1. Sadiq Bey’s Journey in the Hijaz - From the Port of Al Wajh to Medina (417.8 km - 26.5 miles)

**January 23**
By train from Cairo to Suez in four days

**January 27**
Embarkation on the Gulf of Suez

**January 29**
Arrival at the port of Al Wajh

**January 30**
Fortress of Wajh, 9 km from the port

**February 1**
Wadi El-Milayy - Wadi Farah El-Nalim - Um-Harr; 36 km in 7.5 hours

**February 2**
Wadi Abul-Aja; Wadi El-Ruwaila - Jabal Sid - El-Khautahlal; 40 km in 7 hours

**February 3**
MAX1; 36.6 km in 7 hours and 40 minutes

**February 4**
Wadi El-Oqla - El-Oqla Station; 35 km in six hours and 50 minutes

**February 5**
Ruins of Qasr El-Ahmadi - Amudan - El-Fugayyir; 56 km in 11/2 hours

**February 6**
Stay in El-Fugayyir

**February 7**
El-Naqgarat - Wadi (no name given); 37.5 km (time not given)

**February 8**
Abul-Helw; 40.5 km in 8 hours and 50 minutes

**February 9**
Istabi Antar - El-Shagwa; 30.5 km in 6 hours and 20 minutes

**February 10**
El-Mellih; 35 km in 3 hours and 40 minutes

**February 11**
El-Dení Station; 41.5 km in 8 hours and 40 minutes

**February 12**
Abur Oman - Jabal Obid - El-Menaqba - Medina; 24.1 km in 5 hours

II. Sadiq Bey’s Journey in the Hijaz - From Medina to Yanbu al Bahr (237.15 km - 148.2 miles)

**February 16**
Abur All; 10.15 km in 2.5 hours

**February 17**
Bir El-Shafafri - a cave; 36.5 km in 7 hours and 45 minutes

**February 18**
El-Shuda - Bir El-Kabah - Bir Abbas; 44 km in 9 hours and 20 minutes

**February 19**
Trip through El Jodada - city of El-Jodada - El-Hamra fortress; 32 km in 6 hours and 55 minutes

**February 20**
Najir El-Far - Bir Said - Wadi...?; 36 km in 8 hours and 55 minutes

**February 21**
Yanbu al Nahh; 39 km in 8 hours and 20 minutes

**February 22**
Yanbu al Bahr; 39.5 km in 7.5 hours

**February 23**
Sailed from Yanbu al Bahr

**February 28**
Arrival in the Gulf of Suez

**Photographs of Mecca and Medina**

**Taken Between September 1880 and January 1881**

On a further expedition into the Hijaz begun in September 1880, Sadiq Bey joined the group of Egyptian pilgrims that, every year, crossed the Sinai Desert following the overland route taken by the mawileh on the way to Mecca as far as the coast of the Red Sea. The mawileh (or mawzi) is a closed litter, a processional shrine, carried by a camel. Every year, during a symbolic ritual, this litter was sent by the Egyptian government to Mecca at the time of the great pilgrimage. It was filled with gifts and the precious veil, the keswa, with which the Kaaba was newly covered each year. This piece of drapery was made of black brocade or black silk and was adorned with texts from the Koran embroidered using gold or silver thread. It was made in Egypt sparing neither effort nor expense.

Thus, during this trip, Sadiq Bey was a high-ranking official representative of the Egyptian government and the person responsible for the mawileh’s safe passage. Sadiq Bey was not the leader of this expedition, but he did have a very important rank. Other regions also sent their own mawileh, but the Egyptian processional shrine was the best known of all. This custom was eventually abolished, though.

Sadiq Bey again took his camera and photographic equipment with him on this trip. In Mecca, he pho-
Journey in the Hidjas - From the Port of Al Na (417.8 km = 261.5 miles)

By train from Cairo to Suez in four days
Embarkation on the Gulf of Suez
Arrival at the port of Al Wajh
Fortress of Wajh, 9 km from the port
Wadi El-Miyah - Wadi Farsh El-Nalm - Um Harem; 38 km in 7 hours
Wadi Iblis - Wadi El-Ruwaidala - Jabal Sij - El-Khuthah; 40 km in 7 hours
Wadi Matar; 36.8 km in 7 hours and 50 minutes
Wadi El-Qaqa - El-Qaqa Station; 32.2 km in six hours and 40 minutes
Ruins of Qsar El-Ahmad - Amurad - El-Fuqayyat; 32 km in 11 hours
Stay in El-Fuqayyat
El-Naqourat - Wadi (no name given); 37.5 km (time not given)
Abul Helw, 40.5 km in 8 hours and 50 minutes
Istabl Antar - El-Shagwa; 30.5 km in 6 hours and 20 minutes
El-Mellit; 35 km in 7 hours and 20 minutes
El-Dinil Station; 42.6 km in 8 hours and 40 minutes
Alaz Derman - Jabal Elbod - El-Menagh - Medina; 24.1 km in 5 hours

