Conversation in the Library

VOLUME I

Conversation in the Library

Συζητωντας στη Βιβλιοθηκη

Kütüphanede Muhabbet



VOLUME I

HAFIZ AHMED AĞA & AHMED FETHI PAŞA FOUNDATION
ISTANBUL - RHODES

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1st Edition
2025

ISBN 978-625-96330-1-5 (Volume I)
ISBN 978-625-96330-2-2 (Volume II)
ISBN 978-625-96330-0-8 (Set)

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E D I T E D
DESIGNED
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TEREBINTHOS
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Dedication

Şemsinur

was born to an Orthodox Christian family in Chios
before the Greek War of Independence.
She died in Istanbul as a Muslim on July 4th, 1881.
Şemsinur, "sunlight", was the name given to her by Sâliha Hanım,
the wife of Hafız Ahmed Agha. Şemsinur married
Sâliha Hanım's son Ahmed Fethi Pasha.

VOLUME I

is dedicated to the memory of

Şemsinur Hanım

and to the memories of

Ayşe Hatun, the mother of Hafız Ahmed Agha,

Sâliha Hanım

Şemsinur Hanım's daughters Güzîde Hanım and Sâliha Yegâne Hanım,

Güzide Hanım's daughter Sâide Argeşo,

Sâide Hanım's daughter Sâmiha Atay,

Sâmiha Atay's daughter and Şemsinur Hanım's
great great granddaughter

Leylâ Tüten

300 years of Women's Empowerment

Acknowledgements - Ευχαριστίες - Teşekkürler

Abdulhamit Kırmızı
Alexis Alexandris
Alexis Politis
Alexis Rappas
Ali Tüten
Anastasia Tsapanidou & Μισιρλού
Ancient Syriac Virgin Mary Church of Diyarbekir
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Gülsüm Gülsev Şanver
Gülten Kayalı & Mitso & Bianca
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Hasan Can Velibeyoğlu
Hasan Karaali
Hatice Aynur
İbrahim Akkurt
İlay Romain Örs
Ioanna Asmenidou-Foka
Ioannis Georgikopoulos
Ioannis Papageorgiou
Irina Wandrey
İrvin Cemil Schick
İsmail Erünsal
Janina Karolewski
Jewish Museum of Rhodes





Acknowledgements - Ευχαριστίες - Teşekkürler





John Bigelow Taylor
John Robert Barnes,
José Maksimczuk
Josh Houston
J.R. Osborn
Julia Klimi
Katerina Manoussou-Ntella
Konrad Hirschler
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RICHeS
Royal Collection Trust
Saad Alammar
Salih Vidimi
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Sami Arslan
Savvas Pavlidis
Sedanur Sert
Sefa Targıt
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Semra Muratoğlu
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Sophia Laiou
Stefanie Brinkmann
Stefanos Karaiskakis
Stella Nastou
Steve Martin
Takis Koumparos
The Walters Art Museum
Topkapı Palace Museum Library
Tuba Akbaytürk
Tûba Çavdar Karatepe
Tunç Şen
Turgut Tüten
Ünal Zenginobuz
Valerie McGuire
Vera Andriopoulou
Veruschka Wagner
Victor Gysembergh
Wesley Macheso
Yasemin Tanbay
YEK & Şifahane
Yeşim Ünal
Yianni Cartledge
Yusuf Kıbrıslı
Zeynep Erol Pehlivan

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Prologue

Rhodes Illibrated

In Celebration of the Revival of the Hafız Ahmed Library

as a Repository of Learning and a Site of Cross-Cultural Conversations



Cemal Kafadar is the Vehbi Koç Professor of Turkish Studies at Harvard University, where he has been a member of the Department of History since 1990. A leading historian of the early modern Ottoman Empire, Kafadar's scholarship illuminates the cultural, intellectual, and social dimensions of Ottoman and wider Islamic history. He earned his B.A. from Hamilton College and his M.A. and Ph.D. from McGill University, and he previously served on the faculty at Princeton University from 1985 to 1989.

Kafadar's influential scholarship challenges conventional periodizations and binaries in Ottoman historiography, particularly in relation to identity, sovereignty, and subjectivity. His seminal book *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* earned Dr. Kafadar the Turkish Studies Associations's M. Fuat Köprülü Award and offers a nuanced reinterpretation of the Empire's formative years, moving beyond nationalist and orientalist paradigms. *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library, 1502/3–1503/4*, co-edited with Gülru Necipoğlu and Cornell Fleischer published in two volumes by Brill, studies the contents of the Ottoman palace library during Sultan Bayezid II's reign. *Kendine Ait Bir Roma: Diyar-i Rum'da Kültürel Coğrafya ve Kimlik Üzerine*, published in Turkish (roughly translates as *A Rome of One's Own: On Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum*) explores the cultural geography and identity of the historical region known as *Diyar-i Rum*—an area corresponding to parts of Anatolia and Rumelia. Dr. Kafadar's research ranges widely, from manuscript culture and Sufi literature to urban life and the historiography of the Mediterranean.

In addition to his academic publications, Kafadar is known for his deep engagement with archival materials, especially Ottoman manuscripts, waqf documents, and marginalia. He has contributed significantly to the intellectual history of the early modern Islamic world and is recognized for his interdisciplinary approach, which draws from literature, philosophy, anthropology and material culture.

A gifted lecturer and public intellectual, Cemal Kafadar has played a central role in fostering critical Ottoman studies both in Turkey and internationally, and in fighting for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage in his hometown Istanbul. His work continues to inspire a new generation of scholars committed to exploring the complexities of Ottoman and Islamic pasts beyond rigid political or religious categorizations.

GÜLRU NECİPOĞLU is the Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Art and Director of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University. She earned her PhD in the History of Art and Architecture from Harvard University and holds a BA in Art History (Summa Cum Laude) from Wesleyan University.

A preeminent scholar in the field of Islamic art and architecture, Necipoğlu's research encompasses the medieval to early modern periods, with a particular emphasis on the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires. Her work synthesizes visual analysis with intellectual history, architectural theory, and the histories of science and aesthetics.

Necipoğlu's publications have had a transformative impact on the field. *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapi Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* is groundbreaking for its pioneering integration of architectural analysis with court ritual and imperial ideology, revealing how the palace's spatial design functioned as a deliberate instrument of Ottoman political power. Her monograph *The Topkapı Scroll: Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture* opened new perspectives on the role of mathematical thinking in design and earned her both The Spiro Kostof Book Award from the Society of Architectural Historians and The Albert Hourani Book Award from the Middle East Studies Association. *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* recontextualized the work of the celebrated Ottoman architect within broader cultural and political frameworks. She is also the co-editor of the influential volumes *Histories of Ornament* and *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/3–1503/4)*, reflecting her commitment to interdisciplinary approaches and cross-cultural transmission of knowledge.

Necipoğlu's scholarship is distinguished by its philological rigor, theoretical depth, and engagement with primary sources, including architectural drawings, archival documents, and manuscripts. Her work contributes not only to the study of Islamic visual culture but also to broader conversations about early modernity, transcultural exchange, and the aesthetics of knowledge. She is an elected member of the American Philosophical Society and American Academy of Arts and Sciences as well as the British Academy and the Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio.

Gülrü Necipoğlu continues to shape the field through her rigorous research and scholarship, and her sustained commitment to teaching and mentorship.



Cemal Kafadar and Gülru Necipoğlu
immersed in the luminous mastery of Maksûd et-Tabrîzî's sixteenth-century calligraphy.
Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, Rhodes, 2025.
Photo: T. Tuten

Rhodes Illibrated

In Celebration of the Revival of the Hafız Ahmed Library

as a Repository of Learning and a Site of Cross-Cultural Conversations

On another island in another big sea, recently, a verbal exchange between a celebrity lawyer and a vendor who refused to serve him for his repeated defense of celebrity perpetrators of sexual abuse, ended with a brilliant quip by the vendor's assistant: "this is not a cross-examination but a conversation."[1]

Important difference for historians to keep in mind. A conversation can be challenging, it can be about difficult subjects, it can be intensely tense, but it is certainly *not* a cross-examination. It is a sincere engagement with others, including cultivated empathy and even readiness for submission to their view. Commiserating may well be, and often is, the substance to the degree there is one. Conversationists might be moved between joking and poking, sharing pleasantries and good-natured mockery. It could simply be "of airs and waters" to cite wise Hippocrates whose formula has become an everyday expression in Turkish about going over mundane matters. Yet it is always edifying, gratifying, satisfying if conducted among people who want to converse. Conversation is an art.

National historiographies, to state the obvious, emerged under specific historical circumstances that did not encourage conversations and made sense for nation-building enterprises that had a prosecutory as well as a celebratory dimension. It is easy, and becoming increasingly kneejerk, to dismiss them as mere fabrications and to malign them as poisonous. For one thing, they were not created out of the blue but had some roots in the collective memories of different communities. When a youthful Osman Kavala, who has been made to suffer for all the productive conversations he nurtured among people barred from conversing with each other, visited Greece in the early 1990s as a member of the newly-established Greek-Turkish Businessmen's Friendship Association, he met Manos Hadjidakis (d.1994), the legendary composer we both admire, and started by explaining the purpose of his visit to Greece. It is hard to tell how sarcastic Hadjidakis was when he responded, "Why ruin an enmity that we worked on for so long?"

Moreover, it is worth recognizing that national historiographies accomplished a good deal by way of producing a huge and still growing body of research that needs to be taken seriously rather than being thrown out with the washwater. Yet they did not, notwithstanding some worthy exceptions, shake loose of the litigiousness they adopted, thought they had to adopt, from the get-go: we've been good, they've been bad. An often self-appointed mission to cross-examine the histories of "the other side," along with a naturalized sense that the sides of historical argumentation need to be shaped along national lines, implied that *their* histories were dubious, self-serving accounts and certainly needed rebuttal and correction much of the time.

The book that you are venturing to read is a tribute to the art of conversation. It celebrates and wishes to revive the spirit of the agora, the coffeehouse, the hammam, or the salon, in their inclusive incarnations. It also evokes the sense of conversation in its Arabo-Turkish rendering, namely *muhabbet*, with connotations of an affective bond between conversational partners, much stronger than implied in *schmoozing* but still open to differences of opinion. And given that it is

1 https://vineyardgazette.com/news/2025/08/06/after-dershowitz-dustup-islanders-line-pierogis

mostly about Turks and Greeks, it is also worth invoking the simple Turkish *kon-uş-mak*, deriving from conversations initiated by instances like two tribes setting up camp next to each other or two birds of the same species alighting close to one another and chirping away.

The substance of the conversation in our case, or the excuse for having one, is a library established and endowed in Rhodes in 1793 by Hafız Ahmed Agha (d.1800?), an Ottoman dignitary, born and raised on the island. Among other things to be noted below, it is a good example of the proliferation of free-standing libraries in the provinces after a century or so when Istanbul had already set the trend with several sultanic and vizirial endowments of such buildings as widely recognized tokens of both public service and personal prestige. Earlier Ottoman libraries were nested within other institutions, like a mosque or a madrasa, but starting with the Köprülü Library in 1678 things changed, as several pieces in this volume will illustrate.

Let us also note that the library in Rhodes was built and endowed at a time when, arguably, something like a reading revolution was taking place in different parts of the world, including the Ottoman empire. Our focus today on the nature of books, of reading, and of institutions and practices related to reading, is not independent of our own context. With growing awareness by the day, we realize that books and reading are not what they used to be. In even larger terms, the means of production and transmission of knowledge that used to be so heavily reliant on *books as physical objects in the form of bound volumes* and on *reading primarily as an ocular and silent practice* best learned and sustained in schools and libraries, are rapidly changing. The long eighteenth century likewise saw a big shift in attitudes toward reading, and free-standing libraries were particularly hospitable to this shift.

The "new" mode of reading revolved around the prioritization and cultivation of what was part of the reader's toolkit for centuries, known as *mutāla'a* in Arabic and other languages of Islamic learning, namely deep private reading by an individual in silence in an enclosed space if possible, as the best way to study and learn.[2] This may seem like the most obvious thing to readers of the last few generations (but probably not to those growing up after the digital revolution). Medieval pedagogical attitudes, however, considered it to be secondary to learning from the "mouths of men," namely teachers and masters, possibly in the company of others as students or listeners. It was only toward the very end of the seventeenth century and in the early eighteenth century that those norms seem to have shifted, as the first few treatises dedicated specifically to *mutāla'a* were composed and aimed to cultivate deep and analytical reading as the primary mode of learning.

The relationship between the Ottoman "reading revolution" and similar phenomena elsewhere in the world, or the ways it was experienced by different segments of society, are challenging matters yet to be explored, which make the library in Rhodes all the more enticing for deeper exploration.

What did Hafız Ahmed think of manuscripts versus, or along with, printed books which (in the Arabic script) became part of his world during his lifetime? What about musical notation versus *meşk*, namely learning through practice with a master? We may never have good answers to these questions, but we know that his near-contemporaries were reflecting on related matters. A certain Hamparsum Limondjian (1768-1839), for instance, Armenian composer and theorist of Ottoman classical music, and Abdulbaki Nasir Dede (1765-1820) of the Mevlevi order, were developing

2 On changing attitudes to reading, see Cemal Kafadar's "Green Reading: Books and the Outdoors in the Early Modern Ottoman World." *Muqarnas 40*, no. 1 (2023): 353–87. doi:10.1163/22118993_0040_011. The ground for this argument was paved by the work of Khaled el-Rouayheb cited there.

successful notational systems that embodied a new attitude toward transmission of musical learning. Their efforts are to be read, of course, as sequels to the theorizing and notational systems of Ali Ufkî (né Bobowski, 1610-1675) and Dimitri Cantemir (1673-1723), whose experiments took place, respectively, within a decade or two before and after the Köprülü library mentioned above.

The long eighteenth century, in other words, witnessed the gradual but unmistakable development of a profoundly new attitude toward production and transmission of knowledge. Free-standing libraries, musical notation, printed books, and a newly-found focus on an age-old mode of reading are highlights of the transformations that give us a sense of changing attitudes toward the written or rather, and more broadly, towards recorded knowledge in written format as *authoritative*. Such a defining calibration of emphasis and valorization from the oral and the communal to the written and the individual is clearly not only about ways of reading but also about the nature of authority in any given society.

Ultimately, if we consider the inevitably conflictual nature of power relations, be they at the level of family or school or guild or community or nation, the production and transmission of knowledge is hardly ever free of social tension and of political consequences. Local libraries, like the one in Rhodes, were interventions in the universe of learning and production of knowledge. They also had something to do with the rise of new localisms and of provincial notability, instantiated by increasing use and eventual institutionalization of the word *aʿyān* to denote local/provincial notables, or men of some distinction, loosely like the Greek word *árchontes*.

With his impressive commercial activities as well that echoed what his Greek compatriots were doing, Hafız Ahmed was a man of his times as well as *his places*, namely Istanbul and Rhodes above all. No matter what his enterprises and accomplishments in the capital city, his attachment to his birthplace obviously played a key role in his sense of self. Hafız Ahmed used the nisba "Rodosī," i.e., Rhodian, in his endowment deed and inscriptions, and even on his personal seal imprinted on each book to be seen by generations of users of the library who cannot but be aware that they are "here in Rhodes, in a library built by a Rhodian, and reading a book endowed by that Rhodian." His strong identification with his patria continued (and continues) for later generations of his heirs to forge affective bonds with the island and to be caring custodians, when circumstances allow, of the foundation with the library as its centerpiece.

*****

Notability, whether it had official recognition as one of the aʿyān or not, entailed patronage among other things. And patronage in the cultural sphere was acquiring some new dimensions at the turn of the nineteenth century. One after another, libraries were built and endowed in different towns by various dignitaries and notables: within a few years after the foundation of Hafız Ahmed Agha came, for instance, those of Yusuf Agha (Konya, 1794), Raşid Efendi (Kayseri, 1796), Zeynelzade Hacı Ali Efendi (Akhisar, 1798), Yusuf Ziya Paşa (Keban, 1797-98). Many others followed in the next two or three decades, including the relatively better-known ones by Vahid Paşa (Kütahya, 1811-12) and Necib Paşa (Tire, 1826-27).[3]

3 For these endowments and many others of those decades, see the magisterial work of İsmail Erünsal, *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri* (Ankara, 2008), pp.259-293.

Like any founder or builder, Hafız Ahmed must have been concerned with the quality of the 828 volumes that he endowed, namely a respectable but *modestly* respectable collection.[4] Who would want to be subject to the kind of critique that Cavafy, writing a century later, would place in the mouth of Apollonius of Tyana?

> Apollonius was talking about
> proper education and conduct with a young
> man who was building a luxurious
> house in Rhodes. "As for me" said the Tyanian
> at last, "when I enter a temple
> however small it may be, I very much prefer
> to see a statue of ivory and gold
> than a clay and vulgar one in a large temple".--

Likewise with books in a library, however modest it may be. There are indeed some gems among the books Hafız Ahmed Ağa endowed for readers in his cherished patria. Two of those stand out but let us start with some general observations about the collection.[5]

Certain aspects of the collection need to be underlined and deserve eventual comparison with others, especially contemporary ones, to be able to identify peculiarities. In terms of their dates of composition, the books in the collection--not considering the Qur'an, of course--range from the second century of the Islamic calendar to the era of the library's foundation a millennium later. Eighteenth-century authors like Ismail el-Konevi (d.1780, see entry #29 and #30) are represented next to Abu Bishr Sībawayh (d.180/796) or Muhammad bin Hasan al-Shaybani (d.189/805. The work of Ismail el-Konevi is a two-volume gloss on Baydawi's (d.685/1286) *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, namely an eighteenth-century study of a thirteenth-century exegesis which is also in the collection by itself (#91). In other words, many classics of the early Islamic as well as of the late medieval era, which mattered so much to the formation of Ottoman higher learning, are represented either on their own or through commentaries and glosses, continuously worked on into the times of the library's foundation. There are, however, clear signs of a focus on the sources closer in time, namely to authors of the sixteenth century and later.

A comparison to the1502/03 inventory of the Topkapı Palace library might be useful here.[6] One of the most glaring differences is the less-than-impressive presence, here in Rhodes in 1793, of the top three authors in the palace inventory: Ghazali (d.1111), Ibn Arabi (d.1240) and Rumi (d.1273). Instead, we have three new stars topping the charts: Suyuti (d.1505), Kemalpaşazade (d.1534), and Birgivi (d.1573).

Dated copies indicate a preponderance of copies made during the two and a half centuries before Hafız Ahmed's time (see TABLE). These must have been the most readily (and inexpensively?) available copies in the marketplace which obviously kept copyists busily reproducing works from all periods

4 At the time of its foundation in 1811-12, the comparable Kütahya Vahid Paşa Library was initiated with 217 volumes and grew rapidly with further donations by the pasha; ibid, 277. Necib Paşa's original endowment included 671 manuscripts; see Ali Ihsan Yıldırım, *Necip Paşa Kütüphanesi Yazma eserler Kataloğu* I (Tire, 2003), p11. Not in a provincial town but in Üsküdar, Hacı Selim Agha founded his library in 1782 with appr.1200 volumes; see Erünsal, "Hacı Selim Ağa Kütüphanesi," *TDVIA*, s.v.

5 For a full catalogue of the collection, see *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi Yazma Eserler Kataloğu*, eds. Bekir Şahin and Faruk Ağartan (Konya, 2010).

6 See Gülru Necipoğlu, Cemal Kafadar and Cornell H. Fleischer, eds., *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/3-1503/4)*, two vols., (Brill, 2019). doi:10.1163/9789004402508.

of Islamic learning and belles lettres. At least fifteen of the volumes were copied during the decade preceding the foundation. In other words, Hafız Ahmed was active in the book market until or quite close to the time of his decision to make the endowment.

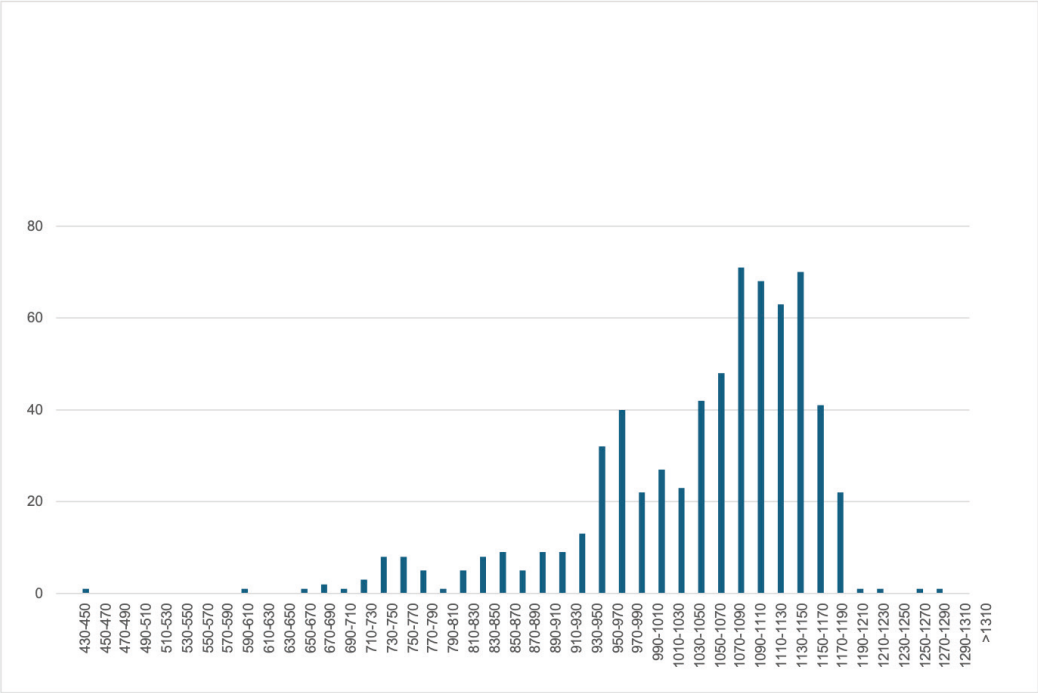


TABLE: Dated manuscripts in the original endowment collection (662 total)

The oldest dated manuscript (#862 of the catalogue) is from the year 607 A.H./1210-11 CE. It is a copy of a popular work on the seven types of Qur'an recitation by al-Mahdavi (d.1048). Hafız Ahmed was clearly not hunting for precious old or rare copies, or autographs, as such.[7]

Of all the volumes endowed by Hafız Ahmed, 177 consist of compilations (sing. *mecmūʿa*) of more than one work, with 1288 titles represented altogether. There are 649 titles in those 177 volumes of compilations, some of which include as many as twenty or more separate works which is not unusual, but this could happen for many different reasons. In this book collection, the overall characteristic of the mecmūʿas is that they are of the "scientific" type, be they in the religious or rational sciences. They include materials of relative homogeneity within a field of learning, or genre, unlike the "hodgepodge" or "helter-skelter" anthologies, with an orientation toward compiling verse and pleasantries and urban lore that characterized many other compilations in many other collections, particularly in the long seventeenth century.

7 The copy date of 438 A.H. is given in the catalogue for item #404, the *Risāla* of Kushayri (d.465 A.H.), which would have made it exceedingly rare but that is clearly the date of the composition of the work, which is given in the same manner in various other copies we were able to consult in the Yazmalar portal: https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/search/full?key=er-risaletu%27l-ku%C5%9Feyriyye&search_key_type=3&search_form_type=ALL_FIELDS

Books on fiqh (jurisprudence), especially considering them together with those classified under ʿuṣūl (methods) of jurisprudence and under ferā'iż (inheritance law), dominate the collection by a wide margin. Sufism, for instance, is not poorly represented at all but books under that classification are underwhelming next to the former. The reverse was the case in the Topkapı Palace library of Bayezid II.

There are several Ottoman histories, primarily some highly-regarded examples from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but there is also a copy of Ahmedi's (d.1412-13) Iskendernāme (#1182), which contains the oldest extant historical account of the House of Osman. A volume on the conquest of Rhodes, *Tevārīḫ-i feṯḥ-i Rodos*, (#1183) is most intriguing and certainly deserves closer attention.[8] There are also signs of an interest in histories of Egypt, which is not surprising given the location of the island on the main sea route connecting the northern Ottoman lands to Alexandria.

What the collection contains is best understood if considered also with respect what it does *not* contain. As indicated by the abovementioned characteristic of the compilations, the founder does not seem to have been interested in literary and adab works at the same level as in some other areas of learning. There are surprisingly few books of what is now considered "classical Ottoman poetry," especially lyrical poetry. Baki (d.1600), for instance, is represented not with his ghazals but only with his translation of a book on the theme of jihad (#697). Fuzuli is here only with his *Ḥadīḳatü's-süʿedā'* on the tragedy of Karbala. Instead, one finds robust representation of the poet Nābī (d.1712), who is best known for his didactic works, with five different titles. There is, however, the divan of Sünbülzade Vehbi (d.1809) which contains several imitative poems with humorously competitive intent to challenge by name many of those well-known Ottoman poets.

Also in the literary sphere, the ubiquitous medieval Persian classics (Saʿdi's *Bōstān* and *Gulistān* as well as the *Dīvān* of Hafız) are here by themselves and in Turkish translations/commentaries by Sururi (d.1562) and Sudi Bosnevi (d. after 1598). Overall, Persian divans outnumber the Ottoman ones.

If there were any readers of Haşmet (d.1768/69) in Rhodes, they would not be able to consult any work of this famous poet whose exceptional talent for biting satire was the cause of his fall from grace and led to exile there, where his tomb is still visited. Likewise missing is any sign of interest in the historical and literary legacy of the Crimean khans several of whom spent many years in Rhodian exile and remain buried on the island.[9] Do these absences say something about Hafız Ahmed's loyalties and his politics? Note, for instance, that the abovementioned Vehbi had served as kadi in Rhodes in 1787 and is considered to have played a role in the execution of the exiled Şahin Giray Khan II of Crimea, himself a poet.[10]

There are obviously choices to be made by a collector, and perhaps assistants, while some other types of items are to be avoided, neglected or downplayed. Each collection reveals a particular taste and vision. What those neglected areas were in our case needs to be investigated more systematically but the observations listed above suggest that, relatively speaking, Hafız Ahmed was a man interested in didactic and "sober" works more than in lyrical, mystical and "amusing" ones.

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8 While this history is attributed to Elhac Halil Sofyevi in the catalogue (and in the Yazmalar portal), the author seems to have been Tabib Ramazan Efendi, a physician serving Sultan Süleyman, as identified by a modern hand writing in the Arabic script on the back flyleaf and by Dikmen Oral, "Tabib Ramazan'ın *Kitâb-ı Tevârih-i Rodos* adlı eseri (Tahlil ve metin)," unpubl. Master's Thesis (Selçuk University, 2014). On Ramazan Efendi, also see Hüseyin Yurdaydın, "Ṭabīb Ramażān'ın Yeni Bir Eseri," *İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 8 (1960): 55-58.

9 For these figures and some other famous names buried in Rhodes, including many who were exiled there, see Celalettin Rodoslu, *Rodos ve Istanköy Adalarında Gömülü Tarihi Simalar* (Ankara, 1945).

10 Selim Sırrı Kuru, "Sünbülzāde Vehbī," *TDVİA*, s.v.

There are also questions regarding book-owning and the book market at that time that remain largely unanswered for now. Did Hafız Ahmed make his own choices, or did he have someone helping him choose and purchase? Did Ayşe Hatun, his mother (d. 1795), or another member of the household contribute somehow? Who was there purchasing the copy of the classic *Kīmyā'-i Saʿādet* (#377) of Ghazali from the, presumably, post-mortem dispersal of the collection of the famous historian Çeşmizade Mustafa Reşid Efendi (d.1770), as suggested by the latter's ex libris on the flyleaf? Several purchases were made evidently from different legacies, with (former) ownership records, including one (#458) dated 1206 A.H./1791-92, namely very close to the date of Hafız Ahmed's endowment. To have a better understanding of the book market at that time, it might be worth collating information of this kind with evidence among the copious probate records in Istanbul, or elsewhere when relevant, which offer the names of the deceased and their belongings, including books, as well as the prices for which they were sold. In other words, there is much fun awaiting the adventurous researcher digging deeper into the codices in this collection, especially with a comparative perspective looking at those contemporaneous libraries mentioned above.

Two books in particular stand out within this wide-ranging collection as touches by an Ottoman reader/collector of the eighteenth century specifically, namely as representative of the intellectual world of the Ottomans just before and during Hafız Ahmed's lifetime.

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), long before his "discovery" in Europe in the late-nineteenth century, had been seized and revered by Ottoman intellectuals for his eye-opening reflections on the cycle of rise-and-decline of empires. At least with Katib Çelebi (1609-1657) from around the mid-seventeenth century, Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima* became a significant part of the conversation in Ottoman intellectual circles, and Pirizade Mehmed Sahib Efendi (d.1749) ventured a translation between 1725-30. The copy of the work in the library in Rhodes (#1153) stands witness to Hafız Ahmed's awareness of this conversation and its significance.[11]

The other standout reminds one of an exchange between two Oxford professors in Harold Pinter's brilliant script of *The Accident* (1967 film, Joseph Losey). One of them is "reading from a learned journal" that "a statistical analysis of sexual intercourse at Colenso University, Milwaukee, showed that 70% did it in the evening, 29.9% between 2 and 4 in the afternoon and 0.1% during a lecture on Aristotle." The provost responds: "I'm surprised to hear that Aristotle is on the syllabus in the State of Wisconsin."[12]

Readers not familiar with the history of Islamic learning might be surprised that Aristotle is also on the inventory of our library. That fact in and of itself would not have been exceptional at all since Aristotle (or sometimes pseudo-Aristotle) is a regular presence in madrasa education, and he is revered as "the First Teacher." What makes his presence in the Hafız Ahmed collection noteworthy is that this is a paraphrastic translation (into Arabic) from Aristotle by Yanyalı Esad Efendi (d.1731), making use

11 The copy is in its Arabic original and from the year 1148 A.H./1735-36. The Yazmalar portal gives the title of this specific manuscript as "*Kitābü'l-ʿİber... ,*" which is not absolutely incorrect, technically speaking, since the *Muqaddima* was initially meant to be the prolegomena of *Kitābü'l-ʿİber* but it is definitely a misleading identification since the former has always been treated as an independent work and copied as such. In fact, the word "*muqaddima*" is written on the spine of the copy in the Hafız Ahmed Library, and the cataloguers Şahin and Ağartan have rightly prepared their entry under that title. Note that the Tire Necib Paşa Library has both Pirizade's translation of the *Muqaddima* and a copy of the *ʿİber* in its Arabic original (# 383 and 391, respectively).

12 The insider's joke within the joke has to do with the fact that the director, better known as a representative of British cinema, was himself an American from Wisconsin who had been hounded by McCarthy's "House UnAmerican Activities Committee," and barely avoided being prosecuted and cross-examined.

of a Latin translation and commentary by Ioannis Kouttounios (1577-1658) who was himself working within an Averroist (Ibn Rushd's) line of interpretation of the medieval Islamic philosophical tradition. The implications of this translation, titled "Terceme-i manṭıḳ li-Aristō" on the spine, along with other manuscripts containing his translations from Aristotle's *Categories* and *Physics*, and their meaning for our understanding of Ottoman natural philosophy await closer study. They have already elicited a lively discussion.[13]

These are merely a few impressions of a medium-sized book collection from the late eighteenth century that deserves a far more systematic investigation of its content and its cultural historical import.



Hâfız Ahmed Agha Library 1153
Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), *Muqaddima*

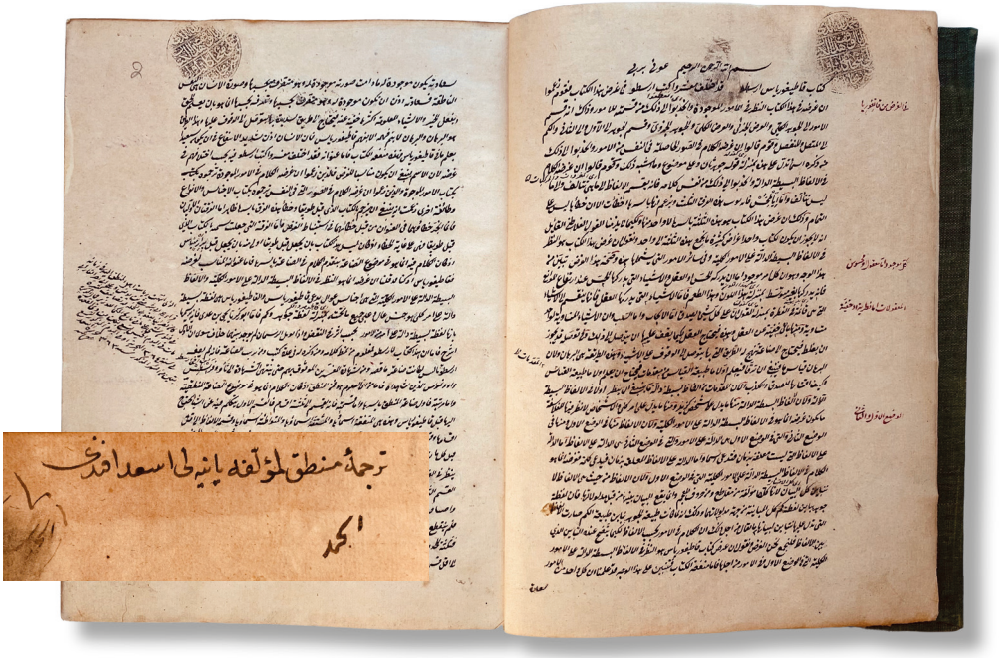
The opening folios (1b-2a) of the manuscript, featuring the title of the work and the name of its author, along with the endowment seal of the library.
Photo: T. Tuten



Hâfız Ahmed Agha Library 1153
Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), *Muqaddima*

Closing folios of the manuscript (367b-368a). The scribe (the *müstensih*) records that **Ibn Khaldun** completed this work, the ***Muqaddima***, in five months in the year 779 [1377]. This copy (the *nüsha*) however, was completed by the *müstensih* - Ibn Sham'a Muhammed b. Osman al-Dimashqî - on 28 Jumādā al-Thānī 1148 [15 November 1735].
Photo: T. Tuten

13 Mehmet Sami Baga, "Yanyalı Esad Efendi'nin Fizika Tercümesine Dair Bazı Notlar", *Beytulhikme An International Journal of Philosophy* (2023), 198-220. Also see Ahmed Alperen Can, "Yanyalı Esad Efendi'nin Fizik Tercümesi," which is a review of Cahid Şenel, Osmanlı Döneminde İbn Rüşdçülüğe Dönüş Denemesi: Yanyalı Esad Efendi'nin Fizik Tercümesi (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2024), published in Kutadgubilig Felsefe-Bilim Araştırmaları 51 (June 2025): 83-87.

