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Die Anfänge der Presse im Nahen Osten



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The Beginnings of the Press in Iraq: *Zevrā*

Christoph Herzog (Heidelberg)

The founding of the first printed newspaper in Iraq is generally considered to be among the accomplishments of the legendary reformer and father of the Ottoman constitution of 1876, Midhat Pasha, who served as governor of the province of Baghdad (*Bağdad vilayeti*) from 1869 to 1871.¹ Printing in Iraq did in fact begin earlier than Midhat's introduction of the first newspaper in 1869. It is even claimed that the last Circassian Mamluk Pasha, Davud, who governed from 1816 to 1831, had established an official newspaper with the title *Jurnāl al-ʿIrāq* as early as in 1816. The name of this alleged newspaper somehow resembles the Egyptian *Jurnāl al-Ḥidīw*, but the existence of such a Baghdadian *Jurnāl* is more than doubtful.² There is, however, evidence that Daud Pasha in 1830/31 ordered the Baghdadian chronicle *Dawḥat al-wuzarāʾ* written by Rasūl Ḥawī to be printed.³ The technique used was the planographical method of lithography, which was invented in 1796/98 by Alois Senefelder (1771–1834).

After the end of Mamluk rule in Baghdad it was only in 1856 that printing was (re-)established in Iraq. In that year two lithographic presses are reported to have been set up: One in Kerbela by a Persian Shiite named Mīrzā ʿAbbās and the other one by the Dominican missionaries in Mosul. In 1860 the latter imported a typographic press provided with Arabic, Syriac and French types from France while Mīrzā ʿAbbās opened a second lithographic press in Baghdad in 1861.⁴ About one year later Baruch Moshe Mizrahi introduced the first Hebrew printing press in Iraq. He also appears to have published the first periodical in Iraq, named *Ha-Dover* or *Dover Mesharim*, of which seventeen issues appeared between 1862/63 and 1867/68.⁵ It resumed briefly in the beginning of 1870 but obviously encountered bureaucratic obstacles from the side of the Ottoman administration. According to the official provincial newspaper, *Dover Mesharim* began publication before the authorities in Istanbul had approved the formal request made to them; consequently, the local administration was forced to suspend it.⁶ In 1865/66 the first typographic press with Hebrew letters was set up

1. For him cf. *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition* [Eī²], Leiden 1960ff., vol. VI, "Midhat Pasha" (R. H. Davison), pp. 1031–1035.
2. Cf. Munīr Bakr at-Tikrītī, *Aṣ-Ṣihāfa al-ʿirāqīya wa-t-tiğāhatuhā s-siyāsiya wa-l-īğtimāʿīya wa-t-taqāfiya min 1869 ilā 1921m*, Baghdad 1969, pp. 52–53 and Michael W. Albin, "Iraq's First Printed Book", *Libri* 31 (Copenhagen 1981), pp. 168–169.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 169ff.
4. Abdul Wahhab Abbas Al-Qaysi, *The Impact of Modernization on Iraqi Society During the Ottoman Era: A Study of Intellectual Development in Iraq, 1869–1917* (unpubl. PhD thesis, Univ. of Michigan 1958), pp. 108–109 and Albin, "Iraq's First Printed Book," pp. 171–172.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 173.
6. Cf. *Zevrā* 33 (30 Şevval 1286), p. 65 and *ibid.* 34 (7 Zilkade 1286), p. 67.

in Baghdad by Rahamin Ruben Mordecai and his partners Moshe and Aaron ben Yesh'ah Fetaya.⁷