1. Journey in the Hidjas - From Medina to Al Na (278.7 km = 173.4 miles)

Abar AlJ: 10.125 km in 1/2 hour
Bir El-Shayfyl - a cave; 36.5 km in 7 hours and 55 minutes
El-Shusha - Bir El-Bahah - Bir Abbas; 44 km in 9 hours and 20 minutes
Trip through El-Jedda - city of El-Jedda - El-Hanna fortress; 32 km in 6 hours and 55 minutes
Nach El-Far - Bir Sall - Wadi ... 7; 36 km in 8 hours and 55 minutes
Yanbus Al Nakhi; 39 km in 8 hours and 20 minutes
Yanbus Al Bah; 39.5 km in 7 hours
Sailed from Yanbus Al Bah
Arrival in the Gulf of Suez

2. Mecca and Medina

September 1880 and January 1881

The expedition to the Hidjas began in 1880. Sadig Bey joined the group of Egyptian officials who, every year, crossed the Sinai Desert from the Red Sea to Mecca. This journey took place in 1880 and 1881, and it is described in detail in Sadig Bey’s book, “Photographs of Mecca and Medina Taken Between September 1880 and January 1881.”

Photographs of Mecca and Medina

Sadig Bey was a high-ranking official representative of the Egyptian government and the person responsible for the nation’s safe passage. Sadig Bey was not the leader of this expedition, but he did have a very important role. Other regions also sent their own members, but the Egyptian procession was the best known of all. This custom was eventually abolished, though.

Sadig Bey again took his camera and photographic equipment with him on this trip. In Mecca, he photographed the sacred mosque, the crown of pilgrims circling the Kaaba, the tomb of Mohammed’s parents and the tents pitched by great numbers of pilgrims in Mina on the plain at the foot of Mount Arafat (see pp. 115-121). In his account of the journey of 1880-81 published under the title of “Front of the Adored Court-Jewel,” he recorded some thoughts relating to his work as a photographer:

November 23, 1880

In these days, by means of photography, I succeeded in taking a picture of the Great Mosque in Mecca and of the Kaaba. I also took a picture of its inner courtyard, as far as this was possible owing to the enormous crowd of people and obstructions of space.”

Further on, he noted that:

“I succeeded in depicting the inner courtyard of the Haram [in a written account] as well as, by means of a photographic camera, taking a picture of its outward appearance including all of the buildings that surround it.”

Sadig Bey also took the opportunity of photographing the guardian of the Kaaba, Sheikh Umar al-Schaibi.

“By means of photography, I depicted the highly esteemed one and sent him [this photograph] with the following views: ‘My heart captured your presence in the grace and lustre of the Kaaba. My heart is burning with pain because of the separation, and yet photographers are not condemned to burn in fire [in hell]. You have drawn on paper in friendship and memory. ‘”

This thoughtful and critical reflection about his medium is highly relevant to the nature of photography as a means of documentation and reportage. It is capable of capturing something of an intimate nature, on the one hand, for private use as a remembrance of a person or event while, on the other, exposing this intimacy to the eyes of strangers.

The following notes recorded by Sadig Bey reveal that he later set off for Medina, where he made several panorama images of the city, as well as photographing the Mosque of the Tomb of Prophet:

December 30, 1880

And it was possible for me to draw an exact and detailed ground plan of the Haram. By means of photography, I also made a picture of the enlightened city [Medina is meant] with the dome and the five minarets. And I photographed the view of the dome from inside the Haram.”

He was also able to take a picture of the guardian of the mosque, Sheikh Shukri Pasha, the Sheikh al-Haram, with three eunuchs who were his assistants. It was again with a certain pride that Sadig Bey noted:

“I also took a photograph of the Sheikh al-Haram, and some eunuchs at the venerable place. And I am the very first who has ever made such pictures by means of photography.”

In 1881, on the occasion of the Third International Congress of Geographers in Venice, Sadig Bey published his views of Mecca and Medina as a portfolio album. This was published by the Société khédivalle Géographie and distributed by its secretary-general, M. le Chevalier Bernier. Each copy of the portfolio contained 50 francs, while those in which the photographs had been pasted onto card cost 50 francs. At this congress in Venice, Sadig Bey was awarded a gold medal for his work, a distinction that heralded his international recognition as a photographer.

He was very curious about the way in which he presented his photographs, too. He wrote explanatory titles in Arabic, and each glass negative was signed with his name in Arabic and French (as ‘Sadie Bey’). It may be assumed that this group of images must have included photographs of Medina that he had already taken during his first trip and which he had newly prepared as album prints at present. It is impossible to ascertain precisely which of the images of Medina were taken in 1880 and which during his second visit in 1881.

In his photographic portfolio, the following laudatory text was included:

‘Collection de Vues Photographiques de “La Meccle et de Medina” par M. Sadic Pasha, Colonel d’Etat-Major Egiptien. Auteur de deux ouvrages sur le pelerinage, Photographie diplomée à l’exposition Internationale de Géographie de Venise 1881.’

