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THE OTTOMAN HAJJ ROUTE IN JORDAN: MOTIVATION AND IDEOLOGY

Andrew PETERSEN

As a background to an understanding of the Ottoman Hajj route in Jordan it is useful to remind ourselves of the position of the Ottoman empire both within the Middle East and further afield in Europe and Asia during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries ¹.

Two major events inform the perception of Ottoman rule both within our own area of concern, Bilad al-Sham and in the wider world. The first of these events was the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople (modern Istanbul) by Sultan Mehmet Fatih in 1453. For the first time in its eight hundred year history a Muslim state had taken over the spiritual home of orthodox Christianity and in the process become a major factor in European domestic politics. The prestige accruing from this conquest firmly established the Ottomans as the principal Muslim power worldwide. The second event is the conquest of Egypt and Syria between 1515 and 1517 which also gave the Ottomans control of the Hijaz including both Mecca and Medina. The pre-eminent status of the Ottoman Sultan amongst Muslim rulers was now confirmed, as he adopted the role of protectors of the two shrines with the title of *khādim al-Ḥaramayn al-Sharifayn* ². Neither of these titles was held lightly and it can be seen that the Ottomans did their utmost to be seen as leaders of the Muslim world and defenders of Islam's holiest cities.

Of course this new status presented the Ottomans with new responsibilities which had not been encountered when they were a minor Turkish state. Three main challenges arose out of this situation; firstly they were now a global power with global alliances and enemies,

1. I am grateful to Bethany Walker and Pierre Bikai for inviting me to take part in this symposium.

2. E. Esin 1986, « The Renovations effected, in the Ka'bah mosque, by the Ottoman Sultan Selim II (H.974-82/ 1566-74) » p. 225-232 in A. Temimi (ed.), *La vie économique des provinces arabes et leurs sources documentaires à l'époque ottomane*, t. III, Publications du Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Ottomanes, Morisques, de Documentation et d'Information (Zaghouan 1986), 225-6.

secondly they needed to maintain control over the vast territories which they had conquered and thirdly they needed to provide some sort of religious leadership.

In the following discussion I will examine how the fortification of the Hajj route from Damascus to Mecca relates to each of these issues. However before discussing these questions it is important to give a brief review of the process and nature of the fortifications ³.

THE SEQUENCE OF FORTIFICATION (FIG.1)

Although the Hajj from Cairo to Mecca (*Darb al-Ḥajj al-Maṣrī*) had been the principal concern of the Mamluks they also supported the Syrian Hajj route which was accorded almost equal status and had its own *maḥmal* ⁴. However whilst the Egyptian overland route had been provided with fortresses and other facilities as early as the thirteenth century ⁵ the Syrian route had no forts with the possible exception of the castles of Jize (Ziza) and Qasr Shebib at Zerka ⁶. Instead it appears that the Mamluk Hajj caravan from Damascus followed a route largely without facilities except for those provided at the few settlements on the way (e.g. Bosra, Karak, and Tabuk).

Within a few years of the conquest (of Syria) the Ottoman Sultan Selim I had ordered the construction of fortresses at Sanamayn, Muzayrib and Tell Far'un (Mafrāq) all within sixty kilometers of Damascus. By the 1570's the network was extended deep into the Hijaz with forts at Qatrana, 'Unaiza, Ma'an, Dhat al-Hajj, Tabuk, Ukhaidhir, al-'Ula and Hadiyya ⁷. The forts were of a standardized plan probably derived from medieval caravanserais ⁸. There is also a more interesting possibility that they were derived from wooden forts used on campaigns in the Balkans ⁹. Each fort measures approximately 20 metres per side with three

3. For a full discussion see A.Petersen, « Early Ottoman forts on the Darb al-Hajj » *Levant* 21 (1989): 97-118; and idem « Ottoman Hajj Forts » in *The Archaeology of Jordan* ed. Bienkowski, MacDonald and Adams. (Sheffield 2001) Chapter 28, 741-8.

4. A. 'Ankawi, « The pilgrimage to Mecca in Mamluk times » in Serjeant, R.B. and B.L. Bidwell eds., *Arabian Studies I*, Hurst and Company (London 1974) 116-170, 154; M.A. Bakhit, *The Ottoman Province of Damascus in the Sixteenth Century*, Librairie du Liban (Beirut 1982) 198.

5. Including the fortress at 'Aqaba which is currently under excavation see J. de Meulemeester & D. Pringle, *Aqaba Castle Project: Report 2000*. Cardiff University and Ministère de la Région Wallone. (Cardiff-Namur 2000).

6. A. Petersen « Two forts on the Medieval Hajj Route in Jordan », *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan* 35 (1991), 347-60.

7. Bakhit, *Ottoman Province*, 98-99 ; Karl K. Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus 1708-1758* (Princeton, 1980).