The provincial laws of 1864 and 1867 provided a comparatively detailed framework for the administrative restructuring of the Empire's provinces.⁸ Among the regulations provided by these laws was the obligatory introduction of a printing press for each province (henceforth officially called "vilayet") and the establishment of an official newspaper, the *vilayet gazetesi*.⁹ After his successful experience as *vali* of the newly created prototype Danube *vilayet* (*Tuna vilayeti*) in the Balkans, Midhat Pasha was made governor of the province of Baghdad in 1869 and remained in that function until 1871. He relied on some energetic young collaborators, among them the later famous painter Osman Hamdi Bey (1842–1910)¹⁰ and the polymath Ahmed Midhat Efendi (1844–1913)¹¹, who was later appointed director of the newly established printing office. Midhat Pasha obviously considered printing a priority: Among the first things he did was to import a printing press from France and put it to work.¹²

The first issue of the new official newspaper of the province of Baghdad appeared on Tuesday, June 6, 1869. The new *vilayet gazetesi* was given the somewhat obscure epithet of the city of Baghdad, *Zawrâ*, pronounced *Zevrâ* in Ottoman Turkish, meaning 'the Crooked'. *Zevrâ* first appeared as a weekly every Tuesday but starting with issue no. 51 of June 14, 1870 became a biweekly, appearing Tuesdays and Saturdays. Some years later it seems to have continued again as a weekly. *Zevrâ* existed until the British occupation of Baghdad in 1917.¹³ While *Dover Mesharim* had addressed only a minority of the population, *Zevrâ* – as the official organ of the Ottoman provincial administration – was intended to reach all Ottoman subjects of the *vilayet*. As most other official provincial newspapers issued in non-Turkish speaking areas of the Ottoman empire it was bilingual, the first part in Ottoman Turkish and the other in the local vernacular.¹⁴ In the case of *Zevrâ* the second language was Arabic. Each part comprised two pages measuring 2°. The subtitle of its header ran: "This news-

7. Albin, "Iraq's First Printed Book", p. 173.

8. Cf. Roderic Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856–1876*, Princeton 1963, pp. 146ff.

9. For general information on the official provincial newspapers cf. Uğur Kocabaşoğlu and Ali Birinci, "Osmanlı Vilâyet Gazete ve Matbaaları Üzerine Gözlemler," *Kebikeç* 2.1 (1995), pp. 101–121 and Michael Ursinus, "Şan'âr. Eine amtliche osmanische Provinzzeitung im Jemen," *Welt des Islams* 29 (1989), pp. 101–124, esp. pp. 103–110.

10. For his biography cf. Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi*, Istanbul 1971.

11. For concise information on him cf. *EF*, vol. I, "Ahmad Midhat" (B. Lewis), pp. 289–290 and *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Istanbul 1988ff, "Ahmed Midhat Efendi" (M. Orhan Okay), pp. 100–103.

12. Tikritî, *Aş-Şihâfa al-irâqîya*, p. 47 and 77. He also set up a lithographic press, which was reserved for the use of the 6th army which had its headquarters in Baghdad. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

13. Zâhida İbrâhîm, *Kaşşâf al-mağallat wa-l-ğarâ'id al-irâqîya 1869–1978*, 2nd ed. Baghdad 1982, p. 123. Hasan Duman, *Istanbul Kütüphaneleri Arap Harfli Süreli Yayınlar Toplu Kataloğu 1828–1928*, Istanbul 1986, p. 472, no. 1786 lists *Zevrâ* only up to 1323.

