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ABDÜLHAMİD II AND SAYYİD FADL PASHA OF HADRAMAWT
An Arab Dignitary' s Ambitions (1876-1900)

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One of the distinguishing aspects of Abdülhamid II's reign is the presence of Arab dignitaries such as Muhammad Zafir, Abulhuda al-Sayyadi, and Sayyid Fadl Pasha at the Yıldız Palace. It is generally assumed that these Arabs played an important role in shaping the Sultan's Arab policies and his attitudes towards religion, i.e. Islam. Yet no serious and comprehensive study has been done on the precise role of these distinguished figures. Abu-Manneh did make an attempt to explain the role of the Arab sheikhs at the Yıldız Palace especially that of Abulhuda al-Sayyadi in Abdülhamid II's regime⁽¹⁾. However, there is still much to be done in order to establish the true nature of the Sultan's relations with these Arab dignitaries. The present article on Sayyid Fadl Pasha is another attempt to contribute to our understanding of how Abdülhamid II dealt with these Arabs and why he kept them in İstanbul.

Fadl b. al-Ghaws Alawi b. Muhammad b. Sahl Mawla al-Duwayla al-Alawi al-Husayni, better known as Sayyid Fadl Pasha, was a member of the large and influential clan of Ba Alawi living in Hadramawt, more particularly in and around the town of Tarim⁽²⁾. His father Alawi Muhammad b. Sahl (d.1260/1844) had migrated to Malabar in south-west India where he

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(1) B. Abu-Manneh, Sultan Abdülhamid II and Shaikh Abulhuda Al-Sayyadi, *Middle Eastern Studies*, XV-2, (May 1979).

(2) O. Löfgren, Ba Alawi, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition*, I, p. 828-830; S. Uludağ, *Alciviye, Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, II, p.370.

had joined the Alawiyya "tariqa" Sufi (order) established there by the two outstanding Alawi leaders, Muhammad Hamid al-Djafri and Sheikh Hasan al-Djafri⁽³⁾. Sayyid Fadl's father had succeeded Sheikh Hasan al-Djafri as the leader of the Alawiyya in Malabar and gained an influential position in religious circles. It was into such an influential family that Sayyid Fadl was born in 1824. He received a traditional Islamic education and was apparently trained in Alawiyya principles⁽⁴⁾. On his father's death in 1844, Fadl succeeded to the leadership of the Muslim community of Malabar⁽⁵⁾.

During Fadl's leadership, the Muslim community of Malabar became increasingly politicized. Fadl adopted an anti-British stance and used his influence to undermine the presence of the British who had been affecting developments in the area since the 1790s and who also influenced developments in Aden, Mukalla, and Muscat in their attempt to protect their trade route to India. The result was an increase in tension between the Muslims and the British officials. The tension reached such a degree in the years immediately preceding 1852 that the British viewed Fadl's presence in Malabar as dangerous. In 1852 following the suppression of a Muslim rebellion, the district magistrate, Mr Connelly, issued an order for the arrest of Fadl. However, Fadl escaped from Malabar and reached Mecca in early 1853⁽⁶⁾. Subsequently, he was accused of instigating the murder of Connelly⁽⁷⁾.

In the mid-1850s Fadl made his first visit to İstanbul. Although he did not stay long, he gained official Ottoman recognition of his status as an influential Arab notable and a salary of 2,500 kuruş per month. Armed with this imperial favour, Fadl made several abortive attempts to secure a high-position in South Arabia. In 1860 he claimed that the Hadrami sayyids (sadat) were being maltreated by the local tribes and that he wished to rescue them with the support of the al-Kathiri tribe of Zafar by bringing the area between Hadramawt and Oman, which was effectively independent, under Ottoman control. Due to the disappointing indifference of the Vali of the Hijaz and the Amir of Mecca, Fadl went to İstanbul again in order to convince the cen-

(3) Sayyid Fadl b. Alawi, *Nabza Muhtawiya 'ala Ba'di Manakib al-Alawi b. Muhammad b. Sahl*, (Beirut, 1307/1889), pp. 2-7. Sayyid Fadl gives a brief biography of his father before explaining his miracles (keramat).

(4) Zaki Muhammad Mujahid, *Al-A'lam al-Sharqiyya*, I, (Cairo, 1949), p. 23; U. R. Kahhala, *Mu'jam al-Muallifin*, IV, (Beirut, n. d.), p. 80; H. al-Zirikli, *al-A'lam*, V, (Beirut, 1984), p. 150.

(5) Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA) Sadaret Resmi Maruzat Evrakı (Y.A RES). An undated memorandum most probably prepared by Awnürrefik Pasha on Sayyid Fadl and his activities until 1879. India Office Library and Records (IOR) Home Correspondence (L/P&S) 3/285, Baring's dispatch, No. 146, Secret, Cairo, 18 March 1889.

