no measures against the 'Awns. There is no evidence either that they investigated the activities of the deceased Grand Sherif. This marked inactivity showed that they had no intention of weakening the 'Awns thus making life easier for the Zaid Grand Sherif.

Abdulmuttalib reached Mecca in early Summer 1880 accompanied by three batallions as reinforcements for the troops in Hijaz.[3] No sooner had he reached Mecca than he started to remove the supporters of the 'Awn clan "from their posts to make room for the partisans of the new ruler";[4] similar steps were taken among some of the tribes.[5] It was natural for such steps to arouse much

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1 B.A. Yıl. Ev. 31/73-9.

2 It is interesting to note that Professor I.H. Uzunçarşılı in his essay "Hicaz Vali Ve Kumandanı Osman Nuri Paşanın. . . [ve] Abdülmuttalib'i Azletmesi" in Belleten, X, July 1946, p. 499, attributed his appointment to the wish of Sultan Abdulhamid to "crush" those who deposed Sultan Abdulaziz since Abdulmuttalib according to him was against them.

3 Layard-Salisbury, F.O. 424/97, desps. 342 and 361, Istanbul 25 and 30 March 1880 respectively.

4 Burrel-Goschen, F.O. 195/1313, desp. 14 (pol.) Jedda, 1880; Siba'i, II, 172f.

5 B.A. Dahiliye İradeleri No. 64930.

opposition which Abdulmuttalib then tried to suppress highhandedly.[1] Moreover, because of his extreme old age, he was unable to supervise sufficiently the daily affairs of the Sherifate, their administration being left in the inexperienced hands of one of his young sons and of his secretary. Again due to his difficult nature it was not easy for the Valis to get along with him. Being alienated from him they did not hesitate to give their sympathy and support to the 'Awns who, as distinct from Abdulmuttalib, treated them with tact and deference.[2]

In a similar way some other high dignitaries in the city were alienated from the Grand Sherif.[3] Thus before the first year of Abdulmuttalib's Grand Sherifate ended, the 'Awns were able to gather strength and move into the offensive. In their struggle for power they neglected no means whereby to harass Abdulmuttalib and at the end have him deposed and humilated.[4]

The first major act of opposition to Abdulmuttalib

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[1] Cf. Dahlan, p. 328.

[2] See for instance the case of Safvet Pasha who was Vali in 1880-81 and who began his tenure with a most friendly disposition towards Abdulmuttalib and ended it as his bitter enemy. (See Dahlan--ibid. and Zohrab-Granville, F.O. 539/19, desp. 18 (sec. and pol.) Jedda 23 December 1880 incls. 1.

[3] Siba'i, II, 171; see also the case of the Hanafi Mufti al-Sarraj (ibid., incls. 2).

[4] In the course of this struggle two sons of Abdulmuttalib who might have inherited the Sherifate after him died mysteriously and he suspected the 'Awns and their allies in the matter but no evidence was shown. (Zohrab-Granville, F.O. 78/3314, desps. 5 and 8 (pol.) Jedda 21 January and 11 February 1881 respectively).

was the despatch of a petition signed by four hundred Meccans to the Sultan.[1] At the same time disorder in the country increased as a result of troublesome movements of some bedouin tribes.[2] But what apparently alarmed the Sultan and moved him to take strong measures were the rumours that started to circulate at about the same time (Summer of 1881) as Midhat and the other banished Istanbul politicians arrived at their prison in Taif. One such rumour for instance was that the British were planning trouble in Hijaz and bribing the sheikhs of the bedouin tribes and that "this time one million English pounds were sent with the object of spreading disorder and inciting the population".[3] Another rumour was that Muhammed al-Mahdi, the head of the Sanusi order in Cyrenaica "who was on friendly relations with the Grand Sherif"[4] was heading for Jedda on his way to Mecca with ten thousand followers.[5] The Vali, Safvet Pasha (not the Foreign Minister and Grand

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[1] Moncrieff-Granville, F.O. 78/3314, desp. 21 pol/confd. Jedda 25 August 1881. A copy of the petition inclosed.

[2] Zohrab-Granville, F.O. 78/3314, desps. 15 and 16 (pol.) Jedda 28 May and 11 June 1881 respectively.

[3] B.A. Yıl. Ev. 13/1503, for the instructions given to the new C-in-C of Hijaz, Osman Nuri Pasha dated 27 Zilkade 1298 (= 22 October 1881).