8. M.Lee, Raso, C. and Hillenbrand R. « Mamluk caravanserais in Galilee » *Levant* 24,(1992): 55-94.

9. D. Nicolle, and McBride, A., *Armies of the Ottoman Turks; 1300-1774* (Men at Arms 140) Osprey Books, (Oxford 1983).

stories (ground floor, first floor and upper floor with parapet) built around a rectangular courtyard (**Figs 4 and 5**). The forts were built of local materials and were generally plain in appearance with little decoration except that above the gateway. Unfortunately the decoration above the entrances has disappeared in many of the forts though it has been preserved at Qatrana where there are three decorative balls above the entrance (**Plate 1**). Although some of the forts were built on earlier sites (mostly Roman) there is little evidence of direct continuity of use/occupation at any of the sites. Despite their simple appearance the forts were an unmistakable sign of Ottoman authority and power expressed through the precision and solidity of the masonry. Each of the sixteenth century forts was located next to a significant water supply located outside the walls.

The next major phase of fortress construction occurred in the eighteenth century¹⁰. Forts built during this period include Qal‘at al-Balqa (Dab’a), Qal‘at al-Hassa, Qal‘at al-Fassu‘a (‘Aqabat al-Hijaziyya), Qal‘at Mudawwara and Medain Saleh. In addition to the construction of these forts a road and bridge were built at Qalat al-Hassa and major repairs were carried out at Hadiyya. The architecture of the eighteenth century forts differs from that of the sixteenth century buildings.

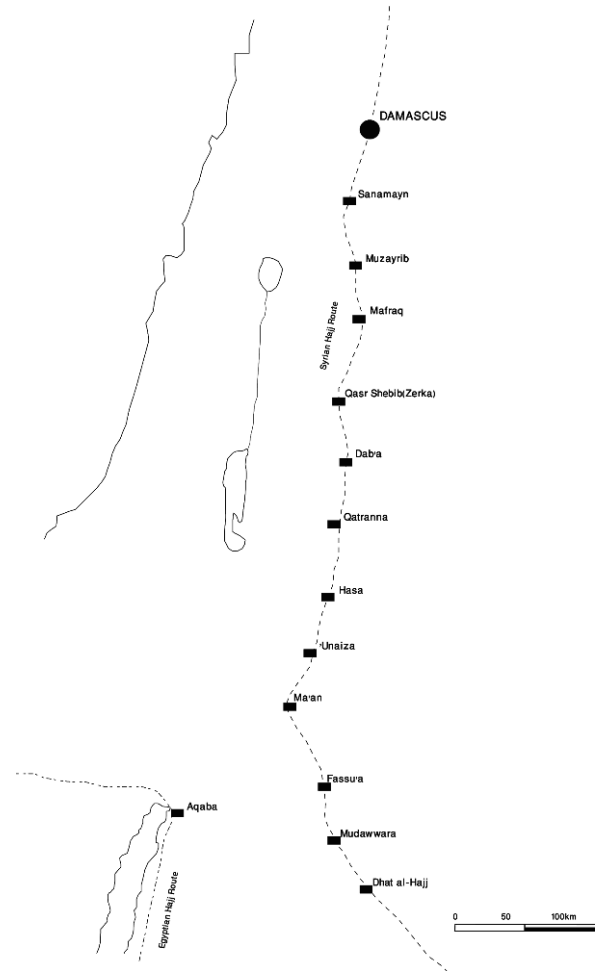


Fig. 1. The northern section of the Syrian Hajj route showing Ottoman forts mentioned in the text.

10. Barbir *Ottoman Rule* 1980, 139-140.

The main difference is that most of the eighteenth century buildings have projecting corner turrets provided with narrow gun slits¹¹. The other notable difference is that the later forts are even plainer than those of the sixteenth century thus there is no carved stone decoration above the doorways similar to that which can be seen at Ma'an and Qatrania.

