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# OSMANLI ARAŞTIRMALARI

## III

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HALİL İNALCIK — NEJAT GÖYÜNÇ

HEATH W. LOWRY

# THE JOURNAL OF OTTOMAN STUDIES

## III

İstanbul - 1982

## BAHRAIN IN 1559

### A Narrative of Turco-Portuguese Conflict in the Gulf

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Present day historiography has virtually condemned to death the narrative history of events. It has come to, as a French historian put it, «study of structures, the persistent patterns of the 'long term', and the collection of data amenable to serial or quantitative analysis»<sup>1</sup>. There is a link, however, between the long term and the single event. What happened in 1559 in Bahrain is an episode which reflects this connection : the history of Indian Ocean, the Red Sea and the Gulf is full of events reflecting the interests of foreign powers, struggling between themselves and against the natives and geographical conditions. The events of the year 1559 brought the Ottomans and the Portuguese face-to-face in Bahrain bringing to both sides great suffering which eventually forced them to withdraw from the Island.

\* This article is based on a chapter of my Ph. D. thesis carried out under the supervision of the Late Vernon J. Parry and submitted to the University of London in 1969.

1 E. Le Roy Ladurie, *The Territory of the Historian* (trans. Ben and Siân Reynolds), Sussex, 1979, p. 111.

Two sultanic orders, one to the Ottoman beylerbeyi of Basra Kubad Pasha, the other to Pîrî Bey, the Ottoman admiral of the Indian Ocean, reveal that among the instructions given to Pîrî Bey before he set out from Suez to besiege Hormuz in 1552 there was a commend that the Ottoman navy should bring under control not only Hormuz but also, if possible, the Island of Bahrain<sup>2</sup>. Even earlier than that, in 1550, the newly appointed Portuguese *capitão* of Hormuz, D. Álvaro de Noronha, informed his King D. João III, that the Turks would come to take Bahrain (*Barem*) after establishing themselves at Katif, a coastal town of Al-Hasa<sup>3</sup>.

In 1554, when Seydî Ali Reis tried to bring the Ottoman fleet back to Suez from Basra, he made an halt at Bahrain and obtained information from its ruler, Murad Shah, that the strait of Hormuz was open and Ottoman fleet could pass through it<sup>4</sup>. In the year 1555 a new Ottoman province (*beylerbeylik*) came into being under the name of Lahsa, thus the Ottomans brought themselves nearer to the Portuguese base at Hormuz<sup>5</sup>. One of the most important purposes of this *beylerbeylik* was, no doubt, to confront the Portuguese advance in the Gulf.

It was in 1559 that the Ottomans tried to take further steps in the Gulf. In this year Mustafa Pasha, the governor (*beylerbeyi*) of

2 «andan Hürmüz'den gelüp mümkün ise Bahreyn'i alup». These orders, preserved in the Topkapı Palace Archives, Koğuşlar 888, fols. 487b-488b, were published by C. Orhonlu in his «Hint Kaptanlığı ve Piri Reis», in *Belleten*, XXXIV/134 (Ankara, 1970), pp. 249-253.

3 See S. Özbaran, «Two Letters of Dom Álvaro de Noronha from Hormuz», in *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 9 (İstanbul, 1973), p. 243.

4 Seydi Ali Reis, *Miratü'l-Memalik*, İstanbul 1313/1895, p. 18.

5 See J.E. Mandaville, «The Ottoman Province of Al-Hasa in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries», in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 90/3 (1970), pp. 486ff.; S. Özbaran, «The Ottoman Turks and the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf, 1534-1581», in *Journal of Asian History*, 6/1 (Wiesbaden, 1972), p. 56. The Ottomans took Basra in 1546 and founded the *Beylerbeylik* of Basra. Katif, an important spot on the coast, opposite to the Island of Bahrain was taken by the Turks in 1550 (An Ottoman land survey which was carried out in h. 959/1551-52 for the Province of Basra indicates Katif as a *liva*, an administrative unit within that *beylerbeylik* (cf. İstanbul *Başbakanlık Arşivi, Tapu Defterleri*, nu. 282, pp. 294 ff.).

the Province of Lahsa, undertook a campaign against Bahrain. Diogo de Couto, the Portuguese historian of the time, states that Mustafa Pasha prepared this campaign with the cooperation of the *beylerbeyi* of Basra<sup>6</sup> while a Turkish document, preserved at the Topkapı Palace Archives<sup>7</sup>, from an Ottoman *beg* who fought in this campaign mentions that before the expedition set out 200 mounted troops and 400 arquebusiers (*200 atlu ve 400 tüfengci*) had been sent from Basra to Lahza<sup>8</sup>. This document and the account of Couto are the sources on which this narrative is based.