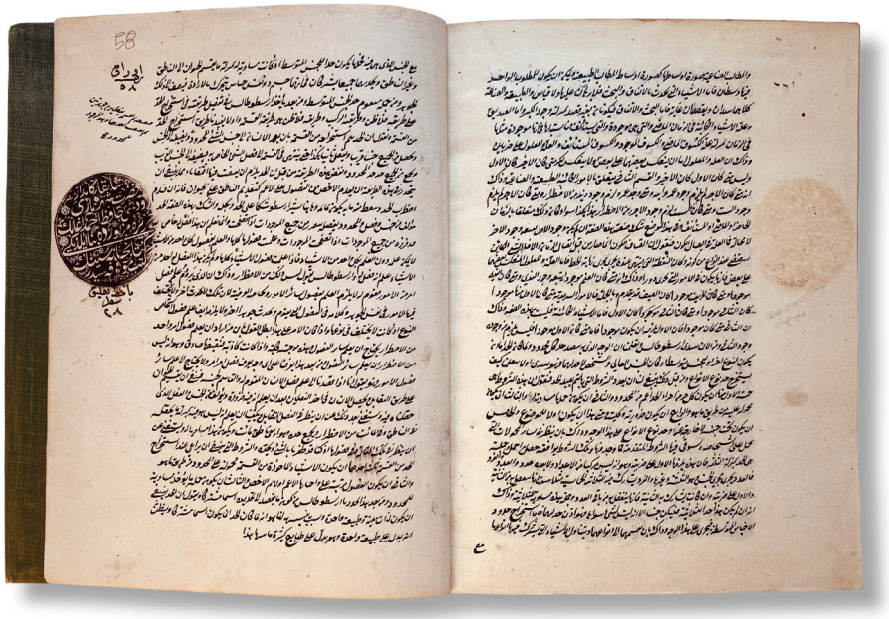


Hâfız Ahmed Agha Library 798

Hoca Mehmed Es'ad b. Alî Yanyalı (d. 1142/1729), *Tercümetü'l-Kütübi's-Semaniyye li Aristo.*

The excerpt from the *zahriya* page with the title, *Terceme-i Mantık,* and author's name, Yanyalı Esad Efendi and opening folios (1b-2a) of the manuscript.

Photos: T. Tuten



Hâfız Ahmed Agha Library 798

Hoca Mehmed Es'ad b. Alî Yanyalı (d. 1142/1729), *Tercümetü'l-Kütübi's-Semaniyye li Aristo.*

The closing folios (57b-58a) of the manuscript, bearing the endowment seal of the library.

Photo: T. Tuten

It is also worth commenting on the distinctive architectural and spatial aspects of the library in Rhodes. Notably, the library complex is situated in a walled enclosure with is monumental round-arched gateway directly across from the courtyard gate of the Friday Mosque of Rhodes, built by and named after Sultan Süleyman soon after the 1522 conquest of the island. This alignment suggests the close relationship between both monuments, as if the library were part of a socio-religious complex (*külliye*). The daily traffic between these two monumental stone masonry buildings, crowned by typically Ottoman hemispherical domes, must have been considerable. The commercial avenue running between the two buildings leads to the harbor of Rhodes from which these monuments were visible.



Hâfız Ahmed Agha Library courtyard with the marble stairs leading to the library on the right, the former class room with the wooden balcony supported on stone columns and the Süleymaniye Mosque with its minaret in the background.
Photo: G. Necipoğlu

Upon entering from the main gate of the library into its walled courtyard, one is surrounded by a magnificent oasis. The courtyard, paved in white and black pebble-stones forming attractive zigzag patterns, is planted with trees and flowers arranged in pots and features a wall fountain that has an inscription eulogizing the founder's father, namely Hasan Agha. Besides the central library building itself, which is composed of two rooms each surmounted by a hemispherical dome, the courtyard features a residence for the library attendant on the right and a two-story mansion with a wooden projecting upper balcony supported by two round arches that rest on stone columns below.



Hafız Ahmed Agha Library reading room's dome, the corner squinches and the two-tiered windows.
Photo: G. Necipoğlu

Each dome inside the library is raised on four corner squinches. Their two-tiered windows render the light-filled serene interior an ideal space for reading. The manuscripts are kept behind the reading room in a space that still features authentic wooden bookshelves. Two iron-grilled windows opening to that space from the reading room flank the round arched gate. Visitors sitting around the central long table of the reading room are therefore offered an enticing preview of treasures of knowledge awaiting them. It is remarkable that the original bookshelves are still arranged according to designated fields of classical knowledge in twenty categories, and the bindings on the manuscripts list their titles in Arabic script. Surely, this library with its rare and illuminated manuscripts must have provided to readers, to those disposed to *mutāla'a*, a serene immersive experience within its beautiful architecture and lush and well-tended garden.



Hâfız Ahmed Agha Library's manuscript collection is kept behind the reading room in a space that still features authentic wooden bookshelves (below). Iron-grilled windows opening to that space from the reading room flank a round arched gate (above).
Photos: G. Necipoğlu





Hafız Ahmed Agha Library's original bookshelves are arranged according to designated fields of classical knowledge. Here a shelf of the history section.
Photo: G. Necipoğlu

In an age when our reading practices, along with relevant technologies and institutions, are changing in drastic ways yet again, and with potentially grave consequences for state-society relations, it might be worthwhile for the readers of this volume to reflect on the nexus of intricate relationships between public life and the means as well as spaces of production, transmission and exchange of knowledge. Relations of power, be they at the family or local or (inter)national levels, take shape and are perpetuated or questioned and resisted by access to and control over those means and spaces, among other things.

A library like the one Hafız Ahmed Agha built and endowed in Rhodes more than two and a quarter centuries ago may not function fully and exactly as it was intended once, but on the one hand it still serves some of its original purposes for the intrepid scholarly researcher and, on the other, it can be repurposed toward new uses for the public. This is precisely what the heirs and trustees of the foundation have set out to do, to re-imagine it as a public institution. For a generation or two, a growing number of academics and other intellectuals of various backgrounds, such as the contributors to these two volumes, working on the histories of Greeks and Turks and their neighbors, have critically engaged with the cross-examining mode of history-writing and found imaginative ways to transcend it. Many have dreamt to have access to institutions that aim to foster sustained conversations along those lines, and aim to encourage others into those conversations, especially new generations and the broader public. As these volumes eloquently articulate, the foundation initiated by Hafız Ahmed Agha is now poised to play that role in a robust manner as an institutional setting where conversations flourish.

Şemsinur

From the Aegean to the Bosporus







Nektaria Anastasiadou is the 2019 winner of the Zografeios Agon, a Greek-language literary award founded in 19th-century Constantinople. Her first novel, *A Recipe for Daphne*, written in English, was published by AUC Press in 2021. It was shortlisted for the 2022 Runciman Award, longlisted for the 2022 Dublin Literary Award, and a finalist with an honorable mention for the 2022 Eric Hoffer Book Award. In 2023, Anastasiadou represented Turkey and Greece as a visiting fellow in creative writing at the University of Iowa's International Writing Program. Her second novel, *Στα Πόδια της Αιώνιας Άνοιξης/At the Foot of Eternal Spring*, written in Istanbul Greek, was published by Papadopoulos in 2023. Her short stories have appeared in anthologies including *Stories from the Center of the World* (City Lights, 2024) and *Κωνσταντινούπολη: Νόστος στον χώρο και τον χρόνο* (Ellinoekdotiki, 2024). She is a contributing editor for *The Markaz Review*.

The search for Şemsinur took me on a voyage in time from Istanbul to Chios and back again. All the while I was accompanied by the souls that had likely been walking beside me before I ever met them in fiction. I still hear their whisper: "Μιε φοάστε."

Nektaria Anastasiadou

‹ Preceding two pages: Mastic tree, Chios, 2023. Photo: T. Tuten

Tear Trees: A Short Story

The mastic trees of Southern Chios have been weeping for centuries. Island tradition says that, in the year 251, Saint Isídoros, an Alexandrian by birth and a sailor of the Roman fleet, was tortured in Chios by his admiral because he adhered to the Christian faith. In one account, the admiral beheaded Isídoros; in another, Isídoros's own father murdered him beneath a mastic tree. In both versions, the martyr's tears watered the soil of the region, were absorbed by the roots of the mastic trees, and were exuded as droplets of resin. Regardless of who in fact killed Isídoros, one thing is certain: the island has had more than its share of tears.

*

I arrive in Mestá, one of the Southern mastic villages, in the evening. I've already travelled through half the island. In each village, I examine the houses. The only thing I know about my ancestor's family home is that it had a balcony. If we leave out the island capitol, you don't see a lot of balconies on the remaining old houses of Chios. Even in Mestá—a labyrinthine castle-town with arching stoas—the balconies are few. It's July, and everyone is sitting outside their homes, enjoying the coolness of evening. An old woman is removing the tough strings from summer beans. An old man, sitting in the stone-paved street, has fallen asleep with his forearm on the chair in front of him. The song of the cicadas is nearly deafening. I find my hotel and check in. The young employee photocopies my Turkish passport and speaks to me in decent English. He doesn't give me the impression that he considers me the descendent of those who, two centuries prior, laid waste to the island. I don't speak to him in the Greek that I learned by taking lessons, in my middle age, first at the Greek consulate of Istanbul, then at a school in the Pangráti neighborhood of Athens, and lately at my house in Léros. I'm tired and I don't feel like giving explanations such as "I learned Greek in order to search for a house that I will never find." Or "I am searching hopelessly for my ancestor herself; not for her grave, which lies in Istanbul, but for the twelve-year old girl who was torn away from this island two centuries ago."

*

There is a void in her place on the family tree. Or perhaps I should say a grey box with the white silhouette of a woman. There is also a void in our memory of her and of all the women who were enslaved in 1822.

To her left, in the middle of the tree, is a portrait of her husband, our great-great-great grandfather, Ahmed Fethi Pasha. He has round cheeks, sleepy eyelids, and a bushy beard. He seems refined, posh, and slightly bored. Maybe he is tired from his many duties or perhaps he is impatient for the next party. He was passionate not only about clothing and décor, but also about food, entertainment, and dinnerware.

To his left is a photograph of his second wife (in the Muslim sense, simultaneously with the first), the princess Atiye. A transparent veil covers her young face. She was only sixteen when they were married, whereas he was thirty-nine. Historians say that Atiye was intelligent, delicate-boned, with sandy-colored hair. As a young girl she would dress like a boy, put on a fez, and follow her brother Abdülmecid (later to become Sultan) around the palace. She was also an adept calligrapher. In the photo she smiles slightly, although she may not have been cheerful in general. They say that she was unhappy in her marriage and mortally jealous of the first wife of Fethi—the woman of whom neither a portrait nor a trace has remained.

*

Since I arrived in Chios, the midges have been biting me mercilessly. They pass through ripped screens and fly stealthily inside sleeves and trousers. In the morning I wake with bites swollen like hard balls. They burn and itch. One of my ankles has swollen like a drum from an allergic reaction.

After buying cortisone cream from a pharmacy and applying it to the bites, I go out for breakfast and try to forget the fire in my ankle. The sun is shining between the leaves of the grapevine that shelters the stone street. Bees buzz around the tiny, tight grapes while I eat fried eggs and mastelo cheese. I drink a Greek coffee—*after* breakfast, according to Turkish custom.

Today I'm taking a break from the sad monasteries, the ossuaries with the skulls of the victims of 1822, the ruined stone houses that were abandoned then, the cliffs from which women jumped to escape rape and slavery. I get into my already hot car, take a few lemon-colored balls of mastic from the tin that I bought as soon as I arrived, and chew them into one bittersweet mass while driving away from the village. Some people say that mastic smells fresh and tastes like cedar. To me it smells like my grandfather's hands and tastes like summer in Istanbul. I remember the secret Saturday trips we used to take to Üç Yıldız candy shop, where we would buy a small box of mastic *lokum* and eat them all before arriving home. My grandmother (the great-granddaughter of the ancestor I am searching for) surely smelled it on our breath. She would frown, but as long as we threw away the box before entering the flat, she wouldn't reprimand us.

I drive past orchards full of mastic trees, their trunks low and bent, their foliage dark green and dense like myrtle, their branches pointing downward toward the earth. Mastic trees do not reach more than two or three meters in height, but their roots can burrow into the soil up to twenty meters. Most of their being is under ground, in the land itself.

I arrive at Mávra Vólia, a black beach formed in antiquity by the eruption of nearby Volcano Psáronas. In the morning the cliffs behind the beach shade the long stretch of round black pebbles and dark sea. Nature seems dressed for a funeral here. I take off my shoes and walk. The glistening pebbles give the soles of my feet a hard, painful massage. The cold water and sea salt both sting and soothe my bloody bites and swollen ankle.

*

They renamed our great-great-great-grandmother Ayşe Şemsinur in Turkish, although Ayşe was usually omitted. "Şemsi" and "nur" are Ottoman words with Arabic roots. Together they mean "the brightness of the sun." Perhaps they called her that because she had been baptized Lambriní (Bright) or Fotiní (Luminous). Or maybe she was blond, with hair like the light of the Aegean. But the most probable explanation is this: Şemsinur was a name ordinarily given to female slaves. It would therefore have distinguished my ancestor from freeborn Muslim women for the rest of her life.

Only a few details dripped like tears of mastic from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first. She was born in 1810 in Chios. At that time, Chios was a flourishing Aegean island with a public library, hospitals, a printing press, public schools, seven monasteries, two convents, law courts, and a privileged system of near self-government under Ottoman dominion. My ancestor lived in a house with a balcony, which leads me to believe that her family was at least middle class. We know that her father was a priest, but at that time the priesthood was a side job to another profession, which was almost always agriculture. Since the source of the island's wealth was its precious mastic resin, coveted by the Sultan's harem as a breath freshener, it is likely that her people were mastic cultivators.

I don't know if I should imagine her rolling out homemade pasta with her mother in a smoky kitchen, if I should envision her practicing whitework sitting on her balcony, or if I should think of her tagging along behind her father to the orchards, where he would perform his own sort of tree bark embroidery (that is what scoring is called in Chios: *kéndos*, embroidery). Perhaps she helped her father flatten and clean the ground around the mastic trees and sprinkle it with calcium carbonate, a white powder that reminds me of the sugar with which Orthodox Christians cover *kollyva* wheat offerings to the dead. Perhaps she would have gazed at the mastic drops that hung from the tree bark for weeks before dropping to the ground. The mastic stalactites might have reminded her of diamonds or crystals; the time hadn't yet come for her to think of them as tears.

In 1821, the Greek Revolution erupted, but the island of Chios, having enjoyed the protection of the Sultan's mother for centuries, was not interested in participating. Greeks from nearby islands, notably Samos, tried to force a Chiot uprising by stirring up trouble; they succeeded only in enraging the Sultan. The result was the 1822 massacre, during which nearly the entire population of Chios was killed or enslaved.

Şemsinur was twelve at the time. Ottoman soldiers tore her from her parents' arms. Historians say that the soldiers raped most of the women and girls. If that was her case, I expect she never would have spoken about it because violated women considered themselves dishonored and sinful until the end of their lives. She wept *hüngur hüngur* (as we say in Turkish, with sobs that sound like those words) from the day that they seized her and throughout the voyage to Constantinople in the hold of a ship. Perhaps she was among the first girls who were sold on Saturday, the 15th of July 1822, in the Fish Bazaar. Or perhaps she was in the second batch, which they took up to the Grande Rue de Pera the next morning. The prices for the half-naked, wounded, insect-bitten, weeping slaves started at a hundred piastres and soon went down to fifty, both rock bottom. Constantinopolitan Greeks, on their way to the Church of the Virgin of Pera, passed with lowered heads. Chiot women were intentionally sold on the streets and not in the regular slave market across from the Nuruosmaniye Mosque; they were living warnings to the Greeks of the capitol.

When I walk in Pera on rainy days and hear the itinerant venders shouting *"şemsiye, şemsiye!*"—literally parasol and not umbrella for rain as we think today—I imagine how, in the same place, Şemsinur might have been sold like an object with less value than a flimsy transparent umbrella that breaks with the first strong gust of wind.

*

After a swim in the cold water of Mávra Vólia and a second anointment with cortisone, which hasn't helped as much as I'd like, I stop at a taverna for lunch. I order octopus in vinegar, grilled sardines, and beans in tomato sauce. The waitress writes down my order and says, "You speak Greek very well. Where are you from?"

I reply, "From across the sea."

In the best case she considers me a neighbor; in the worst a descendent of those who emptied the island in 1822. Under no circumstances does she guess that I'm not a descendent of those who massacred but of those who were massacred. Greeks learn in school that thousands of women and children were enslaved during the revolution. They don't seem to wonder, however, about the lives that those women and children lived. I learn as much as I can from books in Greek, English, and Turkish. I read about a Chiot woman who, after being abused for years in Crete, escaped from her pasha and remarried in Syros. I also read about a woman from the Ágrafa of Thessaly, renamed Emine, who murdered her husband, Ferik Ibrahim Pasha, in 1860; it was the most provocative murder committed in Constantinople during the Tanzimat period. Perhaps the worst testimony I read was that of a Chiot woman who, because she insisted on making the sign of the cross, had burning oil thrown onto her breasts twice by her owner; later she was able to escape. But what became of those who neither escaped nor became famous? A few might have lived well in new families. Others probably suffered abuse their entire lives. Most changed religion, although there were exceptions. The only thing that I can say with some certainty is that they became mothers.

*

At the head of our family tree are the parents of Ahmed Fethi Pasha: Hafız Ahmed Ağa and Saliha Hanım. I've always felt close to them, far closer than I do to their son Ahmed Fethi. Hafız Ahmed was born into a wealthy family in the village of Sgouroú, Rhodes, in 1740. He completed his education at the Sultan's palace and later served in high positions of state. In 1793 he established in Rhodes a charitable foundation that continues to operate until today. On the hadj of 1801, the Sultan charged Hafız Ahmed with the escort of the imperial gifts to the emir of the Hejaz; while passing through Arabia, Hafız Ahmed was murdered under suspicious circumstances.

Together with him on that hadj was his pregnant wife Saliha, who, most likely horrified by the murder of her husband, returned to the family mansion in Constantinople's Eyüp, a melancholy village in the armpit of the Golden Horn. It was not by chance, in my opinion, that so many Ottoman aristocrats were buried in the cemetery of Eyüp; the air of that village blows constantly from the other world, and the living suffer autumn depressions while watching the leaves fall from the trees on the marshy islets in the Golden Horn. I'm sure that Saliha suffered such a depression in 1801 because, immediately after the birth of her son, the family remarried her to the bey of the sanjak of Artvin. Saliha, however, didn't go to Artvin. She remained in funerary Eyüp with Ahmed, her newborn son.

We know that Ahmed Fethi spoke Greek as if it were his mother tongue, despite the fact that he spent his early childhood in an almost completely Muslim village, at a time when there were few Greek slaves—and those only from the Ionian Islands—because Ottoman Greeks were protected from slavery until 1821. Nor were there many Greek governesses, as could be found in wealthy Muslim families from the end of the nineteenth century, when slavery had been restricted and officially banned. Therefore, I suspect that Saliha was also Rhodian and Greek-speaking like her first husband, Hafız Ahmed; to use the Greek expression, "a shoe from his homeland." She might even have been born into a Christian Greek family.

The second fact that we know about Saliha is that, from Hafız Ahmed's death until the coming of age of her son, she must have been the trustee of the family foundation in Rhodes. The foundation's regulation stipulates that upon the death of Hafız Ahmed, his mother (if she was still alive, which she was not) would become the trustee. Second in line was his wife Saliha, and third his eldest child (not his eldest *son,* but his eldest *child*). In other words, Hafız Ahmed trusted the women of his family. With the result that, throughout its history, our foundation has been managed more by women, myself included, than by men. Saliha may have directed the foundation from Eyüp. She might also have made one or more trips to Rhodes, because the foundation's properties—including shops, houses, and fountains—would have needed her attention. This leads me to believe that Saliha was a strong and capable woman.

The last fact that we know about her, apart from the year of her death (1855), is that she was the owner of the Chiot girl renamed Şemsinur. We don't know how the purchase occurred. However, I would like to believe that Saliha, when she learned that Chiot women and girls were being sold in the streets of Pera, decided to save one or more. I imagine her from Şemsinur's perspective: in the midst of the absolute degradation of the sale, a closed carriage stops before the crowd. A Muslim lady, with her face elegantly covered, opens the window and points at a few girls. A servant pays, and the lady takes the miserable slaves inside her carriage, ignoring their filth. After she has closed the door, she removes her veil and comforts the girls in Rhodian Greek: "*Eteliósan pio ta vásana, kóres. Mme foáste*." Your suffering is over, daughters. Don't be afraid.

*

I set out for Pyrgí. I've kept it for last because I know, from photos, that it is full of balconies. I park outside the village and enter on foot at the time of the afternoon siesta. Pyrgí is just as labyrinthine as Mestá but with an entirely different appearance. Last night I read that Pyrgí's stone houses, built stuck together, shoulder to shoulder, are *ksistá* – "scratched" with geometric shapes, diamonds, circles, storks, leaves and flowers, all of which have horizontal and vertical symmetry. First the craftsmen smooth the surface of the building with plaster. Then they render it with dust from the black stones of Mávra Vólia. When the layer of black beach dust has dried, they cover it with white wash and engrave it with the help of rulers and compasses. Finally, they scratch the dried whitewash with a spoon, creating anaglyph geometric designs on top of the black layer. In other words, the scratching—which is in fact damage—transforms the façades of the houses into mathematical works of art.

I wonder if damage worked the same way for Şemsinur. Family lore says that she was exceptionally kind and selfless, to a degree that no longer exists today. Perhaps she, like biblical Joseph, was able to transform the cruelty that she suffered into its very opposite. Under Şemsinur's circumstances, simply continuing to live was a work of art; a tree trunk scored and embroidered to produce diamonds.

*

When Ahmed turned eight (long before Şemsinur's arrival) Saliha sent him to the imperial school of Enderun. After his graduation, he served the palace as a soldier. In 1828, during one of the many Russo-Ottoman wars, he was sent to the front; a year later he was wounded in the left foot and returned to his mother's house in Eyüp to recover. There, they say, he met and fell in love with the nineteen-year-old Chiot slave Şemsinur, who may have nursed him back to health.

But who was Şemsinur in 1829, after seven years of servitude in melancholy Eyüp? She had converted to Islam, at least officially. Even if she spoke Greek with Saliha, she must also have learned Turkish. How had she passed those years? Did she roast coffee for Saliha's guests, embroider whitework curtains, stoke up the coals of waterpipes, sew holes in stockings, destring beans, scrub the mansion's wide plank floors, or wash windows overlooking the Golden Horn? Did she talk about home and weep with the other Chiot slave girls (if indeed there were others in the mansion), or did she sit at Saliha's feet in the evenings, beside a brazier, and listen to stories of Rhodes?

Family tradition says that Şemsinur also fell in love with Ahmed. He bought a mansion in Tophane, at the foot of the hill where his mother Saliha had probably bought his beloved seven years prior. They married and had two sons—the replacements of all that Şemsinur had lost.

In following years, Ahmed was given the rank of general and the title Fethi (Victorious) Pasha. In 1833 he left his family in Constantinople to serve as a diplomat in Vienna, Paris, and London. He danced with European princesses, enjoyed musical soirées under the direction of Strauss (the composer dedicated a waltz to him, the Ball-Racketen Op.96), and gave luxurious dinners at which emeralds filled the empty eye sockets of fish. At some point he purchased a second mansion on the Asian side of the Bosporus, near the Jewish-Greek village of Kuzguncuk. People referred to it as the "pembe yalı," the pink seaside mansion. From its windows one could and still can see the old city, Pera, and Ortaköy. With the exception of the winter months, which the family spent in Tophane, Şemsinur lived the rest of her life at the pembe yalı. Of all the Chiot women who were enslaved in 1822, she was likely the most fortunate. Nevertheless, they say that she continued to weep in secret until her death.

*

Pyrgí seems deserted, as it was just after the massacres. I smell the jasmine that climbs on electric and telephone lines. A contemporary invader would only need to do one thing to paralyze the village: cut those lines. A few old folks, holding rough wooden canes, return home from visits and coffee houses. A young woman with a cigarette dangling from her mouth hangs wreaths of fresh tomatoes on her balcony to sun-dry. On the ground floor beneath, an elderly woman in a traditional white *saríki*—a turban-like headscarf—stands in the doorway, squinting her eyes at the sun. She wears holey homemade socks without shoes and a pleated dress with embroidered sleaves. She doesn't have teeth. She probably doesn't have hair either. She leans on her wooden cane and murmurs, "I wonder what language she speaks?" Or at least that's what I think she said, because the television, which is blasting inside the house, nearly covers her voice. I look around. I don't see anyone. It's just me and the cicadas. I smile at the old woman. She nods in return. I continue my walk.

*

Throughout his career, Ahmed Fethi served in various high positions: ambassador, minister of commerce and agriculture, armory marshal, founder of the first Ottoman museum in the church of Saint Iréne. In 1839, while he was serving as ambassador in Paris, he was informed that he was to be engaged to Atiye, the fifteen-year-old daughter of the Sultan. It wasn't an honor to be refused. But even if it was, I don't think any man would pass up the opportunity to legally enjoy the charms of a pretty young woman. Regardless, the wish of Mahmud II created a dilemma: in the case of marriage with a princess, the law imposed divorce from previous wives—that is, Şemsinur.

In July of 1839, Mahmud II died, and Ahmed Fethi returned to Constantinople for the coronation of Abdülmecid I. They say that Ahmed Fethi, not wanting to divorce his beloved Şemsinur, fell at the feet of the new Sultan and begged for an exception to the monogamy required for marriage to an imperial princess. The exception was granted, and Ahmed Fethi's marriage to Atiye was celebrated royally in the summer of 1840. The festivities lasted nearly two months with animal sacrifices, tightrope walkers, acrobats, magicians, banquets, sherbets, and gifts. Their epicenter was Eyüp, but the entire city participated. Oil lamps were lit outside all the palaces and mansions along the Bosporus shores. Fireworks were launched from rafts in front of Çirağan Palace, exactly opposite Şemsinur's pink yalı in Kuzguncuk.

I wonder if Şemsinur's servants lit oil lamps like everyone else, lest they insult the Sultan with their darkness. Probably. I can't imagine how Şemsinur must have felt while illuminating her garden for the wedding of her husband to another woman. Perhaps she hid in her bedroom despite the unbearable summer heat. Perhaps she covered her ears with pillows for two hours to dull the popping of the fireworks. Or perhaps she was pleased to have a break from Ahmed Fethi and watched the fireworks while sipping a rose sherbet. Whatever she did, I don't think she could avoid the roar of the twenty cannonballs launched according to tradition in order to mark the occasion. Surely the cannon's boom would have reminded her of her island's catastrophe.

After the ceremonies and celebrations ended, the newlywedded bride learned that the groom had another wife. I don't know who to pity more, Şemsinur or Atiye. Both were pawns in the games of men. The princess, however, put her foot down: she insisted that Ahmed Fethi not see Şemsinur; she also required that he always spend the night in her palace. Whenever Fethi was late coming home, Atiye would send men to the pink yalı in Kuzguncuk to bring him back (and with good reason, because he continued to visit Şemsinur and his sons secretly).

I envision Şemsinur sitting in a window of the harem that no longer exists (some say that it burnt, others that it was torn down). From that window she sees the row boat coming down the Bosporus from Atiye's palace in Kuruçeşme. As soon as the boat nears her little quay, she is seized by a posttraumatic crisis, which takes her back to the day that she was captured from the balcony of her family home. She sends someone to tell the boatmen that the pasha is not there—regardless of whether it is true or not—and afterward she hides in a wardrobe, the kitchen, or the coal cellar.

*

I'm standing in an almost empty piazza in Pyrgí. Two old men are playing cards beneath a grapevine pergola. On their table is a plate of Chiot cucumbers, light in color and with thick skins. The smoke from the old men's cigarettes dances before the sun beams penetrating the grapevine. One says to the other, "I want to play and laugh at the same time. If I don't laugh at my cards, I can't play."

I would like to hide from the sun, to have a coffee beside them, to laugh with them, but I can't manage to get the woman with the white turban out of my mind. In front of a church, an itinerant green grocer is hawking vegetables—all products of Chiot rainwater cultivation—from the back of his truck. Farmers don't water such crops even once after planting. The sprouts, like mastic trees, have to put down deep roots in order to survive, but they are stronger than watered cultivation and more resistant to diseases and mold. I buy a bag of tomatoes, zucchinis, and a melon. Then I lose my way in the maze. I hear plates being gathered, men murmuring, women commanding, and everywhere the cicadas. For a break I enter a cool church. Its perch-seats are high, perhaps so that you can hide behind them. Bothered by the painful swelling in my ankle, I sit to rest. My ancestors may have been baptized here or in any old church of Chios. I am impressed by the dark, almond eyes of the saints. They examine me from every direction, asking silently, "Whose child are you?"

*

Atiye Sultan died in August of 1850 from tuberculosis. She was twenty-six. By that time, Fethi was an imperial brother-in-law, a close friend of the Sultan, and one of the most powerful men in Constantinople. Despite the fact that he could marry any woman he chose, he immediately left his two princess-daughters in their palace and returned to Kuzguncuk, which makes me think that his love for Şemsinur might not be a myth.

What did he bring with him from one life to the other, from Europe to Asia? As a known worshipper of luxury, I don't believe that he crossed the Bosporus without luggage. On his hand would surely have been the diamond ring that the Sultan gave him as a wedding present. He might also have taken Atiye's wedding gift, a golden two-in-one harmonica-beardcomb, inlaid with rose diamonds and enameled with the imperial seal.

After ten years of separation and independence, did Şemsinur kiss his lavender-scented hand to welcome him? Did the imperial diamond remind her of the large mastic drop that Chiots call *dachtilópetra*, ring-stone? Did she disdain Fethi's ostentation in silence or did she ask him about each object? And how would Fethi have replied? With typical men's excuses such as "but it was a gift from the Sultan, not from *her*, I swear, and anyway, what man doesn't have absolute need of a harmonica-beardcomb?"

Family tradition says that Fethi and Şemsinur rekindled their relationship. I have my doubts. I wonder if you can love a man who spent the past decade with another woman, acquiring two daughters with her; a man who may have been absent at the death of your eldest son. I will never know what Şemsinur felt, if she loved Fethi, if she continued her marital relation with him in a compromised manner, or if she simply wanted more children—more people of her own. In any case, she gave birth to three daughters, one of which was my great-great grandmother.

As for Fethi, I've always had difficulty understanding him. He impressed me as an enterprising statesman but less as a husband until I read something that obliged me to reconsider: an article about enslaved Chiot women who had been taken to Egypt. These women were called upon by a European committee to decide whether they would like to be repatriated. Most did not want to return to their island. The married women knew that their Greek husbands (if they had survived) might not take them back, and the unmarried knew that, "dishonored" as they were, they would not find husbands. Even the fathers of these women and girls (if they had survived) might disown them. Such was the immoral morality of the times. I don't like to think that Şemsinur was raped before she was sold to Saliha, but it is probable. If Fethi married Şemsinur despite the fact that she had been violated, and if he refused to divorce her and went running to her immediately after the death of Atiye, then we know that the immoral morality of the times had no value in his eyes. And that elevates him in my eyes.

*

From the dark church I emerge into the sun. I look at the balconies. Four tomato wreaths, two at each corner, hang from the frame of a balcony door. I hear a television. The familiar old woman reappears in her doorway beneath that balcony, still wearing her traditional clothing, as if she recently arrived from another century. She has left her cane inside. She says in English, "Hello, can you help me to make telephone?"

I didn't expect a woman in a turban to speak English.

I ask in Greek, "Whom would you like to call, auntie?"

