

A REVIEW OF PORTUGUESE  
AND TURKISH SOURCES  
FOR THE OTTOMANS IN ARABIA AND THE  
INDIAN OCEAN IN THE 16<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

SALİH ÖZBARAN

I  
INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of the sixteenth century the Indian Ocean witnessed the course of events which greatly effected the economies of the Mediterranean as well as the Ottoman and Arab countries. The Portuguese reached the Western India at the end of the fifteenth century and established themselves at various strategic points around the Indian Ocean, seeking to dominate and shift the flow of trade which had been running through the Red Sea and the Gulf to the Mediterranean world for many centuries. On the other hand, the Ottomans became a sea power as well as the land after the conquest of Constantinople; and conquered Egypt in 1517 taking control of the Red Sea. Towards the middle of the sixteenth century, in the time of Suleyman the Magnificent, they took Baghdad and made a direct contact with the Gulf, thus establishing themselves at various important points around the Arabian Peninsula. So became the two empires, Catholic Portuguese and Sunni Ottoman, *vis-à-vis*, in the waters of the Indian Ocean, drawing themselves far from their capitals.

Such events and changes have long attracted the interest of some historians; and they have been subject, within the last 20-30 years to a few researches, clarifying, to certain extent, the Ottoman policy towards the Indian Ocean and Arab lands facing this ocean. Already in 1910 Saffet Bey,

\* I was attracted to this field of study by Cengiz Orhonlu, University of İstanbul, in 1963 and greatly encouraged by Vernon J. Parry, University of London, during the years 1965-69. I so much owe to these scholars and friends, whose untimely deaths were great losses for the field of Ottoman history. It was a real happiness to have the opportunity to work with them. My thanks are also due to Doç. Dr. Reşit Küçükboyacı for reading this English text and suggesting some alterations.

a Turkish naval historian, with the Bahrain campaign of 1559 in his mind, was moved to write this: "May Prayers be for the souls of our ancestors who preserved our beautiful old records. If we had been left to depend on our historians and their works we would have been neither to read nor to write anything correctly"<sup>1</sup>.

About a decade later, a British orientalist, Denison Ross expressed, in two short articles, how much care and labour needed to bring the subject into light: "I would express a hope that I have succeeded in showing how much still remains to be done in this engrossing field of research and how much care and labour will be required before the imperfect and often conflicting accounts of the Franks and the Moslems can be weighed in the balance and reduced to something like historical fidelity"<sup>2</sup>.

It was not long ago, yet about half a century later than the above mentioned historians, when the eminent French orientalist, Jean Aubin, expressed his hopes that the researches yet to be undertaken on the social and economic history of Portugal and also on the countries around the Ocean will change the picture of that part of the world:

"Faire la lumière sur l'histoire de l'Océan Indien revient en fait à mener trois recherches parallèles, dont le premières, pour annexes qu'elles semblent, n'en sont pas moins d'une nécessité directe et d'une importance essentielle. Il est indispensable de pousser les recherches d'une part sur l'histoire sociale et économique du Portugal, d'autre part sur celle des pays orientaux qui sont entrés en relations, d'antoganisme ou de collaboration, avec les Portugais; et par ailleurs sur l'histoire navale et politique de l'Océan Indien. Compte tenu des évidences que dégagera l'ensemble de ces recherches, il deviendra enfin possible d'esquisser, avec sûreté et équilibre, le tableau du déploiement de la puissance portugaise dans le monde indo-islamique."<sup>3</sup>.

The history of the Indian Ocean and the countries around it in the sixteenth century has drawn the attention of some European historians from

<sup>1</sup> Saffet, "Bahreyn'de Bir Vak'a", in *Tarih-i Osmant Encümeni Mecmuası*, III (İstanbul, 1328/1910), p. 1139.

<sup>2</sup> D. Ross, "The Portuguese in India and Arabia between 1517-1538", in *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society* (1922), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> J. Aubin, "Quelques Remarques sur l'Etude de l'Océan Indien au XVIe Siècle", in *Agrupamento de Estudos de Cartografia Antiga*, LXXV (Coimbra, 1972), p. 13.

the view-point of the impact of the Levantine spice trade on the European states and empires. The old theory that with the coming of the Portuguese to India the spice trade through the Levant entirely diminished has lost ground as Lane, Braudel, Magalhaes Godinho and Boxer proved, with European primary sources at their disposal, the revival of the spice trade in the middle decades of the sixteenth century. American historian Frederic C. Lane made use of the reports of Laurenço Pires de Távora, the Portuguese ambassador to the papal court, and showed the increase of the quantities of spices entering the Eastern Mediterranean towns<sup>4</sup>. Fernand Braudel, the French historian, initiated in his huge and well-known undertaking about the Mediterranean world that the revival of the levant trade happened even earlier<sup>5</sup>. English historian C.R. Boxer and Portuguese historian V. Magalhaes Godinho have given us further evidence, particularly from the Portuguese sources, to support the fact<sup>6</sup>. N. Steensgard, the Danish historian, summarised the sixteenth century in the following lines:

“The destructive effects of the discovery of the sea route to Asia upon the traditional intercontinental trade routes were not felt until after the elapse of an entire century. After a set-back at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the trade routes through the Middle East regained their former importance, and at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the transcontinental caravan trade reached dimensions which must presumably be regarded as its historical culmination. No decisive blow was struck at the caravan trade until the establishment of the North-West European trading companies, the Dutch *voorkompagnieën* from 1595, the East

<sup>4</sup> F. C. Lane, “The Mediterranean Spice Trade: Further Evidence of its Revival in the Sixteenth Century”, in *Crises and Change in the Venetian Economy in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (ed. B. Pullan), London, 1968, pp. 47-58.

<sup>5</sup> F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le Monde Méditerranéen à l'Époque de Philippe II*, Paris, 1966, Vol. I, pp. 493-516; *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (Trans. S. Reynolds), London, Vol. I (1972), pp. 543-570.

<sup>6</sup> C. R. Boxer, “A Note on Portuguese Reactions to the Revival of the Red Sea Spice Trade and the Rise of Aceh, 1540-1600”, in *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, X (Dec. 1969), pp. 415-428; V. Magalhaes Godinho, *Os Descobrimentos e a Economia Mundial*, Lisboa, Vol. I (1965), pp. 111-172; Godinho, *L'Économie de l'Empire Portugais aux XVI<sup>e</sup> et XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècles*, Paris, 1969, pp. 713-780.