Mustafa Pasha went against the Island of Bahrain with two galleys (*kadırgas*) together with 70 light ships and one brigantine. The Pasha had with him, according to Couto, 1,200 soldiers, including certain number of janissaries from Baghdad, and ample supplies and munitions<sup>9</sup>. He began to besiege the fortress of Bahrain, i.e., Manama, on the northern coast of the Island on 26 Ramazan 966/2 July 1559. The Ruler of the Island Murad Shah<sup>10</sup>, having gathered toget-

6 Couto, *Da Asia*, Lisboa, 1778-1788, Decada VII, Livro VII, Capitulo VII. Couto arrived in Goa from Portugal this year as a soldier; then became the keeper of the Goa Archives, was able to acquire abundant information about Bahrain. He describes this campaign in great detail.

7 Under the reference number of E. 3004.

8 This document was published by C. Orhonlu as «1559 Bahreyn Seferine ait bir Rapor», in *Tarih Dergisi*, XVII/22 (İstanbul, 1967), pp. 1-16. According to an order of Sultan Süleyman sent to the ruler of Bahrain, and dated 28 *zilhicce* 966/1 October 1559 this campaign was undertaken, however, with no permission from the Sultan: «*Haliya Lahsa beylerbeyisi olan Mustafa Südde-i Saadetime arz ve ülâm itmeden fuzuli bazı ümera ve asakirle taht tasrifinde olan cezire-i Bahreyn'e geçib...*» (cf. Saffet Bey, «Bahreyn'de Bir Vakaa», in *Tarih-i Osmanî Encümeni Mecmuası*, III (İstanbul, 1328/1910), p. 1142.

9 «duas gales e setenta terrades, o terranquins e hum bargantim de dez bancos, em cujos vasilhas embarcou mil e düzentos Turcos, e janissaros, e muitos mantimentos, e munições, e petrechos de guerra...» (Dec. VII, Liv. VII, Cap. VII, p. 110).

10 In the *Mühimme* registers, *Başbakanlık Arşivi - İstanbul*, his name is given as «Murad Şah»; in Feridun Beg (*Münşeât üs-Selâtin*, İstanbul 1274/1857, I, p. 610) as «Murad Han»; and in Couto (Dec. VII, Livro VII, Capitulo VII) as «Rax Morado», the «guazil» of Bahrain. Of these various designations *Ra'is* is perhaps the most appropriate (cf. e.g., Nur al-Din, the then Ra'is of Hormuz). Ra'is Murad, being married to the daughter of Nur al-Din, was, according to Couto, the best *cavalho* in all over Persia. For further informa-

her supplies and placed some 400 soldiers inside the fort, resisted the Ottomans. With the help of some guns he repulsed several determined Ottoman assaults. The Ottomans now sought to fill in the ditch surrounding the fortress and, to this end, began to excavate approach trenches - a difficult task because the ground was of loose sand.

Meanwhile, the news of the Ottoman descent on Bahrain had reached Hormuz. D. Antão de Noronha, the Portuguese governor of Hormuz, discussed the situation with the other Portuguese captains and requested them to get together soldiers and munitions for the relief of Bahrain. He made his nephew D. João de Noronha, *capitão mor*, i.e., the commander-in-chief for the campaign against the Ottomans. D. Antão in order to expedite the sending of aid to Bahrain instructed D. Álvaro da Silveira to go to the island of Angan (*Angão*) or Hengam, near Kishm<sup>11</sup>. He also sent to this island Francisco Jacome, *Escravão da fazenda*, from Hormuz with munitions and supplies for da Silveira, who, having taken them on board set sail at once towards Bahrain. D. João, *capitão mor*, sailing for Bahrain, halted at the island of *Samaim*, described as two leagues from Bahrain<sup>12</sup>. The Portuguese fleet consisted of twenty-two *grabs*<sup>13</sup> in all. Mehmed Beg, who was in command of the Ottoman galleys which had come from Basra, having on board, for this campaign, a force of janisaries from Baghdad<sup>14</sup> moved towards the Portuguese fleet, but withdrew and took refuge in the harbour of Bahrain. D. João de Noronha, on the advice of his captains, now sought to lure the Turkish

tion on Bahrain see J. Aubin, «Le Royaume d'Ormuz an Début du XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle», *Mare Luso-Indicum*, II (Genève, 1973), p. 99.