14. Cf. the list in Kocabaşoğlu/Birinci, "Gözlemler", pp. 10–12.

paper comprises domestic and foreign news as well as all sorts of information. It is issued once a week on Tuesdays. Its subscription costs 70 *kuruş* for one year, and 40 *kuruş* for six months. One single issue is 60 *para*. For places outside the *vilayet* fees of postage will be added. If it is desired to subscribe for one year or for six months, application to the printing office in the center of the *vilayet* is requested.”¹⁵ This kind of “bulk discount” for customers who subscribed for one year was a common practice at that time. The most important private newspaper of Istanbul, *Basiret*, which started at the beginning of 1870, for example, cost 130 *kuruş* per year, 70 per six months and 40 per three months. Postage was calculated at 50 *kuruş*. But as it came out five times a week it can be regarded as cheaper than *Zevrâ*. Up to 1868 the official newspaper of the central Ottoman government, *Takvim-i vekayi* had been – partly at least – financed by forcing officials to subscribe it and by subtracting the price for subscription from their salaries. In 1868 this practice was abolished.¹⁶ However, this method was still practised on the level of the provincial officials and the *vilayet gazeteleri* – at least for some time and in some provinces.¹⁷ In any case this was not the way to attract a broader reading public in the provinces. However, appointing Ahmed Midhat Efendi as editor of *Zevrâ* was a good idea to make this provincial paper more attractive. He had been editor of the official newspaper of the *Tuna vilayeti* before and this paper was a great success. It had started as a weekly with a circulation of a few hundred and had rapidly become a biweekly with a circulation of 1500. Some issues even had to be reprinted.¹⁸ Yet, Ahmed Midhat later claimed that it took him only three hours to write a complete edition of *Tuna*.¹⁹ However, Ahmed Midhat’s Arabic was apparently rather poor.²⁰ He had to rely on a translator for the Arabic part. It is quite probable that this job was done by the Persian friend of Ahmed Midhat, Can Muattar (Moḥammad Bâqer Bawanatî).²¹ In any case, the Arabic part of *Zevrâ* was a far cry from being

15. “İşbu gazete-i dahiliyye ve hariciyye havadisî ve her türlü mebhâhisi şamil olarak hafta da bir defa Salı günleri çıkar. Bir seneliği 70 ve altı aylığı 40 Kuruş’a ve beher nüshası 60 Para’yadır. Dahil vilayetden maada mahaller için posta ücreti zam olunur. Seneliği veya hud altı aylığı almak için yazılmak istenildiği halde merkez-i vilayet matbaasına müracaat olunmak lâzım gelir.” In the Arabic version this was translated as (I give here the first part only): “Hâdîhi l-ğazata ây al-ğarîda tuḥba’u fi l-usbū’i marratan yawma ḫ-talâtan wa-hiya ḫâwiya li-kulli naw’in min al-aḫbâr wa-l-ḫawâdîḫ ad-dâhiliyya wa-l-ḫâriğiyya.”

16. Nesimi Yazıcı, *Takvim-i Vekayi “Belgeler”*, Ankara 1983, pp. 49–0.

17. Cf. Ursinus, “Şan’â”, p. 105. The fact that in 1909 the introduction of forced *vilayet gazetesi* subscription for provincial officials above a certain level of income was considered indicates that this practice must have been abolished in the mean time. Kocabaşoğlu/Birinci, “Gözlemler”, pp. 108 and 110ff.

18. Ursinus, “Şan’â”, p. 105.

19. Ahmed Midhat, *Menfa*, ed. İsmail Cüneyt Kut, Istanbul 1988. [orig. Istanbul 1293], p. 31.

20. So that he preferred to communicate in Persian when offered the choice between Arabic and this language. Ahmed Midhat, *Menfa*, p. 35.

21. Ibid. p. 37: “Kendisi [i.e. Can Muattar] Fârisîde, Arabîde, İbranîde, Hindcede, İngilizcede yektâ olduğu için mütercim ve musahhih sıfatıyla böyle bir adama muhtacdık.” For this job he received 400 *kuruş*. For Can Muattar in this context cf. Johann Strauss, “Nineteenth Century Ottoman and Iranian Encounters: Ahmed Midhat Efendi and Ebrahim Jan Mo’attar (Mohammad Baqer Bawanatî)”, in Werner Ende and Rainer Brunner (eds.), *The*

translated masterly. It was full of grammatical and stylistic flaws and sometimes rather *‘amma* than *fuṣṣā*.²² While this may not have contributed to the prestige of the newspaper in the eyes of the educated Arabic speaking elite of Baghdad it may well have made it easier for the less educated people to understand it.