A portrait of the photographer taken at this time shows him with rather severe features and a moustache (see p. 65).

In 1884, Sadig Bey set off on another trip, this time again accompanying an Egyptian group of pilgrims in the role of treasurer. This was to be his last visit to the Hijaz. Shortly beforehand, his wife, to whom he appears to have been particularly close, died in Mecca; they had travelled there together from Cairo. After Sadig Bey had personally taken in hand all the arrangements for her
funeral, she was buried in Medina. After returning to Cairo, he published a further book containing illustrations and a chapter dealing with his painful loss, which was edged with black as a sign of mourning. The sum of his experiences was presented in his third book, *Star of a Pilgrimage for the Muhammedan Journey by Sea and by Land* (Cairo, 1884).

After Sadig Bey had retired from the army and enjoyed purely titular offices, he published a fourth book about the hadj, his *Pilgrim’s Guide for Visitors* (Cairo 1896), which again drew on the experiences of his three trips. This travel guidebook contained practical advice and information for pilgrims. A portrait of the author and photographer (see page 59) served as the frontispiece of this book. In this, he is seen wearing a costly brocaded coat such as was reserved for men of high rank. The book again made reference to the fact that the author was the first person to have documented Mecca and Medina in photographs, as well as pointing out that “I was awarded the gold medal, first class, in the Venice exhibition in 1882.” This was a time in which Sadig Bey’s fame and reputation were on the increase, and his social recognition extended to leading intellectual circles in Cairo. The title of pasha had already been bestowed on him after the publication of his second book. In 1902, he was appointed governor of El Arish in Sinai, but after spending only two months there, he suffered a heart stroke. He returned to Cairo, where the 70-year-old died in the same year.

The Importance of Sadig Bey’s Photography

Sadig Bey’s photographs are unquestionably the earliest known images depicting a Muslim pilgrim pilgrimage to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, as well as to the surrounding region. There is much to suggest that he worked methodically; he did not merely take “snapshots” of his subjects but made careful preparations for each image, composing it to capture the essence of its subject. Thanks to his training as a geometer and geodesist, Sadig Bey had a highly developed spatial vision and was well-acquainted with the rules of good pictorial composition. Furthermore, his profession had also given him an excellent eye for the arrangement of points, lines, distances and angles within three-dimensional space. However, in his photographs, he was also concerned with the precise presentation of inter-relationships between objects as well as with localizing architecture in its visual context. Moreover, he had mastered the techniques necessary to make maps and ground plans of places and buildings, and each work requires a highly developed capacity for spatial-abstract thinking in order to recognize the essential features of the object under consideration. In the already-mentioned Arabic publication by Muhammad Hamann Fikri, one can find indications that Sadig bey recorded events and experiences with exceptional “precision of description” (adab ‘iyya). Fikri makes constant reference to Sadig bey’s carefulness, accuracy and precision, while reserving particular praise for his investigations concerning the pilgrimage to Mecca and its development. For this reason, Fikri has spoken in favor of reissuing this travel account, which in his opinion, has not received as much attention as it deserves. It is noticeable that, in his journals, Sadig bey often speaks of “view,” “appearance” and “form,” so that a pronounced emphasis on visual perspectives is evident throughout. In a great many of his descriptions, he mentions the spatial composition of objects, a tendency that is reflected in the marked frequency with which prepositions occur in his texts.

In Sadig bey’s photographs, three basic types of image may be distinguished: panoramas, landscape-format views and portrait-format images.

In order to convey spatial depth and breadth, to present a city or landscape as fully as possible, he sometimes took photographs from two or three vantage points and then created a panoramic image by combining them into one picture or by placing the images side by side. Examples of this approach can be seen in some of the photographs of Mecca, Medina and the camp by Mount Arafat (see pp. 126, 127, 131).

An impressive panorama image is the view of Medina (p. 131), in which Sadig bey waited until the moment
when the pilgrims who had pitched their tents in front of the city gate turned toward Mecca to pray.

With his clear delineation of foreground and background, and the arrangement of two images depicting Mount Arafat, with its countless pilgrims, tents and sacrificial animals, in such a way that they blend naturally, and with the inclusion of the Kaaba and the tomb of Abraham, the camera captures the essence of the pilgrimage experience and the historical and religious significance of the site. The composition of the photographs is such that the viewer is transported into the scene, as if they were standing in the midst of the pilgrims, witnessing the solemnity and devotion of the moment. The use of the landscape format further enhances the sense of scale and grandeur, emphasizing the spiritual and historical significance of the pilgrimage to Mecca.

In conclusion, the photographs of Sadiq Bey offer a unique and immersive perspective on the pilgrimage to Mecca, capturing not only the physicality of the pilgrimage but also its spiritual and cultural dimensions. They provide a window into the world of early photography and offer a valuable record of a significant historical event.
piles a lattice-work fence, and the photograph was taken in the open air using the available daylight. Sadiq Bey took several pictures of the same subject, one of which shows the pasha surrounded by three seated eunuch assistants; nonetheless, the version described here in detail is clearer and more convincing in terms of its overall composition.