11 Couto, Dec. VII, Liv. VII, Cap. VIII, p. 115.

12 Ibid, p. 115.

13 In the Turkish document it is stated that these *grabs* were the same size as the Sultan's *kayık* and had on two or three *zarbuzan* (Orhonlu, Bahreyn Seferi, p. 12). A *grab* was a kind of oared ship. Large grabs resemble large galleys, and small ones are shaped like oared galleots (cf. İ.H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Merkez ve Bahriye Teşkilatı*, Ankara 1948, p. 461; R.B. Serjeant, *The Portuguese off the South Arabian Coast*, Oxford U.P., 1963, p. 143.

14 Couto states (in p. 117) that each galley had 150 men on board.

galleys out of the harbour into deep water<sup>15</sup>. With the aid of João de Qadros, a captain endowed with a long experience of navigation in the Gulf, the Portuguese ships moved in the direction of Katif. The Turkish galleys followed them. One of the Portuguese was able to approach the harbour of Bahrain and set on fire the Ottoman supply ships there. D. João de Noronha now went to the island *Caes*, i.e., Qais, off the coast of Laristan, where da Silveira joined them. At the same time the Turkish galleys returned to the harbour of Bahrain<sup>16</sup>. While at *Angao*, D. Álvaro da Silveira had learned that the Turks were expecting reinforcement and supplies from Basra. He moved first to the island of *Romans*, before Katif<sup>17</sup>, and then, making a large circular approach, was able, with the fortunate assistance of sea-mist, to draw near to Bahrain unseen. With the element of surprise on their side the Portuguese entered the harbour on 3 Şevval 966 / 9 July 1559 captured the two Ottoman galleys. Mehmed Beg was killed and some of the Ottoman soldiers were taken prisoner<sup>18</sup>. It was now that Mustafa Pasha, the Ottoman general in command, seeing his two galleys lost and knowing the supply situation to be the most unfavorable, resolved to launch a direct assault on the fortress of Bahrain<sup>19</sup>. The defenders of the fortress resisted stubbornly, inflicting with their gun considerable damage on the Ottoman troops. Mustafa Pasha, at length, broke off the siege and withdrew his forces to an encampment located amidst some palm trees out of range of the fortress cannon<sup>20</sup>. He also recalled a certain sanjak beg, the author of the above mentioned Turkish document, who was still keeping watch over the Portuguese ships<sup>21</sup>. On the advice of the Ra'is Murad and of João de Qadros; the Portuguese admiral, da Silveira, placed his ships around the island of Bahrain to prevent the Ottomans from sending a request for assistance to Basra. On the other hand the Portuguese themselves had reason to be an-

15 Ibid., p. 117.

16 Orhonlu, Bahreyn Seferi, p. 12.

17 Couto, p. 120.

18 Orhonlu, Bahreyn Seferi, p. 12.

19 Couto, Dec. VII, Liv. VII, Cap. IX, p. 123.

20 Orhonlu, Bahreyn Seferi, p. 13.

21 Ibid., pp. 3 and 13.

xious. It was now the month of September and soon, at the beginning of October, the east winds (*os levantes*) would begin to blow, bringing with them malignant fever. The Portuguese in the fleet of D. Álvaro da Silveira, bearing in mind the not distant arrival of *os levantes*, demanded to be led into battle against the Ottomans - a course of action to which da Silveira at last gave his reluctant consent, at the time ordering the Ra'is to prepare his troops for the conflict. Da Silveira, his own preparation completed, marched against the Ottomans. He was joined en route by the Ra'is Murad, who came out of the fortress with 300 Persian soldiers; all very well armed<sup>22</sup>, and also by a certain 'Rehal - oğlu' and his men<sup>23</sup>. Da Silveira arranged his forces in a square and placed the troops of the Ra'is Murad to one side. The Ottomans awaited the advance of the foe in a palm grove not far from the fortress. The Pasha set the above mentioned beg with a number of horsemen (about 200 in all) behind some bushes at the end of his encampment<sup>24</sup>. Under the pressure of the Portuguese advance the Ottomans began to retreat; but at this critical moment the certain sanjak beg, who had been placed in the ambush, struck the Portuguese with his 200 horsemen. It was now that da Silveira received an arquebus shot in the groin and soon thereafter a second shot in the neck, this latter would be mortal. The Portuguese forces, seeing the fate of their commander, fell now into confusion, but the Ra'is Murad gathered them together and held off the Ottomans, while he and his Persian horsemen covered the withdrawal of the Portuguese into the fortress<sup>25</sup>. Seventy men of the Portuguese force were killed and about thirty taken captive. Pero Peixoto now took command of the Portuguese fleet in the place of the dead Silveira<sup>26</sup>. He held at once a council of war, in which it was agreed that D. João de Noronha, with the troops from Hormuz, should join the garrison of the fortress at the Bahrain, that the ships of da Silveira should continue to blockade the island, thus cutting