The first issue of *Zevrâ* contained an introduction (*mukaddime*) on the use and the necessity of newspapers for human knowledge, the text of the imperial edict (*firman-i âli*) of Midhat’s instalment as *vali* of Baghdad as well as a lengthy commentary on the *firman*. The *mukaddime* elegantly introduced the educational goals of *Zevrâ* to its readers. Ahmed Midhat stated that the faculty of speech, although a natural human faculty, was not innate and ready for use, but had to be trained and developed. This, he wrote, was called ‘experience’ (*tecrûbe*). If ‘experience’ was used wisely then progress could be made. By making good use of ‘experience’, people in Europe had invented the steamboat and the railroad, the electric telegraph and hot-air balloons etc., which the other peoples of the world, in various degrees, had failed to do. Then the author made his point: Newspapers, he declared, served to broaden the scope of human experience, which otherwise was limited to man’s personal world and did not enable him to learn of distant things beyond his horizon.²³

Other *vilayet gazeteleri* were even more explicit about the connection between civilisation and newspapers and stressed that the people of the *vilayets* were in urgent need of official provincial newspapers. Thus, one reads in the Bursa-based *Hüdavendigâr Gazetesi* of February 24, 1869: “[...] all the inhabitants of this *vilayet* must be grateful that this newspaper has been started, because without a newspaper people cannot understand their real needs and they cannot be told [what these needs are]. [...] Moreover, people without newspapers do not get information of the progress made in science, industry, trade and the profit gained thereof.”²⁴

However, *Zevrâ*’s attempts to attract readers did not restrict themselves to argumentation. An official announcement (*ilan-i resmi*) published in the fifth issue declared that significant governmental regulations would thenceforth only appear in the official newspaper. Any infringements of the laws and regulations made known to the public (*umumun malumu olmuş*) in that way, the announcement continues, were not to be pardoned by the excuse of not having knowledge of the contents of the newspaper.²⁵ This official announcement – that laws and regulations were to be put into force by their publication in the governmental paper – made it impossible for the indigenous population to ignore *Zevrâ*, at least in theory. Thus *Zevrâ* became the direct voice of Ottoman power.

Twelver Shia in Modern Times. History, Culture, and Institutions, Leiden 2001, S. 97–113.

22. Cf. examples given by Tikrîfî, *Aş-Şihâfa al-‘irâqîya*, p. 289.

23. *Zevrâ* 1 (5 Rebiülevvel 1286), p. 1.

24. Quoted in Kocabaşoğlu/Birinci, “Gözlemler”, p. 106.

25. *Zevrâ* 5 (3 Rebiülsani 1286), p. 9.

During its first years²⁶ *Zevrâ* structured its information in only three categories: “Special issues” (*mevadd-i hususiye*), “General issues” (*mevadd-i umumiye*) and “Foreign events” (*havadis-i hariciye*).²⁷ From time to time there was an “Announcement” (*ilan*). In principle the “Special issues” dealt with matters concerning the Province of Baghdad, the “General issues” were concerned with Istanbul, with the Ottoman empire in general or with one of the other provinces, while “Havadis-i hariciye” covered the rest of the globe. The distribution of topics of the seventh issue of 17 Rebiülahir 1286 (July 27, 1869) may serve as an example:

Under the heading “*mevadd-i hususiye*”:

- news on the ongoing military operation against the Kurdish Hamawand tribe based on a telegram from Haneqin.
- a report on the deposits of ore and especially copper in Iraq and particularly the Imadiye district.
- news that a section of the ‘Anaza Bedouins had robbed 150 camels from the Şammar.
- a note that some Ottoman marine soldiers from Istanbul and the Black sea area who had completed their military service in Basra had been funded in order to meet their travel expenses back home.
- an announcement that six graduates from the military academy of Istanbul were sent to serve in the Sixth Army (which was headquartered in Baghdad).
- a note that the request for retirement for reasons of bad health by a certain Kâmil Agha, an officer in the Sixth Army, had been granted.