When first published in 1889, a portfolio containing 12 photographs by Sadiq Bey could be purchased for just 50 French francs. In recent years, the market prices for early photographs from the Arabian region and from the Near and Middle East have risen to dizzy heights. Thus, in 1998, the state of Saudi Arabia was willing to pay no less than £1.4 million (c. $2.3 million or €2 million) for an album containing 18 albumen prints by Sadiq Bey.\(^\text{8}\)

Christian Snouck Hurgronje—Photography as an Ethnological Document\(^\text{8}\)

The Pictorial Atlas with Photographs from 1884/85 and His Stay in Jiddah from August 28, 1884, to February 21, 1885

The Dutch academic and expert on Arabian culture, Dr. Christian Snouck Hurgronje (see also the section, ‘European Investigators of the Arabian World in the Nineteenth Century’; p. 43 above) stayed in Jiddah from August 28, 1884, to February 21, 1885, where he was a guest of the Dutch consulate for some of the time. The inner courtyard of this establishment served as his photographic studio, as is revealed by close examination of the backgrounds of many of his pictures. Using his camera, he was the first to take remarkable group portraits of pilgrims, and his work ensured him the status of a pioneer of photography in Arabia.\(^\text{8}\)

He published his book, Mecca. The City and its Rules in Leiden (The Netherlands) in 1888, accompanied by a portfolio of photographs measuring 36.2 x 26.5 cm with the title, Pictorial Atlas. This contained 65 albumen prints pasted onto card, along with four engravings and four color lithograph prints showing, among other things, objects from Mecca, most of which belonged to Snouck Hurgronje’s own collection of ethnographic objects.\(^\text{8}\) The images in the Pictorial Atlas were numbered using Roman numerals, and most had been taken in and around 1884/85. They include an engraving taken from a photograph by Sadiq Bey (No. 1, The Mosque and the North-West Part of the City) as well as one of his photographs (No. III, The Kaaba). Those were followed by photographs of groups of pilgrims from Asia, Indonesia, Malaya, the Philippines and India. At the time when Snouck Hurgronje was living in Jiddah, the time of pilgrimage was just coming to an end. Many pilgrims were on their way home and required travel permits, which gave Snouck Hurgronje the perfect opportunity to photograph them in the courtyard of the Dutch consulate. In particular, pilgrims from Indonesia needed a visa issued by the consulate to serve as a travel permit. This is why a few of his photographs show pilgrims actually holding their permits. The administrative measure of demanding the issue of a travel permit was necessary for two reasons: first, to protect the pilgrims against the worse forms of arbitrary mistreatment by guides in Mecca; and second, to keep the flow of pilgrims from the East Indies within manageable bounds.\(^\text{8}\)

Snouck Hurgronje photographed pilgrims wearing costumes typical of their native countries. That these pictures were taken in the inner courtyard of the Dutch consulate is demonstrated by a group photograph in which Snouck Hurgronje himself is to be seen (p. 55, standing on the right wearing a light-colored shirt and a fez). This photograph was taken in late 1884 either using a self-timing device or by another person releasing the shutter. It is worth noting that the background of this image occurs again in portraits of pilgrims included in the Pictorial Atlas, i.e., a boarded-up window, some scantly foliage and pots containing palms and banana-plants.

In the Pictorial Atlas, no names of photographers are given except those of Sadiq Bey and Siegfried Langes: picture No. XXV does record the name of the field researcher and Orientalist, Langes, who met a tragic end during an expedition to Yemen.

In his preface, though, Snouck Hurgronje did mention that he had found a co-worker whom he had instructed in photography: “With the exception of Nos. I and III (Sadiq Bey’s photographs), all of the pictures in the attached atlas have been reproduced from photographs taken by myself or by an Arab instructed in photography by myself or else drawn from my collection of objects from Mecca.”\(^\text{8}\)

The Arab to whom he had given instruction was Al-Sayyid Abd as-Chaffar, a doctor from Mecca, who will be considered in due course.
Snouck Hurgronje — Photographs as an ocument

With photographs from 1866, 1870 and 1885.

Snouck Hurgronje was already in Jiddah from August 28, 1884, to 1886, when he was a guest of the Dutch consul.

Snouck Hurgronje photographed pilgrims wearing costumes typical of their native countries. That these pictures were taken in the inner courtyard of the Dutch consulate is demonstrated by a group photograph in which Snouck Hurgronje himself is to be seen (p. 51; standing on the right wearing a light-colored shirt and hat). This photograph was taken in late 1885 either using a self-timer or by another person releasing the shutter. It is worth noting that the background of this image occurs again in portraits of pilgrims included in the Pictorial Atlas, i.e., a boarded-up window, some waxy foliage and pots containing palms and banana-plants.