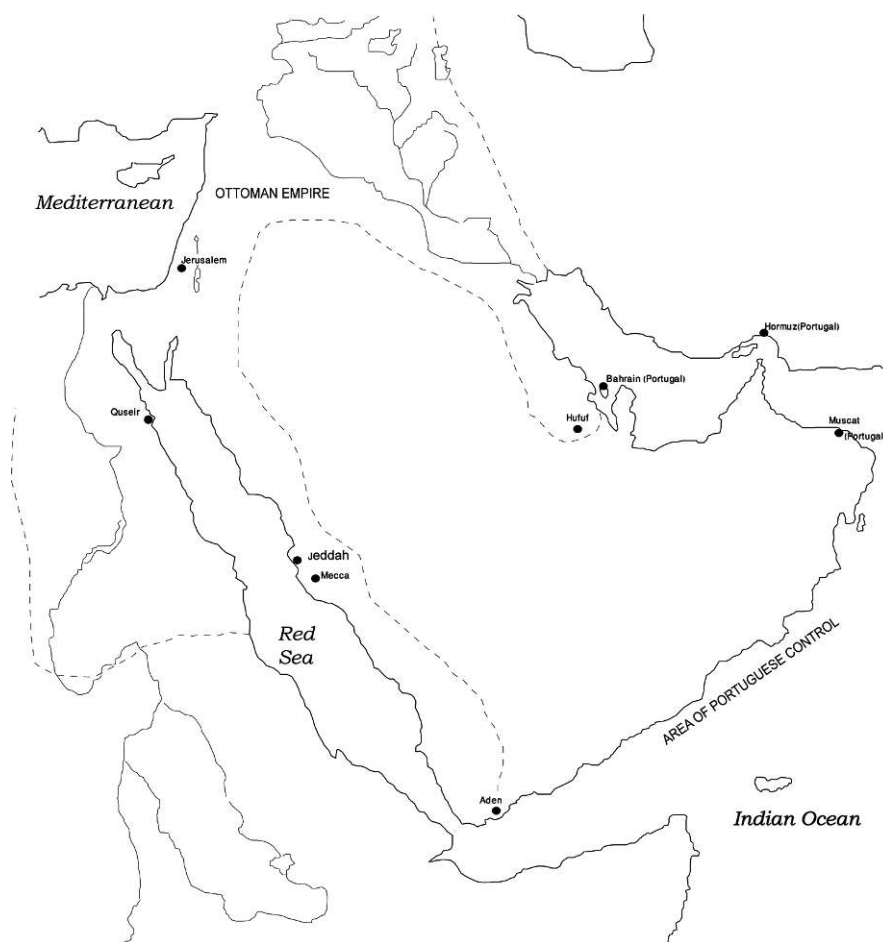


Fig. 2. Arabia in the sixteenth century extent of Ottoman Empire and areas under Portuguese control.

Anybody who has visited any of these forts can appreciate the massive effort required to build them in remote locations so far removed from the centres of power. In order to attempt to understand the mentality behind the construction of these forts I will return to the three questions addressed earlier:

11. The exception to this is Qal'at al-Hasa built by Sultan Muṣṭafā III between 1757 and 1754. This fort does not appear to have had corner turrets though it did have turrets projecting in the middle of each side of the fort (these have now all disappeared).

How do these buildings fit into the Ottoman global policies?

How do these buildings relate to internal control (stability) of the empire?

How do these buildings relate to Ottoman ideas of religious leadership?

OTTOMAN GLOBAL POLICY (FIG. 2)

The Ottomans were relative newcomers to the area of Egypt and the Levant and as such they not only followed many of the policies of their Mamluk predecessors but also employed many of the same people. For example the Mamluk governor of Damascus Janbirdi al-Ghazali was confirmed in his office by the Ottoman Sultan Selim I even though he rebelled a year later ¹². Similarly the Sharif of Mecca Barakat II (1495-1524) who had administered the area for the Mamluks was confirmed in his office by the Ottoman Sultan ¹³. However it is clear that the Ottomans saw their control of the Hijaz in more global terms, a fact which is demonstrated by the fact that the Portuguese mounted an (failed) attack on Jiddah in the same year as the Ottomans occupied Egypt (i.e. 1517) ¹⁴. The Ottomans could not afford to ignore the global view as the Mamluk defeat was largely a result of their unwillingness to adapt to changed circumstances such as the introduction of firearms ¹⁵ and the Portuguese presence in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean ¹⁶.

The determination of the Ottoman rulers to fight on a global scale can be seen in 1538 when an Ottoman expedition was sent against the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean. Under the leadership of the Egyptian governor, Sulayman Pasha, a fleet sailed to Gujerat with the aim of 'holding those Indian ports; cutting off the road and blocking [the] way to the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina' ¹⁷. The expedition was unsuccessful largely because Turkish galleys were no match for ocean going Portuguese ships. Another Turkish plan was to dig a canal between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea so that the Turkish fleets could operate both in

12. Bakhit, *Ottoman Province*, 19.

13. M.N. Pearson, *Pilgrimage to Mecca: the Indian Experience 1500-1800*, Markus Wiener Publishers, (Princeton 1995), 84.

14. *Ibid.*, 83, n.6.

15. See D. Ayalon, *Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom: A Challenge to a Mediaeval Society* (London 1956).

16. Pearson *Pilgrimage to Mecca*, 81-3.

17. M.Y. Mughal, « The expedition of Suleyman Pasha al-Khadim to India (1538) », *Journal of the Regional Cultural Institute Tehran*, II, (1969) 146-51, 147.