Under the heading “*mevadd-i umumiye*”:

- a report on a military operation in the neighbouring province of Syria against a section of the ‘Anaza tribe.
- a note that “newspapers in Istanbul” had announced that a branch of the vocational school (*mekteb-i sanayii*) would be opened there in the buildings that had served formerly as military barracks.
- a report on the building of roads and bridges in the *Tuna vilayeti*.

Under the heading “*havadis-i hariciyye*”:

- a report taken from an Indian newspaper concerning the move of ‘Abdarrahmân A‘zam²⁸ to Iran after he had challenged without success the rule of the Afghan Amîr Šîr ‘Alî.
- a report on quarrels between Iranian governors in the provinces Luristan and Arabistan.

26. The latest issue of *Zevrâ* I was able to consult was no. 250 of May 28, 1872.

27. The Arabic terms used were the same: “*mawâdd huşûşîya*”, “*mawâdd ‘umûmîya*” and “*hawâdîţ ħâriġîya*”.

28. For him cf. *ET*, vol. I, “‘Abd al-Rahmân Khân” (C. Collin Davies), pp. 87–88.

- a three line note that, according to sources from Tehran, Moḥsen Ḥān was appointed Iranian ambassador in London.
- news on the number of casualties the present cholera epidemic in Iran had taken in Tehran.

Borrowing and/or quoting (*iktibas*) from other newspapers was a widespread practice at the time. Thus, *Zevrâ* frequently borrowed from various newspapers in Istanbul, Europe and India. Similarly, *Zevrâ* also served as a source for other newspapers.²⁹ Moreover, *Zevrâ* heavily relied on the telegraph as a transmitter of information. For example, in the seventh issue mentioned above, the articles on the military operation against the Hamawand and the news from India concerning Afghanistan were explicitly declared as based on messages received via telegraph.

Under the governorship of Midhat Pasha, *Zevrâ* not only provided news and published government regulations, but also made considerable efforts to justify the measures of Ottoman administration in Mesopotamia.³⁰ These efforts were primarily made through essays addressing topics of current Ottoman debates. Thus, two key words of the 19th century Ottoman reform discourse, progress and decline, are worked out and localized in an article headlined “The Causes of decline and the means of progress of Iraq” (*Irak’ın esbab-i tedennisi ve vesail-i terakkisi*)³¹. In order to understand the reasons for the decline of Iraq and to find the means of its progress, it is necessary to turn to history and geography, wrote Ahmed Midhat. He emphasized that decline in Iraq was not caused by laziness or lack of intelligence of its inhabitants. On the contrary, he maintained, Iraq once was the cradle of culture, art and science. He put the blame for the miserable state of 19th century Iraq on invaders like Hulagu and Timur, whom he accused of having completely ruined the country’s agricultural and industrial infrastructure. Ahmed Midhat then asked why the people of Iraq had failed to rebuild their country and to restore its former prosperity. The answer he gave was somewhat elusive. On the one hand, he argued that Iraq was ruined to such a degree that it was no longer possible for its inhabitants to rebuild it by their own means. On the other hand, he hinted that because of the geographical remoteness of the country, the Iraqis didn’t notice the development and the progress made elsewhere in the world, especially in Europe. That Iraq didn’t prosper even after

29. Examples of *iktibas* from *Zevrâ* may be found in the provincial newspaper of Bosnia, *Bosna* 182 (2 Ramazan 1286), the article “İhtiyac”; in *Basiret* 4 (24 Şevval 1286), “*Zevrâ* gazetesinden hulasadır”, p. 3; or in *Şark* 369 (22. Muharram 1292), the article “Ahval-i irakiyye”, p. 2.