"Are you Greek? Come *oná*!"

I don't know what the Pyrgousian word "oná" means, but she takes me by the hand and leads me inside her house: one room with a table, two chairs and a bed, upon which she has abandoned a half-finished piece of lace with the needles still attached. In one corner is the television, blasting away; its static-snow picture is half-covered by a piece of whitework embroidery. The old woman sits on the bed and searches for something in the bedstand drawer. I think I see a small pistol among the various papers and junk. It might be an old toy that once belonged to her nephew, or it might not have been a pistol at all. I say, "I brought you a few vegetables."

She doesn't hear me. She holds my fingers fast in her right hand; with her left she searches the drawer. "I can't find it, I can't…"

"The melon should go in the refrigerator."

"Put it in, daughter."

The kitchen is a counter on the wall. I'm uneasy, but I let go of the old woman's hand and open the door of the refrigerator. It has only a small container with cheese, three sad onions, a little fennel that looks like it was cut from someone's garden, and a bottle with a label that says "Mastic Liqueur." On the counter is a package of rusks and an almost empty jar of homemade pasta. I leave the tomatoes on the table and put the melon and zucchini in the refrigerator.

"Help me," says the old woman with her head permanently drooping. On the wall above her bed is a certificate in International Correspondence. So that's how she learned English.

"How can I help, auntie?"

"I want to call my nephew, but I can't find his number."

"Maybe a neighbor has it?"

She sighs in despair. I feel my eyelids drooping from exhaustion. My eyelids are generally large, like those of Fethi, but after so many days on the road and so much searching, they are heavier than usual.

"Maybe I could do something else for you, auntie?"

"Fix the television if you insist."

I can't do that either. I'm useless with technology and the television is from the last century, probably the 1970s. Nevertheless, in order not to disappoint the old woman, I examine the antique.

*

In 1846, while he was married to Atiye, Fethi founded the imperial glass factory in Beykoz. He may have secretly brought gifts from that factory to Şemsinur—colorful mixes of Ottoman and European artisanship. Quite a few such objet d'art were found in Kuzguncuk after his death. Due to his obesity (the English called him Ahmed Fatty), the pasha suffered from dyspnea. In February 1858, he fell ill from a related cardiovascular or respiratory disease, died, and was buried in the courtyard of the *turbe*—mausoleum—of Sultan Mahmud II. Princess Atiye had already been buried inside the turbe with her father. In death, Atiye took her husband back.

The grand pasha left so many debts to pâtissiers, butchers, watch-makers, furriers, coal merchants, lavender sellers (he was obsessed with the scent), kadayıf makers (his favorite dessert), bakers, his Armenian watchmaker, and his Greek tailor, that a large portion of the estate had to be sold. A relative said the housekeeper of the pink yalı told Şemsinur that it was a shame for so many household items to be sold to cover the debts of the extravagant dearly departed. Şemsinur either stopped the sale or hid a few objects from the repossessors. We don't know which, but a few glass pieces, such as a white carafe decorated with roses, were saved. As a child I loved touching them secretly, when the adults weren't watching; I felt as if I were reaching through time to touch Şemsinur.

*

"Do you cook, auntie?" I ask when I've despaired of fixing the television.

"I have trouble on my feet," says the old woman without raising her head. You would think her chin was glued to her throat.

"Does someone look after you?"

Tsouk she replies; no. I surpass my feeling of awkwardness and locate a cutting board and a knife in the dish rack. I wash and cut the fennel. I dice an onion and fry it in olive oil, the only oil on the counter. I don't want to be even more indiscreet by opening cupboards. I already feel like an invader, and I'm worried that someone might ask what I'm doing in a stranger's house. I mix the onion and fennel with the cheese from the refrigerator and some crushed rusks. I form the mixture into patties and fry them. I will leave the old woman without a functioning television screen. Without her nephew. But my heart will not allow me to leave her without food.

*

Just a few months after Fethi's death, in May 1858, Şemsinur's beloved second son, Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha, married Princess Cemile, the daughter of Sultan Abdülmecid and the niece of Princess Atiye. Even though Atiye was long dead, I wonder how Şemsinur felt about her son's engagement to a close relative of the woman who had possessed her husband for ten years. But perhaps the relation had no importance at all for Şemsinur; perhaps she was simply happy that her son had made a good match. Indeed, Princess Cemile was, according to one of her nieces, gracious, intelligent, and worthy of both respect and affection. An ideal daughter-in-law, who might, however, have looked down upon a former slave girl.

The couple had three sons and three daughters. They lived happily for thirteen years, presumably with visits to grandmother Şemsinur and their aunts in Kuzguncuk—until June of 1881, when the family received a serious blow. Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha was accused of conspiracy against the Sultan, arrested, and imprisoned in Arabia. Şemsinur was so distraught at the loss of her beloved son that she suffered a stroke and died in the pink yalı in July 1881, with the Bosporus flowing outside her window. She was buried in the family tomb in Karacaahmet, Üsküdar. Just as Constantinopolitan Jews wanted to be buried in Kuzguncuk in order to be on the same continent with Jerusalem, so did many Ottomans wish to be given to the earth of Karacaahmet, one step closer to Mecca and Medina. I wonder what place Şemsinur wanted to be close to. Mecca and Medina? Kuzguncuk? Or to her destroyed Aegean island?

*

As soon as the first batch is ready, I say, "Come to the table, auntie."

The old woman says, "My back hurts."

I take the plate to her bed. "Look what I made for you."

"Fennel fritters! That's the way my grandmother made them, no tomato."

She takes one and bites it. "Health to your hands, daughter. Are your people from Chios?"

"In a way."

She points at the swollen bite on my left forearm. "The midges have devoured you."

"I used cortisone cream. It helped a little."

"Go to the bathroom. In there you'll find a jar with *remédio*."

I don't know the Chiot word remédio, but it sounds like the English "remedy," so I guess that it must be some sort of homemade medicine. On the shelf of the microscopic bathroom—or rather lavatory with a showerhead in the corner—I find a large jar. Inside it are some herbs embalmed in golden orange oil. I doubt that it will help. Also, I find it a bit disgusting, because the bathroom hasn't been cleaned in at least six months, but I take the jar to the old woman. She opens it, sticks her fingers inside, and spreads the oil on my ankle and arms. Her fingers are rough. I get goosebumps.

"May it pass," she says.

"Thank you, auntie. And to you bon appétit."

"Andromache."

"Pleased to meet you, Aunt Andromache. I'm Lela."

My Greek nickname.

*

My grandmother (the great-granddaughter of Şemsinur) was born in Ottoman Constantinople but came of age in the Turkish Republic. She was a hobby pianist, a graduate of the German Lycée, and a speaker of Turkish, German, French, and English. She was famous for her eclectic cooking, especially perch filet, roast chicken, pilaf with clotted cream, salads with orange sauce (common now but unusual in the 1960s), and fennel fritters. She also rode horses and knew how to use a rifle, both of which she learned in order to be an emancipated woman. I never remember her using the words "fear" or "I am afraid," as if she had expelled them from her vocabulary.

My great-grandmother (the granddaughter of Şemsinur) spent the first third of her life as an Ottoman and the second two-thirds as a Turk. The wife of an army officer, she never learned to cook—her generation considered it beneath them—but she ensured that her staff prepared meals according to family recipes. Consequently, my grandmother learned cooking from the family chef rather than from her own mother, but I wonder if some of her more unusual dishes, such as creamed pilaf and fennel fritters, were legacies of earlier generations. My great-grandmother lived with us for long periods. As a young child I would climb into her bed for a snuggle as soon as I woke up in the morning. She smelled of lavender (like her grandfather Fethi), and her hands were extremely soft, like cotton. She wore skirt suits and always carried a lace handkerchief and a bottle of perfume in her little black bag. Once she gave me a red wooden truck as a gift; I remember filling its wagon with various objects and pretending to drive it around the world. Perhaps these were her lessons to me: that one must both drive and dream.

My great-great grandmother (the daughter of Şemsinur) was born in the mid-nineteenth century and died in 1909. She spoke Turkish, Greek, French, and English. She lived her entire life in Constantinople, far from danger, but she also rode horses and knew how to use a rifle. I wonder why she learned, and I conclude the following: surely she had a hereditary fear of massacre, kidnapping, and slavery—even if her mother never spoke of these things. She learned about horses and firearms in order to be able to escape; in order never to become naked merchandise in the slave market of a foreign city.

*

A man about my age, somewhere in his sixties, appears at the window. He watches us through the empty spaces in the whitework curtain. Smacking the paving stones with his cane, he comes to the door. Everybody seems to have a cane in the mastic villages, either because they are old or because of an unconscious need for defense. He asks the standard Greek question: "Whose are you?"

I introduce myself and extend my hand, but he leaves it hanging in the air and asks, "What are you doing here?"

His words pierce me. I blush. I want to reply, *I'm looking for Şemsinur, however she was called*. Instead, I explain the situation, that Madame Andromache is alone, that she needs help, that she's hungry, that she is trying to contact her nephew.

"And how did you get in here?"

"Madame Andromache invited me."

The neighbor looks at me with suspicion. His skin, full of sunspots, sags. He must have spent most of his life in the fields with the mastic trees. "Are you Turkish?"

I nod yes.

Andromache is still sitting on the bed. She has put a napkin in the collar of her dress like a bib. She takes a bite of a fritter, then examines it up close. She says, "The girl is one of ours. It's obvious from the fritters."

"No, she isn't," the neighbor declares.

Andromache offers the plate. "Taste one and you'll understand."

The neighbor raises his chin in refusal. "Aren't you ashamed of yourself, dragging them into the house?"

This pushes my patience. I say, "Who are you calling *them*, sir? You have no idea who I am."

I pick up my handbag to leave, but Andromache says, "Stay, daughter."

"You shouldn't bother foreigners, Madame Andromache," says the neighbor.

"I told you, she's one of *ours*."

"The woman is Turkish. *Tur-kish*."

"Ours!" shouts Andromache, unwittingly spitting fennel. "Cooking is the last thing to die. Whether you like it or not, you pass it down like genes. Those fennel fritters are ours. Taste and you'll see."

The neighbor raises his chin again. "You're talking like a child."

"No, I'm not talking like a child. You're talking like a man."

"Nonsense."

"Then I'll say something that your man brain can understand. Do you see her midge bites?"

The neighbor glances at me and puts both hands on his cane. "What does that have to do with anything?"

"In the massacres, when the Turks were hunting people in the mountains, they would find them in the places where flies and midges were swarming. The midges want *us*, not foreign blood."

The neighbor rolls his eyes and turns his hand back and forth near his ear to show that Andromache has lost her mind. "Tell that to the Germans in our rented rooms. Every day they buy a new tube of cortisone."

Andromache sighs, takes my hand again, and kisses it. "I want my nephew."

"Day and night *my nephew* and *my nephew*. The Athenian nephew doesn't care at all about you." The neighbor looks at the tomatoes on the table and says to me, "We take care of Andromache. You look tired. You must want to go back to your hotel."

"It's *my* house," says Andromache. "She stays as long as I like. Why don't you go instead?"

I feel uncomfortable, but I don't move. Slowly, with his gaze constantly on me, the neighbor leaves.

"Men," says Andromache. "They know little, they say a lot. Tell me now, daughter, whose are you?"

I sit on the bed beside her. I tell her briefly that I am the descendent of a Chiot woman who was enslaved during the revolution, that I know nearly nothing about her, neither her baptismal name nor the name of her village, but I'm searching for her.

"Root around all you like," says Andromache. "But you carry that girl inside you. It shows in your cooking."

"Do you know what my grandmother never used in her food? Mastic. She didn't even buy mastic lokum. Whenever my grandfather wanted mastic lokum, my grandmother said no. I asked her why. She said that mastic brings tears."

"The Chiot woman forbade it," Andromache says with certainty, as if she has witnessed my entire family history, all two-hundred years of it. She sighs, pats my hand, and adds, "Remembering the island was painful for her."

My eyes fill with tears. I want to be alone. I kiss Andromache's hand and tell her that I hope she finds her nephew. I say goodbye, but as I proceed toward the door, my eye catches a framed photograph on the wall. It shows a dark-skinned girl in traditional clothing, perhaps sixteen years old, dancing between two men. She holds one by the arm, the other with a handkerchief shared between them. The men crouch, performing figures. The girl stands royally upright. She commands. It's the Pyrgousian dance, in which a woman dances like a queen bee while various men come and go around her.

"Is that you in the photo, Madame Andromache?" I ask.

She winks. I emerge into the light of midday. Inside, Andromache waves goodbye. I wave one last time and turn my back. On the way to Mestá I pass fields with mastic trees. From far away they look like bushes with whitewashed trunks. They are so low and humble that they seem to crawl upon the earth like slaves. A villager in overalls rides a motorcycle past me. He is driving with one hand and holding a metal ladder with the other. It's a tall ladder. Tall enough to reach a balcony.

Fethi Paşa *Yalısı (Pembe Yalı)*, Kuzguncuk, where Şemsinur died on July 4th 1881.
Unknown photographer, 1925, family archive.



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"I stumbled upon the Hafız Ağa Library on a pleasant July morning, many years ago. It felt like a treasure trove—its contents just out of reach—as I looked for, in the few hours I had, for any trace of the island's ill-fated entanglement in the Ottoman Empire's long history of slavery. I did not know then that what I was looking for would find me years later—not in the library's books, but through the cherished and mourned family history of its founder and namesake. I am grateful to have been entrusted with the tender story of Şemsinur, whose captivity quietly bore and bound—and still binds—many worlds together."

Ceyda Karamürsel

The Life and Times of Şemsinur

Slavery, Freedom and Gender in the Age of Revolutions

There exists a famous—or, more accurately, infamous—document preserved in the Ottoman State Archives that contains a lengthy list of captives taken from the island of Chios during the early years of the Greek War of Independence. Containing approximately 1,500 entries, this document is possibly only one surviving example of what may have been numerous others.[1] Notably, the list does not serve as a register of those who were captured and enslaved during this violent episode. Instead, it meticulously documents the names of their captors. For instance, a certain Mehmed Ağa from Izmir took six Chiots as captives—three male and three female—one of whom also had a one-year-old son with her. Similarly, Hacı Hüseyin from Manisa returned from the island with six captives, one male and five female, including a woman with a four-month-old child. Somalı Yakup brought back two captives, both women, one of whom had a six-month-old child. Bayındırlı Mehmed took only one captive, a woman who was accompanied by her six-month-old daughter.

The captors did not consist solely of those from the nearby mainland provinces but also included men —for they were unmistakeably all men— that came from farther afield. Konyalı Deli Mehmed, Erzurumlu Osman, Tokatlı Hasan, and İstanbullu Ömer all returned from Chios with their share of human cargo, as did others who journeyed from as far away as Vidin, Tripoli, and Egypt. Some of these men may have belonged to regular troops, but the majority were likely irregulars, members of militia groups, mercenaries, or ordinary individuals seeking to exploit the unfolding crisis for economic gain.

The list extends across pages, offering little detail about the captives themselves apart from their gender and the occasional note of an accompanying infant. Its primary focus rests on documenting the infamous *pençik* levy, the tax exacted by the Ottoman state for each captive, which, in this instance, amounted to a mere 33 piasters per individual.[2] Given that the document originates from the registers of the Office of the Chief Accountant (*Bâb-ı Defterî Baş Muhâsebe Kalemi*), its emphasis on tax records is hardly surprising. What does warrant further explanation, however, is the way in which the Ottoman state classified and processed these transactions explicitly as "slave imports," thereby revealing what the mass enslavement of Chiots was. Far from being an irrational or indiscriminate eruption of violence driven by a "jihadist fury," this was a deliberate act that drew upon established legal-jurisprudential and economic frameworks to achieve two interlinked goals: the effective suppression of an uprising, while generating economic benefits for the state and its intermediaries at the same time.

Occurring just seven years after the Congress of Vienna, which had famously condemned slavery as "repugnant to the principles of humanity and universal morality" and for the first time enshrined

1 Ottoman State Archives (hereafter, BOA), Bâb-ı Defterî Baş Muhâsebe Kalemi Defterleri, D..BŞM.d. 8891, 14 – 24 May 1822.

2 The *pençik* tax (derived from the Persian *panj yak*) originally referred to the allocation of one-fifth of all war booty, including captives, to the sovereign. By the nineteenth century, however, the term had taken on a new financial and administrative meaning, functioning as an *ad valorem* import tax levied specifically on slaves. For a detailed discussion of its origins and evolution within Islamic jurisprudence, see A. Zysow and R. Gleave, "Khums," in Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., edited by P. Bearman et al. (Brill Online, 2016). For its later, specifically nineteenth century significance, see Hakan Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and Its Demise, 1800–1909* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), xiii.

the abolition of the slave trade into international law, the mass enslavement and trafficking of Chiots constituted a flagrant abomination that quickly escalated into a humanitarian crisis, one that set the racial and gender terms of humanitarianism in the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries.[3] Eyewitness accounts from consular officials and other local observers, vividly describing the grim scenes of "men and boys being killed and mutilated in the presence of their wives and mothers ... women being dragged away into captivity ... [and] troops of young girls being driven along, to be sold like cattle,"[4] flooded European newspapers, igniting widespread public outrage that ultimately culminated in an unprecedented act of European intervention.[5]

Beyond its humanitarian implications, this episode also constituted a blatant affront to the emerging legal order established by the Congress system. While the Ottoman Empire was not directly bound by this legal framework—having declined to participate in the Congress, to sign the Final Act, or to join subsequent bilateral and multilateral agreements addressing the slave trade—it had nonetheless been an active participant in the broader evolution of public international law.[6] A series of legal developments throughout the eighteenth century, particularly those concerning the international law regulating wartime captivity, to which the Ottomans were party, had rendered the enslavement of war captives—one of the primary means of just enslavement in Islamic jurisprudence—largely obsolete.[7] In this context, the explicit legal sanctioning of the enslavement of insurgents during the Greek War of Independence stands out as fairly anomalous, even by Ottoman standards. Why, then, did the Ottomans choose this course of action, which they even defended fervently, despite knowing it would place them at odds with the emerging international order?[8] The explanation for this irregularity lies in the intersection of two distinct yet interconnected realms that the Greek War of Independence inadvertently brought together: first, the Ottomans' ambivalent and uneasy relationship with revolutions and the broader revolutionary era,[9] and second, the deep seated economic structure in which slavery and enslavement—in their distinctly gendered forms—were inextricably embedded.

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3 For the full text of Act 15 of the Final Act of the Congress, "Declaration of Powers, on the Abolition of the Slave Trade," see Clive Perry (Ed.), *Consolidated Treaty Series with Index 1648-1919* (Oxford University Press, 1969), 474-475. For slavery and slave trade's entanglement with humanitarianism see Jenny S. Martinez, *The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

4 Alexander M. Vlasto, *A History of the Island of Chios A.D. 70–1822* (London: privately printed by J. Davy and Sons at the Dryden Press, 1913), 162–163. Official and unofficial accounts, news items, as well as documentary collections on the Chios massacre and mass enslavement are numerous, several of which, including Vlasto's relevant chapters, are closely studied by Yianni Cartledge in this volume.

5 Alexis Heraclides, Ada Dialla, *Humanitarian Intervention in the Long Nineteenth Century: Setting the Precedent* (Manchester University Press, 2016), 105–133.

6 Ozan Ozavci, "A Priceless Grace? The Congress of Vienna of 1815, the Ottoman Empire and Historicising the Eastern Question," *The English Historical Review*, Volume 136, Issue 583 (December 2021); Ozavci, "The Ottoman Imperial Gaze: The Greek Revolution of 1821–1832 and a New History of the Eastern Question," *Journal of Modern European History*, Vol. 21, No.2 (2023). For a broader and longer-term perspective on the Ottoman Empire's involvement—albeit not without challenges—in the development of public international law, see Jennifer Pitts, *Boundaries of the International: Law and Empire* (Harvard University Press, 2018), 28–67.

7 Will Smiley, *From Slaves to Prisoners of War: The Ottoman Empire, Russia, and International Law* (Oxford University Press, 2018).

8 Will Smiley, "Rebellion, Sovereignty, and Islamic Law in the Ottoman Age of Revolutions," *Law and History Review*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (May 2022).

9 Yusuf Ziya Karabıçak, "Ottoman Attempts to Define the Rebels During the Greek War of Independence," *Studia Islamica*, Vol. 114 (2019).

As historians have convincingly demonstrated, the Ottoman state traditionally categorized all non-Muslim war captives—whether soldiers or civilians—as slaves, a practice rooted in Islamic jurisprudence, which established the religious conditions necessary to legitimize enslavement.[10] Captive-taking and enslavement were not confined to large-scale wars but extended to smaller skirmishes such as raiding, as well as rebellions against the Muslim Ottoman rule.[11] However, with the advent of the age of revolutions—most notably the French Revolution, which the Ottomans observed with ample unease—and the concurrent 18th-century developments that culminated in the emergence of an international order, this long-standing practice became increasingly at odds with the evolving political landscape of the Ottoman Empire and its growing investment in the emerging inter-state legal frameworks.[12] The evolving conventions, particularly regarding the treatment of prisoners of war, took on concrete form at the turn of the nineteenth century in a series of laws and legal practices that Will Smiley has termed the Ottoman "Law of Release."[13] By this time, the Ottoman state had effectively abandoned its earlier practice of categorizing all non-Muslim war captives as slaves, adopting instead a more nuanced understanding of war captivity, one increasingly informed by emerging international legal norms governing the treatment and eventual release of prisoners.

If this shift had already occurred and the Law of Release had become standard practice by the beginning of the nineteenth century, why, then, did the Ottoman state revert to its earlier methods during the Greek War of Independence, openly sanctioning the enslavement of so-called rebels by anyone willing to participate in the suppression of the revolt? The most straightforward answer lies in the Ottoman state's perception of the conflict: it was regarded, at least initially, not as an international matter subject to inter-state legal frameworks, but as a domestic issue firmly within the empire's sovereign domain. This perspective is evident in the Ottoman state's reaction to foreign protests, particularly as news of the massacre of Chios spread across the globe, igniting widespread public outrage and escalating diplomatic discontent into mounting political pressure. For instance, when confronted by the British Ambassador Lord Strangford about the issue, Reisülküttap Canib Efendi (the chief scribe of the Ottoman court and de facto foreign minister), along with Şeyhülislam Abdülvehhab (the chief religious and legal authority), firmly invoked the Ottoman state's sovereign right to interpret and implement Islamic law in addressing the matter.[14] In essence, then, while the Ottoman state adhered to emerging international legal norms in cases of inter-state conflicts, it consciously excluded instances of domestic unrest—particularly rebellions by non-Muslim ethno-nationalist groups, such as the Serbian revolt of 1804—from these legal developments.[15] Instead, it continued to rely on traditional and often brutal measures for suppressing such uprisings.

10 Will Smiley, "So novel in its character from any thing known": Ottoman Antislavery Policy Under Mahmud II?" *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association,* Vol. 10, No 2 (Fall 2023), 99; Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and its Demise,* xx.

11 For a general overview of the practices in the previous centuries, see Geza David and Pál Fodor (Eds.), *Ransom Slavery along the Ottoman Borders (Early Fifteenth - Early Eighteenth Centuries)*(Brill, 2007).

12 Fatih Yeşil, "Looking at the French Revolution through Ottoman eyes: Ebubekir Ratib Efendi's observations", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies,* Vol. 70, No.2 (2007); Smiley, "So novel in its character from any thing known," 94; Smiley, *From Slaves to Prisoners of War*; Karabıçak, "Ottoman Attempts to Define the Rebels During the Greek War of Independence."

13 Smiley, *From Slaves to Prisoners of War*, 63–79.

14 Smiley, "Rebellion, Sovereignty, and Islamic Law in the Ottoman Age of Revolutions," 229; Hakan Erdem, "'Do not think of the Greeks as agricultural labourers': Ottoman responses to the Greek War of Independence," in Faruk Birtek and T. Dragonas (Eds.), *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey* (Routledge, 2005), 70.

15 Smiley, *From Slaves to Prisoners of War*, 174–176; Smiley, "Rebellion, Sovereignty, and Islamic Law in the Ottoman Age of Revolutions," 230.

Enslavement of not just the combatants but of the general population, especially women and children, remained a deeply entrenched component of these methods.

As Will Smiley has insightfully argued, Sultan Mahmud II's decision to send a fleet to Chios in 1822, with the stated aim of devastating the island, was driven by three key objectives: to assert and reaffirm the Ottoman Empire's sovereign authority, to use the fear of death or enslavement as a means of deterring other rebellious communities, and to incentivize Ottoman forces by granting them opportunities for looting and taking captives. In other words, the Ottoman state's reliance on Islamic jurisprudence and historical legal practices, while giving the appearance of a religiously motivated war, was not rooted in purely religious concerns. Instead, it functioned as a highly pragmatic and ultimately successful political and diplomatic instrument, strategically deployed to assert and solidify Ottoman sovereignty, while simultaneously drawing throngs of men to the island arriving—as vividly evidenced by the archival document that opens this chapter—from both nearby regions and distant provinces.[16] Within mere weeks—the onset of what Yanni Kotsonis aptly described as the "violent birth of nationalism"—tens of thousands of Chiots were killed, while many more were captured and sold into slavery in newly established or repurposed slave markets near conflict zones, as well as in long-standing ones dispersed across especially the empire's urban centers.[17]

While the officially sanctioned and centrally orchestrated massacre on Chios was relatively brief, the upheaval it unleashed on the island caused the highly lucrative enslavement "business" to spiral beyond the Ottoman state's control. Even after the large-scale killing and enslavement had ceased, and the surviving population, scattered across the island's villages, was formally pardoned by the imperial authorities—thus ostensibly regaining their protected *dhimmi* status—local and regional Muslim raiders continued to exploit the chaos. Fully aware that such actions could in no way be justified or defended under its sovereign right to interpret and implement Islamic law—and that they constituted nothing less than unlawful enslavement—the Ottoman state issued, in August or September of 1822, an imperial rescript (*ferman*) accompanied by a religious edict (fetva, Ar. fatwa), which prohibited the further enslavement of Chiots and mandated the return of those who had already been enslaved and transported to the Ottoman mainland.[18] Yet, as Hakan Erdem aptly observed, issuing an edict was one thing; implementing and enforcing it was an entirely different matter.[19] Not only were those who had entered slave owners' households through individual or unofficial means nearly impossible to trace and recover, but many who had reaped substantial profits from the exceptionally high margins of the trade found ways to sustain it without interruption—drawing on the entrenched structures already in place, on the one hand, and exploiting nearby conflicts in the broader region, on the other.

One such contemporaneous conflict, the Caucasus War—unfolding with full intensity on the far end of the Black Sea since 1817—not only drew a significant number of Ottoman traders to the region but also fostered a market where arms, garments, and salt were regularly exchanged for captive

16 Smiley, "Rebellion, Sovereignty, and Islamic Law in the Ottoman Age of Revolutions," 231; Erdem, "'Do not think of the Greeks as agricultural labourers'."

17 Yanni Kotsonis, *The Greek Revolution and the Violent Birth of Nationalism* (Princeton University Press, 2025); Ioannes Makrygiannes, *Memoirs* (Narok, 2001), 198; Drawing on the account of British traveler Robert Walsh, Will Smiley notes—albeit with some reservations—that the total number of slave-tax certificates issued during this period reached 41,000. Smiley, *From Slaves to Prisoners of War*, 177.

18 Erdem, "'Do not think of the Greeks as agricultural labourers'," 70–71.

19 Erdem, "'Do not think of the Greeks as agricultural labourers'," 70.

women and children abducted in conflict zones or during raids. This was to the extent that by the 1820s, the Caucasus War became a conflict funded almost entirely (on the side of the Caucasian clans) by the slave trade with the Ottomans, creating a power vacuum that allowed the trade to thrive during this period. This structure also shaped the fate of enslaved Greeks in the aftermath of the Chios massacre in 1822. Despite Ottoman decrees issued in 1822 and 1823 explicitly prohibiting the transport of Greek captives to Anapa and other Caucasian ports, these locations became notorious hubs for what Joshua White, in an earlier context, termed "slave laundering."[20] An indeterminate number of Greek captives from Chios and elsewhere in Greece were brought to various coastal towns in the Caucasus, where they underwent a process that effectively transformed them into Circassian slaves. This "rebranding" not only increased their market value—Circassian women and children being valued and highly sought after as slaves—but also rendered their enslaved status legally unquestionable. By obscuring their true origins, the process also made their identification and potential reclamation by legal or familial means virtually impossible.

Besides such "laundering" operations, what often rendered captive Greeks, including those from Chios, impossible to trace and reclaim was the captives themselves. Once embedded within a household—whether as servants or, in some cases, as the mistress of the house—they were not always willing to return to their natal families, assuming their families even survived. Like Şemsinur, the central—albeit highly elusive, like all enslaved—protagonist of this section of the volume, many captives rebuilt their lives, begot their own children, formed new kinship ties, and sought to secure their lot as much as their circumstances allowed. Understandably, they were often reluctant to jeopardize the stability and predictability of these newly established lives for the uncertainty of a return to the unknown. While the first-hand accounts documenting the experiences of women and children following the Chios massacre are relatively rare, another, later incident with a different political context but a similar outcome—the Armenian Genocide—offers ample documentary evidence into the reluctance of abducted women and children to return to their natal communities.[21] As Lerna Ekmekcioglu insightfully and cogently demonstrated, some "captive" Armenian women and children actively resisted forcible return, choosing instead to remain where they were, simply because they did not want to trade their relatively stable—and at times bearable—lives for an uncertain and unpredictable future, compounded by the fear of profound stigmatization associated with their "abduction, loss of chastity, abuse at enemy hands, or having had a child by an enemy man," which was often regarded as a "deep disgrace."[22]

That captive or enslaved women and children were often reluctant to return to their natal communities should in no way be interpreted as an indication that they fared better in their host

20 Joshua M. White, "Piracy of the Ottoman Mediterranean: Slave Laundering and Subjecthood," in Judith E. Tucker (Ed.), *The Making of the Modern Mediterranean: Views from the South* (University of California Press, 2019); Şükrü Ilıcak, *"Those Infidel Greeks": The Greek War of Independence through Ottoman Archival Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 368, 666.

21 For one example of such rare first-hand accounts of the Chios massacre, see Stylianos G. Bios, *Η σφαγή της Χίου εις το στόμα του Χιακού λαού* [The Massacre of Chios in the Voice of the Chian People] (Chios: Homerion Cultural Center of the Municipality of Chios, 1989). For examples of Armenian genocide survivors, see Archives of the League of Nations, United Nations Organization, Geneva (ALON-UNOG), Records of the Nansen International Refugee Office, 1920–1947, files C1601/497: Armenian Orphanage, Aleppo – Registry of Inmates – No. 1–100 to No. 1800–1900, which contains detailed personal information and experiences of nearly two thousand individuals—primarily women and children—documented with remarkable specificity.

22 Lerna Ekmekcioglu, "A Climate for Abduction, a Climate for Redemption: The Politics of Inclusion during and after the Armenian Genocide," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 55, No.3 (2013), 536–538.

communities than in their natal ones. Even when they managed to secure stable living circumstances, theirs was far from an easy life. Their enslaved status—even, and at times especially, following manumission—left them perpetually vulnerable to various forms of coercion, both physical and psychological, dangers they were compelled to navigate on a continual basis. Even in the case of Şemsinur, who appears to have secured her owner-turned-mother-in-law Saliha's full support and protection—whether by mere chance of affinity, her own merits, or a combination of both—her life in captivity, both before and after her marriage (despite its exceptional affluence), was not entirely easy. For one, as Nektaria Anastasiadou's fictional piece in this volume vividly illustrates, despite the love and protection that allegedly surrounded her, Şemsinur found herself unexpectedly divorced at the age of 30—through no fault or choice of her own—when her husband, Fethi Ahmed Pasha, was commanded to marry one of the sultan's daughters. It was only a chance event—the untimely death of the latter—that restored love and protection to Şemsinur's life.

Besides these external factors, Şemsinur must have also learned to navigate intricate internal dynamics, expectations, and dangers, as subtly indicated in her depiction and remembrance as "exceptionally kind and selfless"—traits often ascribed to agreeable and dutiful slaves.[23] In a context defined by extreme power disparities, where any sign of unruliness could lead to her being labeled as "mentally ill" or, simply, undesirable—thereby justifying her removal from the household in which she was embedded by means of resale—would she not have felt compelled, whether consciously or unconsciously, to shape herself into the near-saintly figure she was ultimately perceived to be?[24]

The enslaved rarely left behind detailed accounts of their lives. This was particularly true in the Ottoman Empire, where exposing the private lives of their masters—frequently portrayed as their so-called benefactors—was seen as a profound violation of deeply entrenched social norms and deemed highly improper. As a result, much of what we know about the lives of the enslaved comes from second-hand accounts that seldom delve into the complex realities of their experiences.[25] One such example provides a rare glimpse into the life of a Greek slave—a Cretan woman, in this instance—living as an elderly figure on a remote island on the Nile in 1870s Egypt. The account, recorded by Mary Louisa Whately, a British missionary who spent many years in the region, remains limited in scope, focusing primarily on religious matters. Yet, it is significant in offering even a faint outline of her existence, particularly given that she was of a similar age to Şemsinur and had likely experienced a comparable trajectory of captivity and enslavement.