India Company in 1600, and the Dutch United East India Company (VOC) in 1602”<sup>6a</sup>.

Though interesting, useful and pioneer contributions these European based works are, they must be checked with native sources which often show the other side of the medalion; that is to say Turkish, Arabic, Iranian, etc., primary sources should be taken into consideration together with Portuguese archival material and chronicles, which are indeed luminous for the sixteenth century Indian Ocean. We do not yet know, even at a modest level, the Ottoman existence in the Indian Ocean and around the Arabian Peninsula.

I must, however, mention here the names of certain historians whose original works have made the subject to become more understandable. When Jean Aubin started publishing the *Mare Luso-Indicum* he pointed out this:

“... Pionniers d’une vue globale de l’histoire universelle, les historiens économistes nous invitent à déceler à la hauteur d’Aden, d’Ormuz ou de Malacca, les pulsations du monde indo-islamique. Leur discipline permet, jusqu’à un certain point, de tenir déjà cette gageure. Mais ils sont avant tout gens de Venise, d’Anvers ou de Lisbonne, bons postes pour voir les cargaisons. Il n’y a pas que les cargaisons. Et on éprouve parfois le sentiment qu’un européo-centrisme naturel, sinon toujours légitime, et fréquemment naïf, organise à son usage les questionnaires, voire suggère les réponses”<sup>7</sup>.

Indeed J. Aubin showed the way to compare the European sources with the natives, and to be much more familiar with the facts of the Ocean and Indo-Muslim countries. From the Turkish side the most serious study came from Cengiz Orhonlu. Regarding the Ottoman province of Habesh, to certain extent the Red Sea, and the Gulf he used extensively the Turkish archives, reestablishing the facts which had been known earlier as half-legend stories<sup>8</sup>. R.B. Sergeant, English historian, also contributed a great

<sup>6a</sup> N. Steensgard, *Carracks, Caravans and Companies: The Structural Crises in the European-Asian trade in the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century*, Andelsbogtrykkeriet i Odense, 1973, p. 9

<sup>7</sup> *Mare Luso-Indicum*, Vol. I, Genève-Paris, 1971, p. VIII.

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., his *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Güney Siyaseti: Habeş Eyaleti*, İstanbul, 1974; “Seydi Ali Reis”, in *Journal of the Regional Cultural Institute* (Iran, Pakistan and Turkey), 1/2 (Tehran, 1967), pp 44-57; “1959 Bahreyn Seferine Aid Bir Rapor”, in *Tarih Dergisi*, XVII/22 (İstanbul, 1967), pp. 1-16.

deal to this field of study particularly by editing some Arabic sources thus giving the Arabic view of the scene<sup>9</sup>.

As for the Ottoman period in Arabian Peninsula historians are still far from having adequate knowledge. The Ottoman sources, indeed so important for the area, have not been explored properly. Not much has been done after the warning of Bernard Lewis:

“The Ottoman period of Arab history has hitherto been the most obscure and neglected. From the wealth of material in the Turkish Archives it should in time become one of the best known”<sup>10</sup>.

It should, however, be mentioned here that most of the Arab states and their universities has shown interest in the Ottoman period, and undertaken many international meetings in order to establish the sources and facts of the Ottoman existence in the Arab lands<sup>11</sup>.

Of the sources which describe the Turco-Portuguese confrontation and the Ottoman rule in Arabia the richest are the archival material and chronicles written in Portuguese and in Ottoman Turkish—the documents located at the archives in Lisbon and İstanbul being as yet, in large degree, unpublished.

## II

### THE PORTUGUESE SOURCES

The archival material written in Portuguese is to be found in the *Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo*, the oldest and the most important of the Portuguese collections. There is, however, no good general guide and no adequate published catalogue for the *Arquivo Nacional*. The existing guide books offer little aid to the researcher who is seeking particular categories of material<sup>12</sup>. Of much more value is G. Schurhammer, *Die Zeitgenössischen*

<sup>9</sup> R. B. Sergeant, *The Portuguese off the South Arabian Coast*, Oxford, 1963.

<sup>10</sup> B. Lewis, “The Ottoman Archives as a Source for the History of the Arab Lands” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1951, p. 149.

<sup>11</sup> Concerning the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf I must mention here two international meetings: one took place in Riyadh in 1977 and the other in Bahrain in 1983. As I participated in both meetings I can easily express my feelings that they helped a great deal to appreciate the importance of Ottoman material existing in Turkish archives and libraries.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Mesquita de Figuerado, *Arquivo Nacional da Torre de Tombo, Roteiro Prático*, Lisboa, 1922; P.A. d’Azevedo and A. Baião, *O Arquivo da Torre de Tombo. Sua História, corpos que a compõem*

*Quellen zur Geschichte Portugisisch-Asiens und Seiner Nachbarlander*, Leibzig, 1932 (reprinted in Rome, 1962), for the author gives resumés of the Portuguese documents dealing with Portuguese Asia and preserved not only at *Torre do Tombo*, but also in other archives. This work is furnished with a detailed index<sup>13</sup>.

*Torre do Tombo*, has two main groups of material. The larger is known as the "Corpo Cronológico", and contains 82902 documents kept in *Maços*, i.e., "bundles". These documents, each summarized in a few brief lines, are indexed in manuscript volumes. Most of this material relates to the sixteenth century.

The second group of material at *Torre do Tombo* is the "Gavetas", i.e., drawers. There are 23 of them, containing documents referring mostly to events of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. The "Centro de Estudos Historicos Ultramarinos" of Lisbon has published, so far, a large number of documents selected from the "Gavetas". These two groups of material contain various documents relating to the economic, political and military matters of the Arab world and the countries around the Indian Ocean.