30. Thus the use of *Zevrâ* as a source for Midhat’s achievements is proposed by Yaşar Yücel, “Midhat Paşa’nın Bağdat Vilâyetindeki Alt Yapı Yatırımları,” *Uluslararası Midhat Paşa Semineri. Bildiriler ve Tartışmalar*. Edirne, 8–10 Mayıs 1984, pp. 175–183.

31. *Zevrâ* 3 (Salı 19 Rebiülevvel 1287), p. 5f. An other interesting aspect of the decline-concept in: Michael Ursinus, “Midhat Efendi und der Alte Orient,” Michael Ursinus, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches und ihre Interpretation*, Istanbul 1994, pp. 157–164.

the Ottoman conquest in the 16th century is given special attention: Ahmed Midhat states that Ottoman Iraq, after having suffered so many invasions during pre-Ottoman times, finally enjoyed inward peace and security (*asayış ve emniyet*) and the shelter of Ottoman justice (*saye-i adl-i osmaniyye*). But he admits that the Ottoman state was perhaps too busy to actively pursue the rebuilding of Iraq because of its vastness and the hardships of political circumstances. Ahmed Midhat stresses that this relative negligence of the Ottoman state had changed: Nowadays it was the primary goal of the exalted padishah to grant prosperity, wealth and peace to all his subjects. The reforms of the army and the new provincial laws were designed especially for this particular goal.

Ahmed Midhat then speaks of the necessity of reforming the Iraqi farming system. He claims that in the case of Iraq, agriculture was of more importance than trade and industry. In Iraq there was enough fertile land and people to cultivate it and to increase the productivity of husbandry. He finds the reason for agricultural underdevelopment in the fact that people did not own the land they were cultivating, and in extremely high taxation. The local government, he hints, would soon put an end to both of these social evils.

It is interesting to note that both of the causes Ahmed Midhat Efendi gives to explain agricultural underdevelopment are not substantiated historically. Here, the author of the article simply propagates the program of modernization and development the Midhat Pasha administration was about to set up at that time. This program included the implementation in Iraq of the so-called *tapu*-system of land registration as well as tax relief for newly settled cultivators. An important point in his discussion of Iraqi agriculture is the question of agricultural exports. Here, Ahmed Midhat sees the key to prosperity (*mamuriyet*). He discusses two possible routes for the export of agricultural goods: The port of Basra and the Euphrates route. Despite the technical difficulties the Euphrates route posed for transportation, it was to be preferred to the Basra route, because the former was closer to the Mediterranean shores. Moreover he expected a developing effect not only on the regions of lower Iraq (as was the case with the Basra route) but on the presently desolated lands on both sides of the Euphrates. A significantly greater number of Iraqi inhabitants, he says, would benefit from the Euphrates route than from the route via the Şaṭṭ al-‘Arab and Basra. In future, he discloses, there might be a railway connecting Baghdad to the Mediterranean sea. In the meantime the Euphrates connection was to be ensured by steamboats.

The Ottoman administration of Mesopotamia is associated in the article with attributes such as justice (*adl*), progress (*terakki*), safety (*emniyet*), public order (*asayış*), and prosperity (*mamuriyet*). These notions are the keywords of a political and ideological conceptual framework that may be taken as guideline for a critical reading of *Zevrâ*. Within this framework, particular emphasis is laid on the commitment of the government to the prosperity of the province. It is tempting to establish a parallel to the increased consideration for economic issues in governmental public relations of the early 18th century absolutist state in

Europe. The policies there were not only a result of Mercantilist considerations but also expressed the feeling of the absolute monarch that somehow he was responsible for the welfare of his lands. In other words, the traditional monarchic legitimacy had to be complemented by rational utilitarian considerations of patrimonial benevolence.³²