22 Couto, p. 125.

23 Ibn Rehal (Rehal-oğlu) came, it would seem, from Bahrain. He also had lands in the sanjak of Katif (Orhonlu, Bahreyn Seferi, p. 14).

24 Ibid., p. 14.

25 For a full account of this battle see Couto, pp. 125-132.

26 Ibid., p. 132.

off the Ottomans from fresh supplies and reinforcements, and that the local vessels of Hormuz<sup>27</sup> should return to their base (bearing the wounded with them), in case D. Antão de Noronha, the governor of Hormuz, wished to come to the Bahrain in person or send further aid, for which purpose he would need the ships.

Mustafa Pasha, now confronted with a shortage of supplies and munitions so great that the Ottoman bombardment of the fortress of Bahrain had to be discontinued sent one of his Portuguese prisoners, Gil de Goes de Lacerda, to Pero Peixoto, asking that negotiations for peace should be set in train<sup>28</sup>. Peixoto gave his assent and agreed, eventually, to make available ships which would take the Ottomans to Katif, the Pasha releasing all his Portuguese prisoners of war. At this moment a ship arrived from Hormuz with a message from D. Antão de Noronha. D. Antão, having received news of the above events, sent Aleixo Carvalho, in a light *catur*<sup>29</sup> laden with supplies and munitions, to take letters to Pero Peixoto. D. Antão, in these letters, declared his intention to sail to Bahrain with all haste. He now gave orders that the galleys which were captured earlier from the Ottomans, and also a number of other vessels should be prepared for the voyage. Turan Shah, the ruler of Hormuz, agreed that in the course of the expedition he should recruit Persian troops from 'Vidican' and 'Verdestan'<sup>30</sup>. To this aid Turan shah made available a number of *terranquims*<sup>31</sup>. With all the preparations completed, D. An-

27 Ibid., pp. 132-133.

28 At one stage of the negotiations Mustafa Pasha gave to Peixoto, in order to bring the whole matter to a successful conclusion, thirty five horses and 240,000 *akçes* - *akçe* being an Ottoman silver coin - (cf. Orhonlu, Bahreyn Seferi, p. 14).

29 *Catur*, i.e., a light, fast boat used in India and furnished with oars. It was employed for the conveyance of messages; and it was also much in use amongst the pirates of these waters (cf. P.E. Pieris and M.A.H. Fitzler, *Ceylon and Portugal, Pt. I: Kings and Christians 1539-1552*, Leipzig, 1927, p. 357.

30 Couto, Dec. VII, Liv. VII, Cap. X, p. 135. *Verdistan*, i.e., Berdistān - a coastal area in southern Persia, forming part of the region of Laristan.

31 *Terranquim* is a small oared ship having sails also - it was much used in India (cf. G. Correa, *Lendas da Índia*, Lisboa, 1858-61; II, p. 749.

32 «em alguns dias de setembro ja andado...» (Couto, p. 136).



