The travel of ideas in the age of steam and print: The Ottoman Caliphate versus Wahhabism and Mahdism
Koçyiğit, Ö.

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Cover Page

Propositions

Ömer Koçyiğit

1. In the nineteenth century, which witnessed major changes in the world as a result of the revolution in communications and transportation, the Ottoman Empire was able to establish and maintain relations with distant lands to an extent greater than ever before, despite the geographical shrinkage of the empire as it lost one territory after another.

2. The travel of ideas, as in the case of those related to the Caliphate, Wahhabism, and Mahdism, accelerated greatly through the efficient use of steamships, railways, the printing press and the telegraph by their proponents, and this shift in opportunities brought about a worldwide challenge to concepts that had been in existence for centuries in local areas.

3. Technological advances in steam and print, which had fascinated many Ottoman *ulema* and administrators, left their mark on late Ottoman history; however, those sea changes were overshadowed by further developments and also ignored by researchers in the following century.

4. The rapid connections made possible in the age of steam and print dramatically shortened the distance between the centre and periphery and bound them together in the Ottoman state. As a consequence, the centre was able to directly intervene in affairs in the periphery, and that was reflected in its ideological and political reactions to events such as the movements that were based in Najd and the Sudan.

5. The Ottoman state's experience of modernization has largely been analysed in terms of its relationship with Western powers, yet it deserves greater attention vis-à-vis the internal dynamics of the Empire and interactions with areas aside from "the West."

6. The methods employed in global history can ensure that studies about Ottoman intellectual history do not get stuck in certain contemporary approaches that are hedged in by perspectives embedded in notions of the nation-state.

7. In contrast to approaches that split Turkish-centric and Arab-centric intellectual history in Ottoman/Islamic studies, treating them as being intertwined is useful for bringing to light and understanding the scholarly networks that existed across the broad swathes of Ottoman territories.

8. The digitalization of databases has increased rapidly in recent years, making it possible to a certain extent for scholars to conduct research without having to go to archives and libraries. While this has brought about difficulties in terms of maintaining a focus on the main research question and getting bogged down in an overabundance of sources, it has nonetheless been a great boon in various disciplines and it will increase productivity in future studies.

9. In contrast to the general perception that an increase in means of making connections would lead to greater unity, the experience of globalization has shown that people all around the world still have a tendency to cling to polarized, factional, and sectarian stances towards issues.

10. The passenger wagons on the Hejaz Railway, the only remaining line of which runs along the "international" Damascus-Amman route, should have been one of the locales of writing for this study.