Like Şemsinur's and countless others', the story of this unnamed Cretan woman's enslavement began with sheer violence: she was dragged from her parents' home—one that was presumably already "stained with the blood of fathers and brothers," Whately added—before being compelled to spend the rest of her life among strangers.[26] How she came to reside on the remote island—

23 For a more detailed discussion of this topic in relation to a later, twentieth-century example, see Ceyda Karamursel, "Nergister with Wisteria: Fragments of an Enslaved Life in Istanbul Old and New," in Eve M. Troutt Powell, Israel Gershoni (Eds.), *A Cultural History of the Middle East and North Africa* (Bloomsbury, forthcoming).

24 For several illustrative instances of so-called mental illness documented among manumitted palace slaves, see Betül İpşirli Argıt, *Life after the Harem: Female Palace Slaves, Patronage and the Imperial Ottoman Court* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), 142, 151–152 note 62, 154–155 note 70.

25 For a detailed discussion on this specific limitation, see Y. Hakan Erdem, "Magic, Theft, and Arson: The Life and Death of an Enslaved African Woman in Ottoman İzmit," in Terence Walz and Kenneth M. Cuno (Eds.), *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: Histories of Trans-Saharan Africans in Nineteenth-Century Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Mediterranean* (The American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 125–146.

26 Mary Louisa (M. L.) Whately, *Among the Huts in Egypt: Scenes from Real Life* (Seeley, Jackson & Halliday, 1871), 238.

"unobtrusive … seldom, if ever, touched at by travellers," as the author described it—where she was now living remains unknown. What is certain, however, is that she was brought to Egypt by her captor, a Turk or an Arab in the Turkish service, likely a land-owning elite from the Egyptian countryside, who subsequently married her to a peasant on his estate.[27] Half a century later and eclipsed by numerous subsequent tragedies, the Greek War of Independence had largely faded from public memory by then. Yet, as Whately reminded her readers, many of its victims were not only still alive and, in some cases—like the Cretan woman in this story—still living in captivity, but they also continued to bear the profound sadness and lingering fear that had shaped their lives ever since. Clad in the coarse dark-blue cotton robe and black muslin veil typical of Egyptian country women, speaking Arabic like those around her, and even after having children and grandchildren that arguably alleviated the kinlessness and extreme vulnerability of her condition, the Cretan woman carried a "settled sadness" on her face.[28] The pain of her "terrible parting," the violent severance from her family, never left her, so much so that when Whately asked her about them, the dull indifference that had marked the woman's earlier words shifted into a profound and visible sorrow.[29] Not unlike Şemsinur, she described herself as being "old enough to feel everything" at the time of her capture, but she appeared far from free—perhaps even fearful—to openly discuss what she still managed to remember. Instead, she repeatedly and curtly stated that "all [was] forgotten."[30]

In the account of the Cretan woman, as in the stories of countless others, we are left with fragments—mere traces that offer only a partial view of the experiences, expectations, fears, and motives of the enslaved. These fragments, while invaluable, fall short of providing the fuller understanding that unmediated narratives might have offered. Even in the rare moments when such accounts emerge, however, they too are riddled with challenges, shaped by trauma-induced memory gaps on the one hand, and the incongruity between the fragmented, unsettling experiences of the enslaved and the narrative expectations of their audience on the other.[31] As Eve Troutt Powell has insightfully noted, the enslaved often lacked the means to return home—whether in a physical or metaphorical sense—and similarly, they lacked the space to fully articulate their lives. Their stories, marked by ruptures and silences, seldom come together into a cohesive whole, offering only fragmented glimpses of lives shaped by loss and coercion. Yet, in these fragments, there is also evidence, against all odds, of extraordinary resilience—of not mere survival but of beauty and intimacy. Whether it is a stalk of a flower delicately placed in one's hair, the convivial afternoon gatherings on a summer day to pick and enjoy fresh figs, or the quiet, enduring gaze of a woman watching her beloved from across the Bosporus, as with Şemsinur, these moments remind us that even under the harshest circumstances, lives were reconstructed, lived, and at times, quietly cherished.[32]

27 Whately, *Among the Huts in Egypt,* 244–245.

28 Whately, *Among the Huts in Egypt*, 243.

29 Whately, *Among the Huts in Egypt*, 247.

30 Whately, *Among the Huts in Egypt*, 248–249.

31 Eve M. Troutt Powell, *Tell This in my Memory: Stories of Enslavement from Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Empire* (Stanford University Press, 2012), 77–113.

32 Karamursel, "Nergister with Wisteria"; BOA, İ.MVL, 462 / 20803, 1278.Ş.14 (14 February 1862).

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"As a project, I have found this book particularly exciting. Firstly, it is interdisciplinary, which is unique, and has helped redevelop my own understanding of this topic. Secondly, the editorial team are forward thinking, proactive and supportive in every way. And thirdly, it has been a really engaging, constructive and meaningful place to share my research. All in all, I feel fortunate to have been invited to be part of this volume, and it's deeply rewarding to now see it in print."

Yianni Cartledge

Chios 1822

Betrayal, Grim Realities, and Forced Migration

Abstract

In 1822, the Aegean island of Chios (then an Ottoman possession) was decimated in one of the largest massacres during the nineteenth century. Known as the Chios Massacre, as many as 100,000 Chiot islanders were killed, enslaved, or displaced, firstly by Greek Revolutionaries, and secondly by the retaliatory Ottoman fleet. There is a growing body of literature examining the event and its repercussions during the Greek War of Independence (1821-1832) and for broader Chiot migration, especially to the West. Building on this base, this paper examines the event as a betrayal of a neutral population, while also exploring the grim realities that have often been either overlooked, or, on occasion, romanticised. The massacre additionally spurred on a forced migration of Chiots into Anatolia and other Ottoman centres, often in slavery or under the guise of re-education, which has been hitherto under-examined, and is further explored in this paper.

Chios 1822: Betrayal, Grim Realities, and Forced Migration

Between March and August 1822, the population of the neutral (and vulnerable) island of Chios was decimated by firstly Greek Revolutionaries, who had been aiming to stir revolution, and secondly by the Ottoman fleet. As many as 100,000 Chiots were killed, enslaved, or displaced, with only a few thousand left on the island. One foreign observer described it as 'utter desolation'.[1] Viscount Strangford, the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, echoed this, calling 'The whole of the island…one mass of ruin'.[2] Meanwhile, a Chiot escapee, who had fled to Livorno, noted that 'Till the 10th of May, on which day we left Scio[3], there has been no cessation to murders, conflagrations, and enslaving, with all their accompanying ferocity.'[4] One report from the time lamented that 'an island distinguished beyond all those in the Egean Sea (sic) by cultivation, industry, and riches, is given up to misery and desolation.'[5] Evidently, the horrendous event shocked the international community.

In essence, the Chios Massacre was the largest massacre of the Greek War of Independence (1821-32), and shocked observing nations, while sparking wider discourse and ultimately intervention.[6] However, Chios itself was never the same, and the island did not recover its population, nor its prior

1 Anonymous, *The Modern Traveller*, James Duncan, London, 1826, 154-66, in Nikolaos K. Papagiannakis (ed.), *Chios 1822-1912: From Massacre to Liberation*, The Chian Federation, New York, 2012, 92-103.

2 Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 May 1822, FO 78/108(73), in Theophilus C. Prousis, 'British Embassy Reports on the Greek Uprising in 1821-1822: War of Independence or War of Religion?', *UNF History Faculty Publication*, 21, 2011, 171-222, at 211.

3 *Chios* is also styled as *Scio* in this period.

4 *Address in Behalf of the Greeks, Especially those who have Survived the Late Massacres in Scio*, Edinburgh, 1822,10.

5 'Turkish Descent Upon Scio', *Caledonian Mercury*, Midlothian, 1 June 1822, 4.

6 Yianni Cartledge, 'The Chios Massacre (1822) and early British Christian-humanitarianism', *Historical Research*, 93(259), February 2020, 52-72.

reputation as a neutral and prosperous Aegean hub.[7] Many fled the massacre to nearby islands and to the ports of the Mediterranean, however, the largest movement was ultimately a forced migration of enslaved and captive Chiots to Ottoman ports, with many ending up permanently settled in Anatolia. The event is a unique and devastating episode, which ultimately left the surviving islanders fragmented and grievously betrayed.

This paper seeks to contextualise the Chios Massacre by examining the realities that surrounded it, and the betrayal, mass killing, and forced migration that occurred. This is inspired by an earlier volume on the broader Greek War of Independence that sought to dispel national 'myths' and take new perspectives.[8] The importance of the Chios Massacre's place during the Greek War of Independence, as well as the regularity of violence from both Greek revolutionaries and the Ottomans, are key facets to this exploration, especially when trying to rationalise the event itself. The forced migration that occurred due to the massacre is particularly under focus, especially those that were taken as slaves into Anatolia and to Ottoman ports, or even held in slavery-like situations on Chios itself. Both the indiscriminate and systemic natures of the violence are additionally presented, as along with the socio-political climate of the era, they help unravel integral understandings of how and why the event happened.

There have been a handful of previous studies which have examined the Chios Massacre as a nexus of both humanitarian intervention and migration.[9] However, these have mostly focused on intervention from Western actors and migratory movement to the West. A current study by the author similarly looks at the Chios Massacre and Chiot emigration from the lens of 'forced migration', albeit a forced migration to Britain and the British Empire.[10] This study ultimately builds on this, by looking towards the larger migration that occurred of Chiots into Anatolia and to Ottoman ports. Violence and slavery in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire have similarly been of recent focus by historians, including, notably, the work of Davide Rodogno.[11] This paper aims to contribute to this growing base of literature, which has dealt with many difficult, provocative, and important questions that have often been undiscussed, glossed over, or overtly avoided.

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7 Yianni Cartledge, 'Aegean Islander Migration to the United Kingdom and Australia, 1815-1945: Emigration, Settlement, Community Building, and Integration', PhD thesis, Flinders University, 2024, 99-103.

8 See: Yianni Cartledge & Andrekos Varnava (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Greek War of Independence: Myths, Realities, Legacies and Reflections*, Palgrave Macmillan/Springer Nature, Cham, Switzerland, 2022.

9 See: Cartledge, 'The Chios Massacre (1822) and early British Christian-humanitarianism', 52-72; See: Yianni Cartledge, 'The Chios Massacre and Chiot Emigration: A Coerced Diaspora', in Cartledge & Varnava (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Greek War of Independence*, 217-41; Peter Calvocoressi, 'From Byzantium to Eton: A Memoir of Eight Centuries', *Encounter*, 57(6), 1981, 20-6; Peter Calvocoressi, 'The Anglo-Chiot Diaspora', in *Greece and Great Britain During World War I*, Institute for Balkan Studies, Thessaloniki, 1985, 247-57; Gonda Van Steen, 'The United States as a Haven for Greek Revolutionary War Orphans? Myth and Reality', in Cartledge & Varnava, *New Perspectives on the Greek War of Independence*, 155-79; Evi L. Psarrou, *Ottoman Rule in the Aegean: Chios during the Nineteenth Century. Center – Periphery Relations*, Papazissis Publishers, Athens, 2020; Ceyda Karamürsel, The Life and Times of Şemsinur: Slavery, Freedom and Gender in the Age of Revolutions, *Conversation in the Library*, 2025.

10 See: Yianni Cartledge, 'Chiot Refugees in the British Empire after the Chios Massacre (1822)', in Andrekos Varnava, Yianni Cartledge & Evan Smith (eds.), *Forced Migration: Exiles and Refugees in the UK and the British Empire, 1810s-1940s*, Brill, forthcoming 2024/25.

11 See: Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in The Ottoman Empire 1815-1914*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2011.

The concepts of 'betrayal', 'realities', and 'forced migration' guide this study. These three terms can be highly contentious, somewhat subjective, although aptly descriptive of the events of 1822. Firstly, 'betrayal' can be taken as a multifaceted act, that injures or undermines a relationship, and can span from breaking trust and confidentiality, to committing genocide, and be enacted through apostasy, treason, collaboration, or class.[12] Similarly, 'realities' encompasses the grim nature of the events that occurred, from killing, to enslavement, to systemic destruction, and to mass displacement. The notion itself is often juxtaposed to historical 'myths'.[13] Thirdly, the concept of 'forced', or 'coerced', migration, has been used by scholars as a broad term that can be applied to a range of situations, but not least to those fleeing persecutions, seeking refuge, or taken as slaves or captives.[14] The Chiots of 1822 unwillingly participated in various forms of 'forced migration'.

Additionally, the terms 'massacre', 'slavery', and 'displacement' are used in conjunction with and descriptive of the events surrounding the Chios Massacre. The event itself is an example of all three, and due to its multi-faceted nature, appears to fit somewhere between 'massacre' and 'genocide', with the terms 'mass-killing' or 'genocidal' being somewhat more appropriate.[15] This is especially supported by four elements: firstly, that the orders given were supposedly to 'kill and lay waste' the island;[16] secondly, that many Ottoman Muslims viewed it as a 'holy war';[17] thirdly, that Chiots living in Istanbul were simultaneously executed, and specifically Christian (mostly Orthodox) Chiots were targeted on the island;[18] and finally, that the event was seen as 'revenge' for previous massacres of Muslims by Greek Revolutionaries.[19]

Employed in this paper is an archival interrogation that examines existing records and reports from the time of the Chios Massacre, alongside the pre-existing literature and guiding theoretical concepts. These records fall under various categories, including: official and diplomatic records (such as dispatches and official communications); unofficial records (including newspapers, pamphlets, travel writing, and artistic expression); and memoirs.[20] Although, it should be noted

12 Avishai Margalit, *On Betrayal*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2017, 60-1 & 82-4; Judith N. Shklar, 'Lecture 18: Loyalty and Betrayal', in Judith N. Shklar, Samantha Ashenden & Andreas Hess (eds.), *On Political Obligation*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 2019, 154-65; Samantha Ashenden & Andreas Hess, 'Thick and Thin – or Political? Avishai Margalit and Judith N. Shklar on Betrayal', *Global Intellectual History*, 7(4), 2022, 650-65.

13 See, for example: Basil A. Reid, *Myths and realities of Caribbean history*, University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa, 2009; Wolfram Wette, *The Wehrmacht: history, myth, reality*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2006; Denise Aigle, *The Mongol Empire between myth and reality: studies in anthropological history*, Brill, Leiden, 2015; Yianni Cartledge & Andrekos Varnava, 'The Greek Revolution 200 Years on: New Perspectives and Legacies', in Cartledge & Varnava (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Greek War of Independence*, 3-21.

14 Eric Richards, *The Genesis of International Mass Migration: The British Case, 1750-1900,* Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2018, 3-6.

15 Andrekos Varnava, 'Distinguishing between genocide and ethnic cleansing in the Ottoman Empire (1914-23) and why this matters', *Griffith Law Review*, 2024, 1-18.

16 Helen Long, *Greek Fire: The Massacres of Chios*, Abson Books, Abson, Wick, Bristol, 1992, 81.

17 William St Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free: The Philhellenes in the War of Independence*, 2nd edn., Cambridge Open Book Publishers, Cambridge, 2008, 80-1.

18 Alexander M. Vlasto, *XIAKA or "The History of the Island of Chios from the Earliest Times down to its Destruction by the Turks in 1822"*, original 1840, A.P. Ralli (trans.), privately printed by J. Davy & Sons, London, 1913, 164.

19 Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 65.

20 The author acknowledges that memoirs and oral histories are useful, although often subject to memory, thus need to be taken in consideration with biases, memory errors, and existing primary documents.

that there is a limited range of records pertaining to the Chios Massacre, due to the tumultuous and distant time period (1820s), a lack of ample recording at the time, and a lack of access to existing Ottoman source documents.[21] The majority of extant records were produced by Europeans (usually British) or Americans connected to the events, as well as by the Chiot diaspora, thus there are crucial omissions in the historical record, especially when it comes to the specifics of Ottoman actions during the Chios Massacre, including slavery. Due to the re-education of many captives,[22] it is also difficult to trace the path of many of the Chiots that were taken into Anatolia and never returned, although a few famous examples exist.

In all, this paper expands on the grim nature of the Chios Massacre and its subsequent forced migration, bringing to light many of the realities that are often overlooked, including the killing and forced movement of Chiots. It hopes to contribute to the ongoing and recent surge in discourse around the event, which has offered important insight into the actions of the Greek Revolutionaries and Ottoman forces, and to the broader Greek War of Independence period.

The Chios Massacre: Betrayal & Grim Realities

Chios, a large island in the North Aegean Sea, had historically been a prosperous centre of trade, culture, and movement within the Ottoman Aegean region. Between the fourteenth and nineteenth centuries, an elite cosmopolitan class of merchants formed on the island, who both practiced endogamy and spread themselves throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and Ottoman Empire, creating a diasporic trade network.[23] Being situated close to the Anatolian coast, and near urban port-cities like Izmir, further exacerbated Chios as an economic hub through the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. During the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815), these merchant families gained significant wealth due to being neutral, which allowed them to obtain shipping licenses that were acceptable to both the British and French.[24] This long history as a burgeoning regional centre led Chios to remain neutral during the Greek War of Independence, as the majority of islanders had more to gain from remaining Ottoman, than from joining the proposed Greek nation-state.

The massacre occurred only a year into the Greek War of Independence. In the year leading up to the massacre, there had been a disastrous precedent of violence set. Rodogno has described massacres of Ottoman supporters, Muslim civilians and local Jews by Greek Revolutionaries taking place at Kalavryta, Kalamata, Lakonia, Missolonghi, and Vrachori during the Revolution.[25]

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21 It should be noted that there are likely some (even if only few) existing records held in Ottoman archives, however, the author has not been able to locate these successfully, or access the ones that have been located, due to lack of funding, ability to travel, language constraints with Ottoman Turkish, and lack of clarity in archive catalogues. This is a point of importance that could lead to an expanded study once access has been acquired, and if sufficient new material is uncovered.

22 The re-education often consisted of Turkish language and cultural learning, as well as the basics of Islam, at the request of their masters. The precise extent of the re-education and ultimate aims, however, are still a little vague.

23 See: See: Hieronimo Giustiniani, *History of Chios*, Philip P. Argenti (ed.), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1943.

24 Elena Frangakis-Syrett, 'Greek mercantile activities in the Eastern Mediterranean, 1780-1820', *Balkan Studies*, 28(1), 1987, 73-86, at 84.

25 Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 65.

Additionally, the largest massacre pre-Chios, that of between 8,000-15,000 Muslim men, women, and children, along with their Christian and Jewish supporters, at Tripolitsa (Tripoli) in September 1821, led by Theodoros Kolokotronis, is seen as not only one of the worst atrocities of the War, but also one of the motivating factors for the Ottoman atrocities on Chios.[26] Eye-witness British Philhellene Major-General Thomas Gordon described the massacre vividly: 'A scene ensued of the most horrible description: The conquerors, mad with vindictive rage, spared neither age nor sex – the streets and houses were inundated with blood, and obstructed with heaps of dead bodies.' He also noted that the Greek Revolutionaries' 'insatiable cruelty knew no bounds, and seemed to inspire them with a superhuman energy for evil, which set lassitude at defiance. Every corner was ransacked to discover new victims.'[27]

Reports of Tripolitsa are abundant in particularly British publications from the period. British Philhellene and naval officer Edward Blaquiere, rationalised that after the Greek victory at Tripolitsa, 'the scenes which have followed, it were a task as needless as it would be painful to retrace those which occurred at Tripolizza[28]...about six thousand Turks are said to have perished, and some thousands were made prisoners'.[29] Although, Blaquiere justified it noting that 'Indeed the Turks of this place, had always been proverbial for their oppressions and irascible hatred to Christianity.'[30] Meanwhile, London's *Star* wrote that:

> Great atrocities are said, on what authority we know not, to have been committed by the Greeks on the taking of Tripolizza, and that three thousand inhabitants were put to death after the town had capitulated. If such excesses have been committed, every one must regret that so good a cause has been stained by such a crime; but the war between the Greeks and the Turks has from its commencement been a war of extermination.[31]

The *Imperial Weekly Gazette* reported that in one episode:

> nearly three thousand souls, the majority consisting of women and children, were marched from the Greek camps... to a sort of gorge, on one side of the town, where they were all stripped naked, and most horribly butchered. The pregnant women had their bellies ripped open. Many of them had their heads struck off, and the heads of some dogs having been struck off, they...[32]

The paper purposely avoided further description as it was noted that 'The circumstances omitted are too atrocious for publication'.[33] The graphic nature of these reports ultimately illustrated the shocking nature of Tripolitsa, which would have aroused the anger of Ottoman authorities.

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26 Christopher M. Woodhouse, *The Greek War of Independence: Its Historical Setting*, Russell & Russell, New York, 1975, 77-8 & 87-8; Cartledge, 'The Chios Massacre (1822) and early British Christian-humanitarianism', 56.

27 Thomas Gordon, *History of the Greek Revolution*, Vol. I, William Blackwood, Edinburgh, & T. Cadell, London, 1832, 244-5.

28 *Tripolitsa* has also been historically styled as *Tripolizza* and is currently named *Tripoli*.

29 Edward Blaquiere, *The Greek Revolution: Its Origin and Progress*, W.B. Whittaker, London, 1824, 146.

30 Blaquiere, *The Greek Revolution*, 148-9

31 *Star*, London, 27 December 1821, 2.

32 *Imperial Weekly Gazette*, London, 29 December 1821, 4.

33 *Imperial Weekly Gazette*, London, 29 December 1821, 4.

It should be noted that the Greek Revolutionaries themselves were not a unified group. There were a number of ideologically opposed and regionally distinct factions, with different goals, creating fluid definitions of what it meant to be a Revolutionary. These included the Roumeliots of mainland Greece; the wealthy shipowners of the Aegean islands, particularly from Hydra, Spetses, and Psara; the Klephts, who acted as a guerilla force; the fiercely independent Maniots of Mani Peninsula; and the Souliots, who were a confederation of Orthodox Albanians clans; among others. Philhellenic volunteers and diaspora Greek idealists (such as the *Fililiki Eteria*) can also be counted among these disparate groups. These 'Revolutionaries' were often united in name only, and in their position against the Ottoman Empire. This is best seen in the 'civil wars' that occurred between them throughout the course of the Greek War of Independence, as well as the assassination of the first Greek 'president' (governor) Ioannis Kapodistrias by the Maniots in 1831.[34] The term 'Revolutionaries' in this paper is used as a descriptive measure, however, the extent that the actors of the Chios Massacre (especially those from Samos) were linked to the mainland Revolutionaries is disputable.

The Massacre

The Chios Massacre can be seen as three stages, or as Helen Long purported, 'three invasions', with the second and third stage consisting of the bulk of the destruction.[35] The first stage was a year earlier than the core events, occurring in April 1821, just after the outbreak of the Greek Revolution, and consisted of the Hydriot fleet under Iakovos Tombazis arriving at Chios.[36] Tombazis wanted to stir revolution on Chios but did not receive support from the island's *demogerontes* (elected local elites).[37] The seed planted by Tombazis carried over into the following year, with Revolutionaries based in Morea and Hydra shifting their plans from an 'agitation' to an 'invasion' of Chios by 28 December 1821.[38]

The second stage is generally seen as the official beginning of the Chios Massacre. In early March 1822, Greek Revolutionaries based on the nearby island of Samos commenced the plan for a 'liberation' of Chios from the Ottomans, which came in the form of an invasion and occupation. The force landed at Karfas, 7 kilometres south of Chios' main town (known as 'Hora' or 'Kastro') and defeated the Ottoman garrison. After this, the Revolutionaries set fire to the Customs House, and began attacking Muslim establishments, including mosques and coffeehouses. Once finished, the Samians were joined by Revolutionaries from Psara, and the joint force turned their violence on both Orthodox and Catholic Chiots, who had not shared their enthusiasm for the Revolution, nor welcomed their new occupation.[39] The violence of the Revolutionaries included targeted robberies of wealthy locals and Orthodox churches, the burning of Venetian warehouses, and widespread

34 This includes the Greek civil wars of 1823-1824, and 1824-1825. See: Cartledge & Varnava, 'The Greek Revolution 200 Years on', 3-21.

35 See the key work: Long, *Greek Fire*.

36 Vlasto, *XIAKA*, 145.

37 Long, *Greek Fire*, 45-57.

38 Philip P. Argenti (ed.), *The Massacres of Chios: Described in Contemporary Diplomatic Reports*, The Bodley Head, London, 1932, xi.

39 Vlasto, *XIAKA*, 158-9.

rape.[40] The violent behaviour was consistent with their mainland counterparts who had conducted massacres like Tripolitsa. However, it was portrayed in Western reports as a liberation: 'The people of the rich island of Scio, (which contains about 100,000 inhabitants), assisted by those of Samos, have defeated the Turks and driven them into the fortress, which, it appeared, could not hold out for long.'[41] However, Chios massacre escapee Christophorus Plato Castanis saw it as an invasion, and reminisced that 'The magistrates and ecclesiastics refused to communicate with the Samians, except to order them in Christ's name to evacuate the island and not to exasperate the Mussulmans. The Archbishop from his dungeon, promulgated a general excommunication against all Greek invaders, but to no purpose.'[42] Similarly, these same elites had attempted to bribe Tombazis to leave the island a year earlier.[43] This displayed that Chios' elites foresaw the possible chain of events that the Revolutionaries' invasions could trigger.

This invasion was led and instigated by Lykourgos Logothetis of Samos and Antonios Bournias of Chios. Both Logothetis and Bournias had planned the invasion alongside Phanariot Dimitrios Ypsilantis (with possible input from the *Filiki Eteria* via his brother Dimitrios) and Chiot elite Alexander Ralli.[44] Another elite, Stephano Ralli, was later arrested and imprisoned due to their involvement in the events.[45] Despite the extent and formalities of their plans being mostly unknown, the involvement of Chiots and their fellow Aegean islanders in the invasion, marked one of the earliest instances of betrayal against the neutral population during the Greek Revolution. St Clair argued that the 'Revolutionaries' from Samos conducted their actions as they were trying to bait the Ottomans into committing an atrocity, to help appeal the cause of the Greeks to the international community and radicalise the wealthy Chiots for the Revolution. This was coupled with historical jealousies driven by Samos' relative poverty, compared to Chios' prosperity.[46] In addition to this, it is also plausible that many Samians (who were likely a mixed group of Aegean Islander 'brigands', acting in a similar vein to the mainland Klephts) saw an opportunity for financial and material gain by raiding and plundering Chios, under the guise of 'Revolution'.

The third, and most destructive, stage began with the Ottomans aiming to retake Chios from the Revolutionaries. On 11 April 1822, the Ottomans offered the Revolutionaries eight hours to surrender and be pardoned. At the same time, many Chiots of the working class, who could foresee a catastrophe, began fleeing the island or taking refuge in consulates.[47] The Revolutionaries rejected the Sultan's offer, and on 12 April, Kapudan Kara-Ali Pasha, grand admiral of the Ottoman fleet, began his offensive, and launched 7,000 men (some accounts are as high as 13,000) onto the island with orders 'to kill and lay waste the land.'[48] Allegedly, Governor Vaïd Pasha declared that 'Every

40 Argenti, *The Massacres of Chios*, xx-xxi; Long, *Greek Fire*, 68-71; Charles A. Frazee, 'The Greek Catholic Islanders and the Revolution of 1821', *Eastern European Quarterly*, 13(3), 1979, 315-26, at 321.

41 *Niles' Weekly Register*, XXII, Baltimore, 6 July 1822, 295, in Papagiannakis (ed.), *Chios 1822-1912*, 32-3.

42 Christophorus Plato Castanis, *The Greek Exile*, Lippincott, Grambo & Co., Philadelphia, 1851, 26-7.

43 Castanis, *The Greek Exile*, 26.

44 Long, *Greek Fire*, 59; Vlasto, *XIAKA*, 153-4.

45 'French Papers', *Standard*, 240, London, 23 February 1828, 1; 'French Papers', *Morning Chronicle*, London, 23 February 1828; 'Turkey – Constantinople Jan. 11', *Standard*, London, 21 February 1828.

46 St Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, 79.

47 Argenti, *The Massacres of Chios*, xxiii-xxiv.

48 Long, *Greek Fire*, 81.

Chian deserves death.'[49] The Revolutionaries, to avoid combat with the Ottomans, fled to the close island of Psara, which left the Chiots vulnerable. [50] Strangford confirmed this, 'The Samiote Greeks, whose unfortunate expedition to Chios has been the cause of the calamity which has overwhelmed that once happy and flourishing island, took no part in the combat, and basely fled to Psara, hastily embarking on the side opposite to that where the Turkish troops landed.'[51] Further to this, the Revolutionaries supposedly spread rumours on the mainland 'that the Chians had behaved with cowardice, and ascribed their own failure to Chian faint-heartedness!'[52]

The Ottomans proceeded to decimate the island, with numbers close to 100,000 being killed, displaced, or enslaved.[53] One observer, likely from the French consulate, noted that 'The Turks then took possession of the town, and committed a thousand enormities' and another account noted that 'the misfortune is, that a population of above 100,000 souls, who would never have revolted of their own accord against a Government by which they were treated with special favour, has been led by them to ruin.'[54] Blaquiere concurred with this, noting that the Ottomans 'Having massacred every soul, whether men, women, or children, whom they found in the town, the Turks first plundered and then set fire to it, and watched the flames until not a house was left, except those of the foreign consuls.'[55] By 25 April, Strangford reported that:

> ...The Turkish expedition against Chios has been successful. We are yet without complete details of this transaction, but from all that can be collected, it seems to have been productive of dreadful scenes of carnage on both sides. On the first appearance of the kapudan pasha's formidable fleet, the Greeks who were stationed between Chesme, on the mainland, and Chios (to prevent the troops assembled at the former place from crossing over), cut their cables, and effected their escape, leaving Chios to its fate.[56]

These accounts of the massacre have been told on multiple occasions. What also should be acknowledged is that there were some factors, as mentioned, that spoke to elements of systematicity, motivated by revenge. Firstly, the destructive orders by Kara-Ali Pasha and Vaïd Pasha, if true and not embellishments, show a clear intent to destroy the island and its inhabitants in the minds of the Ottoman officials. This may have translated to an ideology present amongst Muslims in the Ottoman Empire, as St Clair suggested, the massacre may have been part of a larger, religiously motivated reaction to the Revolution, with Muslims from Anatolia seeing it as a 'holy war' and crossing over in

49 Argenti, *The Massacres of Chios*, xxv.

50 Strangford to Castlereagh, FO 78/107(55), 25 April 1822, in Argenti (ed.), *The Massacres of Chios*, 12.

51 Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 April 1822, FO 78/107(55), in Prousis, 'British Embassy Reports on the Greek Uprising in 1821-1822', 210.

52 Argenti, *The Massacres of Chios*, xxv.

53 For a discussion of numbers, see: Cartledge, 'Aegean Islander Migration to the United Kingdom and Australia, 1815-1945', 99; Cartledge, 'The Chios Massacre (1822) and early British Christian-humanitarianism', 57-8; Anthony Brandt, 'Tears of Chios: the slaughter of civilians on this Aegean island finally prompted Europe to help Greece throw off four centuries of Ottoman rule', *Military History*, 33(1), 2016, 24-31, at 29.

54 'Turkish Descent Upon Scio', *Caledonian Mercury*, Midlothian, 1 June 1822, 4.

55 Edward Blaquiere, *The Greek Revolution; Its Origin and Progress*, G. & W.B. Whittaker, London, 1824, 187-204, in Papagiannakis (ed.), *Chios 1822-1912*, 48-56.

56 Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 April 1822, FO 78/107(55), in Prousis, 'British Embassy Reports on the Greek Uprising in 1821-1822', 209-10.

boats to join the reclamation of Chios.[57] Foreign diplomats also noted the fact that mosques had been desecrated by Revolutionaries at Chios, and in addition to Tripolitsa and similar events, this further motivated the Ottomans.[58] At the same time, Orthodox Chiots in Istanbul were being imprisoned, tortured, and 60 of them (all prominent merchants) were executed by hanging, showing a target on specifically Chiots in the Empire.[59] The carefulness to avoid attacking foreigners (such as the foreign consuls as mentioned by Blaquiere), as well as stories of protection for Catholic Chiots, as negotiated by the French consul, also showed discriminate killing of Christian, especially Orthodox, Chiots.[60] Essentially, the massacre, or mass killing, was a genocidal act of revenge, motivated by the previously discussed massacres of Muslims by Greek Revolutionaries.[61] It also paints Chios as an example made by the Ottoman Empire. It should also be noted that some Chiots were purposely kept on the island, to tend to the mastic plantations, which were a valuable commodity for the Empire.