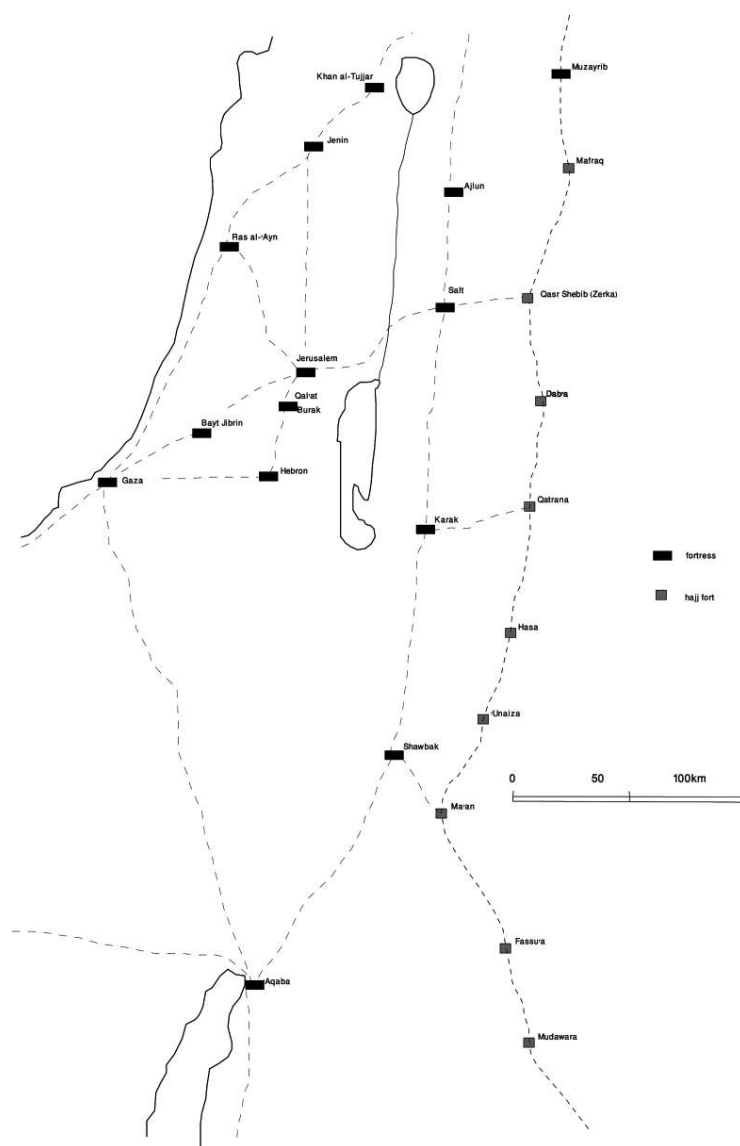


Fig. 3. Fortress network in Palestine and Transjordan during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.

the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean¹⁸. Although neither of these projects was successful they do show that the Ottomans had serious global intentions.

How then do the Hajj forts fit into this global strategy? Firstly it should be pointed out that the Ottomans did not capture the Hijaz by military force but by inheriting the Mamluk

18. N.R. Farooqi, *Mughal Ottoman Relations (A Study of Political and Diplomatic Relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire 1556-1748)* (Delhi, 1989) 156-7.

claims to suzerainty over the political leaders of Mecca and Medina. Within this context the Hajj forts can be seen as part of a plan or process to secure Arabia from European, specifically Portuguese, attacks. As with the Hijaz railway nearly four hundred years later the fortification of the pilgrim route had definite military objectives ¹⁹. If we look at Arabia as a whole in the sixteenth century it can be seen that it was divided into those areas under Portuguese domination (the coasts of south and south east Arabia) and the areas of Ottoman control (e.g. the Hijaz. Basra and al-Hasa) with the area between controlled by Arab Bedouin tribes who were not, at this time, a military threat to the Ottomans (this situation was to change in the eighteenth century as will be discussed below). Whilst the Portuguese were obviously more suited to maritime warfare, the Ottomans had the advantage on land where they were generally

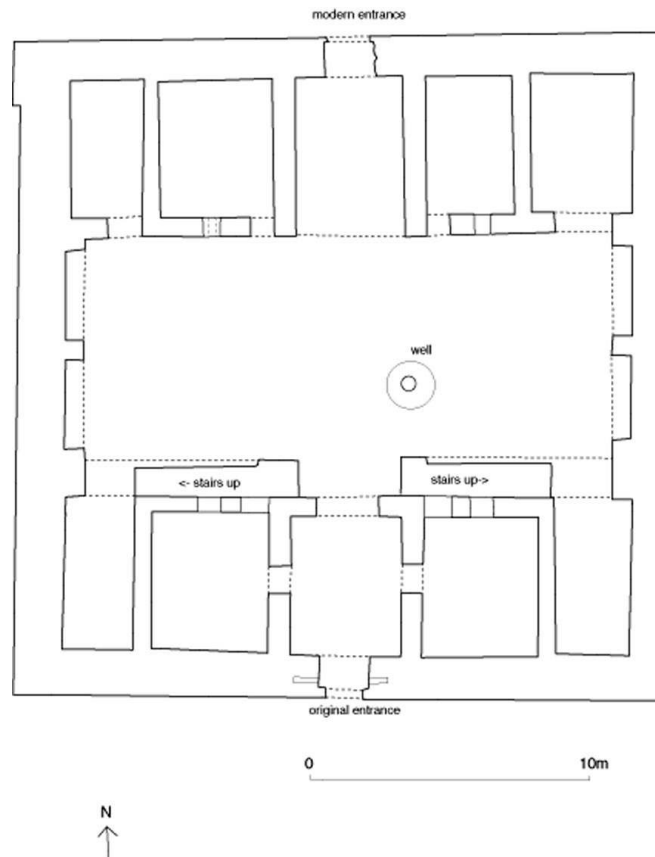


Fig. 4. Qal'at al-Ma'an (sixteenth century), plan of ground floor.