The *Arquivo Nacional de Torre do Tombo* has several smaller collections of material, of which two are important for the affairs of the Gulf, Red Sea and Arabia - i.e., the *Cartas de Ormuz a D. João de Castro* (letters from Hormuz to D. João de Castro, the Vice-Roy of India, 1545-1548) and the *Colecção de São Lourenço* (S. Lourenço collection). The *Cartas de Ormuz* contains seventy seven letters arranged in chronological order and bound in one volume. Most of these letters were from the two Portuguese governors of Hormuz to India during the years 1545-48. The more interesting amongst them bear the signature of D. Manuel de Lima, who, in May 1547 became governor of Hormuz in succession to Luis Falcão<sup>14</sup>.

Manuel de Lima wrote to the Vice-Roy at Goa about the state of affairs at Hormuz, Ottoman occupation of Basra and the situation in the Red Sea. Concerning Basra and the eastern part of Arabian Peninsula information was acquired from an Arab merchant, *Hagy Fayat*, whom the Ottomans sent

---

*e organização*, Lisboa, 1905; J. M. da Silva Marques, *Arquivo Nacional da Torre de Tombo*, I, Lisboa, 1935 (only one volume of this work has appeared in print).

<sup>13</sup> Though the title of this work bears the years between 1538 and 1552, it goes far beyond these given years.

<sup>14</sup> On D. Manuel de Lima see E. Sanceau, "Uma Narrativa da Expedição de 1541 ao Mar Roxo" in *Studia* (Lisboa, 1962), pp. 200-202.

to Hormuz soon after the capture of Basra<sup>15</sup>. He also obtained some further details from a certain Domingos Barbudo, an agent whom he had ordered to go to Basra to gather news about the Ottoman campaign against Basra and the adjacent areas at the head of the Gulf<sup>16</sup>. The letters of Manuel de Lima offer some valuable data about the relations existing at that time between Hormuz and Basra.

The *Colecção de S. Lourenço*, consists of six volumes containing copies of various letters. The correspondance is incomplete and is not arranged in chronological sequence<sup>17</sup>. Here can be found, translated from the Arabic into Portuguese, the letter of Ibn Ulayyan, an Arab chieftain from Jezair, i.e., the Qurna region where the Euphrates and the Tigris flow together: Ibn Ulayyan was appealing to the Portuguese at Hormuz for aid against the Ottomans<sup>18</sup>. The collection has, too, a similar letter from Sheikh Yahya, then the ruler of Basra<sup>19</sup>. There is also here a letter of Ayas Pasha<sup>20</sup>, the Ottoman governor (*beylerbeyi*) of Baghdad to Ibn Ulayyan<sup>21</sup>.

There is in Portuguese, over and above the material preserved in the archives, a rich chronicle literature, which recounts, often in great detail, the achievement of the Portuguese in Asia and in Africa. Indeed, the sixteenth century is a golden age of Portuguese historiography.

Of the great chronicles the first to be mentioned here is that of João de Barros. Barros composed a work narrating the course of the Portuguese conquest in Asia. In 1553 he became a factor in the *Casa da Índia e Mina* in Lisbon, retaining this office for over thirty years. In 1552 the first volume was published of his *Decadas da Ásia* - the "Deeds done by the Portuguese in their discovery and conquest of seas and lands of the East". The second volume appeared in 1553 and the third in 1563. The fourth and final volume was published in 1615. It contains material deriving from himself, but also information coming from the editor, i.e., from the cosmographer Royal,

<sup>15</sup> *Cartas de Ormuz...*, fol. 88v.

<sup>16</sup> *Cartas de Ormuz...*, fol. 140r.

<sup>17</sup> cf. Maria António Nogueira, *Notícia dos Manuscritos de Livraria da Excelentíssimo casa de São Lourenço*, Ajuda, 1871; T.M. da Silva Marques, *op. cit.* p. 103.

<sup>18</sup> *Colecção de S. Lourenço*, IV, fol. 493.

<sup>19</sup> *Colecção de S. Lourenço*, IV, fol. 140r.

<sup>20</sup> *Colecção de S. Lourenço*, IV, fols. 140v-141r.

<sup>21</sup> Numerous documents have been edited by A. Da Silva Rego (*Documentação para a História do Padroado Português de Oriente*) and J. Wicki (*Documenta Indica*).

João Baptista Lavanha, who used a number of other sources<sup>22</sup>. The complete work, in four *Decadas*, covers the events from the voyage of Vasco da Gama to India in 1497 until the Ottoman siege of Diu in 1538. Barros never visited India, but he had access to official documents and letters, available to him in the *Casa da Índia*. He notes that he made use also two Arabic and three Persian geographers<sup>23</sup>-works which officials in the service of the King and in addition, a slave whom he himself owned, translated for him<sup>24</sup>. Barros obtained information on Basra from a *Turco* captured in 1554 when D. Fernando de Noronha (near Muscat, took over six of the vessels<sup>25</sup>) sailing under the command of the Ottoman admiral, Seydi Ali Reis<sup>26</sup>.

Diogo do Couto continued the chronicle of Barros. His work is one of the main sources underlying the Turco-Portuguese relations in the Indian Ocean. Couto went to India in 1559 and remained there for over fifty years. He was for the first ten years a soldier in the Portuguese service and perhaps saw actions against the Ottomans in the Red Sea and the Gulf<sup>27</sup>. Thereafter he became the keeper of the archives at Goa and made full use of them when he came to write his continuation of Barros. He drew some of his data from other Portuguese officials and soldiers serving in India, also from Ottoman Turks whom Süleyman Pasha left in Gujarat after his unsuccessful attempt to capture Diu in 1538<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. C. R. Boxer, "Three Historians of the Portuguese Asia (Barros, Couto and Bocarro)" in the *Boletim do Instituto Portugues de Honkong*, I (Macau 1948), p. 6; J. B. Harrison, "Five Portuguese Historians", in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (ed. C. H. Philip), London, 1961, pp. 157-158. On Barros see also Antonio Baião, *Documentos Inéditos sobre João de Barros*, Coimbra, 1917.

<sup>23</sup> "... em os Livros de nossa Geografia se vera tirada de Geografia dos proprios Arabios, e Parseas dos quaes nos temos cinco Livros, dous em a lingua Arabia, e tres na Parsea" (*Decadas da Asia*, Lisboa, 1788, Decada III, Parte 2, p. 39).

<sup>24</sup> Boxer, "Three Historians..", p. 9.