The disturbing realities of the massacre were discussed widely, especially in British and American newspapers. The *Caledonian Mercury* described the destruction of the Ottoman troops: 'They (the Ottomans) set fire to the Greek quarter, and to that of the Catholics: all the houses were plundered and dismantled, the churched profaned, and even the dead unburied and scattered about the streets.'[62] Other papers published appeals from Chiot merchants living in port cities, aiming to raise awareness and garner Western support. One letter from 'Greeks at Constantinople' read 'Who can, without shuddering, read of the total ruin, the universal desolation, of our famed and once happy isle (Scio); the destruction of all its inhabitants, nearly one hundred thousand, who… have fallen victims to the sword, to fire, hunger, and slavery – that worst of all evils?'[63] Chiots in Livorno similarly noted that 'it was one continued scene of murder, conflagration, and plunder, both in country and town…All the women were sent into slavery; the men and male children (above 12 years of age) were massacred…The number of slain amounted…to 25,000; of captives, to 30,000.'[64] One account found its way into *Paulson's American Daily Advertiser*, which had claimed to come from an American witness that was now residing in Izmir, and that 'it will be seen that the European accounts have not exaggerated the horrid excesses of the Turks towards the Greeks. The unparalleled massacre at Scio is confirmed.' The account stated that 'All the men in Scio have been killed, and all the women and children made slaves. Not content with this, the Government at Constantinople are beheading the poor Sciots as fast as they can find them, although residents in that place for thirty of forty years.'[65] Echoing this, Rev Henry Daniel Leeves of the British and Foreign Bible Society based in Istanbul, Izmir, and Athens, visited Chios in September 1822 and wrote that

57 St Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, 80-1.

58 Strangford to Castlereagh, 26 August 1822, FO 78/109(140), in Argenti (ed.), *The Massacres of Chios*, 28-9.

59 Vlasto, *XIAKA*, 164; Massacre of the Greek Hostages', *Aberdeen Press & Journal*, Aberdeen, 10 July 1822, 4.

60 Charles Frazee noted that: 'The attack on Chios saw the Orthodox community suffer the more severe losses. The British ambassador in Istanbul wrote his government that the bulk of the Catholic population survived due to foreign protection. Charles A. Frazee, 'The Greek Catholic Islanders and the Revolution of 1821', *East European Quarterly*, 13(3), 1979, 315-26, at 322.

61 Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 65; Woodhouse, *The Greek War of Independence*, 77-8 & 87-8; Varnava, 'Distinguishing between genocide and ethnic cleansing in the Ottoman Empire (1914-23) and why this matters', 1-18.

62 'Turkish Descent Upon Scio', *Caledonian Mercury*, Midlothian, 1 June 1822, 4.

63 'Massacre of the Greeks at Constantinople and Scio', *Sun*, London, 28 June 1822, 2.

64 'Massacre of the Greeks at Scio', *News*, London, 7 July 1822, 4.

65 'From Smyrna', *Paulson's American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, 15 August 1822, 1, in Papagiannakis (ed.), *Chios 1822-1912*, 24-6.

he 'walked through the town, which was handsome, and built entirely of stone…One every side were strewed fragments of half-burnt books, manuscripts, and furniture; and, what was most shocking to the feelings, numerous human bodies mouldering in the spots where they fell.'[66]

A pamphlet, published by Philhellenes from Edinburgh (presumably connected to the Edinburgh Philhellenic committee), titled *Address in Behalf of the Greeks, Especially those who have Survived the Late Massacre in Scio*, included a series of letters from Chiots who had experienced and escaped the massacre. One man, identified as 'a Young Greek', wrote that his father and 'two brothers, Theodore and Constantine, and your father-in-law, were amongst the hostages shut up in the castle…they were placed in two lines, and were either hung or put to death with prolonged torments…Our sister Henrietta is a slave; and I have not yet succeeded in discovering to what country of Asia the infamous ravishers have carried her.'[67] Another pamphlet, by Anglican Rev T.S. Hughes, spurred by the execution of Chiot hostages and appealing for Western support for the Greeks, noted that 'Acts of barbarity…had been committed on both sides', but that the Ottomans were 'an infidel exterminating government'.[68]

The Revolutionaries did launch a series of successful counterattacks on the Ottoman fleet docked at Chios between May and June 1822, led by admirals Andreas Miaoulis of Hydra and Konstantinos Kanaris of Psara, and Captain Georgios Pipinos.[69] The Ottomans lost thousands of troops, and Kapudan Kara-Ali Pasha was wounded aboard his ship, and died a day later in Chios' *kastro*. His death was celebrated in Western newspapers.[70] On the death of Kara-Ali, London's *Mirror of the Times* noted that 'Divine vengeance begins to be displayed, and the cause of humanity has found avengers. The Capitan Pacha, that ferocious Mussulman, who plunged all the inhabitants of Scio into the abyss of calamity, no longer exists.'[71] These counterattacks, however, triggered further killings of Chiots in July 1822, especially those that survived in the mastic villages, as Strangford recorded, 'The Turks at Scio were driven to desperation on witnessing the destruction of the Captain Pasha's Ship. They immediately proceeded to wreak their vengeance upon the remainder of the Mastic Villages which had been spared'.[72]

Furthermore, the Ottoman fleet would go on to conduct similar massacres on other islands, such as at Psara (known as the Destruction of Psara) and the Kasos Massacre (conducted by the Egyptian fleet). Both massacres were carried out in June 1824. Psara itself was driven by the success of the Psarian fleet, led by Kanaris, against the Ottomans.[73] The entire population of the island was

66 Henry Daniel Leeves, 'Mediterranean and Black Seas Report', *The Missionary Register*, London, January 1823, 19-20, in Papagiannakis (ed.), *Chios 1822-1912*, 28-30.

67 *Address in Behalf of the Greeks*, 5-6.

68 T.S. Hughes, *An Address to the People of England in the Cause of the Greeks, Occasioned by the Late Inhuman Massacres in the Isle of Scio*, Simpkin & Marshall, London, 1822, 2-6. See also: Robert Chatfield, *An Appeal to the British Public in the Cause of the Persecuted Greeks*, John Hatchard & Son, London, 1822.

69 Long, *Greek Fire*, 97-105.

70 'Greece', *Glasgow Herald*, Glasgow, 9 August 1822, 1.

71 'Postscript', *Mirror of the Times*, London, 27 July 1822, 4.

72 Strangford to Castlereagh, 10 July 1822, FO 78/109(104), in Argenti (ed.), *The Massacres of Chios*, 27.

73 C.M. Woodhouse, *Modern Greece: A Short History*, 4th edn., Faber & Faber, 1986 48-9 & 142.

killed or enslaved.[74] Many Chiots and other refugees that had sought refuge on Psara, were killed or experienced a second displacement during the events.[75]

The Betrayal & Slavery

Essentially, the Chiots were betrayed by both their fellow Greek-speaking Christians, and by the Ottoman administration that they were loyal to. There was also a betrayal from some Chiot compatriots and other Aegean Islanders who had participated (and in some cases led) the invasion by the Revolutionaries. The fleeing of the Revolutionaries, which left the Chiots vulnerable to the Ottoman attack, was a further element of betrayal. This betrayal can be seen as a forced disconnect and isolation between Chios and the broader Aegean community (both Greek and Ottoman), however, in some ways it also fuelled the long-term retainment of the independent Chiot identity, especially amongst those in the merchant diaspora. However, the discussion of identity is beyond the scope of this study.[76]

The violent realities experienced by the Chiots were telling of the ultimate intents of the massacre. In Nea Moni, an eleventh-century Byzantine monastery in Chios' mountains, which was being used as a place of refuge during the massacre, 2,000 Chiots alone were killed in one episode, which was followed by the building being set on fire. Nea Moni is today a UNESCO world heritage site, and the skulls of Chios massacre victims are on display (Image 1).[77] The famous iconographic mosaic of 'The Betrayal' of Jesus Christ by Judas Iscariot fittingly is displayed at the monastery.[78] Both Long, in her study of the massacre, and Vlasto, in his look at Chios' history, also provide lists of 89 notable hostages taken by the Ottomans, with 49 of them being hung, and others being killed after release.[79]

Slavery of women and children became a traumatic reality of the destruction. One letter from a Chiot escapee based in Livorno emphasised the nature of the slavery:

> All the women were sent into slavery, the men and male children above twelve years of age were massacred, the children of the tenderest age, and the most beautiful from among the young women they sent on board the ships, with great pomp and solemnity, under a salute of guns. They circumcised the male children in token of conversion to the Mahometan faith, and then sent off the children, of both sexes, by land to Constantinople, by way of Smyrna, under an escort of a body of Turkish soldiery. Two regiments of Turks had assembled and

74 George Finlay, *History of the Greek Revolution*, II, William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh & London, 1861 Finlay, *History of the Greek Revolution*, II, 49-52; Emmanouil M.L. Economou, Nicholas C. Kyriazis & Annita Prassa, 'The Greek merchant fleet as a national navy during the war of independence 1800-1830', *Munich Personal RePEc Archive (MPRA)*, 76414, 12 February 2016, 1-16, at 10.

75 Finlay, *History of the Greek Revolution*, II, 49.

76 For a discussion of Chiot identity, see: Cartledge, 'Aegean Islander Migration to the United Kingdom and Australia, 1815-1945', 199-220.

77 Long, *Greek Fire*, 92.

78 'The Betrayal', Nea Moni, Chios, mosaic of the inner Narthex, 1043. See: Charles Barber, 'Mimesis and Memory in the Narthex Mosaics at the Nea Moni, Chios', *Art History*, 24(3), 2001, 323-37; Henry Maguire, 'The Mosaics of Nea Moni: An Imperial Reading', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 46, 1992, 205-14.

79 Long, *Greek Fire*, 162-4; Vlasto, *XIAKA*, 169-71.

> shut up, in a place in the country, about seven hundred persons, chiefly peasants, which they meant to divide among themselves as slaves, but not being to agree in the partition, began disputing.[80]

This story was reported widely, and the group of slaves were ultimately massacred due to not being able to be divided fairly among their capturers.[81] Similarly, Strangford, in a dispatch to Castlereagh, noted that 'No quarter was given after the action. Every person taken with arms in his hands was instantly put to death. The women and children have been thrown into slavery.'[82]

The forced conversion of particularly male slaves was a prominent feature of the post-massacre movement of Chiots – many young boys were circumcised, renamed, re-educated, and sold to Muslim families in Anatolia, who raised them, usually in servant roles. Castanis documented his own brief time in slavery, where he was renamed 'Mustapha', performed house duties, laboured, and attended school with other slaves, where they learnt the Turkish language and basics of Islam.[83] Some Chiot slaves eventually rose to prominent positions in Ottoman society, such as Ibrahim Edhem Pasha, Ottoman Grand Vizier between 1877-78, who was originally a member of the Scaramanga family; and Mustapha Khaznadar, prime minister of Tunis from 1837-73, who was born Georgios Kalkias (Halkias) Stravelakis.[84]

Essentially, the number of Chiots that were killed, was surpassed by the number that were taken into Ottoman slavery.[85] Of the between 100,000-120,000 inhabitants of the island, 25,000-30,000 were killed, between 30,000-45,000 were captured or enslaved, and about 20,000 were displaced, with 20,000-30,000 left on the island.[86] The large numbers of Chiots taken as slaves, as well as the re-education and forced conversions many children underwent, were used as a further call to action by Chiot writers trying to engage particularly British (and likely Philhellenic) support, such as when:

> 85 (men) in Scio were hung outside the castle, in that very square where so many of the slaves were placed, in sight of the Turkish fleet, who had their decks covered with Greek slaves…call, dear countrymen, your attention to the miserable naked state of thousands of our Sciots, with which the markets here, at Smyrna, and Scio, are glutted. Picture to yourselves children of the tenderest age…driven about with only a piece of cloth round their

80 *Address in Behalf of the Greeks,* 10-1.

81 'Massacre of the Greeks at Scio', *News*, London, 7 July 1822, 4.

82 Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 April 1822, FO 78/107(55), in Prousis, 'British Embassy Reports on the Greek Uprising in 1821-1822', 210.

83 Castanis, *The Greek Exile*, 44-58.

84 Eldem Edhem, 'Greece and the Greeks in Ottoman History and Turkish Historiography', *The Historical Review/La Revue Historique*, 6, 2009, 27-40; Antonios Chaldeos, 'The Greek community in Tunis between 1803 and 1881: Aspects of its demographics and its role in the local economic and political context', *The Journal of North African Studies*, 24(6), 2019, 892-4; Antonis Chaldeos, 'George Stravelakis: The Enslaved Greek who Became Ruler of Tunisia', *Greek Reporter*, 2 July 2021.

85 See reports such as: 'Massacre of the Greeks at Scio', *News*, London, 7 July 1822, 4.

86 Cartledge, 'The Chios Massacre (1822) and early British Christian-humanitarianism', 57-8; Prousis, 'British Embassy Reports on the Greek Uprising in 1821-1822', 184-5. Strangford noted that he had heard numbers of up to 45,000 killed, as reported by Naxiot soldiers: Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 May 1822, FO 78/108(75), in Argenti (ed.), *The Massacres of Chios*, 21-3; while Franci Werry, British Consul in Izmir, suggested that the numbers killed were lower, at 12,000 (although, this was on 1 June 1822, and the massacre continued in a smaller scale beyond this date): Werry to Levant Company London, 1 June 1822, Izmir, in Argenti (ed.), *The Massacres of Chios*, 40-1.

> infant limbs, without shoes or any other covering, having nothing to live upon but a piece of bread thrown to them by their inhuman keeps – ill treated by them – sold from one to the other, and all in this deplorable situation, exposed to be brough up in the Mahometan religion, and lose sight of the precepts of our holy religion.[87]

These types of reports also engaged artistic resonance, with painters, poets, and other artists romanticising the struggle of the Chiots. Key pieces included the works of visual artists Eugène Delacroix, Thomas Barker of Bath, Sir Charles L. Eastlake, Joseph Denis Odevaere, and Olfert Dapper, sculptors Hiram Powers and Robert Forrest, and poets Henry Pickering and Victor Hugo, among others.[88] One anonymous August 1822 poem, titled 'The Capture of Scio', published in *Wooler's British Gazette*, wrote:

> Green Scio! There's gloom on thy fair-blowing fields,
> And the shrieks of thy children through hamlet and wood.
> While the tyrant the red sword of massacre wields,
> And steeps the bright tents of thy valleys in blood.
> ...
> There, desolate daughter of Greece, must thou bear
> A bondage, the darkest, the foulest, the worst,
> That e'er fixed soft eyes in a tearless despair,
> And the young heart of innocence wither'd and cure'd.
> And there thou art doom'd to be ever opress'd,
> By the smiles of the tyrant, the taunts of the slave;[89]

Slave narratives and memoirs also became popular written forms conveying lived experiences.[90] The most notable of these being Castanis' 1851 autobiography *The Greek Exile*, which detailed his capture during the Chios massacre, his escape from Ottoman slavery, and migration to the United States. *The Greek Exile* begins with the ominous lament 'That moment of woe, the isle of Scio'.[91] Castanis essentially described the massacre in vivid, but also orientalist, language, emphasising its beginnings on Good Friday, the defacing of icons by Ottoman troops, the execution of hostages, and

87 'Massacre of the Greeks at Constantinople and Scio', *Sun*, London, 28 June 1822, 2.

88 Areti Devetzidis, 'Revolution, Death, Transformation and Art: Delacroix's *Scenes from the Massacres at Chios*', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, special issue, 2013, 209-20; Victor Hugo, 'L'Enfant', XVIII, June 1828, in *Les Orientales: Édition Elzevirienne*, J. Hetzel, Paris, 1869, 102-4; Thomas Barker of Bath, *The Massacre of the Sciotes*, fresco, Doric House, Bath, 1825; Joe Rock, 'Robert Forrest (1789-1852) and his Exhibition on the Calton Hill', *The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 7, 2008, 127-38; Hiram Powers, *The Greek Slave*, marble sculpture, Florence, 1847; Papagiannakis (ed.), *Chios 1822-1912*, 27, 66-75, & 79. See: Cartledge, 'Aegean Islander Migration to the United Kingdom and Australia, 1815-1945', 103; Christopher Helali, 'Devoted to the Cause of Freedom: Jonathan Peckham Miller, Philhellenism, and the Transatlantic Struggle for Liberation', in Cartledge & Varnava (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Greek War of Independence*, 243-70.

89 'The Capture of Scio', *Wooler's British Gazette*, London, 11 August 1822, 5.

90 Steve Frangos, 'Tales of Greek Slavery in 19th Century America', *The National Herald*, New York,s 15 January 2000, 1, 9-10.

91 Castanis, *The Greek Exile*, 11.

the use of beheading on many occasions: 'Before me, stood a Turk, holding the trunkless head of one of our neighbours…The dead were beheaded and searched.'[92]

Forced Migration & Aftermath

While there is a growing base of research on Chiot emigration during and after the massacre, with a strong focus on the movement to the West, little is said on the eastward migration. According to Ottoman customs authorities' reports, this was the largest movement from the island during and post-massacre, with 41,000 arriving at Ottoman ports.[93] Izmir, Kuşadası, possibly Thessaloniki, Trabzon, and nearby islands, such as Psara, were the logical ports of arrival, and many of these Chiots, particularly those in slavery, remained within the Ottoman region. It should be noted, though, that a portion of those, especially who fled freely to Aegean islands, eventually migrated westward – there was no one direction of mobility. A key group of merchant families did end up in Egypt as well.[94]

Chiot slaves ultimately ended up in two places before disappearing into the empire. Firstly, most ended up destined for the markets of Istanbul. St Clair noted that Chiot women were sold for around £30 each in Istanbul, almost double the price of female African slaves who had come to the city via the trans-Saharan slave trade.[95] American anti-slavery advocate Dr Richard Robert Madden was an eye-witness to the slave markets, and noted that 'The poor Greek, women were huddled together: I saw seven or eight in one cell, stretched on the floor…some of them were from Scio (Chios), others from Ispara (Psara); they had nothing in common but despair!'[96] Castanis claimed that Chiot women were being bought for $3-$4 by Jews and resold for $1,000, however, this observation was an antisemitic exaggeration.[97] Castanis also went on to claim that Jews, Armenians and the French were buying and selling previously Chiot-owned luxury items, and trading them to the United States and throughout Europe.[98]

Secondly, many were held in Chios by Muslim locals and post-massacre occupiers. It is apparent that members of the Ottoman fleet occupied Chios' main town for a short time after the massacre, where many kept and sold slaves. This was the case for Castanis, who with his master Soliman Aga, resided 'in one of the dwellings, in the broad area of the citadel, occupied only by the Turks.'[99] Strangford noted that 'The kapudan pasha has left a considerable body of troops on the island, who will, I fear, pursue the work of destruction to the very utmost.'[100] Strangford later argued in July 1822

92 Castanis, *The Greek Exile*, 33-4 * 40-3.

93 Long, *Greek Fire*, 88.

94 See: Alexander Kitroeff, *The Greeks and the Making of Modern Egypt*, The American University in Cairo Press, Cairo & New York, 2019.

95 St Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, 228-9.

96 'The Slave Market at Constantinople', *Vermont Gazette*, XX(39), 8 September 1829, from Richard Robert Madden, Travels in Turkey, Egypt, Nubia and Palestine, 1, Henry Colburn, London, 1829, 5-8.

97 Castanis, *The Greek Exile*, 44-5.

98 Castanis, *The Greek Exile*, 45.

99 Castanis, *The Greek Exile*, 44.

100 Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 April 1822, FO 78/107(55), in Prousis, 'British Embassy Reports on the Greek Uprising in 1821-1822', 210.

that 'It is evident from the vast numbers of Asiatic Turks which are pouring into Scio, that it is the intention of the Porte to replace the Greek Population of that Island, which have been banished or destroyed, by Mussulman Settlers.'[101] Although, he also noted that this was followed by a famine which made these settlements unsuccessful.



Barca con i Greci fuggitivi dalla strage di Sciò, 1835,
Francesco Hayez (1791-1882), Boat with Greeks Fleeing the Massacre of Chios,
oil on canvas, 27.5 x 36 cm, Florence, Uffizi Galleries, Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Pitti.

101 Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 July 1822, FO 78/109(114), in Argenti (ed.), *The Massacres of Chios*, 27-8.

Importantly, however, the sale of Chiot slaves only was allowed in Istanbul for a short time. On 20 June 1822, a Sultana (sister to the Grand Signor) sent 'an Imperial Order…to the Slave-market prohibiting the further sale of Sciot Captives…(she) expressed herself indignant at the cruelties which have been exercised there (Chios), and which she attributes to the mismanagement of the Pasha', according to a dispatch from Strangford.[102] This was done 'to save the innocent inhabitants of Scio who have been conducted to this place, many of whom have been sent back to the Island at her expense.'[103] This is important as it displays that there were criticisms around the handling of Chios by the Ottoman fleet coming from the Ottoman imperial authorities.

Chios' notarial registers noted a number of ways that surviving Chiot families found, redeemed, or received inheritances from enslaved relatives, as well as began rebuilding society.

A. Finding and paying a sum of money to redeem enslaved relatives.

B. Allocate an inherited share in the movable and immovable property of the people who survived, were captured or are missing.

C. Appointment of trustees/administrators of alienated property with the aim of finding missing (mainly enslaved people) relatives.

D. Entering into a second marriage after the absence of the missing or enslaved spouse.

E. Return of converts to Islam and claiming their right to the family property.

F. Need for the restoration of churches and Orthodox institutions after the atrocities and desecration suffered by the Orthodox church.[104]

One example was of a man named Pantelis N. Pouleres of Kallimasia who in 1829 paid 1,500 grossia (currency used by the Greek Revolutionary government) to free his son Kostantis from slavery, as noted in a letter to a certain Stamatis Likaris.[105] Similarly, some Chiots appointed trustees to look after their estates so that they could search for and hopefully free relatives, such as Ploumou N. Krithinas, who appointed the deacon Michalis N. Metonis as her trustee, while she searched for her enslaved daughter in March 1826.[106] At the same time, in order to maintain their possessions, the surviving Chiots claimed the properties of missing relatives, such as the Boudas family in 1828, who had lost their brothers Dimitrios N. Boudas and Stamatis N. Boudas during the massacre.[107] Very few Chiots returned to Chios, especially those that were forcibly taken into Anatolia, and presumably most that were taken were assimilated into Ottoman Turkish life. This is testified to by Chios' population numbers, which did not recover during the nineteenth century, as only 20,000 residents were recorded in 1831, and 40,000 recorded between 1881-93.[108] In 1847, however, two brothers did return to the island, Ioannis and Stamatis, sons of Hatzi Giorgis tou Michali Vroulliotis,

102 Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 June 1822, FO 78/108(93), in Argenti (ed.), *The Massacres of Chios*, 24-5.

103 Strangford to Castlereagh, 25 June 1822, FO 78/108(93), in Argenti (ed.), *The Massacres of Chios*, 25.

104 Οι νοταριακοί κώδικες της Χίου μαρτυρούν [The notarial codices of Chios' martyrs], ΓΑΚ Chios, 2022, A-F.

105 Οι νοταριακοί κώδικες της Χίου μαρτυρούν, A.

106 Οι νοταριακοί κώδικες της Χίου μαρτυρούν, C.

107 Οι νοταριακοί κώδικες της Χίου μαρτυρούν, B.

108 Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914: Demographics and Social Characteristics*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Wisconsin, 1985, 108-51; Ottoman Census, 1881/82-1893: Sakız Sancag 1, Sancak: Sakız, Vilayet: Cezair-i Bahr-ı Sefid.

who were taken as children, converted to Islam, and raised in Anatolia by Bakırcı Osman. These brothers ultimately claimed their family's property in Efthymiana, which appeared to be a successful process.[109]

Conclusion

In all, the Chios Massacre was an example of betrayal, violence, and forced migration. The Chiots were not only betrayed by the Ottoman Empire, but were initially betrayed by the Greek Revolutionaries, who not only violently invaded the island, but also fled when the Ottoman fleet arrived. This led to the violent and grim realities of murder, enslavement, and destruction that proceeded, and continued. The shock that the massacre caused went on to spur Philhellenic and romanticist sentiments from Western observers.

Systematic killings and enslavement were also evident, especially given the nature of the killings by the Ottoman fleet, as well as the targets on Chiots in Istanbul, and the brief occupation and resettlement of the island. These can be seen as examples of a purposeful mass killing, with genocidal acts committed. The massacre had many motivations, although vengeance was the clearest, especially for past massacres carried out by Greek Revolutionaries against Ottoman Muslims, such as at Tripolitsa. Chios was also an 'example' made by the Ottomans, which no doubt sent a clear message to the other neutral Ottoman Aegean Islands. Ultimately, the Chiots were unfortunately caught in between violent Revolutionaries and vengeful Ottomans and suffered the brunt of the destruction from both parties.

Stories like Castanis and those portrayed in newspapers and diplomatic dispatches are important windows into the tragedies and long-term impacts of the events on Chios. Similarly, the story of Şemsinur Hanım, who was a 12-year-old Orthodox Chiot girl that was taken into slavery and sold in Istanbul, is further dealt with in this volume, and provides an important look at the consequences of the Chios Massacre and similar events.



109 Οι νοταριακοί κώδικες της Χίου μαρτυρούν, Ε.

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"It is with great pleasure and honour that I participate in this Muhabbet—a significant contribution to the historiography of Chios and Rhodes and to the study of foundations and libraries in the Ottoman Empire with an introduction to a truly precious Ottoman manuscript library in Rhodes through the insights of esteemed scholars, distinguished professors, and leading researchers. Participating in such a prestigious scholarly endeavor has been both a privilege and a deeply rewarding experience, not least by getting to know my fellow islander Şemsinur, who was a Chiotissa when she was born. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with the initiator of the Muhabbet, Tarık Tüten, whose professionalism, dedication, and thoughtful guidance greatly enhanced the making of the volume. His unwavering commitment to excellence was evident throughout every stage of the project. I sincerely thank Tarık for his trust and support, as well as my fellow collaborators for the enriching exchange of ideas."

Evi Psarrou

* With the kind support of
International Journal of Social Science And Human Research

Seeking Greek Independence in the Aegean
an Unsuccessful Venture in 1822*

Abstract

The aim of the present study is to discuss one of the first episodes of the Greek War of Independence that took place in the Aegean Sea in 1822, which ended at the devastation of Chios Island and the defeat of its inhabitants. In this framework the organization of the campaign is examined, the course of the military operations and the final outcome. The importance of the study lies in the fact that it examines the events not in the light of the local history of Chios island but in the broader context of the Greek Revolution and the impact the events had on European public opinion.

Introduction

In 1566 Chios came under the Ottoman rule. The Sultans were favourable disposed towards their subjects granting them special privileges relevant to religion, taxation, regulation of trade and litigation. Five reputable Christian administrators were responsible for the common affairs of the people and also served as mediators between the Ottoman officers of the island and the Chiots. The Chiot community was well organised and the public affairs well managed by these administrators who were called Demogerontes

The Greek expedition to Chios, the wrong decision and the great losses

In the first years of the Greek War of Independence the Greeks tried to involve the Chiots in the Revolutionary movement hoping that the wealthy Chiots living in the island and abroad would join the revolution and contribute financially in the maintenance expenses of the Greek fleet.[1] In July 1821 I. Rallis, a Chiot merchant alongside with Lykourgos Logothetis, a Samian fighter, were charged by Prince Ypsilantis to organise the revolution in Chios.[2] However, the Chiots were not prepared to join the revolution and two of the most eminent Chiot citizens travelled to Psara where they met the admiral of the Greek fleet Tompazes and tried to dissuade him from his plans to involve Chios in the Greek uprising. However their efforts were not successful. On 27th April 1821, Tompazes with 25 Greek ships arrived in a small port, called Vrysi Pasha, and immediately he sent a message to the Demogerontes urging them to spread the idea of rebellion amongst the Chiots. The Chiot elders expressed their contrast to Tompazes' plans, explaining the reasons and fears of their unwillingness to participate.

In December 1821 Prince Ypsilantis after being informed by Rallis about the Chiots' reactions and having foreseen that the central authority would not be able to support the expedition, he

1 Τομπάζης, Ι. Ν, Συμβολή στην Ιστορία της Ελληνικής Παλιγγενεσίας, Αθήνα, 1902, pp. 36-38.
2 Ypsilantis' correspondence with Rallis and Logothetis is cited in Βλαχογιάννης Ι., Χιακόν Αρχείον, τ. 1, Αθήνα, 1910.

recalled it and he advised Logothetis to postpone his venture to Chios.[3] However, three months later, on the night of 22-23 March 1822, fifteen hundred Samians under the Command of Lycourgos Logothetis and the Chiot Bournias landed in Chios. Shortly after Logothetis started quarrelling with Bournias over the office of the commander-in-chief. Shortly it was revealed that the whole expedition was completely disorganized. There was no unified plan of action and the ammunition the Samians brought with them was very limited.

Although there was an initial success of the Samians who managed to trap the Ottomans in the forte, when the Ottoman fleet arrived with reinforcements, the Samians and the Chiot villagers, a great number of whom had joined the Greek arm forces, retreated from the town followed by the Ottomans who were fighting them. When the ammunition was finished and Lukourgos reckoned that there was not much he can do with his soldiers, the Samians boarded on the ships again and departed on the 8th of April, leaving the Chiots to face the Ottomans without any help. Even worse, the Samians on their departure carried with them jewellery, money, golden objects expensive cloths, and many other valuable things that the Chiots kept in their homes.[4] By the beginning of April 1822, the Sultan had shipped around 4,000 men to Chios. Alongside with the Sultan's troops, a crowd of Ottoman volunteers travelled to Chios. It is beyond the scope of this study to present a detailed account of the atrocities that took place in Chios, but it must be underlined that the executions, the robberies, the pillage and the assaults which occurred in the island during the spring of 1822 was outrageous and appalling.[5]

The Ottomans destructed the island whilst the Greek Revolutionary Government remained ineffectual to react. Some people found refuge in the Consulates. Others tried to flee from the island. They were reaching the coasts hoping to find boats to transfer them to Psara. A. Vlastos supports that the Psarians sent eight ships to take away the fugitives without charge.[6] On the other hand, K. Simopoulos argues that some of the owners of the aforementioned boats refused the Chiots to come on board unless they were very well paid by them.[7]

The Consuls who were at the time in the island were trapped by Vachet Pasha, the civil governor of the island, and unintentionally assisted the Ottomans. Vachet Pasha approached the British, Austrian and French Vice-consuls and asked them to announce to the villagers that he would grant mercy to all the Chiots who would return from the mountains where they were hiding and would laid down their arms. Over a thousand fugitives came out from their hiding places, whom eventually the Ottomans killed, together with the 70 members of a deputation who

3 Ypsilantis in a letter dated 21st December 1821 addressed to Rallis notes: "As the present situation does not favour the venture, you acted well in postponing it and waiting for a better opportunity", Βλαχογιάννης Ι., Χιακόν Αρχείον, τ. 1, p. 18.

4 The local historiographers and the eyewitnesses who survived the massacres have unanimously supported this aspect. The Chiots laid the blame for the disaster of their island on the Samians whom they called fortune hunters, and the Samians in turn accused the Chiots of demonstrating indifference towards the Greek Revolution and of being pro-Ottoman. See also: Σιμόπουλος, Κ., Πως ειδαν οι Ξένοι την Ελλάδα του '21, 1822-1823, τ. Α΄, Αθήνα, 1980, p. 132.

5 Γιατράκου, Μ., " Αναλυτική βιβλιογραφία περί της Επαναστάσεως και της καταστροφής της Χίου", Δελτίον της Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρείας της Ελλάδος, τ. 21, Αθήνα 1978, pp. 273-316. Βικέλας, Δ., Λουκής Λάρας, Αθήνα, 1991. Συγγρός, Α., Απομνημονεύματα, τ. 1-5, Αθήνα: Δημιουργία, 1995.

6 Vlastos A., *History of the island of Chios, A.D. 70-1822*, London 1913, p. 161.

7 Simopoulos, K., *Pos eidan oi ksenoi tin Ellada tou '21,* p. 132

had appeared in front of Vahit Pasha, in order to thank him for his benevolence.[8] The following day, on the 28th of April 1822 the Ottomans hanged all the hostages whom they were keeping in the Fort together with the Metropolitan Bishop of Chios Plato and his deacon.[9]

The Catholics, who survived and witnessed the tragedy, testify that the British consul in Chios was hostile to the Chiots and whilst he had promised them in exchange of great payments, to make arrangements for them to depart from the island, he betrayed and abandoned them to be killed. In contrast the Danish Consul in his effort to assist some of the Chiots was captured by the Ottomans, was eventually hanged. The British ambassador in Constantinople in his report noted that the Ottoman expedition against Chios was successful.[10]

De Coulanges who visited the island in 1854, almost 32 years after the massacres, writes that Chios was in such an awful condition that somebody would assume that the catastrophe occurred just a few days before. [11]

Much criticism was levied against the then president Mavrogordatos and the Greek government, because they had not urgently sent the Greek fleet to assist Chios. The rescue operation arrived too late to save the island; it started with a delay of 13 days whilst the ships because of the unfavourable windy weather reached Psara 8 days later. Thus the Greek fleet reached Chios with a delay of 21 days; by that time Chios was completely ruined.

In June 1822, Konstantinos Kanaris, the Greek admiral, performed a personal daring as he managed to set fire on the Ottoman Admiral's flagship which was anchored in the port of Chios and eventually the High Admiral of the Ottoman fleet was killed. Kanaris became the hero of the Greek Revolution because his act was courageous and full of self-sacrifice. The deed encouraged the revolted Greeks, boosted their revolutionary spirit and satisfied them by way of compensation for the Chiots' suffering. As part of a concerted plan this would have been fully justified, and would have assured the destruction of the Ottoman fleet, but alone and without the co-ordination of the Geek fleet, Kanaris's deed did not serve any purpose in the cause of the island itself.[12]

After June 1822, the Greek naval forces continually raided different parts of Chios. In November 1823 the Greek forces effected a landing in the north of Chios. Another raid was carried out in January 1823 and in October 1823 a landing occurred at Lagkada and Kardamyla supported by 18 Greek ships. Between November 1822 and October 1824, seven or eight raids took place. C. David,

8 Βαχήτ Πασά, Απομνημονεύματα Πολιτικά του Βαχήτ Πασά, Αθήνα 1975. Μήτσης, Ν., Τα συμβάντα στη Χίο από το χέρι του Βαχήτ Πασά, Χίος: Εκδόσεις άλφα πι, 2007.