tão set sail in September 1559<sup>32</sup>. At Hormuz the *alcaid mor*<sup>33</sup> with some *casados*<sup>34</sup>, was left in charge of affairs. The main Portuguese fleet, with D. Antão, remained for several days on the coast of Berdistan (Verdestan) in southern Persia, while the Ra'is Nur al-Din recruited troops locally. Meanwhile Aleixo Carvalho sailed straight for Bahrain, bringing with him letters for the Ra'is Murad, and also for Pero Peixoto, who was now instructed to defend the island until the arrival of the Hormuz fleet. Although he had been asked to bring news from Bahrain as soon as possible, Carvalho - a man well versed in the Persian language - wanted to go to the Ottoman encampment and to see his countrymen who were captives there. The *guazil*, Ra'is Murad, obtained from Mustafa Pasha, the Ottoman *beylerbeyi* of Lahsa, permission for Carvalho to see the Portuguese prisoners of war. Mustafa Pasha received Carvalho well and sought his assistance to mediate between himself and D. Antão de Noronha about peace terms<sup>35</sup>. Carvalho now went back to the fortress and then sailed towards Hormuz, taking with him letters from the Ra'is Murad and from Pero Peixoto. He met the fleet of D. Antão, already en route for Bahrain, near the island of Hengam. Carvalho went at once to see D. Antão de Noronha and gave him an account of the situation in Bahrain, underlining to what a degree of desperation the Ottoman forces had been reduced through their lack of supplies<sup>36</sup>. At this time, too, the Ra'is Murad, together with D. João de Noronha, came from Bahrain to see D. Antão. The Portuguese admiral now sent a message to Pero Peixoto exhorting him to maintain a close watch along the coast of Bahrain. To decide what would be the best course for the future D. Antão held a council with the captains of his fleet, with the *guazil* of Hormuz, the Ra'is Nur al-Din, and with the *guazil* of Bahrain, the Ra'is Murad. It was resolved that the best

33 *Alcaide mor*, i.e., the senior officer in command of the garrison troops. The word *alcaide* is derived from the Arabic *al-kaid* (cf. Delgado, *Glossário Luso-Asiático*, I, p. 21).

34 *casado* is the name given to the married Portuguese in the East.

35 Couto (p. 137) notes that Mustafa gave this man a Turkish robe and promised him a sum of money if he were able to win over D. Antão de Noronha.

36 There was on the island nothing to eat but dates. The Ottoman soldiers even had to eat donkey meat (cf. Orhonlu, *Bahreyn Seferi*, p. 15).

scheme would be to maintain a rigorous blockade of Bahrain, and thus to reduce the Ottomans to defeat, without having to take the risk of fighting an open battle against them. With his resolution made, D. Antão once more urged Pero Peixoto to keep a careful guard over the island and to aid him in this task, sent him all his light vessels, including the *terranquins*.

Mustafa Pasha, realizing how grave the situation was for the Ottomans, sent the above-mentioned sanjak beg to see the Ra'is Murad in the fortress of Bahrain<sup>37</sup>. This sanjak beg saw the *guazil*, and told him that the Sultan would soon send reinforcement to the Ottomans on the island. The Ra'is, however, expressed his resentment that the Sultan had sent troops against the Island though the Ottoman Government claimed that the campaign had been undertaken Ottoman forces to Katif.

At this moment four hundred Persian soldiers arrived and encamped near the fortress<sup>38</sup>. These Persian soldiers are no doubt the troops mentioned by Couto<sup>39</sup> - troops whom the *guazil* of Hormuz had recruited in Berdistan and whom the Portuguese admiral D. Antão have sent to Bahrain in advance of his own fleet - perhaps on the light vessels and *terranquins* which he sent off to strengthen the vessels of Pero Peixoto then blockading the island. About this time the above mentioned sanjak beg made a night attack and inflicted considerable damage on these Persian troops from Berdistan<sup>40</sup>. In general, however, the situation remained without notable change until at last - about a month after the night attack of the sanjak beg - D. Antão de Noronha reached the island and received from the Ra'is Murad and from D. João de Noronha an account of where matters stood at the moment<sup>41</sup>.

37 The exact moment when this sanjak beg saw Ra'is Murad at Bahrain fortress - whether the meeting occurred before Ra'is Murad went to see D. Antão or after his return (at an unspecified moment) at Bahrain - is not clear from the available sources.