<sup>25</sup> "... e hum Turco natural do Cairo, que se tomou, quando D. Fernando de Noronha houve vitoria do capitão dos Turcos, o qual joje he meu cative, homem prudente, e de grande juize, e memoria, me contou..." (Decada IV, Parte 1, p. 333).

<sup>26</sup> Barros wrote a work, now lost, on the geography and trade of the eastern lands (Boxer, *Three Historians..*), pp. 7-8.

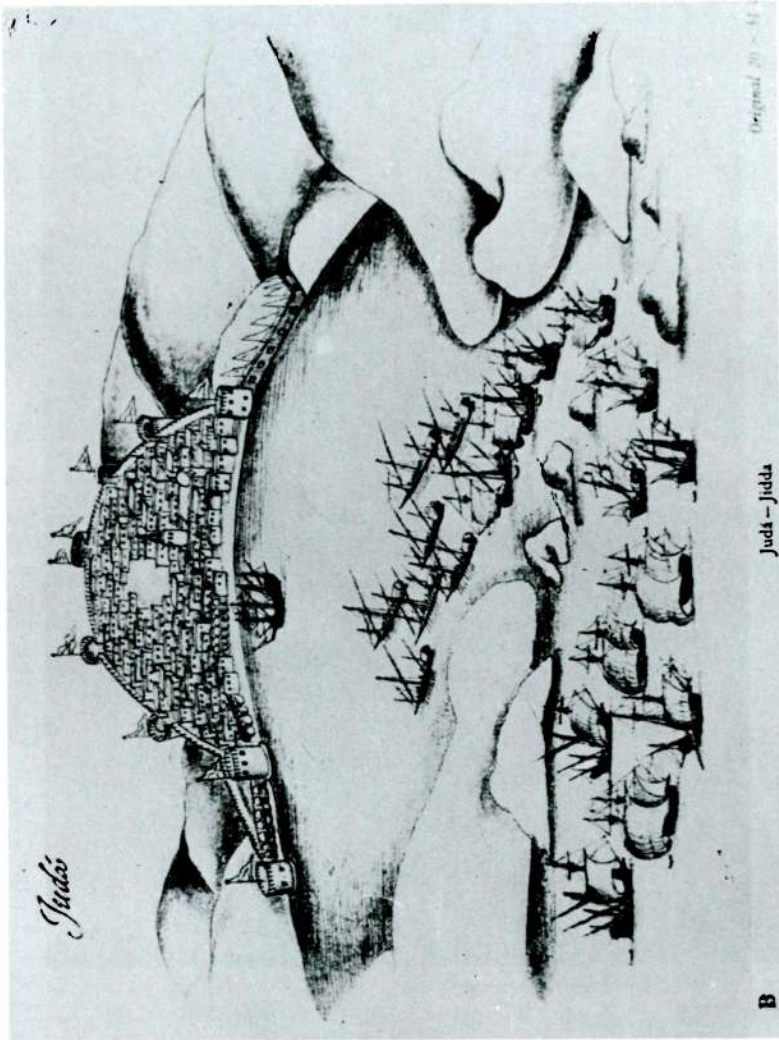
<sup>27</sup> On the life of Couto see the introduction - by Manuel Severim de Faria - to the 1778 edition of the *Decadas* (cf. also A. Bell, *Diogo do Couto*, London, 1924).

<sup>28</sup> Harrison, "Five Portuguese.." pp. 160 and 166. See also *Documentação Ultramarina Portuguesa*, I (Lisboa, 1960), p. 235.

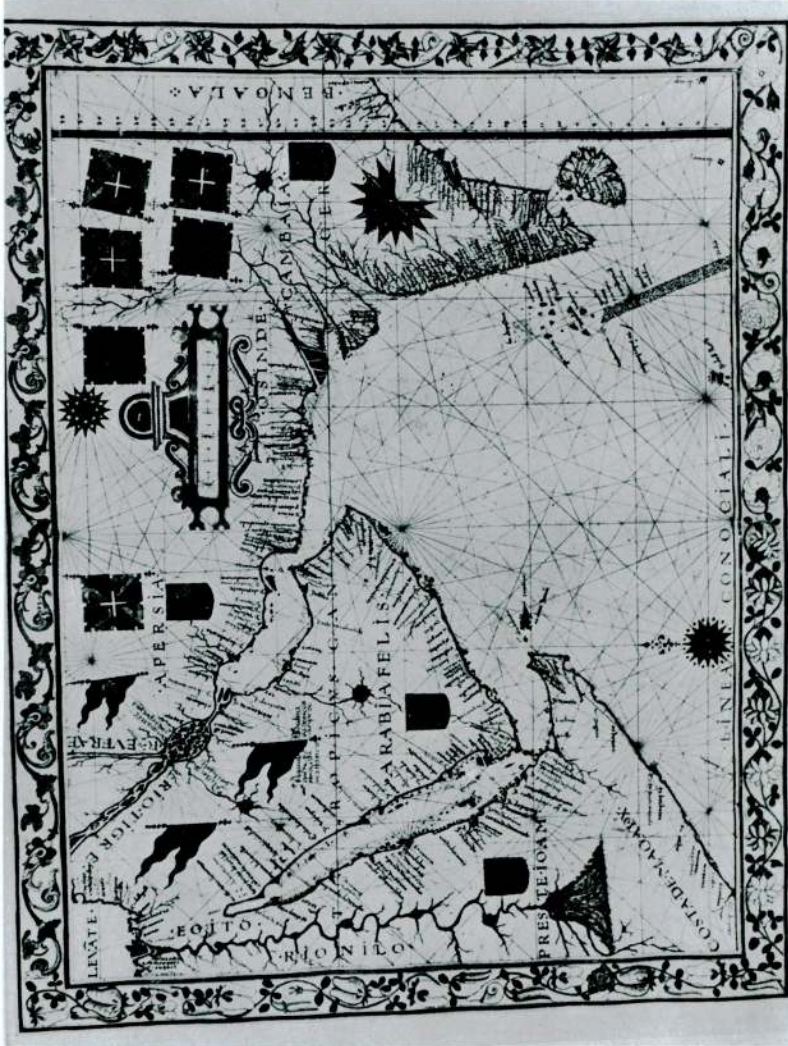




Res. 1—Diogo de Couto in *Decada VII*, 1616 (reproduced in *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415-1825* by C.R. Boxer, London, 1969.