19. J. Franzke, *Bagdad- und Hedjazbahn: Deutsche Eisenbahngeschichte im Vorderen Orient*. DB Museum (Nürnberg 2003); W. Ochsenwald, *The Hijaz Railroad*. University Press of Virginia (Charlottesville 1980); F.E. Peeters, *The Hajj: the Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places*, Princeton University Press (Princeton, 1994) 316-20.

welcomed as co-religionists and also had a better knowledge of the territory. This meant that the Red Sea and the Persian/Arabian Gulf were the most likely areas of conflict as they were accessible to both the Ottomans and the Portuguese.

Within the Persian/Arabian Gulf a stalemate was established by the middle of the sixteenth century. The Portuguese had established a base at Hurmuz in 1514²⁰ and the Ottomans had established a base at Hufuf (1552) in the al-Hasa oasis with a number of outlying forts at al-‘Uqayr (1560/1) and al-Qatif (1551) by the middle of the sixteenth century²¹.

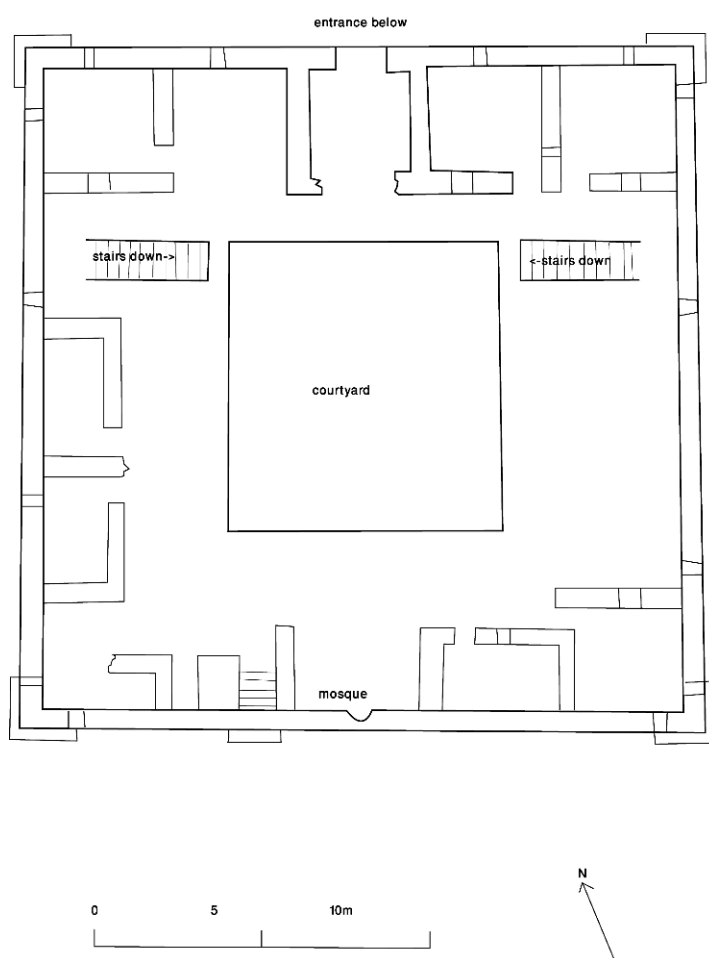


Fig. 5. Qal'at al-Fassu'a (eighteenth century), plan of first (upper) floor. Note projecting corner towers.

20. Castanheda III, cxxxvi cited in Pearson, *Pilgrimage to Mecca*, 96.

21. G.R.D. King, *The Traditional Architecture of Saudi Arabia*. I.B. Tauris (London 1998) 189, 192-4; J.P. Mandaville, « The Ottoman Province of al-Hasa in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries », *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 90 (1970) 486-513.

The situation in the Red Sea was more complicated though it was generally more favourable to the Ottomans. Navigation within the Red Sea was notoriously difficult because of the reefs and the variable wind conditions ²². Against this the Ottomans had the problem that much of the south part of the African coast of the Red Sea was out side of their control. Also any Portuguese ships which had managed to enter the Red Sea would have direct access to Egypt and the cities of Mecca and Medina. In other words any Portuguese access to the Red Sea would significantly weaken the strategic position of the Ottomans

The Hajj forts were undoubtedly part of the defence system of the Red Sea coast of Arabia. They provided a secure line of communication directly between the Hijaz, Syria and ultimately Anatolia. This enabled Ottoman troops to move relatively rapidly down along the Red Sea coast to Mecca and Medina and ultimately to Yemen which the Ottomans occupied in 1538 and finally conquered in 1549 ²³.