(6) For the Hadrami community in Mecca during the second part of the 19th century, see, S. Hurgronje, *Mecca in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*, (Leiden, 1931), *passim*.

(7) IOR L/P&S/3/427, minute paper in a secret letter from India, No. 105, 12 May 1879; J.B. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf 1795-1880*, (Oxford, 1968), p. 773.

tral government to support him militarily, but his efforts were to no avail⁽⁸⁾.

The only benefit that came of this second trip to Istanbul was that he became acquainted with Âli Pasha (d.1871), one of the leading statesmen of the 1860s. On his return to Mecca, Fadl sent several letters to Âli Pasha about developments in the Arabian Peninsula, especially in Yemen. Not surprisingly, Âli Pasha during his Grand Vezirate paid little attention to British demands for Fadl's surrender⁽⁹⁾.

Regarding Fadl's activities in Mecca, not much is actually known. There are reports that during the Ottoman expedition to Yemen in 1870-71, he sent his sons to Hudayda in order to convince Ahmed Muhtar Pasha, the commander of the 7th Army in Yemen and the Vali between 1871 and 1873, to extend his military operations to Yafi', the region between Aden and the southern border of Yemen, and to appoint him the ruler of Yafi'. Once again Fadl was disappointed⁽¹⁰⁾.

At about the same time there were disturbances in Zafar provoked by feuds among the various tribes. In 1874 Abdullah Pasha, the Amir of Mecca, received a request from some of the tribal chiefs of Zafar for a hundred soldiers and a civil governor (*müdir*) to end the hostilities among them. This request indicates that they were willing to recognize Ottoman rule. However, the Amir objected to such a move believing that it would create more problems than it would solve. Firstly, he thought that Ottoman expansion into Zafar would create difficulties between the Ottoman and the British governments; and secondly, that since the area was inhabited by unruly bedouins, any prospect of peace in the future was rather gloomy. In other words, the Amir feared that the Zafar tribes might easily change sides and attack the Ottoman soldiers. Thirdly, he thought that since there was no port facility in Zafar, an Ottoman naval presence would be impossible⁽¹¹⁾.

At this critical moment Fadl managed to meet with the envoy of the tribal chiefs from Zafar and express his willingness to use his influence to meet their request. In response, in 1875 Fadl received an invitation from the tribal chiefs to come and settle the district. In August, along with his family, he left for Zafar and in early 1876 declared that Zafar was an Ottoman territory and that he would rule it in the name of the Ottoman government⁽¹²⁾.

(8) BOA Y/A Resmi 4/15, n.d.

(9) IOR L/P&S/3/146, Goschen to Granville, Confidential, 6 January 1881; L/P&S/3/252, Dufferin to Granville, No. 156, Confidential, Constantinople, 4 March 1882.

(10) BOA Y/A Resmi 4/15, n. d.

(11) Ibid.

(12) Ibid., IOR L/P&S/3/581, India Office to Foreign Office in a secret letter from India, No. 34, 4 September 1876. For a brief account of the history of Zafar in the nineteenth century see J.G. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, I, historical part, I-A*, (Calcutta, 1915), pp. 589-601. Arabic translation of this work appeared under the title *Delil al-Khalij, al-Qism al-Tarikh* (Qatar, n.d.). pp. 896-918.

Interestingly enough, it appears that Fadl did not inform the Ottoman government of his intentions in Zafar. Given his previous abortive attempts and the government's preoccupation with the crisis in the Balkans, perhaps Fadl saw no point in doing so. However, after taking over Zafar, Fadl applied to the Ottoman government for recognition of his governorship and for the extension of Ottoman protection over the area. He also asked the Porte to send two vessels of war with 500 soldiers. Since the Ottoman government knew almost nothing about Zafar, the opinions of the Vali of the Hijaz and the Amir of Mecca were sought⁽¹³⁾. What their response was is not known, but the Porte avoided recognizing Fadl's self-declared governorship. Meanwhile, Sayyid Turki, the Amir of Muscat, claimed that Zafar was a dependency of Muscat and solicited the assistance of the British government in recovering its possession. The British government was not impressed by Turki's request. Finding his claims to sovereignty over Zafar quite vague, Lytton, the Viceroy of India, advised the India Office to drop the matter. However, Lytton was convinced that Fadl's presence in Zafar would be prejudicial to British interests in South Arabia and urged the government to obtain from the Porte a repudiation of Fadl's declaration of governorship in Zafar. Interestingly, the British government's repeated approaches to the Porte met with no success⁽¹⁴⁾.