It is difficult to estimate the degree of interest that local readers in Baghdad might have taken in *Zevrâ*. That it attracted at least a certain attention at all may be – albeit cautiously – inferred from the fact that from the very beginning there were several, and sometimes critical letters to the editor printed or referred to in *Zevrâ*.³³ The very fact that there were letters to the editor at all – if we don't dismiss them as fabricated – suggest that at least some people in Baghdad were already aware (most probably from examples of imported newspapers), of what might be called techniques of public opinion in printed mass media. In this context it should be considered that since the reorganisation in 1840 of the Ottoman Postal system that made sending private newspapers to subscribers possible, *Zevrâ* was by no means the only periodical in Arabic available in Baghdad. It seems that at first *al-Ğawâ'ib*, founded in 1861 by Aḥmad Fâris aš-Šidyâq in Istanbul, was the most widespread of these.³⁴

However, it can be safely assumed that the spread of newspaper reading in the somewhat conservative atmosphere of Baghdad evolved rather slowly and not without certain reservations. Thus, when the first issues of *al-Muqtaṭaf* reached Baghdad in about 1876 it was only the younger generation who showed interest, while some 'ulamâ' strictly opposed some of its content, e.g. an article on Darwin and the theory of evolution.³⁵ According to a report by the French consul in Baghdad, Rouet, in 1900 there was still no other paper than *Zevrâ* printed in Baghdad. It was then edited by a young 'âlim named Fehmî Efendi and did not engage in religious and political issues so that people interested in such questions had to rely on periodicals printed elsewhere. Rouet lists in particular: *İkdam*, *Servet-i Fünun*, *Sabah* (all published in Istanbul), *Muqtaṭaf*, *al-Ağyâl* and *al-Ahrâm* from Cairo, *Aḥwâl*, *al-Bašîr* and *Lisân al-Ḥal* from Beirut. Iranian Shiites living in Baghdad, said Rouet, preferred Persian papers such as *Ḥabl ul-Matîn* that was printed in Calcutta.³⁶

In the long run, *Zevrâ* seems to have lost much of the original vigour given to it by Ahmed Midhat. In fact, in 1911 the philologist, Father Anastâs Mary Kirmili

32. Cf. Andreas Gestrich, *Absolutismus und Öffentlichkeit. Politische Kommunikation in Deutschland zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Göttingen 1994, pp. 49 and 214. I thank Ulrike Freitag (London) for having drawn my attention to that book.

33. An example is a reference to a letter allegedly sent by the Muhtar of the Cedid Hasan Paşa Mahallesi, as-Sayyid 'Abdalquddûs, *Zevrâ* 4 (26 Rebiülevvel 1286), p. 7–8.

34. Cf. Tikrîti, *Aṣ-Şihâfa al-'irâqîya*, p. 54 and 'Alî al-Wardî, *Lamahât iğtimâ'îya min târiḥ al-'Irâq al-ḥadîṯ*, vol. 3, Baghdad 1969ff, p. 8ff.

35. Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798–1939*, Cambridge 1983, p. 247.

36. Ministère des affaires étrangères, Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes, Correspondance du consulat de France à Bagdad, Série A, 32, no. 1: Rouet to foreign minister, 22. January 1900.

made the following comment on *Zevrâ*: "...As far as the contents are concerned it deserves no mention. Oh grief to the province of Baghdad that its official newspaper is of such low quality!"³⁷ But by that time the printing of private journals and newspapers in Baghdad had already begun.³⁸

37. Quoted in Tikritî, *Aṣ-Ṣihāfa al-ʿirāqīya*, p. 289.

38. A bibliography for the history of the Iraqi press in: Werner Ende, "Bibliographie zur Geschichte der Presse im Irak", *Orient* 15 (Opladen 1974), no. 2, pp. 84–86. A later publication on the Iraqi press is ʿAdnān ʿAbdalmunʿim Abū s-Saʿd, *Tatawwur al-ḥabar wa-asālib taḥrīrihi fī ṣ-ṣahāfa al-ʿirāqīya mundu naṣʾatihā ḥattā sana 1917*, Baghdad 1983.

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