Plate 1. Qal'at Qatrana (sixteenth century) showing entrance set below three decorative stone balls, Also not arrow slits with decorative mouldings and domed machicolation above the gateway.

22. For accounts of this see Pearson, *Pilgrimage to Mecca*, 149-151.

23. A.C. Hess, « Piri Reis and the Ottoman Response to the Voyages of Discovery » *Terrae Incognitae*, VI, (1974) 19-37, 27-9.

To the West, in Africa, the Ottomans built a series of larger forts which were intended to extend Ottoman power further south into the area of modern Sudan.

Examples include the fortresses of Qasr Ibrim in Egypt and Qal'at al-Sai which was founded in 1585 and is located 650 km south of Aswan ²⁴.

As well as securing the Nile frontier, as argued by John Alexander, it is probable that these forts were intended to provide an Ottoman military presence on the western side of the Red Sea. In addition to the Nile fortresses the Ottomans also established a fortress and settlement at Quseir on the Red Sea in 1571 ²⁵. This was partially in response to a Portuguese attack on the African Red Sea ports by Don João de Castro in 1541 ²⁶.



Plate 2. Qal'at Ma'an (sixteenth century), south side of fort showing original sixteenth century entrance set below machicolation resting on heavy corbels.

24. J. Alexander, « Qalat Sai, the most southerly Ottoman fortress in Africa » *Sudan and Nubia* (The Sudan Archaeological Research Society Bulletin) 1 (1997) 16-20; *idem* « The archaeology and history of the Ottoman frontier in the Middle Nile Valley 910-1233 A.H./1504-1820AD » *Adumatu* No.1 (2000) 47-61.

25. C. LeQuesne « Quseir Fort and the archaeology of the Hajj » 145-156 in D.Kennet and S. Simpson (eds.) *Trade and Travel in the Red Sea Region; Proceedings of the Red Sea Project I.*, Society for Arabian Studies Monographs No.2 , BAR International Series 1269 (Oxford 2004) 148.

26. Kennedy Cooke, « The Red Sea Coast in 1540 », *Sudan Notes and Records* 16 (1933), 151-159.



Plate 3. Qal'at Ma'an (sixteenth century), south side with modern entrance and three arrow-slits visible

Whilst the Portuguese appeared to be a significant threat in the first half of the sixteenth century by the later part of the same century a *status quo* had been established and there was even the prospect of a peace treaty between the two powers ²⁷. By the seventeenth century the Portuguese control of the Indian Ocean was being subverted by the English and the Dutch. This situation may account for the lack of building activity on the Syrian Hajj route during the seventeenth century. In any case by this time Ottoman attention was more focused on south-eastern Europe.

INTERNAL CONTROL (Fig. 3)

When the Ottomans took over control of Syria and Egypt in the early sixteenth century they were faced with the problem of establishing their rule over an essentially foreign people. Whilst the Mamluk rulers were also largely non Arab they were at least more local and their system of government had evolved in Arab lands using Arabic as the language of government. It was in this context that the Ottomans sought to consolidate their rule through military

27. Pearson, *Pilgrimage to Mecca*, 88.

power in which architecture was a major component. One of the priorities in winning over the support of the local (settled) population was the elimination of the Bedouin threat. Whilst at a high level Ottoman rhetoric was concerned with enemies such as the Portuguese and the Safavids in practical terms there was a strong emphasis on controlling the Bedouin. For example when the Ottomans decided to rebuild Quseir on the Red Sea coast of Egypt one of their principal concerns was to defend the townspeople from the ‘disorders and wickedness of the mischief-making Arabs who many times killed the notables and plundered all their properties’²⁸. Again if we look at the Ottoman documents relating to Palestine there is a constant emphasis on controlling the Bedouin and encouraging settled life²⁹. For example the massive project of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem was partly a response to the Bedouin threats as well as a way of announcing the new Ottoman presence³⁰. Other measures to improve security in the region included the construction of fortresses at Ras al-‘Ayn, Bayt Jibrin, Khan al-Tujjar, Qal‘at Burak and Jennin³¹. The construction of the Hajj forts may also be seen as part of this process of controlling the Bedouin and encouraging settled life.



Plate 3. Qal‘at Ma‘an (sixteenth century), south side with modern entrance
fand three arrow-slits visible

28. *Muhimme Defteri* No.12, Document 906 cited in LeQuesne « Quseir Fort », 148.

29. For numerous examples see U. Heyd, *Ottoman Documents on Palestine* (Oxford 1960).

30. For a discussion of the walls of Jerusalem see Amnon Cohen « The Walls of Jerusalem » in Bosworth, C.E., Charles Issawi, Roger Savory and A.L.Udovitch eds. *Essays in Honour of Bernard Lewis: From Classical to Modern Times*, Darwin Press (Princeton, 1989), 467-77.