In the meantime, Fadl had established a symbolic government in Zafar, choosing Salalah as its capital. His authority was recognized by the al-Gharah and al-Kathiri tribes that occupied much of Zafar. He soon began recruiting soldiers from among these tribes and from among Negroes and appointed representatives to collect "zakat" (alms). He also levied customs duties on all imports and exports in Salalah⁽¹⁵⁾. However, Fadl did not have enough time to consolidate his power further in Zafar. Two years later, the so-called obedient tribes realized that Fadl had been recognized by nobody but themselves, and that he was establishing his personal rule with their men and money. As their feeling of distrust and confusion grew, Sayyid Turki sent a letter to Awad ibn Abd Allah, the sheikh of the al-Kathiri tribe, stating his claim that Zafar belonged to Muscat, and that neither the Ottoman gov-

(13) IOR L/P&S/7/10, Lytton to Salisbury, No. 36, Secret, 4 September 1876; IOR L/P&S/3/581, Malet to Derby, 14 October 1876; L/P&S/3/721, Salisbury to Elliot, No. 660, 21 October 1876; Elliot to Derby, No. 1316, Constantinople, 29 November 1876; BOA Y/A Hususi 162/62, the Porte to the Palace, 7 Sevval 1296/25 September 1879; BOA Amedi Kalemî(A. AMD) defter no. 218, p. 157. I wish to thank Associate Professor İdris Bostan of the University of Marmara for drawing my attention to this document.

(14) IOR L/P&S/7/10, Miles to Prideaux, No. 269-95, Muscat, 22 June 1876; Prideaux to Thornton, No. 661-137, 5 July 1877; L/P&S/3/586, Lytton to Salisbury, No. 20, 25 June 1877; L/P&S/7/14, Lytton to Salisbury, 25 June 1877; L/P&S/3/596, Derby to Salisbury, 13 August 1877.

(15) IOR L/P&S/7/16, Loch to Gonne, No. 176-1022, Aden, 12 September 1877; L/P&S/3/792, Lytton to Salisbury, No. 35, a secret letter from India, 25 October 1877; L/P&S/7/22, Loch to Gonne, No. 250-1556, Aden, 22 November 1878.

ernment nor Fadl had any right to possess it. Turki asked the al-Kathiris to expel Fadl from Zafar, and to recognize his authority instead⁽¹⁶⁾. The letter produced the desired result. In January, 1879 the al-Kathiris rebelled against Fadl, and after three days of small scale fighting, Fadl admitted his weakness and asked for "aman" (surrender). Soon after that, Fadl left for Jidda⁽¹⁷⁾. Upon his departure Awad, the sheikh of the al-Kathiri tribe, went to Muscat and offered the al-Kathiris' allegiance to Turki who appointed Suleyman ibn Saway, one of his chief officers, Vali of Zafar and backed him with a symbolic force of one hundred soldiers⁽¹⁸⁾.

Fadl arrived in Jidda in April 1879, and soon afterwards left for Istanbul via Egypt. The news of Fadl's departure reached Istanbul in early June and arrangements for his arrival, including the reservation of a mansion in the district of Nişantaşı, were made by the Porte. On his arrival, he was received by Mehmed Bey, one of the Sultan's aides-de-camp, and was taken to the palace where he had an audience with Abdülhamid. Later Osman Bey, the palace chamberlain, was appointed to provide for Fadl's needs⁽¹⁹⁾.

Fadl had come to Istanbul with a clear objective: to convince the Sultan to back him militarily as well as politically in his efforts to regain Zafar. Soon after his arrival, Fadl submitted a proposal to the Sultan to make Zafar an Ottoman province. In it he explained the strategic and economic importance of Zafar. His argument as summarized by the Council of Ministers was:

Zafar would be converted into a vilayet and Sayyid Fadl would be granted hereditary governorship of it. All of the revenue of the proposed vilayet would belong to the central government. In return the central government would provide him, first, with half a *tabur* (battalion) of soldiers accompanied by two cannons and 25 cavalry; second, with two secretaries, a mining engineer, and a painter (ressam); third, with a warship which could be anchored on the shores of Zafar; and lastly, with enough presents and decora-

(16) IOR L/P&S/7/22, Turki b. Said to Awadh b. Abd Allah, 31 October 1878 in Loch to Gonne, No. 42-208, Aden, 4 February 1879.

(17) Ibid., Letters from Awadh b. Abd Allah dated 18 Muharram 1296/14 January 1879; Nakib Omar Salih of Mukalla to Loch 6 Safer 1296/31 January 1879 in Loch to Gonne, No. 42-208, Aden, 4 February 1879.

(18) Ibid., Miles to Ross, No. 57, Muscat, 27 February 1879; No. 62, 27 February 1879 in a secret letter from India, No. 105.

(19) IOR L/P&S/3/420, Zohrab to Layard, No. 8, Jidda, 24 April 1879; L/P&S/3/553, Zohrab to Layard, No. 24, Jidda, 25 June 1879; L/P&S/7/23, Loch to Nugent, No. 192-916, Aden, 5 June 1879; BOA Y/A Resmi 3/22, 19.5.1296/12 June 1879.

tions to give to the local notables⁽²⁰⁾.