9 The precise number of the hostages is not known, as the sources do not provide exact information. However, the number should be counted from 63 to 80 persons. The hostages were noble men of the island, honourable persons of good repute and large fortunes. They were put in prison as early as the rumours for a Chiot revolt were spread in 1821. At the same period the Ottoman authorities of the island demanded from the Chiots to hand over to them all the rifles and weapons which they had in their possession.

10 Long, H., Greek Fire, p. 97; Ζολώτας, Γ., Ιστορία της Χίου, τ. 3, p. 103.

11 De Coulanges F., Η Νήσος Χίος, Mémoire sur L' Ile de Chio (1856), Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Καραβία, 1977, p. 223. See also: p. 219. De Coulanges narrates that when he visited Chios in 1854, certain reputable inhabitants revealed to him that in 1822 when the Chiots realised that they could not avoid to get involved in the Revolution, a conspiracy was organised by them in order to hand over the island to France, and they had even approached the French King.

12 The French vice counsel in Chios who was pro-Ottoman in his report to the French Minister of Affairs noted: "had the Greek fleet arrived that crucial moment the triumph over the half defeated enemy would have been complete", translated from the Greek cited in Σιμόπουλος, Κ., Πως είδαν οι Ξένοι την Ελλάδα του '21, p. 147.

the Vice-consul of France at Smyrna and Chios commenting on these naval-landing operations in one of his reports to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs dated 1st December 1822 notes: "their (the Greeks') continual descents on this island do so much harm to their compatriots".[13] This strategy could not serve any useful purpose at that moment, since this policy could cause only more problems to the inhabitants of the island. The Greeks at this period could not have aspired of retaining permanently Chios, because they had neither the forces nor an organised plan for their expeditions. The Ottomans definitely were decisive in maintaining the island under their dominion, because of its wealth and important geographical position.

It is difficult to say how many people were killed or were sold as slaves in the markets of Smyrna, Constantinople and Asia Minor, because there is a considerable variance between the scholars as to the number of the victims. However Dr. K. Frankomichalos in a detailed study brought into light new evidence as far as the population of the island before the events of 1822, the number of the victims, the number of the hostages who were sold as slaves and the number of those who eventually remained in the island.[14] He supports that around 120.000 inhabitants were living in Chios before the massacre, 3.000 of them being Ottomans, 2.000 Catholics and 70-100 being Jews. He raises the citizens of the capital up to 30.000 souls. During the disaster that lasted almost four months, 42.000 were killed, died of hardships, fatal wounds, drowning, epidemic diseases, hunger and suicide; 52.000 were captured and enslaved whilst 23.000 managed to escape from the island and were saved. Frankomichalos estimates that 1800 people remained in the island, 800-900 of whom perished of infections and starvation.[15]

The Liability and the Accusations for the Defeat

The Chiots have been accused of being cowardice, of showing selfishness, of having considered only their own interests and of having shown unwillingness to take a. share in the struggle for the liberty of the rest of the Greeks.[16] However, this might be truthful in a measure, but on the other hand, it became evident that the Chiots had good reasons not to participate from the very first beginning in the Greek Revolution.[17] It was not only the Chiots who denied to participate in the Revolutionary movement as in the mainland of Greece and the Peloponnese many great landowners were opposed to the war of independence for they hesitated to put in risk their own interests. Quite similar was the reaction of the islanders, who were even more justified, as they were exposed to the direct Ottoman threat from the fleet and in such case their defence would be difficult or impossible. [18]

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13 Argenti P., *Diplomatic Archives of Chios*, Cambridge University Press, 1954, vol. I, Doc. 152, pp.41-2, translated by P. Argenti.

14 Φραγκομίχαλος, Κ., Οι Σφαγές της Χίου το 1822. Ποιος ο ακριβής αριθμός των θυμάτων τους, Χίος: Εκδόσεις άλφα –πι, 1999.

15 For a detailed and extensive bibliography on the massacres of Chios in 1822, see: Psarrou, E., *The Administration of Chios 1822-1868: An Aegean island under Ottoman rule*, Ph.D. dissertation, Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies, University of Birmingham, 2003, footnote 89, pp. 47-48.

16 J. Genaddios in the introduction of T.E. Dowling's book, *Hellenism in England*, speaks about the "effeminate behaviour" of the Chiots.

17 The notables in Hydra initially appeared to be very skeptical about the uprising and they had many hesitations in rising the standard of revolt.

18 Πεφρής, Ν., Η Χίος στην Εθνεγερσία, Χίος, 1973, p. 91.

Furthermore, many Chiots were living and working in Constantinople and many of their children were sent there to be taught and trained in trade business. If the Chiots were allied with the other Greeks, the lives of these people in Constantinople would be exposed to an imminent danger.

Additionally Chios was entirely depended upon Asia Minor for food supplies,[19] and if the inhabitants would get involved in the revolution, the imports from the opposite coast would be banned and the people would have to face all the consequential problems. Thus, when the outrages began and all the shops closed, the boats ceased to bring provisions from Asia and soon starvation was spread within the island. Furthermore, as Chios was separated from the mainland of Asia only by a narrow strait, the island was exposed to an immediate danger, long before any help by the Greeks could reach them. Once again, this assumption was proved to be true; the Greek navy reached the island after a tremendous delay, which resulted in the death of thousands of Chiots. The Greek leaders, with a very little reflection and with any knowledge of the arts of war, should have realised that if the insurrection was to succeed, rigorous action of naval and military forces would be crucial, especially considering the particular situation of Chios. Additionally, the distance from Hydra, the main base of the Greek fleet's operations, is roughly 160 miles, a considerable voyage before the days of steam. Consequently, not only a landing on the island should have been previously effected with the full support of the fleet, but also previous provisions should have been made to ensure a continual line of communication for protecting the island against the raids of the enemy fleet as well as maintaining a garrison and land forces sufficient to repel any invasion from Asia Minor. However, all these strategical planning and requirements were completely ignored.

The Chiots were not aware of the use of rifles, in contrast to their neighbours, the Psarians who were well trained in the manual exercises, as they had already equipped their ships with guns in order to protect themselves and their merchandise from the pirates of the Aegean and Mediterranean.[20]. The Chiots were trading with Ottoman cities and ports, like Alexandria, Smyrna, and Constantinople, and they were not in contact neither with the islands of the Aegean, nor with the mainland, which later constituted the Greek kingdom. Even if the Chiots were indeed willing to join the Revolution, yet they might have considered the economic loses they would have, since their activities within the Ottoman Empire would be banned after their rebellion.

The Impact of the Events in Europe and the Reaction of the Ottoman Empire

The massacres of Chios were of great influence in enlisting European sympathy, for the cause of the Greek Independence and in securing at last military help for the revolted Greeks. These events may have been the decisive factor that impelled several of the powers to adopt a pro-Hellenic policy.

As it appears from an interview that the Austrian ambassador at Constantinople, Franz Havier, had with the Ottoman High Admiral, Chosrew (*Hüsrev*) Pasha, the Porte was able to appreciate the consequences of Philhellenism throughout the Western world which resulted

19 De Coulanges F., *Η Νήσος Χίος, p. 202. Παπανικολάου, Γ., Σκηνές από την καθημερινή Ζωή στην Τουρκοκρατία, Αθήνα, 1995,* p. 285. Because Tsesme was the main food supplier of Chios, between the island and the opposite coast of Asia Minor the import duties had been abolished.

20 The Psarians and the Hydriots had a merchant marine as well as a navy at the same time.

from the massacre of 1822. Chosrew Pasha when referring to the events of 1822 said to the Austrian envoy "No one knows better than I the irreparable harm we did to ourselves by the catastrophe of Chios... I know that the eyes of Europe are fixed on us...".[21]

After 1822 the Ottomans changed their policy towards the inhabitants of Chios. Thus the High Porte advised the new governor of the island to follow a practise of clemency.[22] The Vice-consul of France at Smyrna who was acting as vice consul at Chios as well, in his report to French Foreign Minister of Affairs, recorded Yusuf Pasha's intentions who was willing to attract the Chiots to return back to their island. "I should like to repopulate this desert"[23] was his saying. Therefore, in 1824 the period of reconstruction began with the Porte's initiative.[24] It is said that the new governor of Chios Yusuf Pasha by official proclamation invited the inhabitants to return.[25]

The Consequences for the Island

The massacre of 1822 extremely diminished the importance of the island, reduced the number of its inhabitants, ruined its trade, destroyed the buildings of the town and the country houses in the area of Kampos, and resulted in the emigration of many people, the majority of which never return back to the island. Chios' previous wealth, industries, and social institutions temporarily disappeared at any rate.

The financial situation of the Chiot community during the period following the massacres was extremely weak. The trade had been interrupted for many years and many important connections were lost to the advantage of Smyrna, which had always been a keen competitor. The economic decline of Chios meant the decrease of the individual wealth and the consequent decrease of the receipts in the property tax and the decline of the custom duties whilst the Demogerontes faced extreme difficulties in collecting the taxes.

After the events of 1822 the social structure in the town of Chios changed, as many of the wealthiest citizens fled, together with the most significant families of the island while many reputable families were wiped out in the catastrophe. The Chiots of the diaspora from 1822 onwards started to contribute in the rebuilding and maintenance of the churches, schools, hospitals and all the philanthropic institutions which came once more under the direct jurisdiction of the Demogerontes.[26] After 1822 within the general economic decline, the Demogerontes who had the management of the communal finances were forced to ask for internal loans from certain "wealthy" inhabitants in order the economic difficulties to be surpassed.[27] It appears that there were times when certain organisations, like monasteries, donated money to the public treasury in

21 Translated by P. Argenti, *Dipolomatic Archives of Chios*, p. xxiii. The original document, Havier's report to Metternich, Minister of Austria's Foreign Affairs, is cited in the same book, vol. I, Doc.156, p. 499.
22 See also: Pasqua, A., *Diary of the events in Chios sent monthly by the vice-council for the Netherlands in Chios, Antonio Pasqua to the Netherlands Minister to the Sublime Porte, Gaspar Testa, 6 May1821-30 November 1828,* 2 vols, manuscript cited in Public Central Library of Chios *"O Koraes"*.
23 Argenti, P., *Diplomatic Archives of Chios,* p. xxiv. The original text is cited in the same book, vol. I, Doc. 149, pp.436-7.
24 Κανελλάκης, Κ., Χιακά Ανάλεκτα, Αθήνα, 1983, p. 51
25 Argenti, P., *Chius Vincta*, p. cxcv, see also p. ccxxxv, pp. cxxvi-cxcvii.
26 About the significant sums of moneys which were presented to the island from subscriptions raised among the Chiots of the Diaspora, there is a manuscript cited in "Koraes" Library (MS.1559, fol. 94)
27 Ζολώτας, Γ., Ιστορία της Χίου, τ. 3, Ι, p. 97.

order the island to meet its expenses.[28] The Europeans helped the Chiot refugees. Especially they were welcome in England where some of their relatives having depart from the island before 1822, had already established their business and commercial firms.

Conclusion

After the Chiots' return back to their island the issue of the massacres was closed. The events of 1822 passed over in silence as the inhabitants decided quietly not to revive distressing memories whilst they started reorganizing their lives within the framework of the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, once the Greek military forces left Chios, the struggle continued for the Greek independence and for the formation of an independent Greek state, but Chios only became part of it ninety years later.

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28 For example, from a manuscript cited in "Koraes" Library (MS 1559, fol. 37), we are informed that in 1842 the monastery of Nea Mone made a generous donation in assistance of the public education.

The Founders

Vision, Piety, Power, Entrepreneurship and Charity



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Three Generations in Ottoman Modernization

Hafız Ahmed Ağa

Rodosîzade Ahmed Fethi Pasha

Said Pasha the Englishman

Introduction

Modernization has long been a conceptual framework for analyzing historical change and societal transformation across diverse contexts. Within the Ottoman historical context, modernization broadly refers to the process through which the empire adopted and integrated the prevailing cultural norms, values, rationalities, scientific advances, and institutional models of its time. This multifaceted transformation found expression in terms such as *cedit* (renewal), *ıslahat* (reform), *tanzimat* (reorganization), and *asrileşme* or *muasırlaşma* (contemporization). Each of these terms reflects distinct yet interconnected aspects of the social, political, institutional, and intellectual shifts that shaped the Ottoman path to modernity. Though early cultural shifts in the Ottoman Empire, notably the Tulip Period, signaled initial modernizing tendencies, substantial institutional and intellectual reforms gained momentum during the *Tanzimat* era (1839–1876). This period marked the Empire's active engagement with Western policies and ideas, signifying a decisive shift towards institutional and societal restructuring.

This chapter explores Ottoman modernization through the experiences and legacies of the Rodosî family, centering on Rodosîzade Ahmed Fethi Pasha, whose life and career form a historical bridge between his father, Rodosî Hafız Ahmed Ağa, and his son-in-law, Said Pasha, known as the Englishman. By tracing this intergenerational trajectory, the chapter analyzes their educational, administrative, and philanthropic contributions, underscoring the significance of personal initiatives and familial traditions as driving forces within the broader modernization movement. Rather than viewing Ottoman modernization merely as the result of centrally mandated governmental policies, the study highlights the substantial impact exerted by individual endeavors, intellectual commitments, and lasting legacies cultivated by prominent bureaucrats and state officials. Through this perspective, the chapter presents a nuanced interpretation of Ottoman modernization as a layered historical process shaped by the interplay of institutional reforms, local engagements, and individual agency.

The Rodosî Family: A Legacy of Imperial Service

The Rodosî family, also known by the lineage title Rodosîzâdes, traces its origins to the island of Rhodes. According to historical sources and epigraphic evidence on family gravestones, the family's involvement in Ottoman service began with the conquest of Rhodes by Suleiman the Lawgiver on December 25, 1522. These sources record that Ahmed Fethi Pasha's great-grandfather participated actively in the campaign, gaining distinction through demonstrated loyalty and military

competence, an achievement that led to his incorporation into the imperial court.[1] In the following generations, the Rodosî lineage sustained this tradition of service through various administrative and military roles within the Ottoman bureaucracy.

According to archival records from the Directorate General of Foundations (*Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü*), particularly the foundation deeds (*vakfiyes*) of the Rodosî Hafız Ahmed Ağa Foundation and the Rodosîzâde Ahmed Fethi Pasha Foundation, as well as inscriptions on gravestones, Hafız Ahmed Ağa's father was Hasan Ağa, whose own father was named Abdullah Ağa. Hasan Ağa's gravestone, located within the burial enclosure (*hazire*) of the Murad Reis Complex in Rhodes, is dated 1772. Its inscription reads:

> *Hüve'l bâkî Rikabdâr-ı hazret-i Şehriyârî Sâbık Hâfız Ahmed Ağa'nın pederleri merhûm ve mağfur ilâ rahmet-i rabbih'l-ğafur Baba Hasan Ağa'nın ruhuna bi-hürmet'l-fâtiha. Sene 1186 (1772).*
>
> He is the Everlasting. For the soul of Baba[2] Hasan Ağa, deceased father of the former *Rikabdar* of His Imperial Majesty Hafız Ahmed Ağa, may God, the All-Forgiving, bestow His mercy upon him. Recite Al-Fatiha. Year 1186 (1772).

Furthermore, Hasan Ağa's name is also commemorated on the fountain inscription in the library courtyard established by Hafız Ahmed Ağa in Rhodes in 1793. The inscription states:

> *Rikabdâr-ı hazreti şehriyâr-ı sâbık / Hâfız Ahmed Ağa'nın pederleri / Merhum Hasan Ağa'nın ruhu / Şâd ola fî sebîlillâh 1212 (1797–1798).*
>
> For the soul of the late Hasan Ağa, father of Hafız Ahmed Ağa, former *Rikabdar* of His Imperial Majesty, may his spirit rejoice in the path of God. Year 1212 (1797–1798).[3]

These inscriptions substantiate familial lineage and the enduring cultural legacy established by the Rodosî family in Rhodes.

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1 Tayyarzâde Ahmed Ata Efendi, *Osmanlı Saray Tarihi Tarih-i Enderun*, 2, ed. Mehmet Arslan (İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2010), 250; Mustafa Bulut, *Sultan II. Mahmud Haziresi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2012), 85.

2 The inscription on the grave stele of Hasan Ağa, the father of Hafız Ahmed Ağa, located in the cemetery of the Murat Reis Tekke in Rhodes, bears the title – *Baba* - traditionally bestowed upon dervishes who have reached a certain spiritual rank within Bektashi and similar Sufi orders that were established in Anatolia and across the Ottoman territories. *Baba* is a Sufi term referring to a leader who guides disciples (*mürids*) on the spiritual path. The presence of such a title on Hasan Ağa's gravestone indicates that he probably was a person who had attained this spiritual status.

3 Mehmet Zeki İbrahimgil and A. İbrahimgil, *Rodos Adasında Osmanlı Mirası (Mimari Eserler, Kitabeler, Mezar Taşları)* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Başkanlığı, 2019), 50.

Rodosî Hâfız Ahmed Ağa: Between Court and Community

Rodosî Hâfız Ahmed Ağa, known by the epithet Rodosî after his birthplace, hailed originally from the village of Uzgur, today known as Asgourou (Ασγούρου), on the island of Rhodes. Born in the 1740s into a prosperous family, he was the son of Hasan Ağa and Ayşe Hatun. At an early age, Ahmed Ağa was admitted to the *Enderun-ı Hümâyun*, the elite imperial academy of the Ottoman palace, presumably during the reign of Mustafa III (1757–1774). Archival records from the period of Abdülhamid I indicate that by April 16, 1786, Ahmed Ağa had ascended to the prestigious position of *Peşkir Ağası*,[4] a senior court official with privileged access to the sultan, indicative of his trusted status within palace administration.[5] In the subsequent years, his distinguished service was further recognized by his promotion to the rank of *Rikabdâr-ı Hümâyun Ağası*, one of the highest ceremonial offices within the Ottoman court hierarchy.[6]

During the initial months of Sultan Selim III's reign, Ahmed Ağa continued to occupy this influential position until his retirement on September 28, 1789. Historical accounts generally portray his subsequent life as one dedicated predominantly to piety and seclusion.[7] However, archival evidence sheds further light on this period, revealing that Ahmed Ağa simultaneously maintained active involvement in commercial pursuits.[8] According to records, approximately a decade after his retirement in 1789, Rodosî Hâfız Ahmed Ağa was appointed to the distinguished position of *Kaftan Ağası*, a prestigious court position responsible for presenting ceremonial robes (*hil'at*) at official ceremonies and conveying the Sultan's gifts to religious dignitaries in the Holy Cities.[9] In this prestigious capacity, Ahmed Ağa embarked upon the pilgrimage (*Hajj*), consequently earning the honored designation of *Hajji*. A major historical account records that he passed away in 1800 on his return journey.[10] Although archival records remain silent regarding the exact details surrounding his appointment, it may reasonably be assumed that this distinguished role was bestowed upon Ahmed Ağa in recognition of his dedicated and longstanding service within the Ottoman imperial administration.

Historical accounts concerning the death of Rodosî Hâfız Ahmed Ağa offer conflicting narratives and varied chronologies. An Ottoman archival document dated July 19, 1798, explicitly refers to Ahmed Ağa as already deceased.[11] Contrarily, several other sources claim he was killed by Cezzar Ahmed Pasha during his return from the Hijaz, proposing different dates ranging from 1799 to 1802. These discrepancies highlight the enduring ambiguity surrounding the exact circumstances and timing of Ahmed Ağa's demise, underscoring the necessity for continued scholarly investigation

4 Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, Directorate of State Archives, Ottoman Archives (BOA.) AE.SABH.I. 346/24240 (16 April 1786).

5 Mehmet Zeki Pakalın, "Peşkir Ağası," *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü,* 2, (Ankara: Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1993), 773.

6 Abdülkadir Özcan, "Rikâbdar," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* 35 (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2008), 111.

7 Tayyarzâde, *Osmanlı Saray Tarihi*, 250.

8 BOA. C. BLD 28/1367 Permission for Rodosî Ahmed Ağa to import grain from Jaffa and sell it in the imperial granary (12 Mart 1295).

9 Yusuf Çağlar and Salih Gülen, *Dersaadet'ten Haremeyn'e Surre-i Hümâyûn* (Istanbul: Yitik Hazine Yayınları, 2008), 32.

10 Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, 1, (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), 153.

11 BOA. D. BŞM.d. 6659 The fees paid, and income collected from the various tax districts that formed part of the late Hacı Ahmed Ağa of Rhodes's lifelong hereditary estate (12 October 1798).

and archival research to clarify this historiographical uncertainty.[12] An additional document from the Ottoman Archives, dated May 2, 1802, bears the heading "Execution of Kaftan Ağası Ahmed Ağa of Rhodes by Imperial Order," yet provides no explanation regarding the motives behind this decree, nor specifies the exact date or location of its implementation.[13] Following his death, archival records indicate that pensions were subsequently granted to his surviving children.[14] Although certain historical accounts suggest he was laid to rest at the family burial site at Karacaahmed Cemetery in Istanbul, considerable uncertainty persists concerning the precise circumstances and location of his death during his return journey from the Hijaz.[15] Several narratives assert that he was assassinated by Cezzar Ahmed Pasha and interred near Ma'an; however, these accounts remain inconclusive and lack definitive corroboration.[16] This ambiguity challenges historical scholarship, underscoring the need for further rigorous archival investigation.

The source identifies Ahmed Ağa's death as occurring on July 24, 1799, specifying Dar al-Hamra, near the present-day village of Al-Buriekah, as the place of his demise. Known in Turkish as *Pirinç Ovası* (Rice Plain), this location lies within the area of Mada'in Saleh (historically Al-Hijr or Hegra), approximately 368 kilometers from Medina in modern-day Saudi Arabia, situated along the Ottoman pilgrimage route.[17] The document further notes that the *Qadi* (judge) of Mecca inventoried his valuable possessions, after which the surviving members of his household commenced their return journey to Istanbul via Damascus, Aleppo, and Sivas.[18] These details offer valuable insights into the circumstances surrounding Ahmed Ağa's death, contributing to the historical understanding of this episode. Given the considerable distance between Mada'in Saleh and Istanbul, it would have been logistically impractical to transport Ahmed Ağa's remains back to the Ottoman capital during that period. Consequently, it is reasonable to presume that he was buried near his place of execution.

Rodosî Ahmed Ağa is recorded among the distinguished residents of Soğanağa, a prestigious neighborhood situated along Istanbul's Divanyolu, historically renowned as home to prominent Ottoman bureaucrats, senior state officials, religious scholars (*ulema*), palace dignitaries, affluent merchants, and leading citizens of the era. Further archival records reveal that his mother, Ayşe Hatun, who also resided in this quarter, passed away on January 24, 1795.[19] Additional confirmation of Ahmed Ağa's connection to Soğanağa appears in the endowment deed (*vakfiye*) of the Rodosî Hâfız Ahmed Ağa Foundation, dated 1792, which stipulates the foundation's responsibility for financing the construction and maintenance of a public fountain within this very neighborhood.[20] This detail further underscores the family's lasting presence and contribution to the cultural and social fabric of Soğanağa.

Ahmed Fethi Pasha commissioned a gravestone commemorating his father in the family burial area adjacent to the mosque bearing his name in Üsküdar, opposite the Karacaahmed Sultan Mausoleum. Initially constructed in wood by his father, the mosque was subsequently rebuilt in masonry by

12 Kemal Beydilli, *Osmanlı'da İmamlar ve Bir İmamın Günlüğü* (Istanbul: Yitik Hazine Yayınları, 2013), 92; Süreyya, *Sicilli Osmanî*, 1, 522; Mehmet Nermi Haskan, *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üsküdar*, 1, (Istanbul: Üsküdar Belediyesi Yayınları, 2001), 194; Zeki Çelikkol, *Rodos'taki Türk Eserleri ve Tarihçe* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), 87.

13 BOA. HAT. 105/4141 (2 May 1802).

14 BOA. C.ML. 132/5713 (11 October 1800).

15 Süreyya, *Sicilli Osmanî*, 1, 522.

16 Tahsin Öz, "Ahmed Fethi Paşa ve Müzeler," *Türk Tarih, Arkeologya ve Etnografya Dergisi* 5 (1949): 2.

17 Beydilli, *Osmanlı'da İmamlar*, 205.

18 BOA. HAT. 37/1873 (4 July 1799).

19 Beydilli, *Osmanlı'da İmamlar*, 92, 226.

20 İbrahimgil, *Rodos Adasında Osmanlı Mirası*, 40.

Ahmed Fethi Pasha.[21] The gravestone is particularly noteworthy for depicting a Mahmûdî-style fez, bearing the date 1800. Given that the Ottoman decree mandating the fez as official headgear, replacing the traditional turban, was issued only in 1829, it is evident that the current gravestone was installed later, reflecting the son's retrospective commemoration.[22]

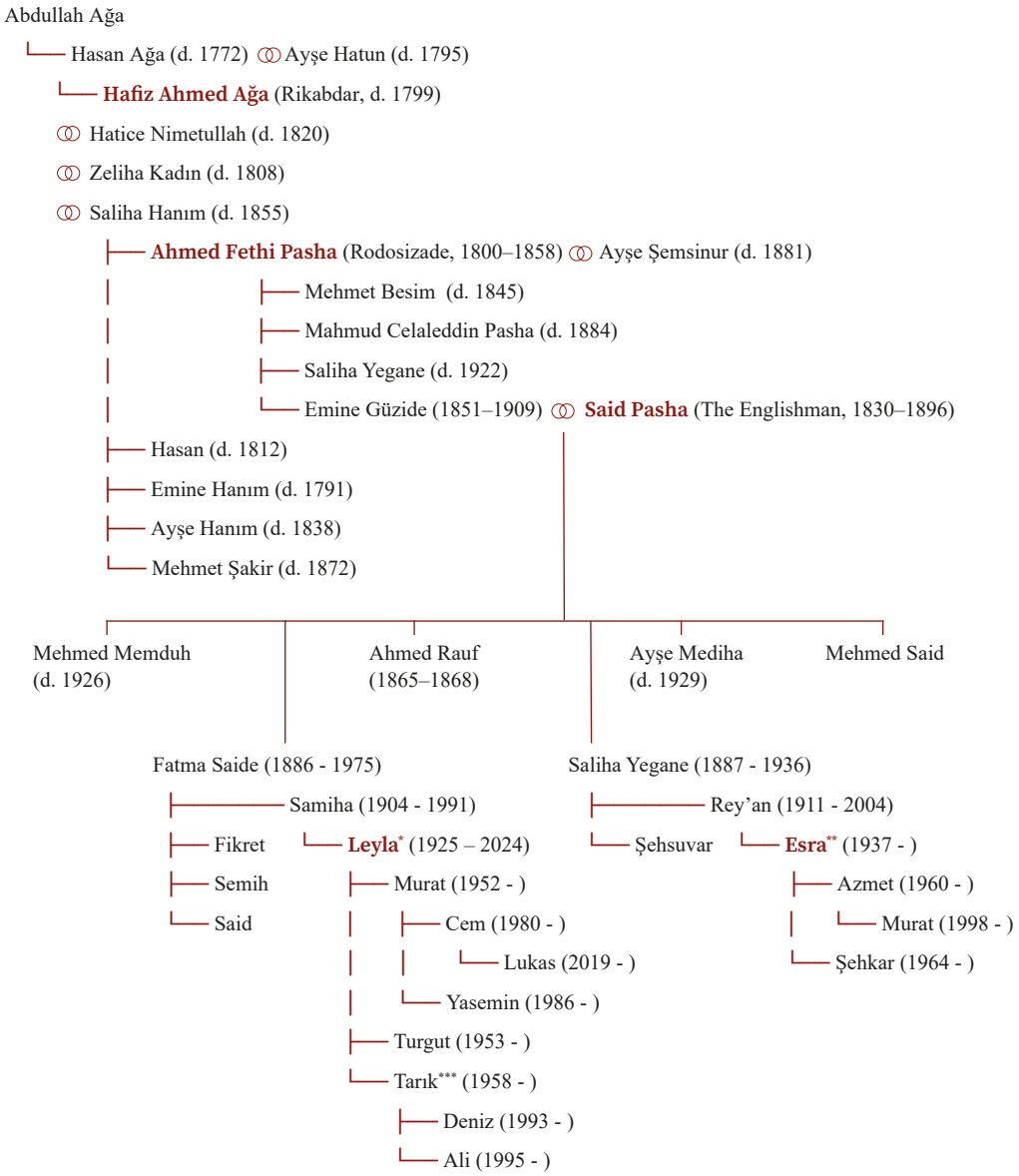
Within the enclosed family burial plot adjacent to the Ahmed Fethi Pasha Mosque in Üsküdar stands the gravestone commemorating Rodosi Ahmed Ağa. The epitaphs inscribed on the headstones within this fenced enclosure provide valuable historical insight into his broader familial relationships. According to these inscriptions, Ahmed Ağa had three wives: Hatice Nimetullah Hatun (d. January 1820), Zeliha Kadın (d. April 1808), and Saliha Hanım (d. July 1855), the mother of Ahmed Fethi Pasha. In addition to Ahmed Fethi Pasha, he had another son, Hasan (d. 1812), and two daughters, Emine Hanım (d. 1791) and Ayşe Hanım (d. 1838). These familial details reveal the broader social networks and interpersonal dynamics that shaped the Rodosi lineage, enriching the historical context and highlighting the family's enduring legacy.[23]



Seal of the Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library
Sâbikan Rikâbdâr-ı Hazret-i Şehriyârî Rodosî Hafız Ahmed Ağa'nın Cezîre-i Mezbûr'da binâ eylediği kitâbhâne'nin kütüb-i mevkûfesidir fi sene 1207

(This is the endowed collection of books of the library erected on the aforementioned island in 1207 (1793) by *Sâbikân Rikâbdâr* (Former Court Equerry) to His Majesty the Sultan, Rhodes-born Hafız Ahmed Ağa)

21 Haskan, *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üsküdar*, 1, 197.
22 Haskan, *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üsküdar*, 2, 841.
23 Haskan, *Yüzyıllar Boyunca Üsküdar*, 2, 840-842.



Genealogical chart of the Rodosî family
highlighting three central figures: Hafız Ahmed Ağa, Ahmed Fethi Pasha,
and Said Pasha the Englishman

* Leyla Tüten - Trustee (*Mütevelli*) of the Hafız Ahmed Ağa & Ahmed Fethi Pasha Foundation until December 2024
** Esra Yegane Birgen Jah - Soon to serve as Trustee (*Mütevelli*) of the Hafız Ahmed Ağa & Ahmed Fethi Pasha Foundation
*** Tarık Tüten - Deputy Trustee (*Mütevelli*).

Following his retirement on September 28, 1789, Rodosi Hafız Ahmed Ağa founded a charitable endowment (*vakıf*) on February 26, 1792. Through this foundation, he financed the construction of a library in 1793 on Rhodes, his birthplace, next to the island's Süleymaniye Mosque. The library comprises two chambers, one designated as a reading hall and the other reserved for the preservation and storage of books. Additionally, the library's garden accommodates dedicated spaces for the recitation of the Qur'an, a librarian's (*hafız-ı kütüb*) house, a water well, and a public fountain constructed in 1797, dedicated to the memory of his father, Hasan Ağa.



Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, Rhodes, 1870s
The Hamidian Albums
Istanbul University Rare Books Library

According to the original inventory records created at its founding, the library established by Hafız Ahmed Ağa initially contained 828 manuscripts covering various disciplines. These works spanned approximately twenty distinct subject areas, including Qur'anic studies, exegesis (tafsir), hadith, history, literature, medicine, jurisprudence, and astronomy, reflecting the comprehensive scholarly interests of the period. Notably, the oldest manuscript in the collection dates back to 1411. Beyond functioning merely as a knowledge repository, the library served as a crucial educational and cultural institution for the Muslim community of Rhodes. Within its premises, a school dedicated to Qur'anic memorization (*Hafızlık Mektebi*) was established, offering free instruction in Qur'anic recitation and Arabic to local Muslim youth. Moreover, the library complex included dedicated residential facilities for the scholars and instructors responsible for the education of these students, further highlighting its integral role in the island's intellectual life. The endowment deed (*vakfiye*) explicitly outlines various social and religious services provided by the library, including the preparation and distribution of halva during religious observances such as *Kandil* nights, the serving of *ashoura* (Noah's pudding) on the fifteenth day of Muharram, and the sacrificial offering of

sheep during Eid al-Adha, with the meat subsequently distributed among the poor.[24] Furthermore, the library attracted distinguished visitors, notably Namık Kemal, one of the prominent intellectuals of the late Ottoman period. During his tenure as governor (*mutasarrıf*) of Rhodes from 1884 to 1887, Namık Kemal is known to have authored several literary works and composed personal correspondence at a desk in the library's reading room, underscoring the institution's significance as a site of intellectual and cultural activity.