[4] Ibid. It is believed however that Muhammed b. 'Ali al-Sanusi the father of the above mentioned and the founder of the order was acquainted with Abdulmuttalib during the later's Grand Sherifate in the early eighteen fifties. See Bustani, Dairat al-Mearif, X, 147.

[5] See B.A. Yıl. Ev. 31/1306-12 dated 19 Zilkade 1298 (= 14 October 1881), cf. Dufferin-Granville, F.O. 539/20, desp. 907 (confd.) Istanbul 13 October 1881.

Vezir but a military man)[1] became alarmed and telegraphed Istanbul accusing Abdulmuttalib of conducting a mischievous relationship with the Sanusi.[2]

It is difficult to know what measure of truth there was in these rumours. However a few months before these charges appeared, the Grand Sherif in a letter to the palace accused the 'Awns of spreading sedition and intrigue.[3] On receiving such information the Ministry of War recommended to the Sultan that he should send a trusted official to investigate the matter but meanwhile to re-inforce the army in Hijaz. The Sultan however despatched the young and tough general, Osman Nuri Pasha, entrusted with a "special mission" and accompanied by two thousand more troops[4] thus bringing the number of troops in Hijaz alone to five thousand regulars and five hundred irregular cavalry.[5] Osman who was appointed first as C.-in-C. was a little later appointed Vali.

But we have no evidence that Osman Pasha set himself to investigate these allegations. Nor does an aide-de-camp of the Sultan who reached Hijaz a fortnight

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1 See S.O. III, 231.

2 B.A. Yıl. Ev. 31/1306-12.

3 Ibid., 31/73-9.

4 Ibid., 31/1306-12; Moncrieff-Granville, F.O. 78/3314 desp. 24 Jedda 12 November 1881; cf. I.H. Uzunçarşılı op. cit. Belleten X, July 1946, p. 502.

5 Moncrieff-Granville, F.O. 539/21, desp. 6 (confd.) Jedda 7 April 1882. In Asir and Yeman there were additional nine thousand regulars.

before Osman seem to have investigated them. Instead, he declared measures "by the command of His Majesty" curtailing some of the powers and prerogatives of the Grand Sherif.[1] Osman Pasha later followed the same path and recommended to the Sultan that he should even further decrease the powers of the Sherifate. In other words the "crisis" was used to degrade the office of the Grand Sherif rather than to investigate if there had been a breach of loyalty on the part of its occupant.

4. Osman Nuri Pasha and Abdulmuttalib

The arrival of the aide-de-camp "was soon followed by a notice through the public crier of Mecca" that henceforth the Grand Sherif had no power to dispense justice in Mecca and that all responsibility for bedouin affairs was transfered from him to the Vali.[2]

But those measures were not satisfactory to Osman Pasha who, "credited with private orders from the Sultan", behaved in complete disregard of the Grand Sherif and controlled almost all the affairs of the country.[3] Two months after his arrival in Mecca he sent to the palace in Istanbul a thorough and detailed memorandum in which he

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1 Moncrieff-Granville, F.O. 539/20 incls. in desp. 25 (sec.) Jedda 19 November 1881.

2 Ibid.

3 Moncrieff-Granville, F.O. 539/21 desp. 6 confd. Jedda 7 April 1882; see also Abdulmuttalib's complaints to the Sultan in the same spirit, B.A. Yıl. Ev. 31/73-24 dated 17 Rec. 1299-= (5 June 1882).

advocated the limitation of the powers of the Grand Sherif.[1] "The prerogatives of the Grand Sherifate" he wrote "should be fixed and defined in a manner that would concord with the sacred rights of the exalted Sultanate",[2] which in fact meant stripping the Grand Sherif of all his ruling powers. Osman recommended that the Grand Sherif should have no judicial functions; should have no private army except a limited number of Zabtieh which the Vali would assign to him; should have no responsibility for the affairs of the great mosque (the Haram), not for the appointment of its personal nor for its endowments in Hijaz; should have no right to appoint the muftis of the four schools and the Naqib al-ashraf, and should have no right to appoint the Muḥtasib or the Shaikhs of the guilds, or the shaikhs of the various quarters of the town. All these prerogatives should pass to the Vali and the other Ottoman authorities. As to the affairs of the bedouin tribes, the right to appoint or dismiss their shaikhs should also pass to the hands of the Vali, but the distribution of their annual allowances should be made after consultation and agreement with the Grand Sherif.