In July, 1879 Abdülhamid sought the Porte's views on Fadl's requests. The Porte replied that in view of the lack of information about Zafar it was impossible to judge them and suggested that the Vali of the Hijaz and the Amir of Mecca be asked to supply information. Abdülhamid objected to the Porte's suggestion because Fadl was constantly asking him about the requests, and he didn't find it expedient to sadden Fadl by an outright rejection of his plan⁽²¹⁾. For the next two months almost identical views were exchanged between the Palace and the Porte.

It is interesting to note that Sayyid Fadl himself acknowledged in a conversation with Layard, the British Ambassador in İstanbul, that although the tribes of Zafar acknowledged the authority of the Sultan, they were acting independently and paid no tribute to him⁽²²⁾.

In early October, 1879 the Council of Ministers finally rejected Fadl's proposal. In a memorandum dated 11 October 1879 the Ministers said:

Half a *tabur* of soldiers would not be sufficient [for the proposed task]. At least six or seven taburs of soldiers would have to be deployed to the area. The present condition of the treasury, however, will not permit this. Moreover, supposing we took that area under control, the local revenues would not meet the cost of administration. [In addition], due to Zafar's proximity to Muşcat, any such move would signal a change in the balance of power in the region, and that would in turn cause complications with England⁽²³⁾.

In addition, in a warning sent to the Porte Hüseyin Pasha, the Amir of Mecca, stated that Zafar was inhabited by unruly bedouin tribes who would not recognize Fadl's authority and that more importantly, upon the request of the tribes of Zafar, Sayyid Turki had already sent a considerable number of troops from Muscat to Zafar⁽²⁴⁾.

(20) BOA Y/A Resmi 4/59, Fadl's proposal on possible reforms in Zafar. It appears that Awnurrefik Pasha, brother of the Amir of Mecca, misinformed Layard when he said that Fadl asked for 4,000 soldiers and three vessels of war to accompany him. Awnurrefik also stated that when the matter came to his knowledge, he at once informed the Sultan that Fadl was a dangerous adventurer and that he would be unable to carry out his promises. This, he claimed, had the effect of convincing the Sultan to reject Fadl's proposal. IOR L/P&S/3/995, Layard to Salisbury, No. 1103, Confidential, Constantinople, 13 December 1879.

(21) BOA Y/A Resmi 4/15, Hayreddin Pasha to Abdülhamid, 27 Recep 1296; Abdülhamid to Hayreddin Pasha, 28 Recep 1296; Said Pasha to Abdülhamid, 11 Saban 1296; Abdülhamid to Said Pasha, 12 Şaban 1296.

(22) IOR L/P&S/3/169, Layard to Salisbury, No. 189, Constantinople, 12 February 1880.

(23) BOA Y/A Resmi 4/59, The Porte to the Palace, 23 Sevval 1296; BOA Y/A Hususi 162/62, The Palace to the Porte, 18 Şevval 1296/6 October 1879.

Fadl himself realized that the Porte's views were being influenced by the strong opposition of the British. It was an open secret that British officials were monitoring his activities, and missing no opportunity to restate their objection to his ambitions regarding Zafar. Furthermore, Fadl inferred from the Council of Ministers' response that the Ottoman government recognized Britain's influence over Muscat in the east and over Aden and Mukall to the west of Zafar. This led him to believe that as long as the British opposed his governorship of Zafar, he would not be assisted by the Ottoman government, and in February, 1880 he made the first of a series of attempts to win the approval of the British. On 6 February 1880 he sent his son Sahl to Layard to express his friendly feelings towards England. Fadl also wrote a letter in the same tone:

What attracts Mussulmans like ourselves still more to the English government is her sincere friendship towards the Ottoman Empire, the only refuge of Islamism on account of the Caliphate⁽²⁵⁾.

Less than a week later he visited and made a good impression on Layard who reported: "he is an intelligent man and seems to have made himself acquainted with Turkish politics and with the state of the Empire." During the visit Fadl disclosed that the Sultan had refused him military assistance, but that he was trying to secure a loan of £15,000 which he intended to use for irrigation works. When Layard asked why Fadl had desired to see him, Fadl stated that he wished to have the friendship of England in view of the critical condition of the Ottoman Empire, and that in the event that the Empire totally collapsed, he wished to be under British protection. He also stated that he was very anxious to establish commercial relations between Zafar and India and to bring British ships to its ports⁽²⁶⁾.