38 Orhonlu, Bahreyn Seferi, p. 15.

39 See above, note 30.

40 Orhonlu, Bahreyn Seferi, p. 16.

41 Couto, p. 138.

Knowing the desperate situation of the Ottomans - now reduced, in the absence of supplies to eating poisonous herbs which caused some deaths among them - D. Antão had no intention of meeting them in open battle, but preferred to let them die of hunger. The Ottoman soldiers began to blame their commander for not extricating them from their difficult situation. At this same time Mir Sultan Ali, the sanjak beg of Katif - perhaps because he had fallen out of favour with the Ottoman authorities<sup>42</sup> - was seeking to place himself on good terms with Turan Shah, the ruler of Hormuz, and with the Portuguese. He now sent to D. Antão de Noronha messengers bearing lavish offers of co-operation. D. Antão received these well and sent them back with words of encouragement. There was also in Katif a captain (*capitão*) named *Mamede Bec*, i.e., Mehmed Beg, *Turco de nação*, and a determined foe of the Portuguese<sup>43</sup>. Through one of the messengers of Mir Sultan Ali to D. Antão, Mehmed Beg sent off in secret a letter for the Ottoman commander in Bahrain, Mustafa Pasha. The men who carried the letter bribed some of the Persian troops serving with the Portuguese at Bahrain to get the letter into the hands of Mustafa Pasha. This letter exhorted the beglerbeg of Lahsa to stand firm, stating that relief would not be long in coming to the Ottomans on the island. The Ottoman troops now recovered their determination to hold out as long as possible against their enemies - a renewal of courage which was most unwelcome to D. Antão, since it was now the month of October when *os levantes*, the east winds which brought sickness on that area, would begin to blow. D. Antão de Noronha resolved therefore to disembark the soldiers in his ships and set them around the fortress, with the Persian mercenaries under the *guazil* of Hormuz lodged in a separate encampment.

At this same time the Muslim troops serving with the Portuguese were secretly selling supplies to the Ottomans<sup>44</sup>. D. Antão de

42 Couto, p. 140: «que foi desejando de se sanear com El Rey de Ormuz e com os Portuguezes, pela culpa em que tinha cahida...».

43 Ibid., p. 140. This man would not seem to be identical with the Mehmed Beg mentioned a little later in Couto as taking over the command of the Ottoman forces there after the death of Mustafa Pasha (cf., below, note 46).

44 The source refers in fact to these Muslims in the following words: «e como estes eram Mouros...» (Couto, p. 141).

Noronha, aware of this traffic, seized a number of the troops engaged in it and had them hanged publicly in the sight of his assembled forces. He was now resolved to give battle to the Ottomans and sought assistance from Inofre de Carvalho, a Portuguese *arquitecto*, whom the King of Portugal, D. Sebastião, had send out to prepare the defences of Hormuz. This man built a tower-like structure of timber, on wheels, from the summit of which arquebuses could be fired at the Ottomans inside their defences.

It was at this moment the Ottoman commander, Mustafa Pasha, died of wounds that he had received earlier in conflict against the men of D. Álvaro da Silveira<sup>45</sup>. A certain sanjak beg named Mehmed succeeded to the command of the Ottoman forces<sup>46</sup>. The Ottomans, through the Persians serving with the Portuguese, made contact with D. Antão about terms of peace. D. Antão warned the Ottomans that no negotiations would be possible, unless the Ottomans surrendered their captives and their arms. On this basis, however, the tentative moves towards peace made no effective progress. At this juncture of affairs Mir Sultan Ali entered into the negotiations. After informing D. Antão de Noronha of his intention, he wrote to Mehmed Beg, the Ottoman commander, urging him to undertake serious discussion with D. Antão de Noronha and declaring that, if he did not do so, the Portuguese would never leave Bahrain until all the Ottomans had been slain.

These representations from Mir Sultan Ali discouraged the Ottomans. In an effort to bring D. Antão to a more favourable frame of mind, Mehmed Beg sent him a fine *ginete*, i.e., a horse; it was a gift which the Portuguese commander declined to accept. The Portuguese Aleixo Carvalho came forward now, offering to go and see the Ottoman commander. Armed with instructions from D. Antão, he did in fact have talks with Mehmed Beg, but to no result. The janissaries, suspicious of their commander and fearing

45 A *mühimme* register (III, p. 143) in the *Başbakanlık archives*, İstanbul, indicates that Mustafa Pasha was dismissed from the *beylerbeylik* of Lahsa during the course of the Bahrain campaign and that a certain Murad, the sanjak beg of Muşul, was appointed to replace him at Lahsa.

46 «que era hum sangiaco, que se chama Mahamede...» (Couto, p. 142).

that he might be about to betray them, placed him under guard - and the peace negotiations again came to nothing.