The Pictorial Atlas, however, contains no photographs of snouck hurgronje himself, as he met a tragic end during an expedition to Yemen.

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The Arab to whom he had given instruction was Al-Sayyid Abd al-Qahtan, a doctor from Mecca, who will be considered in due course.

Snouck Hurgronje’s Stay in Mecca from February 21 to July 5, 1885

In addition to the pictures of pilgrims taken in Jiddah, the Pictorial Atlas contains photographs taken in Mecca, which Snouck Hurgronje traveled on from Jiddah. These are portraits made in a room set up to serve as a photo studio. A white cloth was often spread out as a background, while the floor was covered with carpets or a white cloth as well. For these portraits, the photographer incorporated simple props like a chair or table. For the very first time, these images provided a photographic record of important dignitaries, who were often shown with their children, as well as members of various professions and trades living in Mecca, each wearing typical clothing along with requisite attributes like a uniform, sash, medals, saber or dagger. From the results of recent research and thanks to my close and friendly collaboration with Prof. Jan Just Wickram from the University of Leiden, who is also in charge of the Snouck Hurgronje archive, it may be assumed for the present that most of these photographs were taken by Snouck Hurgronje himself in Mecca, with some being the work of his already mentioned ‘student,’ the doctor from Mecca, Al-Sayyid Abd al-Qahtan.

It seems probable that Snouck Hurgronje had his photographic equipment sent on to Mecca. After all, this would have been advisable for reasons of safety, as such a cumbersome apparatus would have been difficult to transport as luggage without attracting attention and arousing suspicion of his being a spy or a non-Muslim.

As a consequence, he concentrated on portrait photographs right from the start. It may be assumed that the taking of photographs was something completely new and unexpected in Mecca, and so the first priority was to dispel suspicions about the procedure as quickly as possible. It is also conceivable that, after a while, Snouck Hurgronje’s improved studio also became a popular meeting place for various social groups. After important dignitaries had allowed themselves to be photographed, it is easy to imagine that representatives of the city’s ‘high society’ might have wanted to have a portrait made of themselves with their families. The medium of photography enabled Snouck Hurgronje to broaden further his contacts and

Snouck Hurgronje’s Stay in Mecca from February 21 to July 5, 1885

55
circle of friends, with the result that he was able to fulfil his aim of gaining close insights into the society of Mecca.

What makes all of these individual and group portraits so fascinating is the fact that they provide the first photographically documented survey of the various classes and social groups in nineteenth-century Mecca—a truly encyclopedic store, as the title, Pictorial Atlas, may have been intended to imply. In the photographic portfolio, however, only a tiny fraction of this vast series of portraits was actually published. Snouck Hurgronje’s archive contains several hundred more glass negatives showing portraits of people from Mecca. These portraits can be subdivided into three groups: first, Mecca’s powerful lords and rulers, dignitaries and aristocrats, such as sheikhs, sheikhs and pashas—all of whom were photographed either alone or accompanied by servants—as well as eminent families and worthies (ajdads); second, the educated classes and representatives of various professions in Mecca, including doctors, scribes, custodians, muazzins and traders; and third, pilgrims, a category itself embracing a broad spectrum of social strata. Indeed, groups of pilgrims might range from princes and rich merchants to people of very humble circumstances, including beggars, and all classes and ranks in between. Some of the people portrayed gaze with an expectant smile at the camera lens, while others look mistrustful and skeptical with fixed, mask-like expressions. Their clothing and haircuts give us some indication of their social background. In many cases, one can sense the dreadful hardships that they must have endured during the pilgrimage that had just ended. These portrait photographs have an authentic feel about them, because they were not taken in a studio using paid models, as was often the case for generic photographs of this type taken in the professional studios of cities like Cairo and Damascus. As a result, they acquire exceptional value as ethnographic and documentary evidence, and it seems that, from the very first, they were made with scientific rather than commercial intentions in mind.

What makes these objective-photographic studies so modern in style is the way that they already clearly anticipate certain photo-historical positions of the twentieth century, for example Neue Sachlichkeit (New Objectivity) and Concept Art. Long before August Sander’s volume of photographs, Außer den Zeiten (Face of the Age) was published in 1929, the concept of accumulating a photographic mirror of a particular age had been developed here using glass negatives. In his two-volume work about Mecca and in his Pictorial Atlas, Snouck Hurgronje set out to investigate the history and social groupings of Mecca, a project that was lent thematic unity by his photographic documentation of particular classes and professional groups, whose representatives acquire the nature of archetypes in these pictures. It was not without reason that he called his album of images a Pictorial Atlas, as he wanted this to present a very wide-ranging collection of illustrations from this one field of study. Only high-ranking dignitaries were mentioned by name; otherwise, Snouck Hurgronje largely avoided giving the names of the people portrayed, preferring instead a prosaic, anonymous description, such as “a muezzin,” “a nijap (eminent man),” “a kubb” (scribe) or “a doctor of Mecca, his son.” He did not even make an exception in the case of his friend, Helper and photographic assistant, the doctor from Mecca, al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaﬀar, whose name is not mentioned anywhere.

