

## Urban life in late Ottoman, Hashemite and early Saudi Jeddah, as documented in the photographs in the Snouck Hurgronje collection in Leiden

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### The photographic collection of Snouck Hurgronje in the Leiden University Library<sup>1</sup>

The famous »Bilder-Atlas« of Mecca, published by Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje in 1888 as an addition to his voluminous work on Mecca, as well as the *Bilder aus Mekka* (1889) have long been recognised as a remarkable early (albeit not the earliest) visual document about late 19th century Mecca, comprising both photographs and engravings.<sup>2</sup> Some

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Léon Buskens for his kind invitation to Leiden in November 2011, and him and Jan Just Witkam for encouraging me to undertake this article. Jan Just Witkam and Arnoud Vrolijk gave me valuable advice and provided me with materials with regard to the Snouck Hurgronje papers and photographs at Leiden. Without their kind advice this research would have been impossible, and I also thank the library for the permission to reproduce the photographs. John Frankhuizen and the staff of the Oriental Reading Room at Leiden University Library patiently helped me with the practicalities of obtaining the material and the reproduction of the photographs. As all the photographs come from the Leiden collection, this will not be indicated individually. Nelida Fuccaro helped with methodological references, Christoph Herzog, Rana von Mende, Gülhan Balsoy and a number of ZMO colleagues provided helpful references, and Jannis Hagmann and Selma Schwarz helped me to access the necessary articles and books. I am grateful to Claudia Ghrawi and the anonymous reviewers for their comments. My warmest thanks goes to all of them.

<sup>2</sup> On Snouck Hurgronje's *Journey to Jeddah and Mecca* and on his photographs, see Claude W. Sui, »Die Pilgerfahrt zu den heiligen Stätten des Islam und die frühe Photographie«, in: Alfred Wiczorek, Claude W. Sui (eds.), *Ins Heilige Land. Pilgerstätten von Jerusalem bis Mekka und Medina*, Heidelberg 2006, p. 43f. and 53-61 and Jan Just Witkam's »Introduction« to: Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, Amsterdam, Antwerpen 2007, pp. 7-184. The first photographer of the Hijaz was the Egyptian Colonel Muhammad Šādiq, Sui, »Die Pilgerfahrt zu den Heiligen Stätten des Islam und die frühe Photographie«, pp. 46-54, c.f. Gillian Grant, »A century of images in a century of change«, in: William Facey (with Gillian Grant),

of these photographs, many of which document the different groups of pilgrims passing through Jeddah, were actually taken by Snouck Hurgronje during his stay in Jeddah from 28 August to 21 February 1884, which preceded his journey to Mecca. Others, notably the outdoor photographs of Mecca and the Hajj published in the subsequent *Bilder aus Mekka*, were taken by his friend, the Meccan doctor 'Abd al-Ġaffār, at his request.<sup>3</sup>

During his lifetime, Snouck Hurgronje collected a very large number of photographs which are nowadays preserved at Leiden University Library. This collection comprises not only photographs taken by the Dutch Orientalist himself and by his Meccan friend but also many others which were given or sent to him, often through the Dutch consulate in Jeddah. It covers a very wide range of topics and extends in regional scope beyond the Hijaz and even the Arabian Peninsula.

This essay will draw attention to one aspect of this collection, namely photographs of Jeddah, where Snouck Hurgronje spent almost six months before undertaking his famous journey to Mecca. Many of these images, some of which were taken by the Orientalist himself, many of which were sent to him later, speak closely to Snouck Hurgronje's so-called »Jeddah Diary«, a translation of which by Jan Just Witkam will soon be published. However, the collection by far extends the period

*Saudi Arabia by the First Photographers*, London 1996 (repr. 2002), pp. 18-23, here p. 18f.

<sup>3</sup> P. Sj. van Koningsveld, *Snouck Hurgronje en de Islam*, Den Haag 1988, p. 116f. On the working relation between Snouck Hurgronje and 'Abd al-Ġaffār, see the commentary as well as the very interesting letters by 'Abd al-Ġaffār reproduced in Claude W. Sui, »Die Pilgerfahrt zu den heiligen Stätten des Islam und die frühe Photographie«, pp. 56-60.

of Snouck Hurgronje's stay in Jeddah, spanning the period from the mid-1880s to the 1930s.<sup>4</sup> They attest to Snouck Hurgronje's anthropological interest which led him to combine philology and participant observation with the most recent methods of documenting local culture photographically and phonographically.<sup>5</sup> In this approach, he was one of a new brand of Orientalists, like his sometime friend C.H. Becker who followed contemporary as well as classical themes and believed in the importance of ethnography as much as philology.<sup>6</sup> It is not surprising that many of these new-style Orientalists, who in many ways also laid the foundations for the development of Middle Eastern anthropology, became involved in the imperial endeavour. Snouck Hurgronje, who served many years as advisor on Islam in the Netherlands East Indies, was considered as one of the »pioneers of practical anthropology«, by which was meant a »closer relationship between academic anthropology and the colonial administration«.<sup>7</sup>

Moreover, they illustrate a number of lesser known aspects of the social and religious history of Jeddah which was of special interest to the Dutch Orientalist. Apart from the pilgrims from Southeast Asia and any information he could gather on religious life there and in Mecca, it is this theme which stands out in Snouck Hurgronje's »diary« and which is taken up in this essay. And while other travellers and a number of more recent historical anthropological studies refer to these themes, they are rarely illustrated in photographs, which makes the collection by Snouck Hurgronje unique out in comparison to other early and often spectacular photographs of the Hijaz, taken by Arabs and foreigners alike. The photographs can also be used

**4** The »Jeddah Diary« of Snouck Hurgronje is kept at Leiden University, Or 7112. It is henceforth quoted as Jeddah Diary. Prof. Jan Just Witkam kindly provided me with a typescript of his translation. I have used both the original and the translation for content. All English language quotations are taken from Prof. Witkam's translation and are quoted as Jeddah Diary, Translation. The page numbers refer to the original.

**5** Jan Just Witkam, »Fifty Years of Dutch-Arabian relations in Images (1885-1935)«, in: Dirry Oostdam (ed.), *West-Arabian Encounters. Fifty Years of Dutch-Arabian Relations in Images (1885-1935)*, Leiden 2004, pp. 9-16, here pp. 10-13 and D. Oostdam, »Collecting Arabia: Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje and his work«, in: F.C. van Leeuwen, D. Oostdam, S.A. Vink, *Dutch Envoys in Arabia 1880-1950. Photographic Impressions*, Royal Tropical Institute, The Netherlands 1999, pp. 17-24, here p. 20.