For some days no further progress was made, although in fact both sides, being apprehensive about the arrival of the east winds and the time of fever, wanted to come to a conclusion as soon as possible. It was now that *Coge Ocem Camal*, a Persian *alim* who had joined the *guázil* of Hormuz, Nur al-Din, for the Bahrain campaign, entered into the affair. He obtained from D. Antão de Noronha permission to visit the Ottoman commander, Mehmed Beg, to whom he suggested that the Ottomans should hand over their Portuguese captives and two or three pieces of artillery taken in the earlier fighting. Mehmed Beg, and the janissaries accepted this proposal and asked *Coge Ocem Cemal* to undertake the negotiations with the Portuguese. D. Antão de Noronha was glad to receive this offer, since there were a number of distinguished soldiers and noblemen amongst the Portuguese in Ottoman hands. He now sent a present to Mehmed Beg.

However, Mehmed Beg from Katif, who has been mentioned above as stubborn foe of the Portuguese, was still urging the Ottoman commander in Bahrain not to reach an agreement with the Portuguese, but to await the arrival of reinforcements from Basra. Mir Sultan Ali, who understood how much Mehmed of Katif hated the Portuguese, advised him to go to the Bahrain and take council with D. Antão, promising that he himself, i.e., Mir Sultan Ali, would send letters to D. Antão de Noronha and the Ottoman commander.

Mehmed Beg, having received letters from Mir Sultan Ali, set out for Bahrain with a number of *terranquins*. With him there went also, in secret, a trusted confidant of Mir Sultan Ali, who had other letters for D. Antão - letters in which it was affirmed that Mehmed Beg of Katif was the greatest foe that the Portuguese had and that the real reason for the ill-success, thus far, of the peace negotiations. D. Antão received Mehmed Beg of Katif well and allowed him to visit the Ottoman commander, Mehmed Beg. Returning to D. Antão, Mehmed Beg of Katif declared that he would have to go back to Katif for further talks with Mir Sultan Ali. He embarked therefore in a

light *terranquim*. There went with him Aleixo Carvalho and two other Portuguese, named Manoel Coelho, later to be *alcaide* in Goa, and Sagramor Goncalves, a native of the Algarve, both men being well instructed as to their course of action.

Once the *terranquim* had sailed about half a league from Bahrain, Carvalho and his two Portuguese attacked Mehmed Beg of Katif. The small *terranquim* overturned, the men on board fell into the shallow water and there Mehmed Beg was done to death. Carvalho and the other two Portuguese returned now to Bahrain<sup>47</sup>. News of this event reached the Ottomans - perhaps through one of the crew from the *terranquim* - and their anger was such that it seemed as though the moves towards peace would come once more to nothing. The east winds, however, had begun to blow, and fever was rife, causing numerous deaths amongst the Portuguese and also amongst the Ottomans. Under these circumstances there was little recourse left to the combatants save to make peace at last. The terms of agreement were now concluded in some haste. To the Portuguese the Ottomans surrendered their arms and gave a payment of 12,000 *cruzados*<sup>48</sup>. The Portuguese, on their side, undertook to transport the Ottoman troops back to the mainland. The *guazil* of Hormuz, Nur al-Din, together with Gil de Goes de Lacerda and Inofre do Soveral, arranged for the evacuation of the Ottoman forces - which was in fact carried out in the *terranquims* of the *guazil*. The Ottomans now went to Katif<sup>49</sup> while the Portuguese withdrew to Hormuz.

After this event the Ottoman interest in Bahrain did not cease. In 1570s orders sent from İstanbul to the *beylerbeys* of Baghdad, Basra and Lahsa provinces reveal that there were initial preparations for a more aggressive policy towards the Gulf. These preparations

47 Ibid., Cap. XI, pp. 150-51.

48 *Cruzado*, i.e., a Portuguese coin worth 400 *reis*. The Ottoman source refers at this point to «10 yük paşa akçesi» (cf. Orhonlu, Bahreyn Seferi, p. 16.

49 According to the Ottoman document (Orhonlu, pp. 9 and 16) the Ottomans crossed over from Bahrain to Katif on 5 Safer 967/ 6 November 1559. Couto states (p. 152) that the Ottomans who survived the hardship and sickness encountered in the campaign did not number more than 200.

came eventually to nothing<sup>50</sup>. The Portuguese Empire in the East, on the other side, was declining : The Portuguese lost Hormuz in 1620, their superiority over the trade routes through the Gulf came to an end<sup>51</sup>.

50 See Özbaran, «The Ottoman Turks and the Portuguese...», p. 69.

51 Cf. N. Steensgaard, *Carracks, Caravans and Companies: The Structural Crisis in the European-Asian Trade in the Early 17th Century*, 1973, pp. 154ff.