Al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaﬀar and His Position in Arabian Photography

The Pictorial Portfolio, Pictures of Mecca

In 1889, immediately after the appearance of the first volume of his Pictorial Atlas, a supplementary portfolio was published under the title, Pictures of Mecca, containing 36 albumen prints measuring 36.2 x 27 cm and pasted on thin card. These comprised various views of Mecca and its surroundings, along with photographs of pilgrims’ camps and gatherings of pilgrims, i.e., at Mount Arafat, in the Mina Valley and at the tomb of the Sittana Maimumah. Only a single photograph (No. 17) shows a group of four persons with a riding camel in the open air; here, mention is made of the son of Sherif Ahmad and his slave. These pictures had been taken in August 1888 or 1889 during the time of pilgrimage and arrived in Leiden just after the Pictorial Atlas had been published.

In the preface of this second photographic portfolio, Snouck Hurgronje explained that these pictures had, unfortunately, been passed on to him only after his Pictorial Atlas had already gone to print by a “doctor of Mecca, who instructed me during my stay in the holy city.” The fact that these images were of great importance to Snouck Hurgronje, inasmuch as they supplemented various subjects covered in his recent publication, accounts for his publishing this second portfolio so soon after the first.
and photographic assistant, the doctor from Mecca, Al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaffar, whose name is not mentioned anywhere.

Al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaffar and His Position in Arabian Photography

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Nonetheless, in the preface to this portfolio, Pictures of Mecca, he felt it necessary to point out that the photographer, i.e., the doctor from Mecca that he had mentioned, had not approached his work scientifically or systematically:

"This man has no knowledge of these matters will hardly be surprised that the collection is not ordered according to systematic principles. My old student in photography is, of course, not concerned with the advancement of scientific aims; I am exceptionally grateful when he does, on my urgent request, occasionally allow himself to be guided to work in the desired direction. Hopefully, he has not sent me his last specimen of this art that is despised in Islam."

The portfolio contains important information: here, Snouck Hurgronje is making a distinction between methodical photography for scientific purposes and unscientific photography as practised by his former student. While the tone is mildly critical, the writer's dependence on his middleman in Mecca is no less evident. Indeed, after Snouck Hurgronje's sudden extradition, his old friend became the only contact person who might be able to supply him with photographs relating to the pilgrimage in Mecca and the area nearby. In actual fact, the execution of Snouck Hurgronje's original plan was now carried out by Al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaffar.

As already pointed out, however, Snouck Hurgronje never mentioned the doctor by name either in his letters or in his diaries, in the preface to the portfolio of images or in his book. These last have surely been a good reason for this. The doctor from Mecca had himself added his name in Arabic script to the glass negatives that he sent to Snouck Hurgronje:

fayyad ulumm al-
cheffu sabiMSala (a phonetic transcription of the Arabic, whose meaning is, 'photographed by al-Sayyid Abdul-
Ghaflar in Mecca' [see p. 9].)

When he published the photographic portfolio, Pictures of Mecca, Snouck Hurgronje— for a combination of aesthetic and scientific reasons—almost always erased the name of the person who had taken the picture, which had usually been written in the middle of the lower edge of the original. Sometimes, he also removed the pictures' titles and headings defacing the places shown, which had been written in the middle of the top edge. On closer inspection, though, it is still possible to recognize clearly the Flowing arabesques of the (translated Arabic script). As Snouck Hurgronje regarded photography as being simply documentation to be applied in the service of scientific research, there is no reason to think that he erased the names because he did not want the photographers to be known. It should also be borne in mind that, at this time, the prevailing attitudes toward photography and art cannot be compared to the present-day situation. Photography was thus largely viewed as a craft or skill in the sense of a mere reproduction process, and it was very much treated as an artistic 'Cindrella' only exposed to the established fine arts.

Considered in this light, it is not surprising that Snouck Hurgronje often added his own name to the glass plate in Leiden. If he had really intended to withdraw the names of the people responsible for the images he had published, he would not have explicitly given Snouck Hurgronje's name under the picture taken by him. Another reason why he failed to mention the doctor's name may have been that, after his flight from Mecca, Snouck Hurgronje wanted to protect his nickname, friend and confidant. Perhaps the doctor would have been prosecuted, if it had emerged that he had collaborated with the "European spy and thief" from Leiden and had even allowed him to stay in his house for some time. Thus, Snouck Hurgronje's failure to mention the name of the photographer of these images may well reflect justifiable considerations and caution with respect to his friend's safety.

Quite why, then, al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaflar himself, in contrast, chose to add his name, profession and place of origin to his glass negatives must remain a matter of speculation. Either he was proud of being the creator of these images, or he wanted to add a title and his name for the sake of documentary accuracy and scientific orderliness.