Res. 2 — Jidda in *Lendas da Índia* by G. Correia, reproduced in *Portugaliae Monumenta Cartographica* by A. Cortesão and A Teixeira da Mota, Lisboa 1960, I, 86, B.



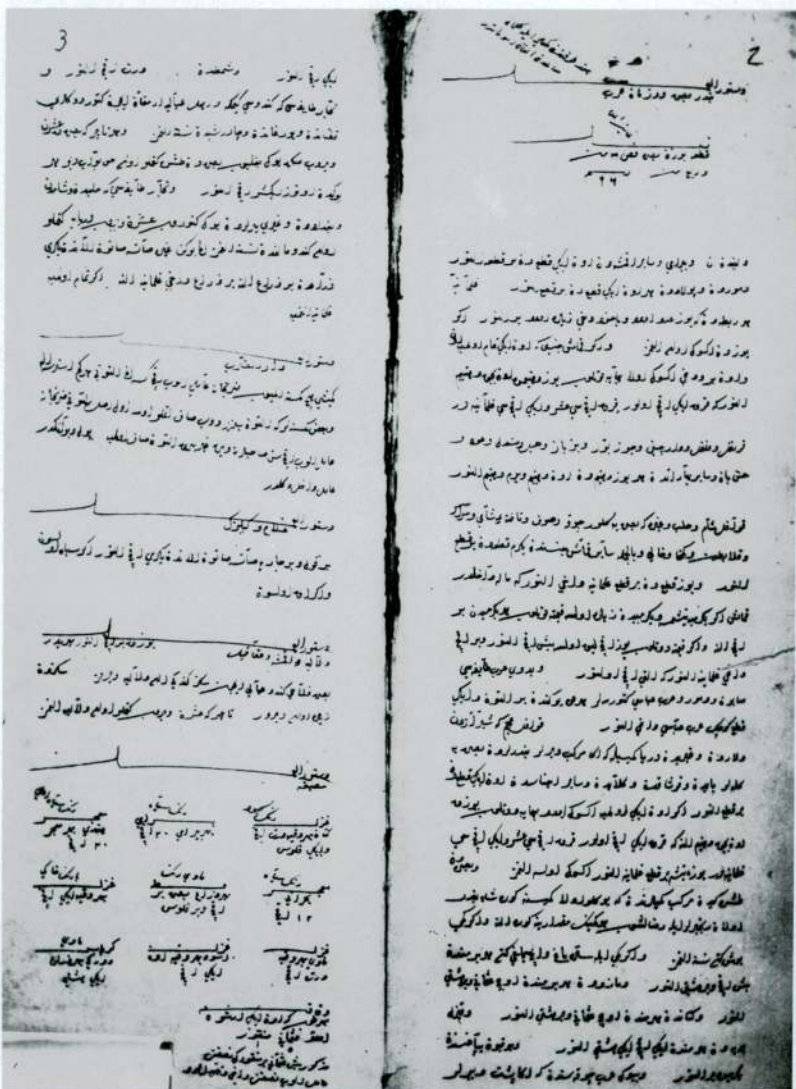
Res. 3—Arabia and the Indian Ocean in the Atlas of Fernão Vaz Dourado, 1570, reproduced in Cortesão and Mato, *Portugaliae...*, III. Estampa 269.

Das ventos que se tomara nos ventos que como se  
 o duto bay de ha mag nua mais para me cobr  
 me para me ob ob hup lya doo litois de S. Il  
 Co de se p ad mure d. id e torna a no d. mo d. pre  
 dij. e na dy d. n. g. sabimoo. u que orle d. que  
 o a bendara Cadol. e a freno e da carta av. 5.  
 na h. emtido m. d. h. n. m. da fadaly a Caarmada  
 e a n. m. p. h. f. a. z. e. o. o. n. u. i. e. d. e. l. l. y. n. o. o. d. e. l. e.  
 e. s. e. i. g. n. i. t. a. m. y. t. a. m. a. n. g. o. s. v. a. g. a. r. i. o. p. u. r. n. a. d. a. r.  
 a. s. a. u. d. e. n. e. n. s. a. r. i. a. s. p. a. r. t. a. p. r. d. i. g. n. i. n. a. d. d. d. e. o.  
 q. u. e. n. a. d. p. o. d. r. i. a. p. a. r. t. i. r. n. o. d. o. e. d. n. m. s. a. r. i. o. p. o. r. t. a. l.  
 e. f. u. i. t. e. d. e. s. d. e. m. a. p. o. d. r. a. f. a. z. e. l. m. a. d. e. t. e. b. o. d. y. f. p. d.  
 a. v. 5. e. r. e. a. r. t. a. n. a. d. p. a. r. t. e. d. a. m. a. n. g. a. s. u. s. t. a. n. s. o. f. e. d. o. u.  
 a. v. 5. m. i. n. h. a. f. r. p. r. i. t. o. o. m. i. n. a. g. a. q. u. e. n. a. d. h. o. r. e. u. s. o. l. o.  
 o. m. d. p. o. r. o. f. u. i. t. e. d. e. s. d. e. p. o. r. q. u. e. e. i. t. o. p. o. d. r. a. q. u. a.  
 l. a. m. b. e. m. a. l. g. u. i. d. a. b. a. l. e. s. o. u. d. i. p. a. d. r. e. e. h. o. m. d. e. m. e. p. a. l. e. r.  
 n. o. p. a. i. o. m. a. d. d. a. p. r. e. v. 5. h. u. d. p. u. i. c. a. d. p. a. q. u. e. q. u. a. d. o.  
 d. i. o. n. e. q. u. e. n. a. d. y. d. e. m. e. m. o. d. r. e. e. q. u. e. o. d. m. g. a. b. t. a. d. o.  
 e. t. e. d. f. a. r. o. b. a. o. o. n. u. i. e. d. e. l. l. y. n. o. o. d. e. l. n. d. a. n. t.  
 e. a. l. m. d. e. q. u. e. p. e. r. a. o. d. a. p. u. i. c. a. d. a. v. 5. n. a. d. e. f. p. a. r. t. e.  
 e. e. a. d. m. d. o. f. e. r. d. o. n. v. i. n. d. a. d. a. f. a. z. e. p. o. r. q. u. e.  
 e. o. r. n. h. u. d. p. r. e. e. o. o. n. i. a. m. d. a. s. p. a. r. t. e. l. e. m. u. z. //