These were drastic limitations of the Grand Sherifs prerogatives. Had they been successfully implemented, they

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1 See B.A. Yıl. Ev. 31/991-22, dated 3 Reb. II 1299 (22 February 1882).

2 Ibid.

would have left him with very little power at all. In fact the intention of Osman, as he himself "hinted", was "to do away with the Sherifate altogether or if that was not possible, to deprive the Grand Sherif of all secular powers and to leave him to enjoy his title and rank as a sort of high priest",[1] or we might say as a high dignitary revered but not feared.

Having such an image in mind, Osman in his memorandum was ready to assign to the Grand Sherif the honour of solving disputes among the bedouin tribes by peaceful means. Another right which he did not mention but presumably he meant to preserve among the Grand Sherif's functions was the organization of and the general supervision over the Haj celebrations.

The memorandum met it seems with favourable response at the palace, and the Sultan ordered that "the conditions and limitations" it suggested, should hereafter be stated in the firman of investiture of future Grand Sherifs and worked upon.[2] Meanwhile Osman assumed all authority in Hijaz. Abdulmuttalib resigned himself to his fate and his complaints to the Sultan about the Vali remained unheeded.[3]

The end was not far. Early in Summer 1882

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1 Abdulrazzak-Granville, F.O. 78/3532, desp. 20 (pol. and sec.) Jedda, 1883.

2 Ibid.

3 B.A. Yıl. Ev. 31/73-24.

Abdulmuttalib complained to the Sultan that the 'Awns had spread rumours of an expected change in the Grand Sherifate.[1] Later in the summer a courier was seized in Mecca carrying five letters bearing the seal of Abdulmuttalib and all dated 10 Shawwal 1899 (= 25 August 1882). One was addressed to the British consul in Jedda, another to Muhammed ibn Rashīd the independent ruler of Ḥa'il, the third to the chief Shaikh of the Harb tribe, and two to two leading sherifs of the Zaid party. The contents of the letters showed that there was an insurrection in preparation. Osman Pasha, without enquiring into the matter accused Abdulmuttalib of rebellious intentions "with the help of the British", arrested him and declared his desposition.[2] His report to the Sultan shows that he had standing orders for such an action. However, later investigation by a high jurist despatched from Istanbul showed that Abdulmuttalib himself had no hand in the matter and that the letters might have been a forgery by a member of his secretariat.[3] But it was too late. The

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1 Ibid.

2 B.A. Yıl. Ev. 31/73-35/1; cf. A. Haydar Midhat Life of Midhat Pasha (London, 1903), p. 239 and Sibā'i, II, 175.

3 B.A. Dahiliye Iradeleri No. 69860 and incls. 6 and 7; cf. Moncrieff-Granville, F.O. 195/145/ , desp. 13, Jedda 27 February 1883. In a previous despatch however the consul reported that the reason for the deposition of Abdulmuttalib was, according to rumours, his being in secret correspondence with 'Urabi Pasha of Egypt. (F.O. 195/1415, desp. 55 of 14 November 1882). Before that in mid-Summer, M. Nedim accused Abdulmuttalib in a memorandum to the Sultan of sending letters of encouragement to some of the ulema of the Azhar of the supporters of 'Urabi, see B.A. Yıl. Ev. 15/1126.

deposed old man was kept in confinement in Mecca until his death a few years later. Sherif 'Awn al-Rafiq the elder of the living 'Awn brothers was sent from Istanbul, where he was residing, to assume the post of Grand Sherif.

5. The Ascendency of Osman Nuri Pasha in Hijaz

Thus ended the first round of reducing the Grand Sherif and limiting his prerogatives, in which Osman was victorious. But although according to all evidence, he was a strong Vali and enjoyed the upper hand in Hijaz, his power was not secure because it was not based upon an adequate bureaucratic apparatus. It was first of all personal and based upon the force of his personality, and will, and the military force at his disposal. That is, it was his power not the power of his post. Real power and influence rested in the last resort in the Grand Sherifate because it still controlled the social and economic structure of Mecca, not to mention the bedouins. To depose a Grand Sherif and install another in his place was easy especially when Mecca was divided into two hostile factions. But to rule the country directly while the Grand Sherif was still controlling many sources of power was another matter.