It is still something of a mystery why, after his conversion to Islam in Jiddah, Snouck Hurgronje decided to assume the name 'al-Ghaflar,' i.e., the same name as the doctor in Mecca. As far as can be made out at present, this would seem to have been pure coincidence, because Snouck Hurgronje only got to know the doctor later during his stay in Mecca.

With respect to the man, al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaflar, little is known. It is the fact that he was the first photographer from Mecca. The Pictorial Atlas contains a portrait (No. XV), see p. 6) whose subject is, in all probability, al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaflar, as its title ("from Mecca") shows. It is a man somewhat over 50 years old. On the same card, the Pictorial Atlas contains another portrait
Witsam discovered three hitherto unknown letters by al-
Sayyid Abd al-Ghaffar in the Snouck Hurgronje archive in
the University of Leiden. Those three invaluable docu-
ments were written to Snouck Hurgronje after his hur-
ried departure from Mecca, and it is likely that they were
sent on to Leiden by S. van der Chijs, vice-consul of the
Netherlands and consul of Sweden in Jiddah. The doctor
had long been in close contact with S. van der Chijs
who, in collaboration with a merchant, was actively col-
lecting information, photographs and objects of ethno-
logical interest, which were then sent from West Arabia
to the University in Leiden. The doctor, al-Ghaffar, also
played a role as a go-between, not only in Mecca, but also
in Jiddah, helping to organize the collection and transfer
of such objects.

We are most grateful to the Snouck Hurgronje archive
in the University of Leiden for permitting these letters
to be published for the first time in the present volume.

Jan Just Witsam has pointed out that these texts reveal
that their author was anything but a man of letters
with an academic background, because their grammar,
spelling and syntax are sometimes considerably at vari-
ance with accepted rules and conventions. This makes
it difficult to achieve an accurate translation of the let-
ters in which the meaning is clear and unambiguous.
Nonetheless, these documents are uniquely interesting
and exciting within the context of the history of photog-
raphy. They provide precise information about the pho-
tographic viewpoints selected by al-Ghaffar for taking
his pictures, as well as descriptions of problems and fail-
ures with respect to the practical implementation of the
photochemical processes available at that time.

"Glory be to God alone.

To the esteemed, honored, exceptionally distin-
guished and generous man, the dear Sheikh Abd al-
Ghaffar (the name assumed by Snouck Hurgronje in
Arabic), may God protect him, Amen.

After saluting you with many greetings and wishes for
eternal grace and the blessing of God, the occasion of my
letter is firstly to enquire of you and to ask how you are.
We pray to God that your health and frame of mind may
be excellent. As you know, your distinguished letter has
arrived and we have understood its content.

Everything that you have explained is now known. You
informed us about the arrival of the photographic paper,
how it is to be used, and it was done so. You informed
us about the pulling tight of the curtains (for darkening),
so that the silks [admitting light] are visible
[7], and this was to be understood. Be that as it may,
O my brother, we do not know the reason why the black
came to be on the upper side, and I believe that this has
to do with the place where we are, as the black slowly
develops into the foreground, except when it is seven
o'clock during the day when the sun comes down to
to where we are, and then something goes well, and except
for when it is four o'clock, then it is good, too.
It is my aim to look for another workplace that is higher, up
on the roof or at the rear of the building, so that it is good.
We are waiting for the optical instrument [7] that you
promised us, as we have promised several people to treat
them with it. We are waiting for the price of optical
equipment. You will receive via our friend, Mr. Van der
Chijs, the photographic papers in a box, forty-eight
small and eight large. Among these, there is a picture of
the Hamidiyya, of the fortress seen frontally and from

Undated letter in Arabic written by al-Sayyid Abd al-Ghaffar, doctor from
Mecca, to Sheikh Abd al-Ghaffar, i.a., C. Snouck Hurgronje, who had
assumed—probably by chance—the same Arabic name as the doctor.
University of Leiden, The Netherlands, Snouck Hurgronje archive,
inv. no. 83191.
In this remarkable letter, the doctor provides a detailed account of his
choice of viewpoints for his photographs.

with the title, "son of the doctor." In a letter written by al-
Sayyid Abd al-Ghaffar, it says that he had three sons,
from which we may deduce that he was married, had a
family and probably held a respected position. A second
portrait of al-Ghaffar has been published in a book by Jan
Just Witsam.

During the course of the research project undertaken
by Jan Just Witsam and the present author, Professor

Travel to the Holy Land and Photography in the Nineteenth Century
photo of the period described here needs a military type of text in which to develop their images.

Up to now, it was considered highly likely that the photographs in the portrait, microscopically, were taken by the doctor, Al-Chaffar, because Snouck Hurgronje made indirect reference to this without, however, actually mentioning his name. The recently discovered letters now provide definite proof that these really are the work of the doctor from Mecca. The descriptions of the vantage points taken up for the photographs can be confirmed from the images contained in the portfolio.