  
 Dio q. u. e. s. p. i. r. i. t. a. l. o. n. d. e. d. o. m. a. n. u. e. l. d. e. l. i. m. a. d. a. s. n. a. v. o.  
 h. e. b. o. m. d. q. u. e. q. u. a. p. a. r. t. e. d. e. l. i. m. a. n. t. e. d. e. o. o. f. i. c. i. o.  
 e. d. n. a. a. r. g. o. l. l. e. e. n. g. u. a. m. e. l. p. a. n. d. q. u. e. t. o. m. e. p. u. t. a. p. o. r.  
 s. a. l. u. a. r. f. a. z. i. m. d. a. s. d. e. p. o. r. t. u. g. a. l. e. s. e. t. e. d. e. l. i. m. a. d. o.  
 p. u. a. l. l. e. e. v. i. u. r. l. i. m. a. n. d. a. m. e. f. u. i. t. e. d. e. s. d. e. l. i. m. a.  
 e. p. o. i. s. o. r. l. e. e. l. o. t. a. m. a. n. u. e. l. f. e. z. p. a. r. t. e. m. e. t. e. d. e. l. i. m. a.  
 e. m. u. l. t. o. a. v. 5. l. i. b. e. r. a. s. m. u. l. t. o. a. v. 5. n. i. g. u. a. v. i. d. a. p. r. o. v. a. d. o.  
 n. o. s. e. d. e. l. i. m. a. n. t. e. d. a. m. u. z. a. x. x. l. v. d. e. j. u. l. h. o. d. e. s. t. 77.

Manuel de Lima

Res. 4 — A page from the Cartas de Ormuz (fol. 108a) dated 1547, bearing the signature of Dom Manuel de Lima.



Res. 5—The first two pages of *Kanunnâme* of Basra, 1551, in İstanbul Başbakanlık Archives, *Tapu Defteri*, 282.



٢٥٤ ریح الاول سنه ١٠٦٢

کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
سج محمد و در سنه ١٠٦٢ مال کتبه و علفه لصلاته و در  
سجلی کبریا در لولون مکتوبه و علی الله بنا کبریا و بنا کبریا  
کلیه اولیای معارف لیا کلمه علفه لصلاته و در سنه ١٠٦٢  
لویض لصلاته ای ادرن کاس ما کلمه سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد  
توفیق المعافین و ضاحیه التوسن و در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد  
مکتوبه و لویضه و در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد  
توفیق المعافین و در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد  
توفیق المعافین و در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد

مش دله مکتوب کوز درون قطعاً اعانه سید  
لهبر و توفیق و علفه لصلاته و در سنه ١٠٦٢  
در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد  
در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد  
در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد  
در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد  
در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد  
در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد  
در سنه ١٠٦٢ لصلاته و بعد

سواله مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف

مش دله مکتوب کوز درون قطعاً اعانه سید  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف

مش دله مکتوب کوز درون قطعاً اعانه سید  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف

مش دله مکتوب کوز درون قطعاً اعانه سید  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف  
کتابخانه مکتوب کوز درون در سنه ١٠٦٢ قیامی فی نامه شریف

Res. 7 — A Ruüs Register (İstanbul Başbakanlık Archives, Kâmil Kepeci collection, nu. 213, p. 18, dated 962/1555) concerning some appointments in the Province of Lahsa.

The image displays a series of handwritten Arabic documents, likely ledgers or accounts, from the Imperial Treasury of Yemen in 969/1561-62. The documents are arranged in two columns and contain various entries, numbers, and signatures. The text is written in a cursive script, and the documents are organized into sections, some with headings and sub-sections. The entries include names, numbers, and descriptions of financial transactions. The documents are written on aged, slightly yellowed paper. The overall appearance is that of a historical record or a collection of official correspondence.

Res. 8—A Summary (*Ijmal*) of an accounting of the revenues and expenditures of the Imperial Treasury of Yemen in 969/1561-62 (Istanbul Topkapı Palace Archive, D. 314, fols. 106-112a).



Couto began his narrative in 1562, giving a fresh account of the period to 1538. After this date his chronicle is a true continuation of Barros, based on his own experience and his own particular sources of information, the narrative extending now to the year 1600. The first portion of Couto's work was printed in 1602, the last section in 1645 long after the death of Couto, which occurred in 1616. A combined edition of Barros and Couto was printed at Lisbon in 1788<sup>29</sup>.

Two other Portuguese historians make some mention of affairs in the Muslim world around the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century - they are Fernão Lopes de Castanheda and Gaspar Correia.

The *História da Descobrimto e Conquista da Índia pelos Portugueses* of Castanheda covers the years 1497-1538. Couto made considerable use of this work, the first six books of which appeared in 1552-1554 and the last two books in 1561. The *Lendas da Índia* of Correia narrates the events of 1497-1548. His chronicle was printed for the first time only in 1864. Both Castanheda and Correia spent some years in India<sup>30</sup>.

### III

#### TURKISH SOURCES

The Ottoman sources relevant to Arabia and the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century are of two kinds-archival material and chronicles.

Historians, thus far, have made little use of the Turkish archival material. When Bernard Lewis in 1951 drew the attention of historians to the use of the Turkish archives for the history of Arab lands in the Ottoman period he observed that the Ottoman period of Arab history had been the most neglected and from the wealth of material in the Turkish Archives it would in time become much better known<sup>31</sup>. Since then, even before he wrote that article, some Turkish documents had been published<sup>32</sup>. The Turkish Archives have recently attracted the attention of some historians

<sup>29</sup> Couto, like Barros before him, composed a treatise on Asian trade. His work, too, has unfortunately been lost (cf. Boxer, "Thee Historions..", p. 17).

<sup>30</sup> On Castanheda, Correia and also another Portuguese historian, A. Bocarro, cf. Harrison, "Five Portuguese..", passim.