**6** Peter Heine lists Snouck Hurgronje as one of the first ethnographers of the Middle East, see his *Ethnologie und Anthropologie des Nahen und Mittleren Ostens*, Berlin 1989, p. 30fW

**7** Michael Prager, »Crossing Borders, Healing wounds: Leiden Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter 1917-1949, in: Jan van Bremen, Akitoshi Shimizu, *Anthropology and Colonialism in Asia: Comparative and Historical Colonialism*, Richmond 1999, pp. 362-383, here p. 342 (although more focusing on his role in Southeast Asia).

to contribute to a better understanding of other aspects of Jeddah's urban history, which this essay will illustrate.

An extensive stylistic analysis of the different photographs and photographers would exceed the scope of this paper, and would benefit from a full catalogisation of the photographic collection as well as a more comprehensive classification of photographers than has been hitherto possible. Nevertheless, it can be hypothesised that later photographers who sent their images to Snouck Hurgronje had more freedom of movement with the camera in outside settings. Hence, many of the images of the city, and people moving outside, seem to be of a later date. In contrast, Snouck Hurgronje had to rely on a local friend for outdoors photographs (most notably in Mecca, but there are few if any outdoors photographs of Jeddah which have him as undisputed author). Furthermore, both the images published in »Bilder-Atlas« and many of those found unpublished in the collection seem more staged. This might have to do with the increasing acceptance of photography in the local population, but also with the development of the photographic equipment which became more easy to transport with the development of photographic film and box cameras in the late 1880s, i.e. just after Snouck Hurgronje's departure from the Hijaz. With the spread of the 35 mm cameras, they became a much less conspicuous instrument to use in public.<sup>8</sup>

Leiden University Library has spent much effort to digitalise a growing number of items in the collection. They can be accessed through its website, <http://www.library.leiden.edu/> and are hidden in the special collections under the search term Snouck Hurgronje with a link from the catalogues of ubl085 and ubl215 (as well as some of the other catalogues) to the digitalised images.<sup>9</sup>

### Snouck Hurgronje's photographs as historical documents<sup>10</sup>

It was common in the early era of photography to consider photographs as »objective, impersonal,

**8** Elizabeth Edwards (ed.), *Anthropology and Photography, 1860-1920*, London 1992, here: Appendix: Photographic Techniques: An Outline, p. 264-267.

**9** The photos of catalogue ubl215 have been published online by the University of Leiden, see [https://socrates.leidenuniv.nl/webclient/StreamGate?folder\\_id=300&dvs=1471943358284~947#ead0](https://socrates.leidenuniv.nl/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=300&dvs=1471943358284~947#ead0) [retrieved 23 August 2016]. The photos of catalogue ubl085 have not been published yet, see [https://socrates.leidenuniv.nl/view/action/singleViewer.do?dvs=1471954255817~735&locale=de&VIEWER\\_URL=/view/action/singleViewer.do?&DELIVERY\\_RULE\\_ID=10&search\\_terms=ubl085&adjacency=N&application=DIGI-TOOL-3&frameId=1&usePid1=true&usePid2=true](https://socrates.leidenuniv.nl/view/action/singleViewer.do?dvs=1471954255817~735&locale=de&VIEWER_URL=/view/action/singleViewer.do?&DELIVERY_RULE_ID=10&search_terms=ubl085&adjacency=N&application=DIGI-TOOL-3&frameId=1&usePid1=true&usePid2=true).

**10** Please note: Most captions of the following photographs are derived from an unpublished photo inventory that has been compiled by Dirry Oostdam.

and authentic ways of representing the real»,<sup>11</sup> and it might indeed have been this very perspective which encouraged Snouck Hurgronje to use the technique as one of the methods of his ethnography. Thus, it has been argued that already his »Bilder-Atlas« (pictorial atlas), the title chosen for his collection of pictures, illustrates this documentary desire.<sup>12</sup> Among the photographs chosen below for a discussion of selected aspects of late Ottoman, Hashemite and early Saudi Jeddah are, as mentioned above, a number of pictures taken by other people, usually members of the Dutch community or travellers who were in touch with the Dutch consulate and/or Snouck Hurgronje. If they are treated in the following essay in a fashion similar to the one's taken by Snouck Hurgronje himself, it is mainly because they seem to reflect quite a number of interests expressed by Snouck Hurgronje in his writings, and because they are clearly linked to themes or people with which he was concerned in his local observations.



1 Fords for passenger traffic to Mecca of the bus service Jeddah-Mecca, March 1926

And although these photographs also demonstrate the changes in material culture and infrastructure, as can be seen, for example, from the pilgrim buses and trucks shown in photograph 1,<sup>13</sup> which was taken in 1926 by Dr. van Voorthuysen, it can be assumed that most of these were either taken at the explicit request of Snouck Hurgronje or at

<sup>11</sup> Gregory Paschalidis, »Images of History and the Optical Unconscious«, in: *Historein* 4 (2003), pp. 33-44, here p. 35.

<sup>12</sup> Sui, »Die Pilgerfahrt zu den Heiligen Stätten des Islam und die frühe Photographie«, p. 56. C.f. p. 57, where Sui contends that the eradication of 'Abd al-Gaffār's name from the photographs in *Bilder aus Mekka* was due to the consideration of photography as a reproductive rather than an artistic medium.

<sup>13</sup> Picture 1, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 12.288 CSH B.28.

least orientated towards his interests. Thus, many of them follow a logic not dissimilar to his own.<sup>14</sup>

It has since been recognised that ethnographic photographs have to be subjected to similar source criticism as other types of sources, i.e. that attention needs to be paid as much to the photographer as to the photographed, considering motivation, arrangement and audience, brief, the context in which the visual archive came into existence.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the context of Orientalism and particular types of the portrayal of »the other« have been discussed extensively in the literature.<sup>16</sup> However, there has also been an increasing realisation that in spite of the necessity to reflect on the motivations and circumstances of photography, the resulting images can tell us something about the past, and notably about certain aspects of the material culture and everyday life which otherwise might remain obscure.<sup>17</sup> On a theoretical level, Roland Barthes' elaboration of the photographic paradox, which distinguishes between the depiction and its connotation or context has opened the way for such a reflection, even if his point of departure was the genre of journalistic photography which, one could argue, is different from an academic documentary endeavour.<sup>18</sup> The existence of at least some notes by the photographing academic, keen on recording as much as possible of his experience in the Hijaz, is a particularly fortuitous coincidence. In addition, there are a good number of other sources illuminating a number of issues

<sup>14</sup> The album containing Or. 12.288 CSH B.1-69 holds a postcard by the photographer, dated June 29, 1927, thanking Snouck Hurgronje for his advice before the journey and offering these images as a gift.

<sup>15</sup> Joan M. Schwartz, »Negotiating the Visual Turn: New Perspectives on Images and Archives, in: *American Archivist* 67, 1 (2004), pp. 107-122, here p. 110, c.f. Terence Wright, »Photography: Theories of Realism and Convention«, in: Elizabeth Edwards (ed.), *Anthropology and Photography 1860-1920*, New Haven, London 1992, pp. 18-31.