Osman undoubtedly was aware of that. His memorandum had shown that he regarded it necessary, for the establishment of Turco-Ottoman rule in Hijaz on firm

bases, to put the Vali in control of the social and economic structure of the city and in charge of the bedouin affairs as well. But when he started to implement this policy he met with much resistence both from the Grand Sherif and from the people concerned. In the end he was recalled and all his achievements were reversed.

The Sultan was unquestionably pleased with Osman Pasha's achievements and no doubt wanted him to continue his task. In 1883 he honoured him with a silver medal of distinction. A year later he decorated him with the Mejidie medal of the first degree. Still a year later Osman was elevated to the rank of Mushir (Marshal) only four years after he had been raised to the rank of General.[1] This naturally enhanced his status and authority in Hijaz. But it seems that he needed further powers to implement his "reform" which aimed at reducing the Grand Sherifate into a cipher. Thus early in 1884 he had himself appointed as Guardian of the Great Mosque (Shaikh al-Haram) in Mecca in addition to his posts as Vali and Commancer-in-Chief.[2] This new post gave him direct control over the ulema and the functionaries of the Haram, who thus became dependent for their tenure of office and livelihood upon the favour

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1 For the life of Osman Nuri Pasha see B.A. Yıl. Ev. 16/2070 p. 7. Another short biography can be found in I.H. Uzunçarşılı, Midhat Paşa Ve Taif Mahkumları (Ankara, 1950), pp. 144-5.

2 Jago-Dufferin, F.O. 195/1482 desp. 8 (conf.), Jedda 5 March 1884.

with which they were regarded by the Vali.[1]

The new Grand Sherif, 'Awn al-Rafiq was aware of the disadvantages of his position. In such circumstances he would normally have sought the support of the viceroy of Egypt, but with the fall of Ismail and British control of Cairo, the Khedive could no longer play the role of protector for the Grand Sherif. Recognising this, 'Awn al-Rifiq refrained from challenging Osman and for the time being stood aside abstaining from everything but a very limited public activity. He declined to meet the public and only on Fridays allowed visitors to see him formally; and this an observer remarked, was because of Osman.[2] He abstained for instance from dispensing justice, even when people applied for his juridical consideration: some people from Taif, it was reported, waited six months in Mecca without being summoned by the Grand Sherif.[3] Osman on the other hand showed outward respect for the Grand Sherif and visited him once a week.[4]

But if Osman was not required to meet an open challenge on the part of the Grand Sherif, he faced it elsewhere--among the ulema and notables who did not wish to see an Ottoman Vali usurp what they regarded as the

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1 Jago-Granville, F.O. 195/1514, desp. 3 (conf. and pol.), Jedda 5 March 1885; cf. Yıl. Ev. 1303/916.

2 Snouck H. Mekka, 2 vols. (Haag 1888), I, 178-9. The author spent a few months in Mecca in the mid-eighteen eighties.

3 Ibid., p. 179.

4 Ibid., p. 181.

Grand Sherif's powers. The Grand Sherif, was their traditional ruler and the continuation of his rule was the only safeguard for the survival of their own values and traditions; moreover he was the symbol of their semi-independent status, and stood between them and the state of which apparently they were afraid. Thus depriving him of his ruling powers and influence was a matter of great concern for the Meccans. We might not be far from the truth if we assume that the more the Ottoman Government tried to strengthen its grip over Hijaz, the more local opinion ralied around the Grand Sherifate.

Our information about Osman's rule at this phase (between 1883-1886) is not sufficient to reconstruct his acts completely. However it might be sufficient to follow the broad lines of his policy which were intended to demonstrate to all concerned with whom authority and power lay.

Osman's first step was to strike at the notables, or as he "hinted" to the British vice consul "it was necessary to deprive all the influential men in Mecca and Jedda of the power to do evil".[1] Thus we find that eight ulema and notables had been sent into exile at this phase.[2] The agent of the Grand Sherif in Jedda, 'Umar Nasif a man

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[1] Abdulrazzak-Granville, F.O. 78/3532, desp. 20 (pol. and sec.), Jedda, 2 October 1883.