The sixteenth century Hajj forts (Ma'an, 'Unaizah and Qatrana) were designed for the use of small cannons (e.g. *Karathaun*), heavy arquebus like hand guns and cross-bows³². Although most of the gateways contained hidden machicolations the defences were not particularly sophisticated and were only designed to repel bands of Bedouin who during the sixteenth century would not have had access to hand held guns. Although we have no way of measuring the success of the Hajj forts or other measures taken against the Bedouin they appear to have been fairly successful. Certainly the new Ottoman forts in Palestine encouraged a return to settled life in areas that had previously been nomadic territory³³. However during the eighteenth century there was a massive increase in Bedouin attacks of the Hajj caravan culminating in the attack of 1757 in which the entire Hajj caravan was destroyed by the Banu Sakhr³⁴. The disaster has been attributed to the failure of the Ottoman rulers to pay the required amount to the Bedouin who lined the way³⁵. It may also be that a new influx of Arab tribes, including the Shammar and the 'Anazah, which began in the late seventeenth century altered what may already have been a delicate balance at the fringes of the desert³⁶. This in turn could have been a result of environmental factors such as drought.

However the fact that the attacks of the eighteenth century were successful may have been the result of another factor. The eighteenth century forts (Mudawwara, Fassu'a, Dab'a and Hassa) were built to a different design from their sixteenth century predecessors with projecting corner towers and small gun slits designed for hand held guns (**Fig. 5, Plates 4 and 5**). The change in the design of the forts was probably a response to the acquisition of firearms by the Bedouin which was both a technological development and a result of changing patterns

31. For a discussion of the fortress network see A. Petersen, « The development of fortification in Jordan during the early Ottoman period » in *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* VI, (1995) 299-305. For more detailed information see idem « Qal'at Ras al-'Ayn : a sixteenth century Ottoman fortress » *Levant* 30 (1998) 97-112. For Bayt Jibrin see M. Sharon, M. *Corpus Inscriptonum Arabicarum Palaestinae (CIAP)* 2, Brill, (Leiden, Boston, Köln 1999) 138-9; Heyd *Ottoman Documents*, 115. For Khan al-Tujjar see Lee et al « Mamluk caravanserais in Galilee ». For Qal'at Burak see Sharon *CIAP*, 244-6; Hawari, M. H. Auld and J. Hudson «Qal'at Burak. A fort of the Ottoman Period South of Bethlehem» *Levant* 32 (2000) 101-120.

32. Smith, C.K. « Kawkaban, the key to Sinan Pasha's campaign in the Yemen (March 1569-March 1571) » in *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 32 (2002) 287-294, 292.

33. A.D. Petersen, *The Archaeology of Towns in Muslim Palestine*. BAR International Series 1381, Archaeopress (Oxford 2005), 41-2; Heyd *Ottoman Documents*, 103.

34. A.K. Rafeq, *The Province of Damascus, 1723-1783 Khayats* (Beirut 1966) 213-8; Barbir *Ottoman Rule*, 175-176.

35. Peeters, *The Hajj*, 161.

36. Norman Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers in Jordan*, 1987, 8.

of trade. Before the eighteenth century the Bedouin did not possess guns that could be fired from horseback and consequently were unable to mount a serious attack on a fort or well defended caravan ³⁷. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it had often been possible to scare off an attack thus in 1672 the *Amir al-Hajj* (Commander of the Hajj Caravan) only had to get his military band to play to disperse the would be Bedouin attackers ³⁸. In the eighteenth century the Ottoman long gun (*uzun topu*) was introduced which was both lighter and more accurate than the arquebus like hand guns of the sixteenth century. The new hand held long guns could be fired from horseback which made the Bedouin a much more formidable foe ³⁹. The mechanism by which the Bedouin obtained weapons is not known in detail though one source was probably via Zahir al-‘Umar the semi-independent ruler of Galilee who was (illegally) buying arms from Dutch and French merchants in Acre, Haifa and Sidon in return for cotton ⁴⁰.

RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

It is clear that the Ottomans saw themselves as the prime defenders of Islam and this fact was also acknowledged by other Muslim dynasties such as the Mughal rulers of India and the rulers of Aceh in Indonesia ⁴¹. The fortification of Jerusalem and the renovation of the Dome of the Rock



Plate 5. Qal'at Fassu's (eighteenth century), detail of projecting corner tower.

37. For a discussion of guns in the Ottoman empire from the sixteenth to eighteenth century see Gábor Ágoston, G., *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge 2005).

38. Peeters, *The Hajj*, 373 n.51.

39. It is perhaps no coincidence that the Wahhabis emerged as a major political force in Central Arabia at the same time as long guns were being introduced in the area in the mid to late eighteenth century.

40. C. Edwards, K.Livingstone, D.Boyd and A. Petersen, « Dayr Hanna: an eighteenth century fortified village in Galilee », *Levant* 25 (1993): 63-92; A. Petersen, « The Fortress of Shafr 'Amr and Related Buildings », *Levant* 32 (2000) 77-96.