<sup>16</sup> Nissan N. Perez, *Focus East. Early Photography in the Near East 1839-1885*, Jerusalem 1988; Wiczorek, Sui (eds.), *Ins Heilige Land. Pilgerstätten von Jerusalem bis Mekka und Medina*; Jacobson, *Odalisques and Arabesques: Orientalist Photography, 1839-1925*, London 2007. C.f. more generally the contributions in: Eleanor M. Hight, Gary D. Simpson (eds.), *Colonialist Photography. Imag(in)ing Race and Place*. London, New York 2002, here particularly Ayshe Erdogdu, »Picturing Alterity. Representational Strategies in Victorian Type Photographs of Ottoman Men«, pp. 107-125.

<sup>17</sup> Paschalidis, »Images of History and the Optical Unconscious«, p. 39f., c.f. Joanna C. Scherer, »The Photographic Document: Photographs as Primary Data in Anthropological Enquiry«, in: Edwards (ed.), *Anthropology and Photography 1860-1920*, pp. 32-41. One of the most extensive methodological work on the use and problems of images is Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing. The Use of Images as Historical Evidence*, London 2001, in spite of the criticism by, e.g., Schwartz, »Negotiating the Visual Turn: New Perspectives on Images and Archives, in: *American Archivist*, pp. 9-13.

<sup>18</sup> Roland Barthes, »Le message photographique«, in: *Communications* 1 (1961), pp. 127-138.

emerging from Snouck Hurgronje's photographs and serving as corroborating or explanatory context. It is thus the documentary side of the photographs that will be of special interest in this essay.

The importance of photography for the Orientalist becomes transparent from the entries in the »Diary«: already during the first two weeks of his stay in Jeddah he experimented with his photographic equipment.<sup>19</sup> Soon afterwards, Snouck Hurgronje's diary contains a slightly frustrated sounding note about »trying, but to no avail, to take photographs of the passing *maḥmal* from the Austrian Consulate«, and, still in the first fortnight of his stay, he reports that he had been »busy with photography« when a visitor came to call on him.<sup>20</sup> He also notes the arrival of some photographic equipment and the sending of photographs to his mother, in addition to regularly reporting to take particular photographs of people or spending time on photography.<sup>21</sup> In addition, Snouck Hurgronje seems to have discussed the subject of photography not only with potential collaborators, but also with some men of religion, such as the Egyptian-born Shaykh Ḥusayn al-Baqarī, who considered it to be permissible.<sup>22</sup>

This academic motivation notwithstanding, the overall context is necessary for the decoding of images. Thus, it needs to be remembered that Snouck Hurgronje's journey was supported financially and logistically by the Dutch government because of Dutch official interest in pan-Islamic movements, notably those which impacted on or emanated from pilgrims in Southeast Asia. Thus, a significant number of the photographs taken by Snouck Hurgronje show pilgrims from the Dutch colonies, grouped presumably by the photographer in order to show the characteristic features of specific ethnicities, and thus possibly contributing to the typification of Dutch colonial subjects.<sup>23</sup> There exists, however, no hint anywhere in the diary or in the other papers by Snouck Hurgronje that he was asked to take specific pictures and hence fulfil a specific colonial task.

Furthermore, it is not surprising that it was a Hadhrami *muwallad*, the nephew of the son of Pontianak, who was the first with whom Snouck Hur-

gronje discussed the possibility of photographing Mecca.<sup>24</sup> This, however, does not seem to have affected the way in which he looked at the city of Jeddah, and there is no evidence that he regularly supplied the Dutch government with photographs taken.

It might be interesting to note besides such typological photographs, more portrait-like pictures were another genre that appears among the images. This enabled Snouck Hurgronje to use photography as a door-opener to »establish friendships and acquaintances«.<sup>25</sup> Thus, after his conversion, he was invited to meet the governor of the Hijaz, who offered him his hospitality when visiting Mecca. Snouck Hurgronje also noted: »Shows me badly taken photographs of himself, and would like to have better ones.« A few days later, the governor returned, »in order to be photographed later on in the building of the Consulate.«<sup>26</sup> This might be seen in the established context of Ottoman portrait photography which began around the 1840s. In addition, and given that the governor was a very high-ranking Ottoman official, the wish for a good photograph might have also arisen in the context of the sultan's efforts to document both the people and the sights of the Empire, leading to many officials sending the Sultan photographs of themselves and their realms. This official sultanic endeavour seems to have sprung from two motives – the desire to present the outside world with a particular image of the (modernising) Ottoman Empire, and the interest in seeing (and to some extent visually controlling) the vast Empire from Istanbul.<sup>27</sup>

To some extent, this mixture of motivations would also have held true for a number of the local officials and notables whose portraits will be discussed in the last part of this article. The resulting images are often of a distinctly formal nature and might say as much about the self-representation of the portrayed as about the photographer. There was at the time no photo-studio in Jeddah, but given the cosmopolitan nature of its population, photographs were known and at least privately appreciated by the educated elite. Indeed, the contemporaneous resolute rejection of photography

**19** Jeddah Diary, p. 1.

**20** Jeddah Diary, Translation, p. 11 and 14.

**21** Jeddah Diary, p. 25, 37, 36-38, 40 and *passim*.

**22** Jeddah Diary, p. 35.

**23** Quite a number of these images were published in plates XII-XXIII of Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *Bilder-Atlas zu Mekka*, Haag 1888. C.f. Michael Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia. The Umma Below the Winds*, London, New York 2003, p. 57, on the depiction of »types« Erdogdu, »Picturing Alterity«, p. 118-120 and on this as a means of establishing anthropology as a science, Cory Willmott, »The Lens of Science: Anthropometric Photography and the Chipewa, 1890-1920«, in: *Visual Anthropology* 18 (2005), pp. 309-337, here pp. 309-18.

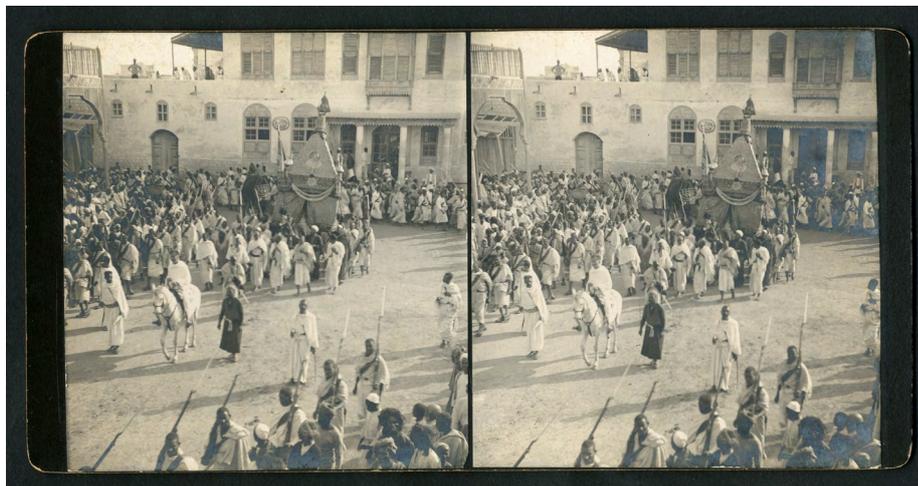
**24** Jeddah Diary, p. 8 f.