[2] B.A. Dahiliyeh Iradeleri No. 82266; they were pardoned only after the recall of Osman.

of much wealth and influence and a holder of a high medal granted by the Sultan[1] was accused of complicity in disturbances of some bedouin tribes and was sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment by Osman Pasha. However shortly afterwards he was pardoned by the Sultan and "invited" to go to Istanbul,[2] but he never recovered from this blow which was the start of the decline of his influence.[3] In addition Osman Pasha, it seems, used his control of the salaries and allowances of the ulema and sherifs as a means of pressure upon them.[4]

At the same time that Osman Pasha was exerting mounting pressure upon the ulema and notables, he also attempted to intimidate the bedouin tribes, especially the largest and strongest of them, the Banu Harb, who controlled the route between Mecca and Medina.[5] To the east of Hijaz lived another large tribe, the 'Utaiba, one part of which fell it seems under the influence of the Grand Sherif and was better disposed towards the authorities of Mecca than the Harb.[6] At this time an act of injustice

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1 Ibid., No. 69603.

2 Abdulrazzak-Granville, F.O. 195/1451, desp. 19 (pol.) Jedda 26 September 1883. See also Jago-Granville, F.O. 195/1514, desp. 3 (conf. and pol.) Jedda 5 March 1885; I.H. Uzunçarşılı Midhat Paşa Ve Taif Mahkumleri (Ankara 1950), p. 14, n.i.

3 Cf. Devey-Oconor, F.O. 195/2061, desp. 108, Jedda 27 December 1899, and same-same, F.O. 195/2083, desp. 9, Jedda 21 January 1900.

4 Cf. B.A. Yıl. Per. Ev. No. 1303/916.

5 For Harb see Hamza-Qalb pp. 139-143; Eyyub Sabri Mirāt-ul-Haremeyn, III, 277-280.

6 For 'Utaiba see Hamza pp. 179-182 and Sabri III, 281 cf. Jago-Duffrin, F.O. 195/1482, desp. 8 (conf.) Jedda 5 March 1884.

in favour of the 'Utaiba against the Harb was perpetrated by the authorities. Moreover Osman declined to grant the Harb their customary annual subsidies of grain, apparently as a further means of pressure. This and other acts aroused the Banu Harb (Summer 1883) and a major confrontation between them and the government troops assisted by the 'Utaiba looked to be imminent. But Grand Sherif 'Awn intervened in time to settle the conflict by peaceful means,[1] for in the long view it was contrary to his interests to see the Banu Harb defeated or weakened whatever their disposition towards him was. Later, however, Osman returned to his policy of pressure and intimidation, withholding grain subsidies and threatening to subjugate the Banu Harb and establish garrisons throughout their country, but he was recalled before he could implement such intentions.[2]

6. Local Reaction and the Fall of Osman

Such policies made Osman very unpopular in Hijaz and opposition to him started slowly to build up in Mecca. By the end of 1885 it became more active and more persistent.

Mecca, as any other traditional Muslim city, was divided into quarters each of which was headed by a shaikh

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1 Moncrieff-Granville, F.O. 78/3532, desp. 11 (pol.) Jedda, 22 July 1883; see also desp. 13 same-same of 10 August 1883.

2 Yıl. Per. Ev. 1303/1075; see also Jago-Granville, F.O. 195/1514, desp. 3 (conf. and pol.) Jedda, 5 March 1885.

appointed from its inhabitants by the Grand Sherif.[1] Through them he controlled the people of the city, a matter which formed one basis of his power in Mecca. Osman wished to penetrate this structure and assume control of the shaikhs of the quarters as he had stated in his memorandum about the prerogatives and powers of the Vali and the Grand Sherif.[2] Thus, he declared, in the Administrative Council of Mecca,[3] his intention to abolish this one-shaikh system and appoint three persons instead. But he met with much opposition. For the people of Mecca suspected that the aim behind this attempt of the Vali was to collect taxes and impose conscription.

Thus following Osman Pasha's declaration in the council, placards were stuck on the gates of the Haram attacking "the cursed Vali" and accusing him that "he intends to implement the Tanzimat in the Holy Land". Osman Pasha's intention of appointing three persons for each quarter, continued the placard, was "to carry out a census in order to collect "Werko" [Vergi--a tax] and to apply conscription". After calling upon "the people of Mecca . . . to awake" the placard declared that "a society had been

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1 H.Snouck, I, 188 and II (English translation), p. 138; cf. B.A. Yıl. Ev. No. 31/991-22.