In March, 1880 Fadl made another set of requests to the Sultan. He asked for two cannons, a number of light weapons, and a loan sufficient to develop the basic infrastructure of Zafar; he had dropped his requests for war vessels, soldiers, and Ottoman officials, but he again proposed bringing Zafar under Ottoman rule in the form of a vilayet. Once again the Council of Min-

(24) BOA Y/A Resmi 4/59, the Porte to the Palace, 23 Şevval 1296/11 October 1879; Layard was privately informed that Hüseyin Pasha, the Amir of Mecca, warned his brother, Awnurrefik, to prevent Fadl's return to Zafar because such a move would only "lead to the introduction of Turkish rule and to its evil consequences." Hüseyin also stated that he advised the Amir of Muscat to occupy Zafar and also asked the inhabitants of that country to accept the occupation. L/P&S/3/314, Layard to Salisbury, No. 402, Confidential, Constantinople, 9 April 1880. For Hüseyin Pasha's anti-Ottoman propaganda and secret dealings with the British see my forthcoming article in *Middle Eastern Studies*, "The Hijaz in the Early Days of Abdülhamid II and Amir Hüseyin's Secret Dealings with the British, 1877-1880."

(25) L/P&S/3/169, Layard to Salisbury, No. 164, Confidential, 6 February 1880. The dispatch includes an extract from Fadl's letter to Layard.

(26) L/P&S/3/169, Layard to Salisbury, No. 198, Confidential, 12 February 1880.

isters refused him. They argued that the main problem was not the expenditure, but the difficulty in assessing whether such a move would be beneficial or bring extra burdens. They feared that given the remoteness of Zafar coupled with the unruly nature of its inhabitants, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the Ottoman government to establish an enduring authority. They figured that the government would start by sending a few troops with a few cannons, but end up sending thousands of troops at an unbearable cost in men and money not to mention the probability of political difficulties⁽²⁷⁾.

Despite the Porte's refusal, in early April, 1880 Sayyid Fadl informed Layard that he was about to return to Zafar and that he wished to see him before leaving İstanbul. Layard excused himself from seeing Fadl and immediately warned Sava Pasha, the Ottoman Foreign Affairs Minister, that the "presence in the Hidjaz of the sheikh. . . might lead to fresh complications in Arabia." In response, Sava Pasha stated that Sadrazam Said Pasha and himself took the same view of the matter and that the Council of Ministers had unanimously decided that Sayyid Fadl should not be allowed to return to Zafar. Sava Pasha added that he would make another attempt to convince the Sultan to keep Fadl in İstanbul⁽²⁸⁾.

At about the same time, however, Abdulmuttalib Efendi, the new Amir of Mecca, wrote to the Sultan that the expansion of the Amir of Muscat's power over Zafar would produce a very unfavorable impression of Ottoman authority in Arabia. He, therefore, advised the Sultan to issue a ferman recognizing Fadl Pasha as the Amir of Zafar. Abdulmuttalib seemed to be convinced that such a ferman would be sufficient to make the people of Zafar accept Fadl's authority and bring the region under Ottoman rule⁽²⁹⁾.

In May, 1880 Sayyid Fadl was still hopeful about repossessing Zafar. In his letter of 14 May 1880 addressed to Sayyid Turki, the Amir of Muscat, Fadl stated:

I hear that you sent some men in the direction of Zafar to take it into your possession. . . . I was astonished for I had informed you. . . four years ago that for this tract of country there was a ferman from the Sublime Porte both for the time past and for the hereafter. . . . It is my intention to start from the seat of the Khalifate with the orders of the Sublime Porte for the district of Zafar⁽³⁰⁾.

Indeed, Fadl was quite anxious to return to Zafar. On 4 June 1880 he

(27) BOA Y/A Resmî 5/42, 9 Rebiyulahir 1297/22 March 1880.

(28) IOR L/P&S/3/303, Layard to Salisbury, Confidential, No. 396, 7 April 1880.

(29) IOR L/P&S/3/415, Layard to Granville, Confidential, No. 512, Therapia, 15 May 1880.

(30) IOR L/P&S/7/26, Part 4, a letter from Sayyid Fadl to Sayyid Turki, in a secret letter from India, No. 190, 24 August 1880.

asked the Sultan to permit him to return to Zafar so that he could personally look after his property⁽³¹⁾. By giving personal reasons Fadl probably wished to give the impression that he no longer had any political claim over Zafar and in this way secure permission from the Sultan. Be that as it may. In time, however, rumours began circulating in İstanbul that the Sultan was inclined to follow Abdumuttalib's advice and was ready to help Fadl to reassert his authority in Zafar⁽³²⁾. In early September, 1880 Süleyman Efendi⁽³³⁾, the Şeyh of the Uzbek tekke in İstanbul, informed Goschen, the British Ambassador in İstanbul, that Fadl would soon be named "hakim" (governor) of Zafar and that he would immediately take possession of the place. Süleyman Efendi added that Fadl was also being given the authority to request assistance from Yemen, the Hijaz, and Bagdad in order to solve whatever problems he might encounter in accomplishing his mission⁽³⁴⁾. However, neither the rumours nor Şeyh Süleyman Efendi's information turned out to be true despite the fact that in December, 1880 the British in İstanbul were at pains to find out the probable time of Sayyid Fadl's departure for his mission to Zafar⁽³⁵⁾. Also, to their bewilderment, rumours that the Sultan had promised Fadl Pasha succession to the position of Amir of Mecca since Abdumuttalib Efendi had been ill for some time were reported by the British consul in Jidda, Zohrab. The British Foreign Secretary, Granville, immediately requested St John to question the Porte about the rumour and remarked: "the appointment of such a person to the position in question would be an act of a seriously unfriendly character which Her Majesty's Government could not regard with indifference."⁽³⁶⁾ St. John spoke to the Ottoman Foreign Affairs Minister Asım Pasha who replied:

When a vacancy occurs in the Grand Sharifate of Mecca, though the Sultan possesses the right of nomination, the choice of a successor is restricted to members of two families, the Awn and the Zed, represented in the one case by Awn Pasha and in the other by Abdumuttalib, the present holder of the office. . . . Fadl belongs to neither family and could, therefore, never be appointed⁽³⁷⁾.

However, it appears that unlike his ministers Sultan Abdülhamid pre-

(31) BOA Yıldız Mütenevvi Maruzat, 3/129 24, Cemaziyelahir 1297/4 June 1880.

(32) IOR L/P&S/3/659 Goschen to Granville, No. 265, *Therapia*, 21 August 1880.

(33) For details of how Süleyman Efendi worked as a double agent between the Ottomans and the British see, Azmi Özcan, "Özbekler Tekkesi Postnişini: Buharalı Şeyh Süleyman Efendi bir 'Double Agent'mı İdi?", *Tarih ve Toplum*, Nisan 1992, pp. 12-16.

(34) IOR L/P&S/3/674 Goschen to Granville, Confidential, No. 338, *Therapia*, 7 September 1880.

(35) IOR L/P&S/3/6 St. John to Granville, Confidential, No. 666, Constantinople, 14 December 1880; IOR L/P&S/3/19 St. John to Granville, Confidential, No. 687, Constantinople, 22 December 1880.

(36) IOR L/P&S/3/80 Granville to St John, Telegram, No. 93, Foreign Office, 3 February 1881.

(37) IOR L/P&S/3/145 St. John to Granville, No. 103, Constantinople, 8 February 1881.

ferred to be vague about Fadl's return to Zafar for two reasons: first, he did not want to upset Fadl Pasha by rejecting his requests outright; and second, he wanted to indicate his displeasure at the increase of British influence in South Arabia. Of course, the vagueness of the Sultan's position coupled with tribal rebellions in late 1880 against the Omani authorities in Zafar kept the issue alive. On 13 November 1881 Fadl's son, Muhammad, told Dufferin, the British Ambassador in Istanbul, that the Sultan had the intention of sending his father on a tour of inspection to Mecca and Yemen⁽³⁸⁾. About two weeks later Sayyid Fadl, during his visit to Sadrazam Said Pasha, stated that the Sultan had signed a ferman authorizing him to govern Zafar⁽³⁹⁾. Apparently, this was Fadl's hope rather than a fact since such a ferman was never issued by the Sultan.

Then in January, 1883 the authority of Suleyman b. Saway, the Omani governor in Zafar was again challenged by the local tribes. Although the details are not known, it was not until the arrival of reinforcements that the rebellion came to an end⁽⁴⁰⁾. Incidents like these must have encouraged Fadl to continue in his efforts to become the governor of Zafar. In fact, he again wrote to Sayyid Turki b. Said. In a letter dated 12 March 1883 Fadl reiterated his strong hope that he would repossess Zafar, and warned Turki not to be the cause of the loss of many lives by opposing his authority⁽⁴¹⁾. Then Fadl, somehow, gained the support of the new Amir of Mecca, Awnurrefik Pasha, who also wrote a letter to Turki asking for his cooperation in re-establishing Fadl's authority over Zafar. The Amir advised Turki, based on their friendship, to repair the mischief and direct any of his people in Zafar to give up their place to Sayyid Fadl as soon as any of Fadl's people arrived in Zafar. The Amir added that Fadl would shortly go to Zafar⁽⁴²⁾. Far from producing the desired effect, both letters provoked Turki's indignation and Turki, after being backed by Mockler, the British political agent and consul at Muscat, strongly rejected Fadl's claim over Zafar⁽⁴³⁾. But Turki's rejection did not weaken Fadl's determination to repossess Zafar.

In 1884 Fadl sent his son Muhammad to Mecca from where he was to proceed to Zafar. The ostensible object of Muhammad's visit was to repair certain water courses and springs which belonged to his family. However, his real object seems to have been the recovery of the district. In January,

(38) IOR L/P&S/3/890 Dufferin to Granville, Confidential, No. 998, Constantinople, 14 November 1881.

(39) IOR L/P&S/3/931 Dufferin to Granville, No 1064, Constantinople, 28 November 1881.

(40) Lorimer, *op. cit.*, p. 594.

(41) IOR L/P&S/7/38, translated purport of a letter from Sayyid Fadl to Turki b. Said in a political letter from India No. 127, 1 October 1883.