Another letter written by Al-Sayyid Abd al-Chaffar and dated the 23rd of Shawwal, 1304H (July 5, 1888, according to the Gregorian calendar), also gives insights into the doctor’s efforts to come to terms with photographic techniques and processes. For the history of photography, this is a unique document. In it, we are given an account of the problems Al-Chaffar experienced in the handling of his photographic materials owing to the unfavourable climatic conditions, and how he then attempted to rectify the situation by means of patient improvisation and experimentation.

“Glory be to God alone. To the esteemed, honored, exceptionally distinguished and generous man, the dear Shiek Abd al-Chaffar (the name assumed by Snouck Hurgronje in Arabia), may God protect him, Amen.

After saluting you with many greetings and wishes for eternal grace and the blessing of God, the occasion of my letter is firstly to enquire of you and to ask how you are. We pray to God that your health and frame of mind may be excellent. As you know, your distinguished health has arrived and we have understood its content. Everything that you have explained is now known. You informed us about the arrival of the (photographic) paper, how it is to be used, and it was done so. You informed us about the pulling together of the (photopic) layer for darkening, so that no slits (admitting light) is visible (in the paper), and this was to be understood. Be that as it may, O my brother, we do not know the reason why the black comes to be on the upper side, and I believe that this has to do with the place where we are, as the black slowly develops into the foreground, except when it is seven o’clock during the day when the sun comes down to where we are, and then some things go well, and except for when it is four o’clock, then it is good, too, as my aim is to look for another workplace that is higher, up on the roof or at the rear of the building, so that it is good.

We are waiting for the optical instruments that you promised us, as we have promised several people to treat them with it. We are waiting for the piece of optical equipment. You will receive via our friend, Mr. Van der Chuijs, the (photographic) papers in a box, forty-eight small and eight large. Among these, there is a picture of the Hamidiyya, of the fortress seen frontally and from the side, also a picture of Akerun {illegible} and a picture of the artillery barracks and one of the hospital in Mina, and a picture of the Egyptian madrasa close to the Gate of Haram, not far from the house of the governor and that of the Qawwas, and of the governor, Othman Pasha, holding the rope (around the neck) of the camel (bearing the madrasa), and Umar Pasha is also among those who are standing together there. If God wills it, this will reach you safe and sound. We have asked brother Van der Chuijs to send us (you) [a small glass (jar)] of lens or glass negative) and also, if possible, a larger one. He and you can look at it. Our intention to begin in earnest with the production of these things, in two or three days, we will be going to At-Taf and will be back in Mecca at the end of the month of Shawwal. We wanted to inform you of this. Our children, Abdu, Husayn, and Hasan, send you their greetings, and also Shafik Efendi, Shiek Musa and Shiek Mahmudir, Shiek Muhammad Salih Khafife salute you and send their best wishes.

Your friend, Al-Sayyid Abd al-Chaffar, doctor in Mecca, in the best of health.”

In a second letter, there is a passage mentioning which photographic viewpoints had been chosen in accordance with the wishes of Snouck Hurgronje, as well as which images had been forwarded to him in Leiden via the agency of Van der Chuijs.

“...You should also have received the photographs via Mr. Van der Chuijs. We took a picture of the Haram when it was empty [the mosque] from the roof of the Rab al-Salam during the third hour of the day on Friday while the Hajar was empty. We also took a picture of the Haram when it was empty from the roof of the Hamidiyya building close to the Rab al-Wada. You will be receiving these. We pray to God that all of them (the photographs taken by the doctor from Mecca) which you at a time that you are well and in good health.”

I received the sheet with the text of the elegy by the poet, Bedawi, and the question to the jurists of the Shafites about whether the use of al-tawashi is permitted against chickenpox, which I received from the late Al-Sayyid Ahmad Dahlan, the Mufti [an exponer of Islamic law] of the Shafites, and thus we have sent you [this] question. We have rashly and weent God that this has reached you and entrust you to let us know when it reaches you. And we entrust God that the (instruments) may arrive in the near future. And that we need it urgently, this, too, we wanted to tell you. And we also inform you that, in these days, we were not able—we do not know why—to make photographs in the darkroom during the extremely hot and sultry weather, as the watering of the glass (negative) did not work properly. The gelatine dissolved and became diffused owing to the extremely hot and sultry weather. Nonetheless, in the days of the sandstorm, the photographs were acceptable because the sandstorm was dry and, during sultry weather, the gelatine dissolved rapidly. We do not want to give a final verdict about it, though, until we have tried many times, because we have only tried it twice and want to try it another two or three times, in order to reach a verdict afterward and to be sure whether our photographs are of good acceptable results on days of sultry weather and extreme heat.

also written by Al-Sayyid Abd al-Chaffar, doctor from Al-Chaffar, i.e. C. Snouck Hurgronje who had by chance—the same Arabic name to the doctor, The Netherlands, Snouck Hurgronje, archive.

Note: the doctor provides a detailed account of his trip to his photographs.