**25** Witkam, »Fifty Years of Dutch-Arabian Relations in Images (1885-1935)«, p. 11. In the Jeddah Diary, Snouck Hurgronje mentions sending photographs to his mother, but does not indicate that he sends any to the government.

**26** Jeddah Diary, Translation, p. 54ter.

**27** Nancy C. Micklewright, »Personal, Public, and Political (Re)Constructions: Photographs and Consumption«, in: Donald Quataert (ed.), *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550-1922, An Introduction*, New York 2000, pp. 261-287, here p. 273-276 and 279-282. On Osmān Nūrī Paşa c.f. M. Metin Hülagü, Gazi Osman Paşa, *Askeri ve Siyasi Faaliyetleri*, Boğaziçi Yayınları, İstanbul 1993.

2  
Arrival of the *Maḥmal* in  
Jeddah, unknown date



by contemporaneous Wahhabi scholars was at that time a matter confined to their domains in the Najd.

If Snouck Hurgronje delegated the outdoor photography in Mecca to his friend, this was not so much because of a general rejection of photography and had much more to do with his European origin and the fear of being declared an (unbelieving European) intruder, which could have endangered his life.<sup>28</sup> This fear was not entirely unfounded: after all, it was press reports about Snouck Hurgronje's presence in Mecca under the name of 'Abd al-Ġaffār (and Turkish agreement to his presence) which prompted the Ottoman governor to order his immediate departure just before *'īd al-aḏḥā* 1895.<sup>29</sup>

### **Snouck Hurgronje's passion: Islamic scholarship and religious practices**

Snouck Hurgronje's diary shows that he was very much interested in the religion of Islam, including religious practice, as well as in the Muslims themselves and their traditions, religious or otherwise. His fascination with Islam as a theology and Islamic history is well-documented in many of his scholarly publications. For example, he collected as much information as possible on Islamic learning and noted with great diligence the prescribed books in religious schools between Mecca and Java, as can be seen both from his diary as well as from many of his studies, it is the documentation of this religious lived culture which will be highlighted in the following as it is clearly evident in the photographs. Thus, while the images of Mecca, many of which were taken by his Meccan friend for reasons of security, might still be linked to the more traditional interest in the holy places of Islam, Snouck Hurgronje was also very interested in the local practices. For example, he spent quite some time attending ceremonies for *muḥarram* at

the Iranian consulate, and describes them in some detail.<sup>30</sup>

An interesting detail is that the photographic collection contains photographs of the arrival of the Egyptian *maḥmal*, the ceremonial palanquin containing the *kiswa* or cloth covering the *ka'ba* which was renewed annually.<sup>31</sup>

It was accompanied by Egyptian officials and military, and its arrival in Jeddah, as well as its procession to Meccan and Medina was accompanied by much pomp and music. This provided a joyful occasion for the local population until the *maḥmal*'s ban in 1926. It seems that this photograph cannot have been taken by Snouck Hurgronje, it is clearly very much in line with his interests. However, Snouck Hurgronje, who had to leave the Hijaz before being able to witness the arrival of this well-known *maḥmal*, describes a quite different variety of ceremonial palanquin, and of a very secular nature. Namely, when the Ottoman governor Osman Nuri Pasha reached Jeddah in January 1885, all the quarters organised processions in his honour, centering around such palanquins. They were carried by people dressed up as Ottoman officials and competing about presenting the most beautifully decorated *maḥmal*. This gave rise to a fight between the *awlād* of two different quarters.<sup>32</sup> Incidentally, Snouck Hurgronje here confirms the importance of the quarter organisation, also known from other parts of the Arabian Peninsula and beyond, in spite of the important differences in local building styles and the spatial organisation of quarters.<sup>33</sup> He seems to have only

<sup>30</sup> Jeddah Diary, p. 26-31.

<sup>31</sup> Picture 2, Leiden University Library, Cod. Or. 26 363\_O1 B 09 (unpubl.).

<sup>32</sup> Jeddah Diary, p. 44f.

<sup>33</sup> For social institutions of the quarters of Jeddah, see Muḥammad Yūsuf Trābulṣī, *Jidda... ḥikāyat madīna*, 2nd enlarged ed., Riyadh 2008, p. 179-206, for two other Saudi cities Mohammed Abdullah Eben Saleh, »Privacy and Communal Socialization: The Role of Space in the Security of Traditional and Contemporary Neighbourhoods in Saudi Arabia«, in: *Habitat International* 21 (1997) 2, pp. 176-184, particularly

<sup>28</sup> Sui, »Die Pilgerfahrt zu den Heiligen Stätten des Islam und die frühe Photographie«, p. 46.

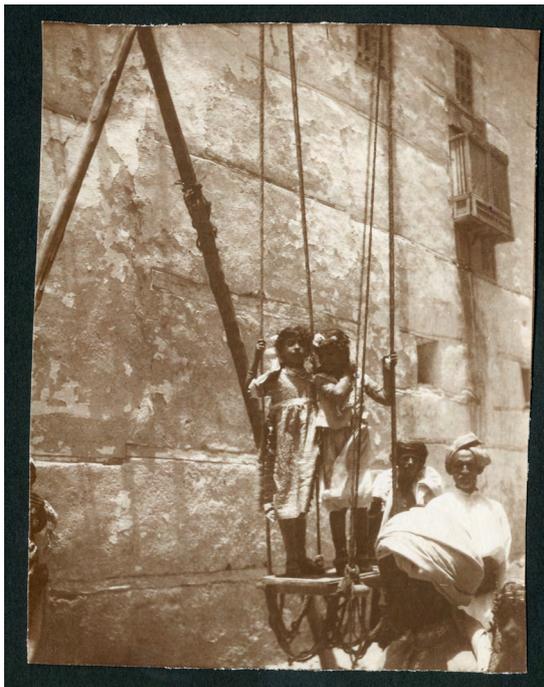
<sup>29</sup> Witkam, »Introduction«, p. 129.

witnessed this in passing, as the diary notes that »[r]egrettably I could see nothing of the *maḥmal* processions«.<sup>34</sup>

What is, with regard to the ethnography of Jeddah, of great interest are the photographs linked to the end of the breaking of the fast at the end of *ramaḍān* contained in the collection.<sup>35</sup>