<sup>31</sup> See B. Lewis, "The Ottoman Archives..", p. 149.

<sup>32</sup> See, e.g., S. Özbaran, "The Importance of the Turkish Archives for the History of Arabia in the Sixteenth Century", in *Sources for the History of Arabia*, part 2 (Riyad 1979), p. 110, note 3.

interested in the area under discussion. But this interest has not been in a very large scale; and the Arab world under the Ottoman rule has not so far been one of the best known. Ottoman documents concerning the history of Arabia and the adjacent areas are indeed abundant for the second half of the sixteenth century and when they are studied carefully, the Arabian world in the affairs of the Ottoman Empire will, as B. Lewis pointed out, be much better known.

The largest and the most important of the Turkish archives is *Başbakanlık Arşivi* (Turkish State Archives) located in İstanbul. The bulk of the documents preserved there are not earlier in date than the middle of the sixteenth century<sup>33</sup>; only a small number of documents has survived from the period before 1550. Of this archival material it is the series of “*Mühimme Defterleri*” (registers of important affairs) which contain the richest information in the Ottoman and Portuguese confrontation in those parts of the world. This series covers the years 961 H. (1553-54) - 1300 (1882-83) and comprises 263 volumes arranged in chronological order. The registers contain copies of decrees (*fermans*, *berats*, etc.) sent out from the central government and addressed to officials in the provinces of the empire<sup>34</sup>. No catalogue of the individual documents has yet been prepared, but there are summaries for the first sixty volumes; a subject index is available for some of the following volumes, i.e., from vol. 61 onwards. The orders (*hüküms*) relating to the Red Sea, Arabia, the Gulf and the Indian Ocean were sent, for example, to the governors (*beylerbeyis*) of Egypt (Mısır), Yemen, Lahsa, Basra and Baghdad. No *mühimme* registers between the years 1554 and 1559 have survived. There is also a gap between the years 1561 and 1564 during the time of the Ottoman efforts to revive the trade to and from the Indian Ocean.

Also of importance is another collection in the same archives, i.e., the *Ruûs Defterleri*. The *Ruûs* registers - in contradiction to the *Mühimme* Registers, - contain material of an administrative nature and provide information about appointments, honours, rewards and the like. They were prepared by an office (*Ruûs Kalemî*) attached to the Imperial Council, and

<sup>33</sup> On the “Başbakanlık Arşivi” cf. M. Sertoğlu, *Muhteva Bakımından Başvekalet Arşivi*, Ankara, 1955; A. Çetin, *Başbakanlık Arşivi Klavuzu*, İstanbul, 1979; B. Lewis, “Başvekalet Arşivi”, in *EI*<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> On the character of a *mühimme* document see U. Heyd, *Ottoman Documents on Palestine, 1552-1615*, Oxford, 1960.

cover the period from 1547 to 1908<sup>35</sup>. We can obtain a clear picture of the Ottoman *eyalet* system from the Ruûs documents as it existed in the region of Basra, Lahsa and Yemen.

There is yet another class of material preserved in the *Başbakanlık Arşivi* in İstanbul - the *Tapu Defterleri* (the cadastral registers) though no cadastral surveys have survived to the present for the provinces of Lahsa and Yemen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The cadastral registers relating to Basra province survived however with a *kanûnnâme*, i.e., a codification of the customs, fiscal and economic life of the province<sup>36</sup>. These two *kanûnnâmes* dated 1551 and 1574-75 enumerating, amongst other information, the port and customs duties levied on incoming traffic, have been printed<sup>37</sup>.

In absence of the *tapu* registers there are however, in the *Başbakanlık Arşivi* some *maliye* registers. These Registers include many kind of information as they are reflected in a card-index, each card giving in few lines what a *maliye* registers. It is, however, difficult to obtain from this card-index the content of a *defter*. Some of the *defters* cover outgoing orders, and some contain accounts of revenues and expenditures of the Imperial Treasury of Yemen (that is to say the budgets of the province of Yemen). Some *maliye* registers cover the customs duties, regulations of trade and industry and expenditures, i.e., the salaries of high officials, wages of soldiers and other spendings for the purposes of the province of Yemen<sup>38</sup>.

The other major collection in İstanbul is the *Topkapı Sarayı Arşivi* (the Archives of the Topkapı Palace). At the Palace there is a library, which has the earliest in date of the *Mühimme* registers known (thus far) to be extant. This *defter*, dating from 1552 contains some orders relating to the campaign undertaken by Pirî Reis<sup>39</sup>. At the archive itself there have been discovered

<sup>35</sup> Cf. N. Göyünç, "XVI. Yüzyılda Ruûs ve Önemi", in *Tarih Dergisi*, Vol. XVII/22 (İstanbul, 1967), pp. 17-34.

<sup>36</sup> One of them is preserved at the Başbakanlık Archives, İstanbul, among the series of *Tapu Defterleri*, under the ref. num. 282. This *defter*, dated 1551-52, includes the fiscal surveys of some sanjaks in Lahsa.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. R. Mantran, "Reglements Fiscaux Ottomans, La Province de Bassora (2e moitié du XVIs.), in *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. X/2-3 (Leiden, 1967), pp. 224-277.

<sup>38</sup> See Özbaran, "The Importance..", p. 108. For the Ottoman budget of Yemen relating to the year H. 1008 (1599-1600) see H. Sahillioğlu, "Yemen'in 1599-1600 yılı Bütçesi" in *Yusuf Hikmet Bayur'a Armağan*, Ankara, 1985, pp. 287-319.

<sup>39</sup> Topkapı Palace Library, *Koşular* 888.

and published some documents giving light to the affairs of the Red Sea, Arabia, the Gulf and the Ocean. A report in Turkish (dated 2 June 1525) attributed to Selmar Reis, Ottoman admiral in the Red Sea is as much response to Portuguese activities as a warning to the Turkish authorities<sup>40</sup>. There exist, too, some letters of Süleyman Pasha relating to his campaign against Diu in 1538 and the establishment of Ottoman rule in Yemen<sup>40a</sup>. The Late Professor C. Orhonlu discovered a report about the 1559 campaign against Bahrain. It was written by an Ottoman officer who took part in that operation<sup>41</sup>. There may well be, in the Topkapı Palace archives, other documents, untraced as yet, which concern Arabia and the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century. The possibilities of finding new material in the Palace will be known when the work of cataloging the archive is complete<sup>42</sup>.