41. N.R. Farooqi, *Mughal Ottoman Relations* (A Study of Political and Diplomatic Relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire 1556-1748) (Delhi 1989) 157-8.

(*Qubbat al-Sakhra*) with faience tiles was clearly an attempt to show that they were Muslim rulers intent on defending Jerusalem from the Christians ⁴². However the Hajj was the principal focus of Ottoman religious leadership in their Arab provinces. At the starting point of the Hajj, in Damascus, a magnificent pilgrimage complex including two mosques, a *madrassa* and hostel was built by the famous Ottoman architect Sinan ⁴³. The Ottomans were careful to follow established procedures in the conduct of the Hajj as any deviation from established practice would be regarded as suspicious by the local population. At the other end of the Hajj route the Ottomans embellished the Holy cities of Mecca and Medina with buildings and gave lavish grants of money to the poor ⁴⁴.

The fortification of the Hajj route may be seen as part of this process, a method of advertising the Ottoman presence from Damascus to Mecca. However a survey of the inscriptions on the forts themselves does not indicate a pre-occupation with religious titles or claims and simply states the name of the Sultan who ordered the construction, the names of officials who carried out the work and the year the work was completed ⁴⁵. It is also notable that none of the Ottoman Sultans made the Hajj before the nineteenth century whereas at least four of the Mamluk rulers made the journey to Mecca ⁴⁶. Of course there may have been practical reasons why the Ottoman Sultans could not have made the Hajj such as security, health or the length of the journey though all of these factors would have operated on other pilgrims. It is for example interesting to remember that the king of Mali, Mansa Musa made the pilgrimage from West Africa in the fourteenth century ⁴⁷. It appears then that the Ottoman

42. S. Auld and R. Hillenbrand (eds.), *Ottoman Jerusalem, the living city*. World of Islam Festival Trust and Scorpion Books (London, 2000); Cohen « Walls of Jerusalem », 469.

43. G. Goodwin, *Ottoman Architecture*, Thames and Hudson (London 1971) 256-7.

44. Esin, « The Renovations effected, in the Ka'bah mosque » ; S. Faroqi « Ottoman documents concerning the Hajj during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries » in A. Temimi (ed.) *La vie sociale dans les provinces arabes à l'époque ottomane*, Tome III, Publications du Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Ottomanes, Morisques, de Documentation et d'Information (Zaghuan 1988) 151-163, 157.

45. The only inscription from a Hajj fort in Jordan is located above the entrance to the fort at Ma'an though unfortunately this is a 1970's copy of an earlier lost/destroyed original. The Ma'an inscription does not contain any religious claim. For an examination of some of the inscriptions from Saudi Arabia see Jaussen, R.R. and P.P. Savignac (1914-22), *Mission Archéologique en Arabie. De Jérusalem au Hedjaz, Médain-Saleh* Paris. (New Edition Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Cairo 1997) 292-8.

46. J. L. Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia*, Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior of Africa, London [reprinted as No. 2 in the series 'Islam and the Muslim World' by the Centre of West African Studies, University of Birmingham 1968] (London 1929) 248; 'Ankawi « The pilgrimage to Mecca in Mamluk times », 154.

47. Al-Maqrizi in N. Levtzion and J.F.P. Hopkins, *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History*. (Fontes Historiae Africanæ: Series Arabica IV). Cambridge University Press (Cambridge 1981) 351.

support for the Holy Cities was institutional rather than personal, their extensive donations of money and property to the Holy cities was what was expected of them⁴⁸. In this light the Ottoman Hajj forts can be seen as part of a process of increasing the religious status of the Sultans without their having to make a personal commitment.

CONCLUSION

What should be clear from this brief discussion is that the Hajj forts had a variety of functions each of which served to increase Ottoman power in the region. Although they were relatively small structures their significance was increased by the isolation of their locations and the way they fitted into a wider network of fortresses in Palestine and beyond. The fact that the forts lack any overt religious symbolism either in terms of decoration or inscriptions suggests that their primary purpose was the extension of military power in the area. This is not to say that religious considerations were not important but that they were regarded as coincident to the interests of the state thus a document dated to 1584 refers to the *Haram i Sherif* in Mecca as ‘necessary to state and religion’⁴⁹. This hardly indicates passionate religious devotion rather it shows an awareness of the responsibilities of being the most powerful Muslim state and a desire to remain in control.

48. The Sultan and the state are often regarded as identical though as Richard van Leeuwen has pointed out in another context ‘one should distinguish between the personal attitudes of the head of state and the policies of the large bureaucratic apparatus. A complete separation would not be adequate either, however, since if the sultan was not the personification of the state, he was at least its most overwhelming symbol, and in general something in between’ Richard van Leeuwen, *Waqfs and Urban Structures: The case of Ottoman Damascus*. Brill (Leiden Boston Köln 1999) 97.

49. *Muhimme Defterleri* 12, p438 no. 849 cited in Faroqi « Ottoman documents concerning the Hajj » 1988, 162

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