3 *Kleine Feest* (The »minor feast«) , unknown date

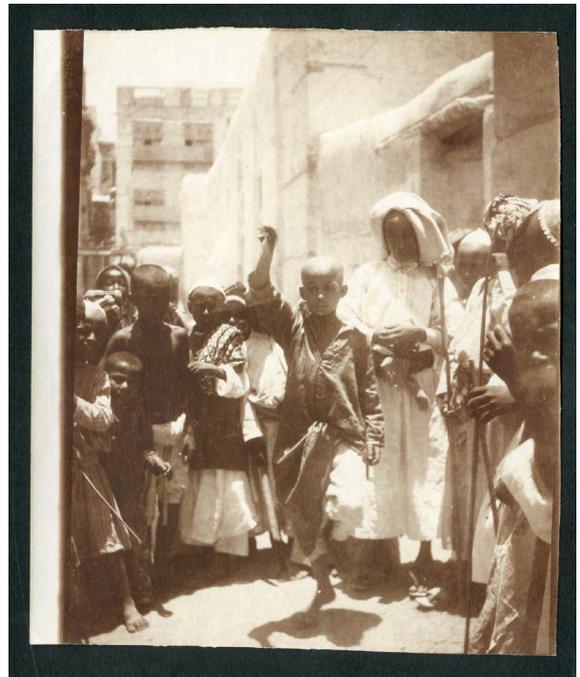


4 *Children on swings* (subtitle U.F.), unknown date

p. 171. C.f. Ulrike Freitag, »Urban Space and Prestige: When Festivals Turned Violent in Jeddah, 1880s - 1960s«, in Nelida Fuccaro (ed.), *Violence and the City in the Modern Middle East*, Stanford 2016, pp. 61-74.

<sup>34</sup> Jeddah Diary, Translation, p. 33.

<sup>35</sup> Pictures 3-5, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 12.288 CSH M.35 (entitled »kleine Feest«), M.36, M.39.



5 *Children in the street, dancing* (subtitle U.F.), unknown date

These are of an unclear date, but seem to relate to the common context of the festivities of the »Minor Feast« or *ʿid al-fiṭr*. Snouck Hurgronje did not experience this particular feast. However, he describes on a number of occasions how he witnessed children during festive occasions. Thus, on 1 October, 1884 he writes, apparently on the occasion of the *ʿid al-aḍḥā* (he calls it »great ḥajj-day«) and describing what seems to match very closely the three photographs:<sup>36</sup>

At several locations in town some Turkish swings with girls and boys in them. Sweets (pies, beans, candies, dates) were sold nearby. Also here and there dances (war dances and also a sort of cancan) by negro slaves. Beautifully clad children with gold-embroidered clothes and gilded amulet containers hanging from their necks or waists walk through town [...].<sup>37</sup>

He also describes the presence of well-dressed children (and adults) on the last day of the month of *Ṣafar* as well as on the occasion of the Birthday of the Prophet on 12 *rabīʿ al-awwal*.<sup>38</sup> On the first occasion, he also refers to other interesting traditions, such as the camping outside the city and the organisation of

<sup>36</sup> Jeddah Diary, Translation, p. 18.

<sup>37</sup> Leiden Diary, Translation, p. 18. About the swings, c.f. Ṭrābulsī, *Jidda... ḥikāyat madīna*, p. 333-336 (and an image of a wheel), Muḥammad Nāṣir ʿAlī ʿAl Ḥaṣḥūl al-Asmarī, »Ṭārīḥ al-ḥayyāt al-ijtimāʿiyya fī madīnat Jidda 1300h-1343 h/1882 m-1924m«, unpubl. MA thesis, King ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz University, Jeddah 2008, p. 98.

<sup>38</sup> Jeddah Diary, p. 42f.

donkey, horse and camel races at the end of *ṣafar* which are not easily found in other sources on Jeddah. Another photograph depicts young boys engaged in a mock fight with shields and sticks.<sup>39</sup>

On many of these festive occasions, religious and secular, as well as at family parties such as weddings, a variety of music was played and dances performed. While photograph 6 shows a dancing boy, Snouck Hurgronje himself took a number of photographs of musicians with their instruments.<sup>40</sup>



6 Slaves with Tumbura (Jeddah), 1884-85



7 Musician from Jeddah, 1884-85

8 Young Man in Jeddah, 1884-85

<sup>39</sup> While I have not been able to conduct a comprehensive research into these issues, it seems that most current books on the local traditions also don't mention this tradition. Besides Asmarri, I am referring here to Ḥasan 'Abd al-Ḥayy Qazzāz, *Ahl al-ḥijāz bi-'abqihim al-tārīḥī*, Jidda 1994.

<sup>40</sup> Pictures 6 and 7, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 12.288\_CSH N.17 (entitled »Slaves with Tumbura (Jeddah)«) and Cod. Or. 12.288\_CSH O.7 (entitled »Musician from Jeddah«). On musical entertainment, c.f. Qazzaz, *Ahl al-ḥijāz bi-'abqihim al-tārīḥī* p. 96-98, Ṭrābulsī, *Jidda... ḥikāyat madīna*, p. 413-426.

Image 7 shows a band of slaves, slavery being a very common feature of Jeddawi society at the time, with most wealthy households owning one or more slaves), whereas the bagpipe-like instrument in picture 7 is played by a »musician from Jeddah«.

It is interesting that he mentions a musical performance among women in his neighbourhood, something which has been described otherwise mostly in the context of weddings and the like and attests to the existence of a somewhat richer social and cultural life for women than is often acknowledged.<sup>41</sup>

### The portraits of individuals and groups

A large number of the photographs taken by Snouck Hurgronje depict people, both local and pilgrims, as has been discussed above. Quite a number of them were clearly taken in an arranged indoor setting (or in the courtyard of the Dutch consulate). What is of interest here are the social and habitual differences which are demonstrated in the photographs and which help us understand the society of Jeddah of the late Ottoman and early post-Ottoman society. What stands out in particular are the different dress codes observed by Hijazis, Ottomans, Europeans and Najdis, visualising differences between these groups. This notwithstanding, it needs to be noted that the groups dressed by no means in a homogeneous way, details of dress and fabric as well as different types of uniform being important markers of social distinction.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, photograph 8 shows a young man, portrayed by Snouck Hurgronje himself in the courtyard of the Dutch consulate, in traditional Hijazi garb with a turban.<sup>43</sup>



<sup>41</sup> Jeddah Diary, p. 18.

<sup>42</sup> On the (male) Hijazi dress, see Ṭrābulsī, *Jidda... ḥikāyat madīna*, p. 397-408, for women's dress, p. 409-412, c.f. Wahīb Aḥmad Fāḍil Kābilī, *al-Ḥirafiyūn fī madīnat Jidda (fī 'l-qarn al-rābi' al-hijrī)*, Jeddah (3rd ed.) 2004, p. 26-29, noting particularly social distinctions.