2 See ibid.

3 The first time that a Meclis was established in Mecca was in 1869-70 by Muammar Pasha (Dahlan p. 325), but nothing is known about its activities. Osman Pasha might have revived the council.

established called the Islamic Society . . . whose aim is to break this Vali [who behaves] like Ceaser". It ended by enumerating some of Osman's injustices and threatened him with death; "the one who kills this man, will enter paradise without judgement".[1]

In spite of such threats no-one committed any violent act against Osman. However, the campaign against him took another form, that of exerting pressure upon the Sultan and Grand Sherif 'Awn, who for more than two years had refrained from clashing with Osman, took a leading part. He sent several letters and telegrams to the Sultan accusing the Vali, among other things, of not giving the tribe of Harb their annual allowances in full which led the later to prevent caravans from proceeding to Medina. He complained also of Osman's haughty and scornful behaviour towards the ulema and sherifs of Mecca.[2]

At the same time a petition signed by twenty seven leading ulema and sherifs was similarly sent to the Sultan. In it they complained of the oppression of the Vali and of the contemptuous manner in which they were treated by him. "Many ulema and notables" they stated, "had been imprisoned, tortured or exiled by various kinds

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1 A copy in H.Snouck, I, 222-224; see also p. 186.

2 B.A. Yıl. Per. Ev. 1303/1075; see also 1303/800 and Dahiliye Irad. 75317; cf. H.Snouck, I, 185.

of false accusations and without justice or charge". They also accused Osman of not paying the salaries and allowances usually granted to the dignitaries of Mecca. They ended by applying for the justice of the Sultan hinting that their other way out was to emigrate.[1]

On receiving these complaints the Sultan proposed to send a commission of inquiry.[2] But before this could be carried out, Grand Sherif 'Awn brought matters to a crisis. In the Autumn of 1886 he with his entire household and supporters left Mecca for Medina. From there he sent a delegation to the Sultan asking him either to release him from office or to recall Osman, for as long as the later remained in Mecca he was determined not to return there.[3] Sultan Abdulhamid sent a chamberlain to reconcile the two dignitaries but with no success.[4] He then decided to keep Grand Sherif 'Awn in office and transfered Osman to Aleppo (end of 1886). His recall was a sign that the policy of limiting the powers of the Grand Sherif had failed.

According to all evidence Osman served the intentions of his master well, but he lost for two main reasons. Being a military man he lacked the patience and touch of the trained bureaucrat. "Osman Pasha's word is

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1 B.A. Yıl. Per. Ev. 1303/916.

2 B.A. Dahiliye Irad. 79542/1; see also B.A., Mec. Mah. 3690.

3 H.Snouck, I, 184; Jago-White, F.O. 195/1547, desp. 29 Jedda 25 December 1886.

4 Ibid.

law in all matters great and small" it was reported.[1] The people of Hijaz were unaccustomed to such a rule. With his policy of controlling the ulema and notables and of intimidating the bedouins, Osman united Hijaz against him and behind the Grand Sherif.[2] Never since the 'Awns came to power under Muhammad 'Ali had they ever had so much support in Mecca.

The final test of power between the Vali and the Grand Sherif was not decided in Mecca but in Istanbul. One of the means by which Sultan Abdulhamid promoted loyalty to himself and consolidated his regime was to create links with prominent dignitaries in the Arab provinces (and presumably in other parts) through a close courtier he trusted. In this way, those dignitaries enjoyed an advantage over the Vali, because through this courtier they were able, in case of need, to have access to the centre of power while the Vali who normally had access only through the Porte, was for all practical purposes denied that privilege. In other words the Sultan was exposed to some degree to the influence of provincial dignitaries through officials of the palace. In the case of the Grand Sherif, the man in between was Sayyid Ahmed As'ad, originally from Medina and for long a friend of

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1 Jago-Granville, F.O. 185/1514, desp. 3 (conf. and pol.) Jedda 5 March 1885.

2 Cf.H.Snouck, I, 188.

the 'Awns.[1] Observers regarded him as the "paid agent" of the Grand Sherif and attributed the recall of Osman to "the great influence exercised by...[him] over the mind of the Sultan...".[2] This is probably a superficial explanation of what had taken place. Sayyid As'ad was primarily the agent of the Sultan. But the existence of such a system of personal interconnection made it possible for the Grand Sherif to have the ear of the Sultan before the Vali. However, in this case the Sultan had little choice but to appease the Grand Sherif and calm Hijaz.