This library flourished under the custodianship of his son, Ahmed Fethi Pasha, who enriched its holdings by acquiring numerous manuscripts and scholarly works. As a result, the library emerged merely as an educational focal point for Rhodes' Muslim community and broader society, laying the groundwork for Ottoman modernization through educational advancement and intellectual enrichment. Beyond the renowned library he founded on Rhodes, Hafız Ahmed Ağa commissioned several other notable structures, including a mosque constructed of wood in Üsküdar, situated opposite the Karacaahmed Sultan Mausoleum, as well as an adjacent school (*mekteb*), which unfortunately has not survived to the present. Additionally, he sponsored the construction of a public fountain in the Soğanağa neighborhood of the Laleli district. Collectively, these charitable works reflect his broader legacy of cultural patronage, educational philanthropy, and commitment to public welfare.

The Career of Rodosizâde Ahmed Fethi Pasha: Diplomat and Military Reformer

Rodosizâde Ahmed Bey was born in 1800 at the Abdullah Pasha Palace in Eyübsultan, Istanbul, as the son of *Rikabdar-ı Hümayun* Rodosî Hâfız Ahmed Ağa. His father passed away before his birth. In 1809, Ahmed entered the *Enderun-ı Hümayun*, the imperial palace school, where he pursued his education until 1826.[25] Following the abolition of the Janissary Corps in 1826, he was selected to join the newly established Mansure Army, specifically the Court Battalion (or *Enderun Ağaları* Battalion), which formed the core of this new military force.[26]

In December 1828, Ahmed Bey transitioned from his role within the Imperial Palace School (*Enderun*) to active military service, initially holding the rank of Adjutant Major (*Kolağası*), before swiftly ascending to Battalion Major (*Binbaşı*) by January 1829. Equipped with extensive training acquired in the *Enderun*, coupled with his intellectual abilities, diligence, and pronounced enthusiasm for military pursuits, he rapidly distinguished himself within military circles. His exceptional bravery and notable accomplishments during the Ottoman-Russian War of 1828–1829 earned him the honorary title "*Fethi*" (meaning conquest), along with a subsequent promotion to Lieutenant Colonel (*Kaymakam*).[27]

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24 The original endowment deed (*vakfiye*) of Rodosî Hâfız Ahmed Ağa, dated 26 February 1792 (3 Rajab 1206), was later expanded through a series of supplementary *vakfiyes*. According to the records held in the Archives of the Directorate General of Foundations (*Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi*), three such additions were made: the first dated 18 November 1793 (13 Rabi al-Thani 1208), recorded in Register No. 743, p. 79, entry 26; the second dated 13 July 1796 (7 Muharram 1211), p. 153, entry 36; and the third dated 18 July 1808 (14 Jumada al-Ula 1223), p. 159, entry 37. Likewise, the endowment deed of Rodosîzâde Ahmed Fethi Pasha, dated 5 December 1851 (10 Safar 1268), is registered in Volume 747, p. 235, entry 195, along with an annex dated 4 December 1852 (21 Safar 1269), recorded on the following page, entry 196.

25 Süreyya, *Sicilli Osmanî*, 1, 522; Davut Hut, "Fethi Paşa," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Supplement 1 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2016): 450; Öz, "*Ahmed Fethi Paşa ve Müzeler*," 3.

26 BOA, HAT 308/18206 (18 August 1792); Tayyarzâde, *Osmanlı Saray Tarihi*, 250.

27 Gülnar Kara, *Polenezköy'ün Kurucularından Çaykovski Mehmed Sadık Paşa'nın Anıları* (Istanbul: Kömen Yayınları, 2016), 24.

Upon returning to Istanbul after the war, Ahmed Fethi Bey married Ayşe Şemsinur Hanım.[28] In 1830, he was promoted to Colonel (*Miralay*) and soon thereafter appointed as aide-de-camp (*Yaver*) to the Sultan. His career trajectory continued to rise significantly, culminating in his elevation to the rank of Major General of the Imperial Guard (*Ferik-i Hassa-i Şâhane*), solidifying his prominence within Ottoman military and court circles.[29]



Seal of Ahmed Fethi Pasha
"Ahmed Fethi in 1247"
(1831)

In 1835, Ahmed Fethi Pasha was dispatched as an extraordinary ambassador to Vienna to convey Ottoman congratulations upon Emperor Ferdinand's ascension to the Austrian throne.[30] His three-month diplomatic mission captured widespread interest and acclaim from both Viennese high society and the broader Austrian public, with newspapers throughout the empire, from Lviv and Budapest to Linz and Klagenfurt, regularly reporting on his activities.[31] The distinguished Austrian diplomat and orientalist, Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, officially assigned as interpreter for the Ottoman envoy, demonstrated considerable personal affinity toward Fethi Pasha beyond his formal responsibilities. Hammer-Purgstall admired that the ambassador was received throughout Vienna with extraordinary distinction and enthusiasm, famously characterizing him as "the lion of the summer of 1835" and one of the most celebrated figures of the social season.[32]

Ahmed Fethi Pasha returned to Vienna in 1836, this time serving as Ottoman ambassador, a post he held for nearly a year. During this diplomatic tenure, he further enhanced his standing within Vienna's elite circles, widely admired for his sophisticated demeanor, charisma, and diplomatic finesse. Frequently described as an elegant figure whose appeal was partly rooted in his refined yet exotic persona, Ahmed Fethi Pasha hosted numerous receptions and events, reinforcing his prominent status in Viennese high society. These gatherings attracted notable attention among the Austrian aristocracy and contemporary observers.[33] Notably, the Austrian novelist Frances Milton Trollope dedicated detailed passages in her memoir, *Vienna and the Austrians (1838)*, to

28 Öz, "*Ahmed Fethi Paşa ve Müzeler*," 3.

29 BOA. HAT. 307/18141 (12 July 1828); Tayyarzâde, *Osmanlı Saray Tarihi*, 203, 251.

30 BOA. HAT 484/23753 (26 March 1838); *Takvim-i Vekayi*, 22 Safar 1251, 104.

31 Gisela Prochazka-Eisl, "*An Ottoman Diplomat in Vienna: Ahmed Fethi Pasa*," ve Andreas Tietze, *Avusturya Türkolojisi Türkçe'nin Zenginliğine Efsanevî bir Katkı*, ed. Emine Yılmaz et al (Vienna: Neue Welt Verlag, 2002), 190.

32 BOA. HAT. 1195/46928 (26 March 1838).

33 Prochâzka-Eisl "*An Ottoman Diplomat in Vienna: Ahmed Fethi Pasa*," 193.

elaborate accounts of the extravagant balls and receptions held by Ahmed Pasha, highlighting his considerable influence and reputation within European diplomatic circles of the era.[34]

In the summer of 1837, Ahmed Fethi Pasha, accompanied by Mehmed Emin Âli Efendi (later known as Âli Pasha), was dispatched to Russia to observe military maneuvers conducted in St. Petersburg. Subsequently, on January 28, 1838, he was appointed military governor (*müşir*) of Aidin and shortly thereafter designated Ottoman ambassador to London.[35] However, due to Mustafa Reşid Pasha's inability to assume his diplomatic posting in Paris due to other pressing obligations, Ahmed Fethi Pasha was reassigned to the Paris embassy in his stead. Before commencing his duties in Paris, he was also designated to represent the Ottoman Sultan at the coronation ceremony of Queen Victoria; unfortunately, his illness prevented him from attending this historic event.[36] During his journey from Istanbul to Paris, he visited several prominent European cities, including Vienna, Berlin, and various locations in Italy, undertaking careful observations. Most notably, during his stay in Rome, he became the first Ottoman statesman to meet officially with the Pope. Ahmed Fethi Pasha began his ambassadorial tenure in Paris in September 1838 and served for one year, returning to Istanbul in 1839 following Mahmud II's death and Sultan Abdülmecid's accession.[37]

During the reign of Sultan Abdülmecid, Ahmed Fethi Pasha was appointed as a member of the *Meclis-i Vâlâ* (Supreme Council) in 1839, subsequently becoming Minister of Commerce (*Ticaret Nâzırı*) on January 8, 1840.[38] In June of the same year, he married his second wife, Atiye Sultan, the daughter of Mahmud II, thus establishing familial ties with the Ottoman imperial dynasty.[39] For a brief period during a military administrative reshuffle, he also served as Acting Commander-in-Chief (*Serasker Kaymakamı*). In May 1842, he returned to his position in the Supreme Council. On November 8, 1843, he was elevated to the presidency of the *Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* (Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances), reflecting his increasing prominence within Ottoman governance.[40]

Ahmed Fethi Pasha's career advanced significantly when he was appointed Minister of Military Supplies (*Mühimmat-ı Harbiye Nâzırı*) on March 20, 1845, followed shortly thereafter by his first term as Commander (*müşir*) of the Imperial Arsenal (*Tophane-i Âmire*) on August 10, 1845.[41] In June 1850, he accompanied Sultan Abdülmecid on a Mediterranean voyage, which included visits to Rhodes and Crete. During their stay on Rhodes, Ahmed Fethi Pasha briefed the Sultan on his recently established philanthropic foundation, highlighting ongoing construction projects such as a clock tower, a *muvakkithane* (timekeeper's office), and a junior secondary school (*rüşdiye*). He also presented the library established by his father, Hafız Ahmed Ağa, in 1793. Sultan Abdülmecid's visit was particularly significant, marking the first and only time an Ottoman Sultan traveled to Rhodes since its conquest by Sultan Suleiman the Lawgiver in 1522.

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34 Frances Milton Trollope, *Vienna and the Austrians; with Some Account of a Journey through Swabia, Bavaria, the Tyrol, and the Salzbourg*, 2, (London: R. Bentley, 1838), 93, 181–184.

35 BOA. HR. SFR.3 1/35 Letter from the Foreign Office to the Ottoman Embassy concerning Ahmed Fethi Pasha's appointment as ambassador to London (16 March 1838).

36 BOA. HR. SYS 2922/3 Dispatch Confirming Fethi Pasha's Posting to Paris (Nisan 1838); BOA. HR. SYS 2922/7 Fethi Pasha's Appointment to the Ottoman Embassy in Paris (5 May 1838); Ömer Eğecioğlu, "Kraliçe Victoria'nın Taç Giyme Töreni ve Fethi Ahmed Paşa," *Toplumsal Tarih* 211, (2011): 68-73.

37 Davut Hut, "Fethi Paşa," 450.

38 Ahmed Lütfi Efendi, *Vak'anüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi,* 6, ed. Yücel Demirel (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1999), 1024; BOA. C.IKTS. 21/1032 (3 February 1840).

39 BOA. A.DVNSNMH.d. 11/10-12 (19 May 1839).

40 BOA. HR.SFR.3. 6/72 (1843 Z 31.)

41 BOA. TS.MA.e 496/11.

In recognition of his distinguished service and numerous achievements, Ahmed Fethi Pasha was awarded the First-Class Order of *Medjidie* (*Mecîdî Nişanı*) in January 1853.[42] Subsequently, on February 26 of the same year, he was appointed Minister of Commerce for the second time, a role soon followed by his reinstatement as Commander of the Imperial Arsenal.[43] Although briefly relieved of this command on September 9, 1857, he was swiftly reinstated on October 22, 1857, serving as commander for a third term until his death.[44] Ahmed Fethi Pasha passed away on February 14, 1858, and was interred in the mausoleum garden of Sultan Mahmud II, located along Istanbul's Divanyolu, thus becoming only the second individual to be granted burial in this prestigious site.[45]

Cultivating Modernity: Contributions to Ottoman Society and Culture

Ahmed Fethi Pasha actively advanced the empire's military modernization agenda during his diplomatic posting as the Ottoman ambassador to Vienna. In January 1837, he held discussions with Austrian Chancellor Metternich, from whom he successfully obtained a copy of the regulations governing the Austrian reserve forces (*Landwehr*). He forwarded this material to Istanbul to inform and support ongoing military reform efforts. Later, in June 1838, while quarantined in Malta during his journey from Istanbul to Paris, he encountered an American-manufactured rifle set. Recognizing its potential military value, he purchased the weapon for detailed examination upon his return to the capital.[46] Later, as a member of the *Meclis-i Vâlâ*, he was instrumental in promoting the introduction of conscription by lottery, a military reform promised by the *Tanzimat* Edict, further reinforcing his influential role in Ottoman military modernization efforts.[47]

Ahmed Fethi Pasha's historic audience with Pope Gregory XVI holds particular significance in evaluating his contributions to Ottoman modernization through diplomacy. In 1838, while en route from Istanbul to Paris to assume his ambassadorial post, he stopped in Rome, becoming the first Ottoman statesman to hold an official audience with the pope. The discussion centered primarily on the condition and welfare of the Maronite Catholic community in Lebanon, set against the backdrop of Mehmed Ali Pasha of Egypt's rebellion challenging Ottoman authority. During the meeting, the Pope expressed his appreciation for the security and favorable treatment afforded to Catholics within the Ottoman Empire. He presented Ahmed Fethi Pasha with a medal and a commemorative gift to mark this unprecedented diplomatic occasion.[48]

In response to widespread outbreaks of infectious diseases, particularly cholera and plague, which posed severe threats to public health during the early 19th century, the Ottoman government established the Quarantine Council in 1838. Before formally establishing this organization, Ahmed Fethi Pasha, serving as the military governor of Aidin, participated in preliminary deliberations at the Sublime Porte. Having witnessed the efficacy of quarantine protocols already implemented throughout Europe, he strongly advocated adopting similar preventative measures within Ottoman

42 BOA. I.DH. 256/15805 (7 August 1862).

43 BOA. A.DVN. 88/99 (17 November 1852).

44 BOA. I. DUIT. 190/29 (22 November 1857).

45 Davut Hut, "Fethi Paşa," 450.

46 BOA. HAT. 1185/46751 (25 Jun 1838).

47 Musa Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Sürecinde Türkiye'de Askerlik* (Istanbul: İmge Yayınevi, 2008), 69.

48 Ahmet Türkan, "Osmanlı ile Papalık Arasındaki İlk Dostane İlişkiler ve Bunun Doğu Kiliseleri Açısından Önemi," *History Studies* 6 (2014) 1; Davut Hut, "Fethi Paşa," 450.

territories. His views and contributions to these deliberations, which he later personally conveyed to the historian Ubicini, highlight the strategic importance of quarantine policies within the broader context of Ottoman modernization, particularly in public health and epidemic prevention.[49] Ubicini notably remarked that the establishment and organization of the Ottoman quarantine service was primarily attributable to Ahmed Fethi Pasha.[50] Indeed, during his three separate terms spanning twelve years as Commander of the Imperial Arsenal, under which the Quarantine Administration operated, Ahmed Fethi Pasha played a decisive role in developing the infrastructure. Utilizing his knowledge of contemporary European practices, he refined the administrative structure, increasing its efficiency and organizational capacity. Under his guidance, quarantine stations and isolation facilities were constructed at critical locations throughout Ottoman territories. Furthermore, he oversaw the systematic employment of specialized personnel, including quarantine administrators, physicians, administrative officers, and security staff, solidifying the institutional framework essential for effective public health management within the empire.[51] Pasha also contributed to the Ottoman Empire's medical modernization, notably through his instrumental role in establishing the Imperial Medical School (*Mekteb-i Tıbbiye-i Şahane*) in 1839. His initiative to recruit Dr. Jakob Anton Neuner from Vienna facilitated the introduction of contemporary medical practices and training methodologies to Ottoman lands. Additionally, during his service in the Imperial Arsenal, he supervised the construction of medical institutions, including the Zeytinburnu and Gümüşsuyu Military Hospitals, substantially strengthening the empire's healthcare infrastructure and institutional capacity.[52]

Indeed, Ahmed Fethi Pasha actively supported the education of numerous promising Ottoman youths abroad, aiming to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to significantly enhance their homeland's cultural and intellectual life upon their return. His profound interest in the arts, particularly in painting, enabled him to identify and nurture artistic talents such as the painter Hüsnü Yusuf Bey, whom he sponsored and encouraged to pursue formal artistic training in Europe.[53] The renowned French author Alphonse de Lamartine eloquently characterized this aspect of the Pasha's legacy by depicting his residence as a distinguished intellectual and cultural sanctuary. Lamartine emphasized that the Pasha's home was frequented by prominent literary figures such as İbrahim Şinasi, a pioneering Ottoman intellectual, poet, and journalist, serving as both a scholarly haven and a refuge closely associated with the intellectual aspirations and literary careers of the era's leading writers and poets.[54] Among those influenced by Ahmed Fethi Pasha's commitment to education and intellectual advancement was Said Pasha, who later became his son-in-law. Ahmed Fethi Pasha was instrumental in facilitating Said Pasha's studies in Edinburgh, directly contributing to his subsequent prominence in Ottoman administration and intellectual life.[55] Praised by the renowned Turkish literary figure Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar for turning the

49 Gülden Sarıyıldız, "Karantina Meclislerinin Kuruluşu ve Faaliyetleri," *Belleten* 58/222, (1994): 335.

50 Abdolonyme Ubicini, *La Turquie actuelle* (Paris: Hachette, 1855), 113–116.

51 Pınar Çevik Azap, *Tophane-i Âmire Müşiriyeti* (Istanbul: Timaş Akademi, 2023), 251.

52 Seda Kula Say, "Gümüşsuyu Askeri Hastanesi," *Sultan Abdülmecid'in Bir Mimarı: William James Smith,* ed. İlona Baytar, Jale Beşkonaklı (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür A.Ş. Yayınları, 2016), 108.

53 Naciye Turgut Cebeci, "Mühendishâne-i Berrî-i Hümâyûn Mezunu Bir Ressam: Hüsnü Yusuf," *Millî Saraylar Sanat, Tarih ve Mimarlık Dergisi* 19, (2020): 47-67; *Eyüplü Meşhurlar*, ed. Ali Şükrü Çoruk (İstanbul Eyüp Belediyesi, 2014), 109.

54 Şemsettin Şeker, *Ders İle Sohbet Arasında 19. Asır İstanbul'unda İlim Kültür ve Sanat Meclisleri* (Istanbul: Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, 2013), 216.

55 Burhan Çağlar, *İngiliz Said Paşa ve Günlüğü Jurnal* (Istanbul: Arı Sanat, 2010), 5-11.

administrative offices of Imperial Arsenal into a vibrant "cradle of new ideas," Ahmed Fethi Pasha's patronage substantially enriched Ottoman cultural and artistic spheres, nurturing and introducing numerous influential personalities to Ottoman intellectual circles.[56]

Ahmed Fethi Pasha pioneered the first archaeological excavations at Sultanahmet Square (the ancient Hippodrome) in Istanbul in 1847. Concurrently, he promoted archaeological investigations across several regions of the Empire, including Jerusalem, Ashkelon, Aleppo, Samsun, and Aidin. His efforts extended beyond fieldwork, encompassing the centralized collection and preservation of artifacts and findings in Istanbul, contributing to the development of Ottoman archaeological scholarship and heritage preservation.[57] Widely regarded as a foundational figure in Ottoman museology, Ahmed Fethi Pasha undertook curatorial initiatives in 1846 at Hagia Irene, which served as an arsenal at the time. He converted the arcaded galleries surrounding the courtyard into dedicated exhibition spaces by enclosing them with glass showcases. One gallery housed the Collection of Ancient Weapons (*Mecma-ı Esliha-i Atîka*), while the other exhibited the Collection of Antiquities (*Mecma-ı Âsâr-ı Atîka*).[58] These foundational efforts paved the way for the institutional emergence of the Military Museum and the Archaeological Museums. Due to his visionary contributions in curating and exhibiting historical collections, Ahmed Fethi Pasha may be recognized as the first Turkish curator, underscoring his instrumental role in establishing modern practices of preserving and presenting Ottoman cultural heritage.

His exposure to European cultural life during his diplomatic postings profoundly shaped his appreciation for Western arts, particularly music and theatre. This interest continued upon his return to Istanbul, notably during his tenure as Commander of the Imperial Arsenal when he introduced Sultan Abdülmecid to opera performances at prestigious venues such as the Pera Theatre and Naum Theatre, thereby contributing to the integration of European cultural practices within Ottoman elite society.[59] Moreover, during his tenure as Ottoman Ambassador in Vienna (1836-1837), Ahmed Fethi Pasha was notably included in an exclusive series of portraits commissioned by Princess Metternich from the renowned Austrian painter Moritz Michael Daffinger. This series depicted the princess's inner circle and eminent guests, underscoring the Pasha's high standing within European diplomatic and cultural networks.[60] In addition, he commissioned several other portraits from prominent Western artists, reflecting his cultural engagement and social prominence. His prominence in Viennese society was further underscored through musical tributes composed in his honor by celebrated musicians of the era: Johann Strauss dedicated a waltz to Ahmed Fethi Pasha in 1837, followed by Josef Lanner, who similarly composed a waltz in his honor in 1839.[61]

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56 Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *XIX. Asır* Türk *Edebiyatı Tarihi*, ed. Abdullah Uçman (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2006), 137-138.

57 Edhem Eldem, "Early Ottoman Archaeology: Rediscovering the Finds of Ascalon (Ashkelon), 1847," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 378, (2017): 25-53.

58 Wendy M. K. Shaw, *Osmanlı Müzeciliği: Müzeler, Arkeoloji ve Tarihin Görselleştirilmesi*, ed. Esin Soğancılar, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 45; Olcay Pullukçuoğlu Yapucu, "Zarif Bir Yüksek Bürokrat Rodosluzade Ahmet Fethi Paşa," ed. Mustafa Kaymakçı, Cihan Özgün, *Rodos ve İstanköy Türk Kültürü* (Konya: Eğitim Yayınevi, 2020), 359-360.

59 Emre Aracı, *Naum Tiyatrosu*: *19. Yüzyıl İstanbul'unun İtalyan Operası* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2003), 127-129.

60 Zeynep İnankur, "Fethi Ahmed Pasha: A Cosmopolitan Ottoman Diplomat in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Culture and Diplomacy: Ambassadors as Cultural Actors in Ottoman–European Relations from the 16th to the 19th Century*, 1, ed. Reinhard Eisendle, Suna Suner, and Hans Ernst Weidinger (Vienna: Hollitzer Verlag, 2023), 1002.

61 Ömer Eğecioğlu, "Strauss ve Lanner'in Fethi Ahmet Paşa'ya İthaf Ettiği Valsler," *Sanat Dünyamız*, 118, (2010): 22-24.

Ahmed Fethi Pasha was distinguished by his exceptional cultural sophistication, refined aesthetic sensibility, and cultivated appreciation for beauty and art. His formative years within the Imperial Treasury (*Hazine Dairesi*) at the *Enderun* granted him early exposure to an array of exquisite artworks and historically significant objects, fostering his discerning taste from a young age. His subsequent time in Europe further expanded and enriched his cultural horizons through involvement in elite social events, visits to prominent museums, and a sustained interest in artifacts cherished for their historical value and aesthetic refinement. This profound sense of cultural discernment and refined appreciation for artistic heritage notably set Ahmed Fethi Pasha apart from many of his contemporary Ottoman statesmen. As a reflection of his sophisticated aesthetic sensibilities, he was instrumental in shaping the interior decoration and furnishings of the Dolmabahçe Palace, one of the most iconic structures symbolizing Ottoman modernization. His residence in Kuzguncuk, exquisitely adorned in European style with crystal glassware, delicate ornaments, and other refined artifacts, notably attracted the admiration of Sultan Abdülmecid. Recognizing Ahmed Fethi Pasha's discerning taste, the Sultan entrusted him with overseeing Dolmabahçe Palace's interior design.[62] Among the Pasha's significant contributions were commissioning the palace's renowned crystal staircase from Britain, securing the services of the prominent architect William James Smith for the palace's architectural and interior designs, and initiating the construction of the Dolmabahçe Gasworks to provide heating and illumination.[63] Moreover, Ahmed Fethi Pasha personally supervised the selection and acquisition of elegant glassware, luxurious furnishings, and distinctive decorative pieces from leading European manufacturers, influencing the refined aesthetic character that defines the Palace.[64]

The establishment of *rüşdiyes*, junior secondary schools inspired by Western educational models during the *Tanzimat* era, marked a significant step in the modernization of Ottoman education. Following their integration with primary education, the number of these schools grew notably from 1845 onward, reflecting the empire's sustained commitment to educational reform. Among these institutions, a *rüşdiye* founded on the island of Rhodes during Sultan Abdülmecid's visit in 1850 and completed in 1852 stands as a tangible expression of the sultan's direct involvement in advancing the educational agenda. As indicated by its commemorative inscription, the school was dedicated to the memory of Atiye Sultan, whose untimely death in 1850 left a profound personal impact on the pasha. Functioning under the charitable endowment established initially by his father, Rodosî Hafız Ahmed Ağa, the institution was further developed through Ahmed Fethi Pasha's patronage. In particular, he expanded the library founded by his father in 1793, significantly enriching its holdings by adding 1,200 volumes, 459 of which were manuscripts, through his initiative. These contributions greatly enhanced the library's scholarly resources and reinforced its central role in Rhodes's cultural and intellectual life.

One of the essential challenges the Ottoman Empire faced following the proclamation of the *Tanzimat* Edict on November 3, 1839, was the need to modernize its legal and administrative structures in line with European norms. During his ambassadorship in Paris that same year, Ahmed Fethi Pasha actively participated in the diplomatic campaign to manage the international dimension of the Mehmed Ali Pasha crisis. In close coordination with Mustafa Reşid Pasha, then ambassador in London and architect of the *Tanzimat*, Fethi Pasha sought to shape French and broader European

62 Şeker, *Ders İle Sohbet Arasında*, 216.

63 BOA. HH.İ. 5/3 (1 February 1852); Tuncay Cengiz Göncü, *Dolmabahçe Sarayı: İnşa Süreci, Mekân ve Teşkilatı* (Istanbul: Istanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2019), 70.

64 Önder Küçükerman, Jülide Edirne Erdinç, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Bir Ağır Sanayi Bölgesi Zeytinburnu* (Istanbul: Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, 2021), 125.

public opinion in favor of the Ottoman cause, reinforcing the legitimacy of the new reformist agenda abroad. Their joint diplomatic initiatives and intellectual contributions shaped the ideological groundwork of the era. Mustafa Reşid Pasha, widely regarded as the principal architect of the reforms, relied notably on Ahmed Fethi's support during this transformative period. Indeed, the official protocol prepared before the *Tanzimat* Edict, bearing the signatures and seals of prominent Ottoman statesmen, included Ahmed Fethi Pasha among its signatories. Both Mustafa Reşid and Ahmed Fethi concurrently served on the *Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye*, the empire's supreme legislative and judicial council responsible for drafting, overseeing, and implementing reforms.[65] However, after seven months, both statesmen were dismissed from this council due to disagreements arising from discussions about the new commercial code.[66]

Ahmed Fethi Pasha set himself apart from his contemporaries through his entrepreneurial vision and substantial contributions to Ottoman industry and commerce. While serving as a diplomat in Europe during a period when the Industrial Revolution was fundamentally reshaping daily life, he took advantage of the opportunity to observe firsthand its transformative effects across major European cities. Deeply influenced by these experiences, he emerged as a leading advocate for industrial advancement within the Empire, establishing several factories and promoting Ottoman industrial modernization. In 1841, he obtained a concession to establish a brick factory in Büyükdere, in partnership with Mustafa Reşid Pasha.[67] This initiative aimed to enhance public safety by addressing the frequent and devastating fires from Istanbul's widespread use of wooden buildings. Additionally, the establishment of the factory sought to stimulate domestic economic growth and reduce dependency on foreign monopolies. The terms of the concession granted extensive privileges, providing him not only exclusive operational rights for the factory but also authority to restrict the establishment of competing enterprises. It stipulated that any future requirements for additional brick production would be met solely through expansion of his facilities.[68] The bricks produced at the Büyükdere Brick Factory were notably employed in the construction of the *Darülfünun* (The University) building, initiated in 1846 in Istanbul's historic Sultanahmet district.[69] In his travel memoirs, the Scottish traveler Charles MacFarlane also confirms Ahmed Fethi Pasha's direct involvement in managing the clay quarries and brick manufacturing facilities, providing additional evidence of Pasha's pivotal role in advancing industrial development within the Ottoman Empire.[70]

Although the Ottomans had achieved prominence in ceramic arts between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, their first major industrial venture into porcelain production commenced in the nineteenth century with Ahmed Fethi Pasha's establishment of a factory in the Incirköy district of Beykoz in 1845. The porcelain items produced at this facility, distinguished by the hallmark "*Eser-i İstanbul*" (work of Istanbul), represented a pivotal industrial shift in Ottoman material

65 Ali Akyıldız, "Meclisi Vâlâyı Ahkâmı Adliye," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* 28 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2003): 250.

66 Ahmed Dönmez, "Mustafa Reşid Paşa ve Reform Karşıtları: Tanzimat Fermanı'nın Bedeli," *Turkish Studies* 11/6 (2016): 17-30.

67 BOA. İ.MVL. 15/233 (17 January 1841).

68 Serap Sunay, "Bir Hanedan Damadının Yaşam Tarzı ve Standardı: Ahmed Fethi Paşa'nın Terekesi," *Belleten* 84, (2020): 745-788.

69 Ahmet Hamdi Bülbül, *İstanbul'da Osmanlı Dönemi Endüstri Yapıları* (Istanbul: İstanbul Ticaret Odası Yayınları, 2024), 185.

70 Charles MacFarlane, *Turkey and Its Destiny: The Result of Journeys Made in 1847 and 1848 to Examine into the State of That Country*, 2, (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1850), 389, 561–597, 701-792, 804, 1162-1226.

culture from traditional ceramics toward refined porcelain wares.[71] Notably, sixty examples from Ahmed Fethi Pasha's Incirköy factory were exhibited and documented at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. These items included soup bowls, sauce boats, candlesticks, hookah bases, coffee cups, ewers, envelope holders, and decorative pineapple-shaped ornaments, showcasing Ottoman achievements in industrial porcelain manufacturing to an international audience.[72] During his tenure at the Imperial Arsenal, he promoted the development of industrial enterprises in Istanbul and facilitated the integration of European artistic traditions into Ottoman cultural practices. In 1844, he advanced Ottoman industrial modernization by establishing the Beykoz Glass and Crystal Factory, a pioneering institution in the history of Turkish glassmaking.[73] Recent research has shown that this factory and the nearby porcelain works in Beykoz, previously considered separate ventures, actually operated as a single integrated enterprise.[74]

Upon visiting the factory, Charles MacFarlane described its operations, highlighting the presence of fourteen German craftsmen working under the supervision of an elderly English foreman. He particularly commended the facility's compact yet systematically arranged showroom, which displayed an impressive variety of finely crafted glass and porcelain items, including ornate drinking vessels, pitchers, goblets, coffee cups, ewers, decorative bowls, perfume bottles (*gülabdan*), flower vases, and intricately designed inkwells.[75] In addition to these international artisans, the factory employed numerous skilled Ottoman porcelain and ceramic craftsmen from various districts across Istanbul. Among these local craftsmen was Hacı Beyzade Ali Bey, a distinguished porcelain decorator whose work later gained prominence at the Imperial Yıldız Porcelain Factory, and who initially refined his craft at Pasha's *Eser-i İstanbul* workshop.[76] Moreover, inspired by the Venetian glass-making tradition, Ahmed Fethi Pasha introduced an innovative and distinctive style of glassware known as *Çeşm-i bülbül* (Nightingale's Eye), significantly enriching Ottoman artistic heritage in glassmaking.[77] Products from his factory gained international acclaim, notably earning medals at the Paris Exposition of 1855.[78] Furthermore, establishing the Zeytinburnu Ironworks represented another pivotal step in the Ottoman Empire's industrial modernization, an initiative actively championed and closely supervised by Ahmed Fethi Pasha during his tenure at the Imperial Arsenal. His contributions were substantial, extending beyond routine oversight. During his diplomatic mission to Paris in 1838, he engaged in critical preliminary negotiations in Britain, laying essential foundations and securing the technical expertise necessary for the establishment and successful operation of the factory.[79]

The establishment of *Şirket-i Hayriyye* (Bosphorus Ferry Company) in the spring of 1852 represented a milestone in the Ottoman Empire's efforts to modernize urban transportation and enhance maritime connectivity within its capital. Founded through joint investment from Sultan Abdülmecid, his mother, influential statesmen, high-ranking officials, and private investors, the company substantially improved daily commuting along the Bosphorus by providing steamship

71 Ecem Haberal, *19. Yüzyılda 'Eser-i İstanbul' Damgalı Porselen Üretimi* (Master's thesis, Hacettepe University, 2002), 1-4

72 Haberal, "Porselen Üretimi," 225.

73 Önder Küçükerman and İhsan Yücel, "Milli Saraylar'daki Cam Eserlerin 19. Yüzyılda Türk Cam Sanayiinin Gelişimine Etkileri ve Ahmed Fethi Paşa," *Milli Saraylar* (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 1993), 39.

74 Haberal, "Porselen Üretimi," 224.

75 MacFarlane, *Turkey and Its Destiny,* 389, 561–597, 701-792, 804, 1162-1226.

76 Haberal, "Porselen Üretimi," 58.

77 Küçükerman, "Fethi Ahmed Paşa ve Türk Cam Sanayiinin Gelişimine Katkıları," 473.

78 Önder Küçükerman, *Sanayi Devriminin Beykoz'daki Ünlü Temsilcileri Beykoz Camları* (Istanbul: Beykoz Belediyesi, 2021), 75.