<sup>43</sup> Picture 8, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 12.288\_CSH O.3.

He is clad in a manner similar to that of the Jiddawi pilgrim agents or *wukalā'* in photograph 9, probably photographed in the early years of the 20th century by the then Dutch consul Scheltema in front of the consulate.<sup>44</sup>



9 Some agents for pilgrims in front of the Dutch consulate in Jeddah, date unknown

These agents worked in close cooperation with the *muṭawwifīn* (pilgrims' guides) in Mecca and were responsible for the reception of the pilgrims in the harbor, their accommodation in Jeddah and the organisation of their onward transfer to Mecca. Upon the return of those pilgrims who did not proceed to Medina and Yanbu, they accompanied the departing pilgrims from their arrival until their final departure to their home countries.<sup>45</sup> An interesting detail in the photograph, found on a number of the outdoors images, is the umbrella, used as a protection against the scorching sun, but apparently still rare enough to serve as a suitable prop in such a formal photograph.<sup>46</sup>

In comparison to the long robes of the Hijazis, Ottoman officialdom must have appeared distinctly foreign, and possibly Western, ranging from the odd portrait of the policeman in photograph 10 the image of whom seems to reflect the rather low status of such Ottoman officials to the more dignified, as in the image of the chairman of the Commercial Council (*majlis al-tijāra*) in photograph 11.<sup>47</sup>



10 Policeman, date unknown

11 Muḥammad Nadīm Effendi, chairman of the Commercial Council of Jeddah, date unknown

It is basically the fez, the headgear introduced in 1829 and already deeply unfashionable among nationalists by the end of the Empire, which clearly marked the Ottomans as distinct from Europeans.<sup>48</sup> However, the overall proximity in habitus is particularly striking in photograph 12, depicting Aḥmad Rātīb Paşa, Governor-General of the Hijaz (1892-94 and 1895-1908), with the Dutch Consul Scheltema, as well as Dr. Yūsuf Bey, a physician in the sanitary installations and the dragoman of the Dutch consulate as well as a (from his dress apparently fairly high-ranking) Arab retainer of the Governor-General.<sup>49</sup>



12 Aḥmad Rātīb Paşa, Governor-General of the Hijāz, N. Scheltema, Consul of the Netherlands in Jeddah, Dr. Yūsuf Bey, physician of the sanitary service in Jeddah, Radèn Abū Bakr, dragoman of the dutch consulate in Jeddah, a follower of the Governor-General, October 1905

<sup>44</sup> Picture 9, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 18.097 CSH S.66.1 A17.

<sup>45</sup> Kābilī, *al-Ḥirafīyyūn fī madīnat Jidda*, p. 79.

<sup>46</sup> C.f. Leiden University Library, Cod. Or. 26.365 OID 22 (unpubl.).

<sup>47</sup> Pictures 10 and 11, Leiden University Library, Cod. Or. 26.368 OI G. 25, G.44 (unpubl.). The dates and photographer are not known.

<sup>48</sup> Touraj Atabeki, Erik J. Zürcher, *Men of Order. Authoritarian Modernization under Atatürk and Reza Shah*, London, New York 2004, p. 210f.

<sup>49</sup> Picture 12, Leiden University Library, Cod. Or. 26.368 OI.SR 59.10 (unpubl.) On the dates of his governorship, see Sinan Kunalalp, *Son Dönem Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali (1839-1922)*, Prosopografik Rehber, Istanbul (2nd ed.) 2003, p. 60. Saleh Muhammad Al-Amr, »The Hijaz under Ottoman Rule 1869-1914: Ottoman Vali, the Sharif of Mecca, and the Growth of British Influence«, PhD thesis Univ. of Leeds 1974, p. 254 gives 1893 as his date of appointment.

Thus, the visual appearance makes it likely that John F. Keane's observations on the Turks were shared by many locals, albeit surely from a different perspective and thus different value judgements. Keane visited the Hijaz in 1877 and commented that, to his mind, but also locally, the Turks were »the most civilised«. He adds, however, that they were hated as the ruling power, »both on account of their adoption of European costume and their introduction of such Christian innovations as forks, chairs, and, it is whispered, even wine into the holy Meccah«. <sup>50</sup>



13 Ibn Sa'ūd with Shaykh 'Abdallāh 'Alī Riḍā, 1925

Finally, it is worthwhile to consider the well-known image of Amīr 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Sa'ūd, Sultan of Najd, with Shaykh 'Abdallāh 'Alī Riḍā, *qā'im-maqām* of Jeddah in Ottoman, Sharifian and Saudi times, and prominent member of one of its foremost trading families. <sup>51</sup> In this position, he officially surrendered the city to Ibn Sa'ūd after a long siege and fierce criticism of Sharifian rule by a number of local notables. The picture was taken in 1925, thus shortly after the entry of Ibn Sa'ūd on 23 December 1925. <sup>52</sup> It shows the two men at a table in a setting reminding of a coffee-house, drinking Turkish coffee – the Arabian variant being served in smaller cups. The image brings out nicely the different styles of dress (note the overcoat, but most strikingly the difference between the Hijazi turban and the *shammākh*, the checkered cloth worn on the head and held with the *'aqqāl*). These were perceived as emblematic of the cultural differences between Najd and Hijaz, resulting in the slow ad-

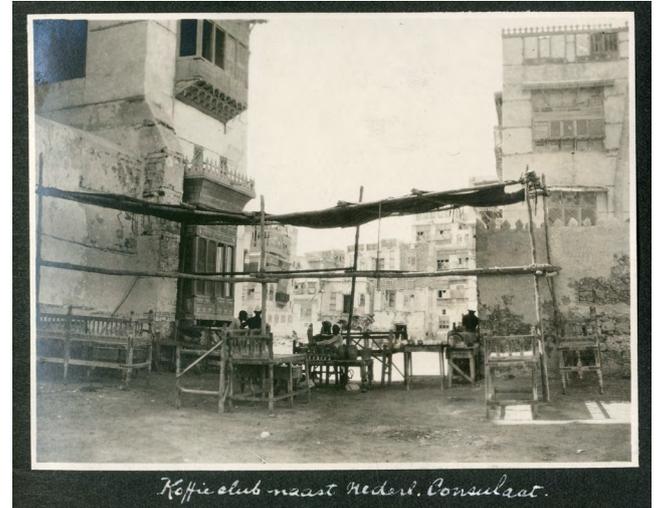
<sup>50</sup> John F. Keane, *Six Months in Meccah: An Account of the Mohammedan Pilgrimage to Meccah*, London 1881, p. 90.

<sup>51</sup> Picture 13, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 12.288 CSH J.4. On 'Abdallāh 'Alī Riḍā, see Muḥammad 'Alī Maḡrabī, *A'lām al-Hijāz fī 'l-qarn al-rābi' 'ashar al-hijrī*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. Jeddah 1985, p. 136-144.