7. The Ascendancy of Grand Sherif 'Awn and its Consequences

It was a fateful decision on the part of the Sultan because Grand Sherif 'Awn restored much of the lost powers of the Sherifate. No future Vali attempted to limit those powers or to challenge openly the supremacy of the Grand Sherif in Hijaz until the end of the Hamidian period and indeed (with one exception) until the end of Turkish rule. The weakest of those Valis was Ahmet Ratib Pasha who remained in the post for fourteen years (1894-1908) through all of which he was evidently dominated by the

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1 Cf. B.A. Dahiliye Irad. No. 60638; around 1896 A. As'ad gave his daughter in marriage to 'Awn's son, Muhammad 'Abdulaziz. See "Memorandum Respecting H.H. the Grand Sherif" of Devey the British Consul in Jedda in F.O. 195/2126 (1902), no date.

2 Richards-Clare Ford, F.O. 195/1767, desp. 52, Jedda, 16 December 1892.

Grand Sherif.[1]

On his return to Mecca, 'Awn Pasha ordered the inscription "The Office of the Grand Sherifate and the Exalted Government"[2] to be placed on his residence, a demonstration of his opposition to duality in the government of Hijaz. From then until his death in 1905 he ruled Hijaz leaving little for the Vali to do beyond commanding the troops.

This state of affairs was indirect contradiction of the policy adopted towards the Grand Sherifs in the preceding five years. That policy as mentioned had failed but its object still could be served by other means. What mattered it seems, for the Sultan, was not the powers that the Grand Sherif controlled but how he used them. The object of the Sultan was to make the occupant of the Grand Sherifate harmless to his cause. Grand Sherif 'Awn understood this and he did his best not to arouse the suspicions of the Sultan throughout his rule.[3] Moreover 'Awn Pasha proved to be, through unintentionally, most useful to the Sultan's assumed status as the universal Caliph of Islam.

Contemporaries who knew Grand Sherif 'Awn closely

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1 Richards-Currie, F.O. 195/1847, desp. 38, Jedda, 1 July 1894. Cf. Rifat Mirat al-Haramain, 2 vols. Cairo 1925, I, 185, n.

2 " دار الامارة الجليلةوالحكومة السنية " See H.Snouck, I, 185, n.

3 Ḥamza, p. 315.

enough described him as a very despotic and tyrannical in his behaviour, unscrupulous, and dominated by greed. He was further described as devoid of tact and administrative ability. All this made him much disliked by all classes in Hijaz. ulema, sherifs and shaikhs of bedouins were alienated from him because he did not treat them with the respect and consideration due to their rank and position[1] and because he did not distribute regularly and in full the allowances of grain and money granted by the central government[2]--the same tactics that Osman Pasha used, though probably from different motives.

In this way 'Awn alienated himself from his own base, from those who sided with him during his strife with Osman. Such a Grand Sherif, in spite of the powers that he enjoyed was much less dangerous than one who wished to be liked and respected by his people. No wonder then that Sultan Abdulhamid turned a deaf ear to all the complaints against 'Awn Pasha.

However contemporaries accused the Sultan of keeping 'Awn al-Rafiq as Grand Sherif for other reasons.

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1 Siba'i, II, 176ff.

2 Husein-Devey, F.O. 195/2148 (conf.) Jedda 8 October 1903, inclo. in desp. 94, 10 October 1903; cf. the memorandum of Devey respecting the Grand Sherif in F.O. 195/2126 (1902) and Al-Khilāfa no. 18 of 25 May 1900. See also a copy of a petition enclosed in Richards-Clare Ford F.O. 195/1805, desp. 3, Jedda, 27 January 1893, which prominent sherifs sent to the Sultan to complain about the treatment to which they had been subjected by the Grand Sherif.

'Awn Pasha, either from maladministration or more likely from greed for wealth, grossly abused his position. He did not hesitate to extort money from the pilgrims by forcing arbitrary charges upon them,[1] the expenses of performing the pilgrimage increased considerably as a result. His policy towards the bedouins enraged them to such a degree that safe travel almost disappeared and the pilgrims often suffered.[2] The complaints of the pilgrims to their governments and the protests of the ambassadors in Istanbul did not move the Sultan to act to stop such abuses.