(42) IOR L/P&S/7/38, Awnurrefik to Turki b. Said, 21 Receb 1300/29 May 1883.

(43) IOR L/P&S/7/38, Reply from Turki b. Said to Awnurrefik in a political letter from India No. 127, 1 October 1883.

1886 Muhammad left Jidda despite a temporary obstruction created by the Vali of the Hijaz, Osman Pasha. But to his dismay, the British, who were watching his activities closely, prevented him from reaching Zafar⁽⁴⁴⁾. This occurred because the British found out that Muhammad and his supporters were on board the ship, *Metapedia*, carrying passengers returning from their pilgrimage to Mecca and when they searched the ship in Aden, they discovered "a large quantity of arms and ammunition including revolvers and Martini-Henry rifles." Not surprisingly, Muhammad was stopped from going on to Zafar and his arms were confiscated. Subsequently, Sayyid Fadl complained to the British representative in Aden and to the Viceroy of India about his son not being allowed to enter Zafar, but his complaints fell on deaf ears⁽⁴⁵⁾.

After this abortive attempt to regain Zafar, Sayyid Fadl, for a decade or so, kept a low profile in Istanbul. Then, from 1894 until 1896 he repeatedly applied to the British Embassy in Istanbul for assistance in order to resume his position as the Amir of Zafar. Fadl promised, if allowed to do this, to forward British political and commercial interests to the utmost of his power and to suppress the slave trade in his domain⁽⁴⁶⁾.

Fadl's efforts did not increase his chances of getting Zafar back. The British government continued to oppose his return, not only to Zafar but also to the Hijaz. They also arranged a careful watch in Cairo, Jidda, and Aden over any unauthorized activities Fadl might engage in, and they advised the Sultan of Muscat to strengthen his position in Zafar⁽⁴⁷⁾. Finally, the Porte was made to understand that Fadl's return to Zafar might lead to serious complications between the two governments. There were two reasons for this opposition: first, the British, for security reasons, viewed any Ottoman expansion in South Arabia with great concern; and second, Fadl's unwelcome past led to an exaggerated fear that he would threaten British interests in South Arabia. Fadl's assurances that he would cooperate made no tangible impact on the British attitude towards him⁽⁴⁸⁾.

(44) IOR L/P&S/7/46, Jago to White, Confidential, No. 32, Jidda, 16 September 1885 and a memorandum prepared by the Foreign Office on Sayyid Fadl and his family in IOR L/P&S/3/1055, 1893.

(45) Lorimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 595-596.

(46) IOR L/P&S/3/1119, Currie to Kimberly, Confidential, No. 469, Therapia, 12 October 1894; L/P&S/3/535, Salisbury to Herbert, No. 103, 19 June 1896; L/P&S/3/682, Herbert to Salisbury, No. 632, Therapia, 3 August 1896.

(47) Lorimer, *op. cit.*, p. 597.

(48) IOR L/P&S/3/169, Stanhope to Salisbury, India Office, 12 March 1880; L/P&S/3/303, Layard to Salisbury, No. 396, Confidential, Constantinople, 7 April 1880; L/P&S/3/659, Malet to Undersecretary of State at the Foreign Office, Confidential, India Office, 13 September 1880; L/P&S/3/725, Granville to Goschen, Foreign Office, No. 514, 24 September 1880; L/P&S/3/1119, Currie to Kimberly, Confidential No. 469, Therapia, 12 October 1894; L/P&S/3/1119 Letter from Foreign Office to India Office, 31 October 1894; L/P&S/3/496 Foreign Office to India Office, 5 June 1896; L/P&S/3/535, Salisbury to Herbert, No. 103, 19 June 1896; L/P&S/3/682, Herbert to Salisbury, No. 632, Therapia, 3 August 1896.

In conclusion, Sultan Abdülhamid did not play any role in Sayyid Fadl's first coming to İstanbul, and before Fadl's arrival he knew almost nothing about Zafar. But thanks to Fadl's ambitions and his efforts to achieve them, the Sultan gained insight into the southern Arabian region and a realistic view of Ottoman influence in the southernmost part of the Arabian Peninsula. During the discussions of Fadl's proposals concerning Zafar, it became clear that Zafar was neither economically, strategically, nor politically important to the Ottomans and that they thought that too much money and manpower were needed to administer the area. Also, the Sultan must have realized that the late Abdullah Pasha, the former Amir of Mecca, was right in stating that the Zafar tribes might easily change sides. Indeed, between 1879 and 1895 there were five serious rebellions against the Omani authorities in Zafar⁽⁴⁹⁾.