<sup>52</sup> On the political development, see Alexei Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia*, London 1998, p. 264 and, for a Hijazi perspective, Ṭrābulṣī, *Jidda... ḥikāyat madīna*, p. 585-596.

aptation of Najdi dress as the dress of the new elite in the following decades.

It is, however, noteworthy that Snouck Hurgronje was not just interested in portraits and »types« (of pilgrims, social groups etc.). This might not be reflected in his own photographs, but certainly is obvious in the collection. Snouck Hurgronje himself mentions visits to coffeehouses in various parts of the city. <sup>53</sup>



14 Coffeehouse beside the Dutch consulate, March 1926

Jeddah, as many port cities, featured a wide variety of such coffeehouses. They served as public spaces of communication and entertainment for the majority of inhabitants. In addition, they (or some of them also provided affordable shelter for travellers, notably during the pilgrimage when Jeddah became crowded. <sup>54</sup> Besides the coffeehouses, there existed private seating outside the houses on benches or small platforms as well as benches in public spaces (*marākiz*). These served as regular meeting places for the daily interaction between small, fairly well established groups of friends (*šilla*) who met there in a more intimate setting than in the coffeehouse, but they could also be rented out during Hajj. <sup>55</sup> Finally, many people met inside the houses where they kept salons to receive their visitors, either in the more business-like settings of the cantors on the ground floor or in larger sitting rooms, often situated on the first floor of the multi-storeyed buildings.

The cafés were convenient sites for Snouck Hurgronje's fieldwork, for example a place where he

<sup>53</sup> Picture 14, »Koffieclub naast Nederl. Consulaat«, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 12.288 CSH B.26. See Jeddah Diary p. 19, 22.

<sup>54</sup> Ṭrābulṣī, *Jidda... ḥikāyat madīna*, pp. 196-202 and Heinrich Freiherr von Maltzan, *Meine Wallfahrt nach Mekka. Reise in der Küstengegend und im Innern von Hedschas*, 2 vols Leipzig 1865, here vol. 1, p. 251, 254.

<sup>55</sup> Ṭrābulṣī, *Jidda... ḥikāyat madīna*, pp. 202-206, interviews in Jeddah, March 2009.

could listen to a storyteller.<sup>56</sup> This was in line with his deep-rooted interest in many aspects of popular (and religious) culture, such as lullabies, rain prayers or dreams, and in the festivals associated with the Islamic calendar and the pilgrimage, on which he had, after all, written his dissertation.<sup>57</sup>

### Photographic evidence of urban and material change

Snouck Hurgronje himself does not mention many of the sights of the city in which he spent five and a half months, staying, until his conversion to Islam, at the Dutch consulate.<sup>58</sup> This might, at the time, have been housed in a building similar to the one in this photograph, possibly taken by Snouck Hurgronje himself.<sup>59</sup>



15 Street in Jeddah date unknown

He describes, albeit without too much detail, a number of visits to the market. A picture dating from 1926 and showing one of the market streets gives a vivid impression of one of the quieter markets.<sup>60</sup> Featuring oil barrels in the middle of the street, it also illustrates the slow change in material culture. Oil was already imported to Jeddah from the United States by the time Snouck Hurgronje visited in 1884, probably mostly for cooking and lighting. Motor transport, introduced some time in the early 20th century, would have greatly increased demand.<sup>61</sup> The commercial transport of pilgrims to

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

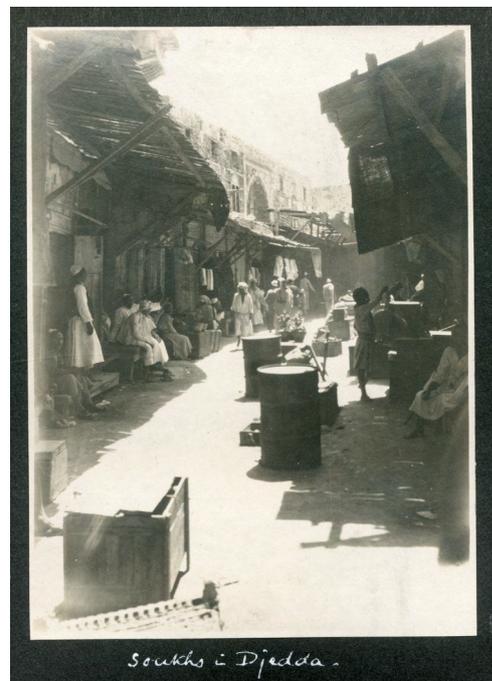
<sup>57</sup> Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *Het Mekkaansch Feest*, Leiden 1880.

<sup>58</sup> Jeddah Diary, p. 43 and the commentary by Witkam, »Introduction«, p. 66f.

<sup>59</sup> Picture 15, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 12.288 CSH J.28. The images in this file are of different origins, according to Dirry Oostdam. There are a number of houses which might have been Dutch consulates, see Dirry Oostdam, »Catalogue«, in: Oostdam, Witkam, *West-Arabian Encounters*, pp. 28-141, here p. 95-97.

<sup>60</sup> Picture 16, »Soukhs in Djedda«, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 12.288 CSH B.18.

<sup>61</sup> In 1878, an Italian firm was trading in petroleum (Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Centre des Archives Diplomatiques à Nantes (MAE, CADN), Djeddah, Consulat, 46, p. 341ff and Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade



16  
Sūqs in  
Jeddah,  
1926

Mecca by bus was discussed in Jeddah in 1910, in parallel to speculations surrounding the possible construction of a raillink between the two cities which was considered a supplement to the Hijaz railway.<sup>62</sup> In March 1911, the British consul reported that an omnibus had arrived from Liverpool, originally destined for the transport of pilgrims between Mecca and Arafat, but that the buyer had refused to accept it because vehicle turned out to be a defunct second-hand item.<sup>63</sup>

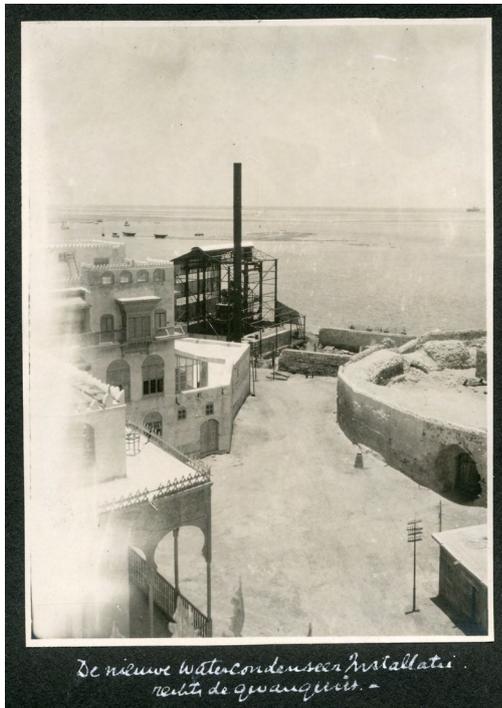
A number of photographs in the collection show both such subtle (and not so subtle) changes in the urban material culture as well as more directly the urban development which Jeddah witnessed. Thus, van Voorthuysen also sent a picture of the customs station and another one of the new seawater desalination plant, the first Ottoman installation of 1908 having become defunct after a few years (incidentally also providing a view of the almost derelict old prison building).<sup>64</sup>

and Finance. Turkey, Report for the Year 1893 on the Trade, &c., of the Consular District of Jeddah, Annual Series 1451, Foreign Office, London 1894, p. 6, c.f. Public Record Office (PRO), Foreign Office (FO) 195/2198, Report on the Economic and Administrative Condition of the Hijaz Vilayet for the Quarter ended the 30th Sept. (1905), p. 6.