Some newspapers in Egypt and India took up the issue against both the Sultan and the Grand Sherif.[3] I. al-Muwailihi, a well-known Egyptian journalist who lived in Istanbul for many years and was acquainted with some of the Sultan's entourage, thought that the aim of the Sultan in keeping Grand Sherif 'Awn was "to become known in public about the descendents of the Prophet, what we see and hear of shameful acts so that Muslims would feel a disgust for them and come to believe that they were good for nothing". The Sultan then "would feel easy in mind of that word which

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[1] See Rifat, II, 119, 124-126, 275-283. The author was the Emir of the Egyptian pilgrims for several years from 1901. See also al-Manar, II, 222-223.

[2] See for instance Devey-Currie, F.O. 195/1987, desp. 96, 26 October 1897.

[3] Extracts and translations of such articles are found in Rifat, II, 75-84.

is repeated every now and then that 'Imams are from Quraish'"[1] meaning that the Sultan was not entitled to the Caliphate which should be restored to the descendent of the Prophet and particularly to the Grand Sherif.

Other newspapers in Egypt touched on the same subject. Al-Jawaib[2] reported that some of the Sultan's entourage counselled him to dismiss Grand Sherif 'Awn, but Abdulhamid refused and answered that he would leave him "as a lesson and example" to those who were aspiring for an Arab Caliph and to show them how such a Caliph would behave.[3]

Al-Manar however accused Abdulhamid of other intentions. The Sultan was closing his eyes to such abuses because he wished "to discourage Muslim dignitaries and ulema from going to the Ḥaj lest they [meet and] conspire there and choose [a rival] Caliph..."[4]

Whatever the Sultan's motives were, the behaviour of 'Awn al-Rafiq caused much harm to the reputation of the Sherifian clan both in the Ottoman Empire and in the Muslim

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1 In al-Muayyad n. 4230 dated 9 April 1904, cited in Rifat, II, 75.

2 Owned by Halil Mutran the famous poet of Syrian origin who lived in Egypt. This publication should be distinguished from another of the same title that was edited by A. Faris al-Shidyaq and appeared in Istanbul between 1861 and 1884.

3 Cited in al-Manar, VII, 72 of 2 April 1904. See also comment on an article "Mustqbal al-Hijaz" in al-Muayyad (beginning of June 1902) in al-Manar, V, 197 of 7 June 1902.

4 Al-Manar, VII, 105, 17 April 1904.

World. Sultan Abdulhamid certainly gained from this because the Grand Sherif, who had been respected by a great many Muslims and regarded as a potential Caliph of Islam, undoubtedly lost much sympathy and support. Even those Muslim Arabs who were convinced of the illegality of the Caliphate of Abdulhamid and of the belief that a Caliph should be from Quraish, were on weak ground. This might partly explain the very limited response among the Arab population of the Fertile Crescent to the revolt of Grand Sherif Husein against the Turks. However, the Sultan on the other hand tried to appear as a benevolent Caliph who cared for the welfare of the pilgrims. He for instance, built an asylum in Mecca for poor pilgrims.[1] He would sometimes send sums of money to be distributed among poor pilgrims.[2] Above all there was the Hijaz Railway, the declared aim of which was to make the pilgrim's route comfortable and safe. All this brought him much sympathy and inhanced his Caliphal posture.

When Sultan Abdulhamid recalled Osman from Hijaz, it is difficult to say that he could have foreseen the future, but keeping 'Awn in Mecca for almost two decades afterwards in spite of his character and the general outcry against his rule, was an act of political

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[1] Richards-Currie, F.O. 195/1894 desp. 27, Jedda 21, April 1895. Rifat, I, 54. It was opened in 1901.

[2] Richards-Currie, F.O. 195/1894 desp. 36, Jedda 19, May 1895.

skill on the part of the Sultan. For it helped him to establish his image as Caliph and to make Istanbul the centre of the Muslim world, no little achievement in face of his numerous enemies both inside and outside the Empire.

However, this policy of the Sultan had one failure, the effect of which was only felt under Abdulhamid's successors. In spite of the defects of Grand Sherif 'Awn, it was to his credit that he preserved many of the powers and prerogatives of the Grand Sherifate a matter which served considerably to enable Grand Sherif Husein [II] to hold his ground vis-à-vis the Young Turks' policies and ultimately to revolt against the Turks during the first world war.

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