The Ottoman chronicles which describe the events of the sixteenth century are much less rich in date on Arabia and the Indian Ocean than the great Portuguese histories. The sparseness of the material available in the Ottoman chronicles is mentioned in the words of Saffet Bey already in 1910<sup>43</sup>. Cengiz Orhonlu also expressed his surprise when he found that no mention of even important events of the sixteenth century was made by the contemporary Ottoman chroniclers<sup>44</sup>. Indeed the court historians -like Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali- offer little information of an original character on the conflict between the Ottomans and the Portuguese. Most of their data came from a small number of more specialized histories like the work of Seydi Ali, the famous Ottoman sailer and geographer who in 1554 fought against the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean and wrote a vivid account of his

<sup>40</sup> For the text, French and English translations see M. Lesure, "Un Document Ottoman de 1525 sur l'Inde Portugaise et les Pays de la Mer Rouge", in *Mare Luso-Indicum*, III (1976), pp. 137-160; S. Özbaran, "A Turkish Report on the Red Sea and the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean (1525)", in *Arabian Studies*, IV (1978), pp. 81-88.

<sup>40a</sup> These letters have been published by F. Kurtoğlu in his "Hadım Süleyman Paşanın Mektupları..." in *Belleten*, IV/13. (Ankara, 1940), pp. 61-75.

<sup>41</sup> See C. Orhonlu, "1559 Bahreyn Seferine Aid Bir Rapor", in *Tarih Dergisi*, Vol. XVII/22 (1967), pp. 1-16.

<sup>42</sup> Türk Tarih Kurumu (Turkish Historical Association, Ankara) is to publish a new catalogue of the material preserved at the Archive of the Topkapı Palace Museum in İstanbul.

<sup>43</sup> Saffet, "Bahreyn'de...", p. 1139.

<sup>44</sup> Orhonlu, "1559 Bahreyn.." p. 1.

adventures<sup>45</sup>. A later historian, Kâtib Çelebi, wrote about the naval affairs of the Ottoman Empire. He, too, relied on the narrative of Seydî Ali, when he came to recount the course of events in the Ocean<sup>46</sup>.

The Ottoman chronicles relate in much detail the wars fought against Safavid Iran<sup>47</sup>. Some of these Histories include data on the affairs of Basra, Gulf and the Ocean. Matrakçı Nasuh<sup>48</sup>, living in the time of Sultan Süleyman, has described the conflict between the Ottomans and the Bedouins of Jezayir. Another chronicle, called *Tevarih-i Âl-i Osman*, which extends to the year 1561 gives some information about the Ottoman occupation of Basra in 1546 as well as the affairs of the Red Sea and Yemen<sup>49</sup>.

As for the Ottoman existence in Yemen in the second half of the sixteenth century *Ahbarü'l-Yemani* and *Tarih-i Feth-i Yemen* should be mentioned here. *Ahbar* is translation of Qutb al-Din al-Nahrawali's *al-Barq al-Yamani* by a certain Ali with additional notes. *Tarih-i Feth-i Yemen* is a versified and richly illustrated Turkish chronicle of Mustafa Rumuzî<sup>50</sup>. The

<sup>45</sup> Seydî Ali, *Miratü'l-Memalik*, İstanbul, 1313/1895; cf. also, Orhonlu, "Seydî Ali Reis", in *Journal of the Regional Cultural Institute (Iran, Pakistan, Turkey)*. 1/2 (Tehran, 1967), pp. 44-57; Ş. Turan, "Seydî Ali Reis", in *IA*.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l Kibar fi Esfarü'l Bihar* (ed. O. Ş. Gökyay, MEB, 1973, pp. 89 ff.

<sup>47</sup> See B. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı-İran Siyasî Münasebetleri, I: 1578-1590*, İstanbul 1962; J. R. Walsh, "The Historiography of Ottoman-Safavid Relations in the Sixteenth and the Seventeenth Centuries", in *Historians of the Middle East* (eds. P.M. Holt and B. Lewis), London, 1962, pp. 197-211.

<sup>48</sup> Matrakçı Nasuh (on whom cf. H. Yurdaydın, *Matrakçı Nasuh*, Ankara, (1963) wrote a *Süleyman-nâme* describing the events which occurred in the time of Süleyman Kanunî. I have consulted the manuscript preserved in İstanbul Arkeoloji Library, MS. 379. This manuscript covers the years 950/1543 to 958/1551.

<sup>49</sup> This chronicle was considered to be the work of Rüstem Pasha who was grand vizier of the Ottoman Empire in 1544-1553 and again in 1555-1561 (cf. Ş. Altundağ and Ş. Turan, "Rüsten Paşa", in *IA*). It has been argued, however, that the author of this chronicle was in fact Matrakçı Nasuh (cf. H. Yurdaydın, "Matrakçı Nasuh'un Hayatı ve Eserleri ile İlgili Yeni Bilgiler", in *Belleten*, XXIX (Ankara, 1965), p. 354.

<sup>50</sup> For the detail see J. B. Blackburn, "Arabic and Turkish Source Materials for the Early Years of Ottoman Yemen", in *Sources for the History of Arabia*, part 2 (Riyad, 1979), p. 206; H. Yavuz, *Kâbe ve Haremeyn için Yemen'de Osmanlı Hâkimiyeti (1517-1571)*, İstanbul, 1984, pp. 142 ff.

nineteenth-century Ottoman soldier and historian Ahmed Râşid paraphrased it into his work in its entirety<sup>51</sup>.

The importance of the Portuguese and Turkish sources for the Ottomans in Arabia and the Indian Ocean, which I have tried to express in a limited scale will be better appreciated only when these source material become available for researchers. I have only mentioned particular documents and chronicles: they are much more numerous in quantity and much more variant in quality. No doubt the history of the Arabian world and the Turco-Portuguese confrontation in the Indian Ocean will be better known when and only these sources are explored.

<sup>51</sup> A, Râşid, *Tarih-i Yemen ve San'a*, 2 vols. İstanbul, 1291/1874-75.