Thus, Abdülhamid chose to keep Sayyid Fadl in İstanbul as an honoured guest and occasional adviser. He provided for his material needs, and in August, 1880 he awarded him the rank of "vezir." But he did not permit him to return to Zafar or the Hijaz, though he did permit his sons Sahl and Muhammad to return to the Hijaz in the 1880s⁽⁵⁰⁾. There is no doubt that Abdülhamid sensed that Sayyid Fadl was an ambitious man who was determined to secure a position in southern Arabia, and as such, that he was a potential embarrassment unless firmly controlled. Also, by keeping Sayyid Fadl in İstanbul, he could benefit from his extensive knowledge of southern Arabian affairs. From 1880 onwards Sayyid Fadl presented the Sultan with several detailed memoranda, all advocating Ottoman expansion into southern Arabia and the Red Sea region. Fadl naively argued that the Ottoman government could easily expand its control over the Arabian Peninsula simply by winning over its leaders with presents and decorations⁽⁵¹⁾. None of his memoranda appear to have been acted upon, although the detailed information they contained was doubtless of use to the Sultan and his Ministers.

(49) Lorimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 593-599.

(50) BOA İrade Dahiliye, No. 65534, 23 Ramazan 1297/30 August 1880; Yıldız Mütenevvi, 17/84, 27 Receb 1302/13 May 1885; IOR L/P&S/7/26, Goodfellow to Gonnc, No. 292-1345, Aden, 3 September 1880. BOA Y.A. Hususi, 384/7, Sadrazam Halil Rifat Paşa's presentation to the Sultan on Sayyid Fadl's salary, 3 Zilhicce 1315/26 April 1898; The Sultan paid salaries not only to Fadl Pasha but to his sons and close relatives in İstanbul. See BOA İrade Hususi, No. 39, 13 Şaban 1315/8 January 1898; İrade Hususi, No. 4, 3 Rebiyülevvel 1324/28 April 1906; Dahiliye Nezareti Kalem-i Mahsus Müdüriyeti(DH. KMS) 1/36, correspondence on Ahmad b. Fadl's salaries; Lorimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 596-597..

(51) BOA YEE 18/553-182/93/35, n. d.; YEE 14/88-26/12/88, n. d.; IOR L/P&S/3/252, Dufferin to Granville, No. 156, Confidential, Constantinople, 4 March 1882; Foreign Department (India), Secret, E, April, 1898, No. 166, report by Sayyid Fadl Pasha, 13 Safar 1315/15 July 1897 in Currie to Salisbury, No. 592, Therapia, 2 September 1897. I wish to express my thanks to Dr. Azmi Özcan for providing me with this document.

Fadl was also a writer writing about the Alawiyya and his father's miracles (*keramat*). Of his nineteen works five were published during his stay in İstanbul. Fifteen of his works were kept in the Sultan's library at the Yıldız Palace⁽⁵²⁾. In two of his works, *Tarikat al-Hanifa* (2nd Edition, İstanbul, 1317/1899) and *Tanbih al-Ukala* (İstanbul, 1298/1881), Fadl refers to Sultan Abdülhamid as the Caliph of Islam and praises his rule. In *Tanbih al-Ukala* at the bottom of each page from page 2 to page 18 he cites two traditions about the need to obey the Caliph: "whoever despises the Sultan is despised by God. Whoever betrays the Sultan is betrayed by God." In the margin on page 13, it is stated that to obey Sultan Abdülhamid is religiously necessary, for he is the Caliph of God on earth. In addition to writing, Sayyid Fadl used his residence in İstanbul to develop contacts with visiting Muslim dignitaries from inside and outside the Ottoman Empire and to encourage the notions of pan-Islamism and Muslim unity. In one of his memoranda to the Sultan, he argued that foreign encroachments upon Muslim territories could be stopped only by a "union of the people of Islam. By the aid of this great cause. . . we shall promote the patriotism of all Mussulmans and gain the admiration and approval of our co-religionists"⁽⁵³⁾. Fadl died in İstanbul in October, 1900 without realizing his dream of governing Zafar⁽⁵⁴⁾.

(52) At present Fadl's works are kept in the İstanbul University Library. A list of these works is included in Fehmi Edhem Karatay, İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi Arapça Basmalar Alfabe Kataloğu, (İstanbul, 1951), pp. 213-214. It should be noted that Karatay erroneously states 1844 as the date of Fadl's death. However, this is not Fadl's but his father's date of death. For Fadl's works that are not listed in Karatay see, Sarkis, op.cit., I, p. 517, II, p. 1421; Kahhala, Mu'jam, IV, p. 70.

(53) IOR L/P&S/3/252, Dufferin to Granville, No. 156, Confidential, Constantinople, 4 March 1882.

(54) Zaki Muhammad Mujahid, op. cit., p. 23; Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli, al-A'lam, V, (Beirut, 1984), p.150. Some sources give 1844 and 1866 as Fadl's dates of death, but as the above account of Fadl's life demonstrates these dates can not be correct. See Löfgren, Ba Alawi, EI2, p. 829; Sarkis, op. cit., I, p. 517.