<sup>62</sup> MAE, CADN, Djeddah, Consulat, 45, no. 30-34 of July and August 1910 and PRO, FO 195/2350, Monahan to Lowther 4.6.1910.

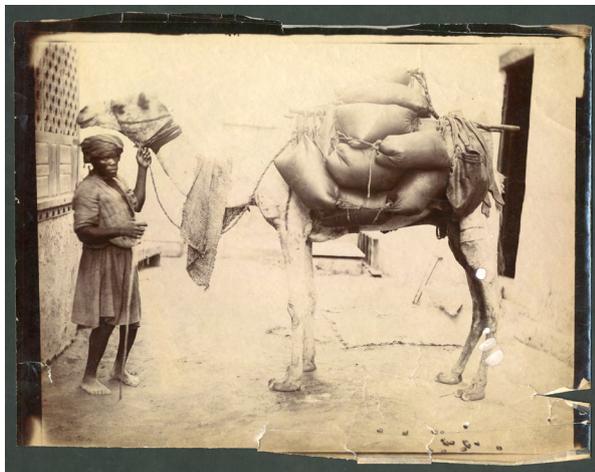
<sup>63</sup> PRO, FO 195/2376, Monahan to O'Connor, 8.3.1911.

<sup>64</sup> Picture 17, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 12.288 CSH B.31. The construction of the desalination plant was started in August 1907, shortly after the one in Yanbu began to work, and seems to have been operational by early 1908. PRO, FO 195/2254, Monahan to O'Connor, 30.8.1907 and FO 195/2286, Monahan to O'Connor, 29.2.1908. Already in 1911, the installation of a new machine was planned, PRO, FO 195/2376, Memorandum of 6.10.1911. The technology had already been in use at the quarantine station of Camaran Island, FO 195/2061, Ahmed, Vice Consul to Hossain, Acting



17 The new water-condensator, to the right the prison, March 1926

Nevertheless, it took a long time until piped water reached the quarters and later individual houses. Until then, the water tanks of the houses were regularly filled by water carriers who brought the precious good from the various sources of supply to the houses by camel or donkey, as in photo 18 by an unknown photographer.<sup>65</sup>

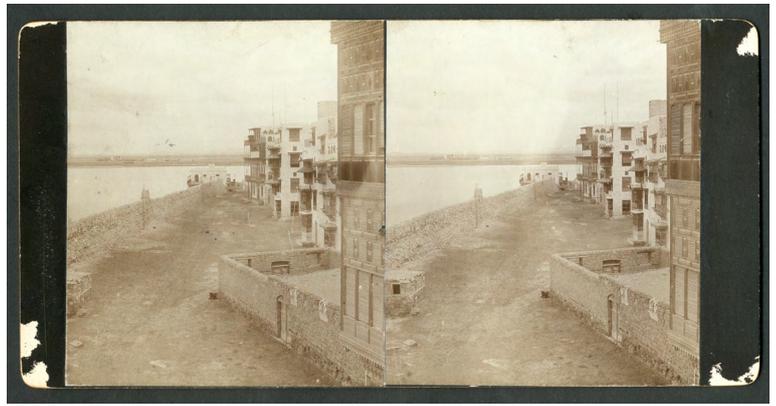


18 Water carrier, date unknown

Other photographs, dating from 1906, show the development of the northern front of the Ḥārat aš-Šām, which was built up in the last part of the 19th century and became the quarter inhabited by rich

Consul Jeddah, 20.8.1899. The customs house is depicted on Or. 12.288 CSH B.10.

<sup>65</sup> Picture 18, collection Snouck Hurgronje, Cod. Or. 12.288 CSH N.12.



19 Jeddah: seen from the Dutch Consulate: right- part of the French Consulate; adjacent, the English; next: the Austrian. The white building at the end of the wall is a police post, January 1906

families and the consulates. These can be seen lined up against the wall separating the city from the lagoon.<sup>66</sup>

### Conclusion: Snouck Hurgronje's collection as an important source for Arabian history

This discussion of a few of the photographs from the Leiden collection has, of course, by no means exhausted the wealth of historical detail depicted therein. Both the range of the images, depicting people in formal and less formal settings as well as outside scenes showing water carriers, port workers as well as market scenes contain much to illustrate the history of Jeddah in an unprecedented way. For example, the images of women working clearly shows that, unsurprisingly but hardly proven in documented form, the generalised notion of women's seclusion was very much a phenomenon linked to class. Children, depicted in the photographs of *'īd al- aḏḥā*, hardly appear in the written record. Furthermore, the images give much incidental information about the material culture, from details of dress and furniture to oil barrels and the shades with which the market streets were protected against the sun.<sup>67</sup>

It should be added that the collection also comprises numerous photographs of other parts of the Arab world (not to mention Southeast Asia, which this paper consciously does not even touch upon). Thus, historians of Egypt, Bilad al-Sham as well as Yemen, notably Hadhramawt, might also want to consider consulting Snouck Hurgronje's photographic archive. A full description of this archive still remains a desideratum.

<sup>66</sup> Picture 19, Leiden University Library, Cod. Or. 26.363 OI B.02 (unpubl.), showing the French, British and Austrian consulate from the building rented by the Dutch.

<sup>67</sup> It is typical of photography of this period that much information about the everyday is accidental to most photographs, see Annegret Nippa, »30 Minuten Orient in 18.000 Bildern: Anmerkungen zur Lesbarkeit der Orientfotografie«, in: *Mit Kamel und Kamera - Historische Orient-Fotografie 1864-1970* (Mitteilungen aus dem Museum für Völkerkunde Hamburg, Bd. 38), 2008, pp. 33-58, here p. 50.

This paper has merely attempted to show a few avenues for the use of these images in future historical research, and to highlight some of the particular strengths of this collection, which result to a large extent from the specific anthropological interests of its former owner, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje.

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