79 BOA. HAT. 828/37483 (16 July 1838).

services. Ahmed Fethi Pasha was among its prominent shareholders, further representing his active engagement in the Empire's broader modernization initiatives.[80] However, the Golden Horn (*Haliç*) was excluded from *Şirket-i Hayriyye*'s operational jurisdiction. Consequently, Sultan Abdülmecid granted a separate twenty-year concession on September 6, 1856, to Yusuf Ağa, authorizing small-scale steamship passenger services along the Golden Horn. Within a few months, this concession was transferred to Ahmed Fethi Pasha, extending its term to January 1877.[81] Established under the name *Haliç-i Dersaadet Şirket-i Hayriyesi* (Golden Horn Ferry Steamship Company of Istanbul), this company provided passenger ferry services between the Galata Bridge and various piers along the Golden Horn, facilitating public access to modern transportation in the Ottoman capital.[82]

Ahmed Fethi Pasha, renowned for his patronage of culture and the arts, also expressed his refined aesthetic sensibility through contributions to Ottoman architecture. Among the most distinguished examples of his sophisticated taste are the Fethi Pasha Grove (*Fethi Paşa Korusu*), which today serves as a cherished green space for the residents of Istanbul, and the Ahmed Fethi Pasha Mansion, considered one of the most exemplary surviving representations of classical Ottoman waterfront architecture along the Bosphorus. Acquired originally from İbrahim İsmet Efendi, the father of Arif Hikmet Bey, the mansion was extensively renovated and expanded by Ahmed Fethi Pasha in line with his cultivated tastes. Indeed, contemporaries regarded the mansion as one of the era's most elegantly appointed and aesthetically pleasing residences.[83] The mansion was originally designed with two main sections: the *harem* (private quarters) and the *selamlık* (reception area). In the 1920s, the hare, along with an adjacent pavilion and kitchen, was destroyed by fire. The surviving *selamlık* section comprises sixteen rooms distributed over two floors, each centered around a spacious hall (sofa). The garden courtyard features intricate paving in the rodoskârî style, a traditional technique using carefully arranged black and white pebbles to form geometric patterns.[84]

Ahmed Fethi Pasha's architectural legacy in Üsküdar notably includes the reconstruction in 1855 of a mosque originally built in wood by his father in 1795. This masonry reconstruction featured an elevated structure (*fevkani*), embodying the contemporary architectural aesthetics of the period. Additionally, although it has not survived to the present day, a public fountain he commissioned once enriched the local urban landscape, further underscoring his contributions to the district's architectural heritage. His approach to architecture reveals a keen interest in shaping the built environment in ways that aligned with the changing expectations of his time. Beyond his contributions to the capital, he left a lasting imprint on Rhodes, his family's ancestral homeland. The public works he sponsored on the island, including a clock tower, a timekeeper's office (*muvakkithane*), and educational facilities, demonstrated his engagement with the broader drive toward institutional and spatial renewal. Following the mid-century reforms, clock towers became defining features of Ottoman urban landscapes, often placed in prominent locations to symbolize both public order and state authority. The Rhodes Clock Tower, completed in 1852 and built in

80 Ali Akyıldız, "Şirketi Hayriyye," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 39 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2010): 201.

81 Ali Akyıldız, *Haliç'te Seyrüsefer Haliç Vapurları* Şirketi *ve Faaliyetleri* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2007), 21-24.

82 Reşat Baykal, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan Günümüze İstanbul'da Kent İçi Deniz Ulaşımı* (İstanbul: Türkiye Turing ve Otomobil Kurumu, 2021), 167, 168.

83 Halûk Y. Şehsuvaroğlu, "Fethi Ahmed Paşa Yalısı," *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* 10, ed. Reşad Ekrem Koçu (Istanbul: Koçu Yayınları, 1971), 5711.

84 Sedat Hakkı Eldem, *Türk Evi Plan Tipleri* (Istanbul: İTÜ Mimarlık Fakültesi Yayınları, 1968), 186.

a European architectural style, clearly expresses this trend. Although the adjacent *muvakkithane*, once photographed in the Hamidian Albums, has not survived, the tower remains one of the island's most iconic landmarks. Through these architectural ventures inspired by contemporary Western models, Ahmed Fethi Pasha contributed to shaping a new vision of urban life that emphasized precision, visibility, and state presence.[85]

Professional Formation of Said Pasha the Englishman: Education and Technical Expertise

Educated within the reformist spirit of the *Tanzimat* era, Mehmed Said became known as "the Englishman," a tribute to his rare mastery of English in a period when French reigned supreme, and his distinctly British bearing and refinement. The formative years he spent immersed in London's intellectual circles endowed him with profound technical expertise, cultural elegance, and social grace, crafting him into a living link bridging the worlds of the Ottoman and British empires. His engineering and military technology expertise enabled him to play active roles in development initiatives across various sectors, including weaponry modernization, railway construction, maritime infrastructure, coal extraction, and the establishment of military-industrial facilities. Moreover, through his involvement in scholarly institutions such as the Ottoman Society of Science (*Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i Osmaniye*) and educational establishments like the Ottoman Naval Academy (*Mekteb-i Bahriye*), Said Pasha, the Englishman, contributed to the education and formation of a new generation of intellectual and technical elites within Ottoman society. In his administrative roles as governor across various Anatolian provinces, he promoted and personally supervised infrastructure projects, notably constructing roads, bridges, waterways, and weirs, accelerating regional development. He advocated modern agricultural techniques to revitalize the rural economy, foster increased productivity, and promote local economic growth. Additionally, establishing educational institutions and administrative buildings at provincial and district levels strengthened regional educational infrastructure and enhanced the efficiency of bureaucratic governance. These contributions collectively played a focal role in facilitating broader Ottoman administrative reforms and advancing the modernization efforts throughout the empire's regional peripheries.

Mehmed Said was born in 1830 in Izmid, into a distinguished sayyid family from Eğin, known today as Kemaliye in Erzincan, Turkey. His father, Mustafa Ağa, served as a *Has Ağası*, a senior administrative official responsible for overseeing imperial landholdings known as *has*, and concurrently held the position of *mutasarrıf* (district governor) in the region.[86] Following his father's untimely death in 1832, his family relocated to Istanbul, where he began his early education at the Nuruosmaniye Primary School (*Sıbyan Mektebi*). A pivotal moment in his intellectual and professional development came in 1848 with his enrollment at the Imperial School of Military Engineering (*Mühendishane-i Berrî-i Hümâyûn*), a leading educational institution central to Ottoman

85 Stefanos Yerasimos, "Tanzimat'ın Kent Reformları Üzerine," *Modernleşme Sürecinde Osmanlı Kentleri*, ed. Paul Dumont, François Georgeon, trans. Ali Berktay (Istanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996), 1-19.

86 Nazan Danişmend, "Türk Demokrasi Tarihinin Unutulmuş Simalarından: Eğinli Sait Paşa," *Türklük* 1 (1939): 252; Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, 4, (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1302), 858; Mehmed Esad, *Mirât-ı Mühendishâne-i Berrî-i Hümâyûn* (Istanbul, 1312), 168, 373.

modernization efforts.[87] The rigorous curriculum and intellectual environment at this academy influenced Mehmed Said's character, academic development, and subsequent professional career.

The Ottoman Empire's efforts toward modernization are especially evident in military education. One of the pivotal institutions representing this transformative shift was the Imperial School of Military Engineering, established under Sultan Selim III in 1795. Located in Hasköy, the school was founded primarily to educate artillery and fortification officers, offering exceptional opportunities to young individuals such as Mehmed Said, who demonstrated considerable aptitude for military sciences and engineering. Distinguished from earlier Ottoman military schools by its adoption of contemporary methods in mathematics and natural sciences, the institution notably integrated European languages, particularly French, into its curriculum, enabling students to engage directly with Western scholarly sources. Mathematics, geometry, topography, physics, astronomy, and ballistics were taught in classrooms furnished with modern educational tools, including desks and blackboards, aligned with prevailing Western pedagogical standards. These comprehensive and innovative courses provided students access to contemporary engineering concepts and scholarly literature, enhancing intellectual development.[88] Within this progressive educational framework, Mehmed Said acquired a fundamental grasp of the technical and military aspects integral to the broader Ottoman modernization movement.

Upon graduating in 1851, Said Bey was promoted to Captain (*Yüzbaşı*) and appointed assistant instructor at the school due to his academic record.[89] During this period, he produced translations and prepared extensive lecture notes, circulating among students as informal yet essential educational resources, reflecting an early stage of educational modernization when printed instructional materials remained scarce. He concurrently served as an assistant to the renowned Scottish professor Edward Sang, an eminent mechanical and engineering scholar widely recognized across Europe for his authoritative publications on gear mechanisms and mechanical principles.[90] Sang also demonstrated considerable interest in astronomy, notably establishing a sundial on campus to instruct students in celestial phenomena, including solar eclipses and lunar movements.[91] Said Bey's close collaboration with Sang enhanced his mathematical knowledge and proficiency in English, enriching his intellectual and professional endeavors.

Having completed his tenure in Istanbul in June 1854, Edward Sang returned to Britain, accompanied by two distinguished students selected for advanced training. Among these was Mehmed Said, recently promoted to Adjutant Major (*Kolağası*) at the Imperial School of Military Engineering.[92] These students, sponsored by Ahmed Fethi Pasha in his official capacity as Commander of the Imperial Arsenal, were granted state scholarships to undertake advanced engineering studies at the University of Edinburgh, placing them at the center of European scientific and industrial developments. They integrated rigorous theoretical coursework with practical internships at prominent British military

87 Esad, *Mirât-ı Mühendishâne*, 180,372-373; İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, "Said Paşa, İngiliz Mehmed," *Türk Ansiklopedisi*, 28 (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1983), 51–52.

88 Kemal Beydilli, *Türk Bilim ve Matbaacılık Tarihinde Mühendishâne, Mühendishâne Matbaası ve Kütüphanesi (1776–1826)*, (Istanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1995), 30–35, 59–60.

89 Esad, *Mirât-ı Mühendishâne*, 170; *Sabah*, February 14, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 10, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 11, 1311, 1.

90 Alex D. D. Craik, "The Logarithmic Tables of Edward Sang and His Daughters," *Historia Mathematica* 30 (2003): 47–84.

91 Esad, *Mirât-ı Mühendishâne*, 370-375; BOA. İ.HR. 40/1886 (31 May 1841).

92 BOA. İ.HR. 110/5047 (7 June 1854); Esad, *Mirât-ı Mühendishâne*, 168.

and industrial institutions throughout their academic training, expanding their professional knowledge, technical proficiency, and practical expertise.[93]

Mehmed Said, in particular, obtained comprehensive practical training at the Royal Small Arms Factory in Enfield, where he closely examined advanced methods in rifle manufacturing, fabrication techniques, and contemporary practices of mass production. His internship at the Woolwich Arsenal allowed him to observe the complex logistical and technical procedures involved in ammunition production, substantially broadening his practical comprehension of military-industrial operations. Additionally, at the Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Mills, he gained specialized expertise in industrial chemistry and modern techniques of gunpowder manufacturing processes. His training further encompassed prominent naval shipyards such as Plymouth, Portsmouth, Devonport, and Keyham, where he engaged directly with naval architecture, shipbuilding techniques, and explored the military implementation of steam-powered technologies.[94] Beyond these technical experiences, Said immersed himself in European society and its vibrant cultural environment, notably participating in the 1855 Exposition Universelle in Paris, where he closely observed Western advancements in science, technology, and culture.[95] These experiences shaped his professional capabilities and intellectual outlook, preparing him to contribute substantially to Ottoman modernization efforts and inspiring his later involvement in similar international exhibitions in Istanbul.

After completing his education in Britain, Mehmed Said returned to Istanbul in November 1859. In a report by the Ottoman Ambassador in London, Kostaki Musurus, particular emphasis was placed on Mehmed Said's specialized expertise in railway engineering, accompanied by a recommendation to be employed in this field. Ambassador Musurus highlighted that he was the first Ottoman engineer skilled in producing detailed technical drawings for locomotives and railway systems.[96] By this recommendation, Said Bey was appointed in 1860 as railway commissioner within the Department of Roads and Bridges (*Turuk ve Maâbir Dairesi*), affiliated with the Ministry of Commerce and Public Works (*Ticaret ve Nâfia Nezâreti*). In this capacity, he was responsible for supervising and facilitating technical coordination on the Smyrna-Aidin railway project, undertaken by the Ottoman Railway Company.[97] His close association with the project's chief engineer, Thomas Russell Crampton, allowed him to further his experience. Subsequently, the knowledge and competencies Mehmed Said acquired during this period influenced his involvement in establishing the Ottoman Scientific Society (*Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i Osmaniye*), thereby contributing meaningfully to the advancement of Istanbul's scholarly and intellectual community.[98]

Mehmed Said subsequently transitioned from railway administration to academia, accepting an appointment as an instructor at the Naval Academy (*Bahriye Mektebi*) in August 1861, with the rank of major (*Binbaşı*).[99] His advanced engineering education and practical experience in Britain

93 *Sabah*, February 14, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 10, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 11, 1311, 1; BOA. HR. SFR3. 16/37, Letter from Professor Edward Sang in Edinburgh to the Ottoman Ambassador in London, Kostaki Musurus (21 August 1854); BOA. HR.SFR.3 16/37 Letter from Kostaki Musurus to Edward Sang (5 September 1854).

94 Danişmend, "Eğinli Sait Paşa," 252-254; BOA. İ.HR. 110/5047 (7 June 1854); BOA, A. AMD. 74/9 (l856).

95 *Sabah*, February 14, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 10, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 11, 1311, 1

96 BOA. İ. DH. 449/29726 Ottoman Ambassador Kostaki Musurus to the Ministry of the Interior (28 November 1859).

97 BOA. İ. DH. 449/29726 From the Ministry of the Interior to the Grand Vizierate (6 December 1859); BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 175/47 From the Grand Vizierate to the Ministry of War and the Ministry of Commerce (9 December 1859); BOA. A. MKT. NZD. 303/4 From the Ministry of War to the Grand Vizierate (27 January 1860).

98 Yeşim Işıl, *Bir Aydınlanma Hareketi Olarak Mecmua-i Fünûn* (Master's thesis, Istanbul University, 1986), 149–154.

99 BOA, İ. DH. 477/32044 (10 August 1861); BOA, A. MKT. NZD. 364/51 From the Sublime Porte to the Office of Grand Admiral (14 August 1861).

positioned him to fulfill this educational role. Through his mastery of mathematics, physics, and mechanics, he contributed to training modern technical personnel, integrating contemporary scientific resources to meet the evolving technological requirements of the Ottoman navy effectively.

Intellectual Progress: The Ottoman Scientific Society and Journal of Sciences

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, newspapers and periodicals increasingly became features of social and intellectual life within Ottoman society. Among these publications, *The Levant Herald* was Istanbul's first English-language newspaper, widely perceived as an informal publication closely associated with the British Embassy. Regularly followed by Mehmed Said throughout his lifetime, this newspaper represented Western journalistic practice within the Ottoman context.[100] Concurrently, the emergence of *Tercüman-ı Ahval* (Interpreter of Events), the first privately owned Turkish-language newspaper independent from state support, introduced a dynamic new element into the Ottoman press landscape. Within this dynamic and increasingly competitive media landscape, contemporary intellectuals sought various platforms to disseminate their ideas and more effectively engage public opinion.[101]

In this intellectual atmosphere, Mehmed Said, together with his close associates Halil Şerif and Tahir Münif, began exploring the establishment of a new scholarly organization to address the scientific and intellectual gap resulting from the dissolution of the *Encümen-i Dâniş* (Council of Knowledge). Central to their vision was creating a scholarly association that, while remaining autonomous from governmental oversight, would gain official recognition through imperial authorization.[102] Given the politically sensitive context shaped by events such as the *Kuleli* Incident of 1859, the founders deliberately established foundational principles designed explicitly to exclude political or religious controversies. Thus, the *Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i Osmaniye* (Ottoman Scientific Society), formally inaugurated on May 24, 1861, was structured by these cautious, impartial, and scholarly objectives. Mehmed Said's role in establishing the society demonstrates his substantial contributions to Ottoman modernization, extending beyond the domains of technical and engineering expertise into the cultural and intellectual spheres. Established through the concerted efforts of Said and his close associates, this society represents a prominent endeavor designed to introduce European scientific knowledge to Ottoman society and to encourage the spread of scientific thinking among the wider public. In this respect, the society may be viewed as both a tangible and symbolic reflection of the cultural and scholarly transformation that characterized the *Tanzimat* era.

In an effort to raise public awareness about the activities of the *Cemiyet-i İlmiye* and promote the broader dissemination of scientific thought within Ottoman society, the journal *Mecmûa-i Fünûn* (Journal of Sciences) commenced publication in July 1862. This journal sought to acquaint Ottoman readers with contemporary European advancements in science, philosophy, technology, and commerce. The journal maintained a clear and consistent focus on scholarly and intellectual

100 Burhan Çağlar, *Anglophone Press in Constantinople: The Levant Herald & Eastern Express (1859-1878)* (Libra Kitap, 2020), 119-122.

101 M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 94-95.

102 Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, "Cemiyet-i İlmiye ve Mecmua-i Funun," *Osmanlı İlmî ve Meslekî Cemiyetleri: I. Milli Türk Bilim Tarihi Sempozyumu Bildirileri* (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1987), 2170–2180.

discourse by distancing itself from everyday political controversies.[103] Mehmed Said actively supported the journal and contributed to its intellectual profile by authoring two comprehensive articles on engineering and the natural sciences. In the first article, entitled "*Fevâid-i Turuk*" (On the Advantages of Road Networks), Said highlighted the crucial importance of transportation infrastructure for economic development, emphasizing the transformative impact that technological improvements in transportation and communication networks could have upon Ottoman society.[104] His second article, "*Nazari ile Ameli Beyninde Olan Cihet-i Vahdet*" (On the Unity of Theory and Practice), provided a critical analysis of the historical dichotomy between theoretical and applied sciences, arguing persuasively for their integration as part of a cohesive modern scientific paradigm.[105]

Another noteworthy undertaking of the *Cemiyet-i İlmiye* involved founding a modern public library and a reading room (*kıraathane*) in Istanbul. Mehmed Said directly facilitated this initiative by obtaining a donation of 173 scientific volumes from Thomas R. Crampton, the British chief engineer of the Smyrna-Aidin railway project. The library swiftly became a central institution through which contemporary scientific works were introduced to Ottoman readers. The adjoining reading room complemented the library by providing a dynamic intellectual space for discussions, language instruction, and academic lectures.[106] Through these activities, the *Cemiyet-i İlmiye* solidified its position as a leading cultural and intellectual institution representative of the *Tanzimat* era, contributing to the Ottoman modernization movement.

In its formative years, one of the prominent subjects frequently addressed by the *Mecmûa-i Fünûn* was the General Ottoman Exhibition (*Sergi-i Umûmî-i Osmânî*), inaugurated in Istanbul on February 27, 1863. The exhibition was a conspicuous symbol of the Ottoman Empire's commitment to modernization during the era. Drawing inspiration from the European tradition of international expositions popularized throughout the nineteenth century, the event exposed Ottoman society to diverse technological advancements, encompassing areas from agricultural machinery to industrial products. Through detailed reporting and critical analysis, the journal highlighted the exhibition's role in facilitating the circulation of scientific ideas, technological innovations, and industrial developments, thereby significantly enriching the Ottoman intellectual landscape. A particularly notable exhibition section was devoted to weaponry and machinery manufactured by Ottoman military facilities. This section prominently displayed an extensive array of military equipment, including cannons, rifles, and ammunition produced at imperial institutions such as the Imperial Arsenal (*Tophâne-i Âmire*), Imperial Shipyard (*Tersâne-i Âmire*), and the Zeytinburnu Arms Factory. By presenting these exhibits, the Ottoman state aimed to publicly showcase its technological advancements and enhanced production capacities within the military-industrial sector, underscoring its ongoing commitment to modernization and industrial growth.[107] The miniature locomotive model, designed by Mehmed Said, emerged as a prominent attraction, captivating public attention as Ottoman society's initial encounter with this technology. Its recognition extended beyond local observers, drawing considerable attention from European media, thereby enhancing Mehmed Said's international

103 İhsanoğlu, "Cemiyet-i İlmiye," 2180-2185.

104 Mehmed Said, "Fevâ'id-i Turuk," *Mecmûa-i Fünûn* 4 (1279): 186-196; Mehmed Said, "Fevâ'id-i Turuk, mâ-bâd," *Mecmûa-i Fünûn* 4 (1279): 232–238.

105 Mehmed Said, "Nazarî ile Amelî Beyninde Olan Cihet-i Vahdet," *Mecmûa-i Fünûn* 1 (1279): 368–376.

106 İhsanoğlu, "Cemiyet-i İlmiye," 2180-2185.

107 Ahmet Erdem Tozoğlu, "Addressing the Modern Regimes of Urban Spectacle: Revisiting the Ottoman General Exhibition of 1863 in Istanbul," *Journal of Urban History* 50 (2022): 640–649.

stature as a distinguished Ottoman engineer. An article published in the London-based newspaper *The Daily News*, referencing coverage by *The Levant Herald*, specifically identified Mehmed Said's locomotive model as the most remarkable event exhibit.[108] Further highlighting this achievement, Münif Efendi, writing in *Mecmûa-i Fünûn*, credited Mehmed Said as the creator of the locomotive and underlined his prestigious role as vice president of the *Cemiyet-i İlmiye-i Osmaniye*. Such public recognition bolstered Mehmed Said's personal prestige and reinforced the intellectual and technical reputation of the scholarly society he represented.[109]

Mehmed Said's instrumental role in founding the *Cemiyet-i İlmiye* and his contributions to the publication of the *Mecmûa-i Fünûn* illustrate that his impact on Ottoman modernization reached far beyond the technical and engineering domains, impacting cultural and intellectual spheres as well. Mehmed Said contributed to the transformation of Ottoman intellectual life through his active involvement in initiatives such as establishing a modern public library, disseminating scientific knowledge via periodicals, and promoting technological innovations at public exhibitions. This intellectual environment allowed individuals to maintain their personal beliefs separately from public life, encouraging a transformation of communal identity away from traditional religious affiliations toward modern communities defined by shared intellectual interests. Such developments laid the groundwork for scientific associations within Ottoman society, enabling people to come together based on shared intellectual goals rather than religious identities. In this context, his activities within the *Cemiyet-i İlmiye* represent clear manifestations of broader efforts to transmit European scientific and intellectual traditions into Ottoman culture, thus facilitating the wider dissemination and acceptance of scientific thought throughout Ottoman society.

Defense Industry and Military Renewal: The London Mission

Following his appointment as an instructor at the Naval Academy, Mehmed Said's professional reputation and personal prestige were likely enhanced by the widespread recognition of his locomotive design showcased at the General Ottoman Exhibition. Shortly thereafter, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel (*Kaymakam*). In August 1863, Mehmed Said was again dispatched to Britain, supervising the acquisition of naval vessels, weaponry, and ammunition crucial for the Ottoman military's ongoing modernization efforts.[110] His mission in London thus became a juncture combining technological modernization, diplomatic engagement, and technical cooperation, facilitating the transfer of Western knowledge and technological expertise to the Ottoman Empire.[111]

During this period in Britain, Mehmed Said Bey engaged directly with British arms manufacturers, naval shipyards, and ammunition producers, effectively undertaking duties akin to those of a military attaché. Through closely monitoring the manufacturing processes within Britain's military industry, he facilitated the transfer of advanced technical knowledge and

108 "The Ottoman National Exhibition," *Daily News*, April 6, 1863, 2; "The Ottoman National Exhibition," *Morning Post*, April 7, 1863, 8; "The Ottoman National Exhibition," *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 9, 1863, 6; "The Turkish Industrial Exhibition," *Leeds Mercury*, March 19, 1863, 4.

109 Kadri Bey, "Sergi-i Umumî-i Osmânî," *Mecmûa-i Fünûn* 8 (1279): 338; Münif Efendi, "Sergi-i Umumî Osmânîyeden Vuku-i Küşâdı," *Mecmûa-i Fünûn* 9 (1279): 362; Kadri Bey, "Tariḫ-i Sergi-yi ber-Vech-i Umumî," *Mecmua-i Fünûn* 9 (1279): 387; Münif Efendi, "Zamime-i Sergi-i Osmânî," *Mecmûa-i Fünûn* 10 (1279): 409; Kadri Bey, "Sergi-i Umumî-i Osmânî," *Mecmûa-i Fünûn* 10 (1279): 431.

110 BOA. A. MKT. MHK 277/24 To the Undersecretariat of the Imperial Arsenal (18 August 1863).

111 Frank Lee, "Marshal M. Said" (Obituary), in "Memoirs," *Proceedings of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers* 50 (1896): 93.

technologies to the Ottoman armed forces.[112] Between 1863 and 1867, he personally supervised the production and delivery processes of warships ordered by the Ottoman Navy.[113] Among these projects, Said Bey directly oversaw the procurement process and attended the official handover ceremony of the ironclad warship *Osmaniye*, constructed by B. Napier & Sons in Glasgow, Scotland. In addition, he was instrumental in acquiring four armored battleships, each with a displacement of 6,400 tons, as well as various steam vessels of smaller capacities intended for patrol duties and troop transportation.[114] In 1864, he played a role in negotiations concerning a large battleship of 10,800 tons, initially ordered but subsequently cancelled three times due to financial disputes, and eventually sold to Prussia. Furthermore, through his continued efforts in 1867, three smaller warships were successfully commissioned and delivered to the Ottoman Navy in 1870.[115]

Mehmed Said Bey further expanded his responsibilities during this mission by acquiring specialized machinery and manufacturing equipment from the Woolwich Arsenal, which was intended to modernize and upgrade the facilities of the Imperial Arsenal. He also secured essential technical apparatus required for establishing the domestic production of Armstrong artillery batteries, representing some of the era's most advanced military technologies. To ensure the successful transfer and implementation of these technologies, he coordinated the dispatch of British technical experts to the Ottoman capital. These activities accelerated the Arsenal's technological progress and infrastructural enhancement, thereby reducing the Ottoman military industry's reliance on foreign suppliers while fostering the development of self-sufficient domestic production capabilities.[116] In addition to these advancements, Mehmed Said Bey played a role in the Ottoman military's transition from traditional short-range flintlock muskets to advanced, long-range Enfield rifles, initiated in 1863. To support this modernization, he negotiated the procurement of 50,000 Enfield rifles from Britain in July of the same year, along with essential ammunition components such as percussion caps, cartridges, and cartridge cases. Furthermore, Said Bey collaborated closely with the Royal Small Arms Factory to acquire specialized machinery and equipment required to establish domestic rifle manufacturing facilities at the *Tüfekhane* (Imperial Arms Factory). This strategic initiative enhanced the Ottoman Empire's capacity for independent production, ultimately reaching an output of approximately one thousand rifled muskets per week. Moreover, he arranged for technical specialists to travel to Istanbul to oversee equipment installation and provide essential training to local personnel, reinforcing the Ottoman military industry's technological proficiency and industrial autonomy.[117]

Mehmed Said's tenure in London also provided opportunities to enhance his connections within prominent European engineering communities, thus laying the groundwork for greater international representation of Ottoman engineers. Reflecting these strengthened connections, in 1864, he was admitted as a member of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE), a leading British society renowned for advancing the engineering profession. His membership, obtained

112 BOA. HR. MKT. 464/36 To the Office of the Imperial Arsenal (22 December 1863).

113 BOA. HR. TO. 57/10 From the London Embassy to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (28 March 1867).

114 "The Turkish Ambassador," *Glasgow Herald,* September 3, 1864, 4; "Launch of an Iron-Clad on the Clyde for Turkey," *Morning Post,* December 31, 1864, 5.

115 Daniel Panzac, *The Ottoman Navy: From the Height of Empire to Dissolution, 1572–1923*, trans. Peter R. Gillespie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 330-339.

116 Serdal Soyluer, *Osmanlı Silah Sanayii'nde Modernleşme Çabaları (1839–1876)* (PhD diss., Istanbul University, 2013), 98–101, 123–125, 202–205, 230–233, 397–400.

117 *Soyluer, Osmanlı Silah Sanayii'nde Modernleşme*, 98–101, 123–125, 202–205, 230–233, 397–400.

through a formal process of nomination and endorsement, was sponsored by the eminent military engineer John Anderson and supported by engineers such as Thomas R. Crampton and Frederick William Taylor, who had been involved in Ottoman railway and industrial ventures. Through his affiliation, Mehmed Said facilitated closer professional ties between European engineering networks and the Ottoman Empire, enhancing the visibility and participation of Ottoman engineers on international technical platforms.[118]

Restructuring the Navy: Reforms and Regulatory Improvements

Upon returning to Istanbul in 1867, Mehmed Said was promoted to Colonel (*Miralay*). With his extensive engineering expertise, military-technical experience, and professional network, he quickly assumed primary responsibilities within the Ottoman capital. Initially appointed as director of the Imperial Arsenal, he led initiatives to advance weapons manufacturing technologies and expand this facility's industrial capacity. Concurrently, he became involved in the restructuring efforts accompanying the establishment of the Ministry of the Navy (*Bahriye Nezâreti*). Within this context, he was appointed as a permanent member of the newly established Naval Manufacturing Board (*İmalat-ı Bahriye Meclisi*) at the Imperial Shipyard (*Tersâne-i Âmire*).[119] Following the abolition of the office of Kapudan Pasha (Grand Admiral), the newly formed Naval Administration Board (*Bahriye İdare Meclisi*) under the ministry marked a decisive step toward modernizing the Ottoman Navy. Entrusted with broad-ranging responsibilities, the board supervised financial administration, shipbuilding, fleet management, logistical planning, maintenance operations, and the procurement of naval supplies.[120] Central to these modernization efforts, Colonel Mehmed Said played roles in drafting and implementing new naval regulations beginning in 1867, placing particular emphasis on improving educational standards for maritime personnel, expanding technical capabilities, and ensuring reliable and sustainable fuel supplies for naval operations.

British Admiral Augustus C. Hobart, during this period, submitted reports to the Naval Administration Board, highlighting critical shortcomings within the Ottoman Navy, notably regarding personnel training and logistical infrastructure. Responding to Hobart's recommendations, Mehmed Said contributed to developing and implementing regulations to elevate naval training standards.[121] Simultaneously, he introduced measures designed to strengthen the navy's logistical capacities, emphasizing securing reliable coal supplies, a resource of strategic importance. On May 7, 1867, following the Ministry of the Navy's assumption of administrative authority over the Heraklia (Ereğli) Coal Basin, Colonel Mehmed Said was appointed to the commission tasked with overseeing the management of this resource. Drawing upon his previous experience from August 1861, during which he facilitated the transition of administrative control from British corporate entities to Ottoman authorities, Mehmed Said effectively integrated practical insights with the

118 Lee, "Marshal M. Said," 93.

119 BOA. İ.DH. 570/39719 (31 December 1867); *Sabah*, February 14, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 10, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 11, 1311, 1; *Salnamei Devleti Aliyye-i Osmâniyye* 20 (Istanbul: Matbaai Amire, 1282), 15; *Salnamei Devleti Aliyye-i Osmâniyye* 22 (Istanbul: Matbaai Amire, 1282), 40.

120 Dilara Dal, *The Modernization of the Ottoman Navy during the Reign of Sultan Abdülaziz (1861–1876)* (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2015), 53–60.

121 Dal, *The Modernization of the Ottoman Navy*, 80-95.

engineering expertise acquired during his tenure in Britain.[122] His involvement proved essential in drafting regulations to resolve persistent production issues and modernize the facilities within the coal basin. These interventions increased coal production, bolstering the logistical infrastructure and enhancing the Ottoman Navy's readiness for operations.

Colonel Said strengthened the technical and administrative aspects of Ottoman military modernization through these responsibilities and the regulatory frameworks he introduced. His initiatives in modernizing critical institutions, including the Imperial Arsenal and the Ministry of the Navy, facilitated the Ottoman military industry's adoption and advancement of contemporary production methods and technologies. Furthermore, his administrative reforms improved operational efficiency within the Ottoman Navy, effectively aligning the empire's military and technological capabilities with modern standards. Consequently, Mehmed Said emerged as a pivotal figure within the Ottoman modernization movement, widely recognized for his substantial contributions to the empire's military and technical transformation.

Transforming the Naval Academy: Instruction and Curriculum

Colonel Said played a prominent role in advancing Ottoman modernization through his educational initiatives and institutional reforms at the Naval Academy (*Bahriye Mektebi*). Established during the reign of Sultan Mustafa III, the Academy underwent substantial modernization under Sultan Abdülmecid, who relocated the institution to Heybeliada (Halki). The Academy entered another transformative phase following the establishment of the Ministry of the Navy. The introduction of steam-powered and ironclad warships into the Ottoman naval fleet required more advanced and technically oriented training programs for naval officers.[123]

Having served initially as an instructor at the Naval Academy in 1859, Mehmed Said provided foundational instruction in the basic sciences. On September 30, 1868, he was promoted to Brigadier General (*Mirliva*), granted the title of "Pasha", and appointed director (*nazır*) of the Academy.[124] He undertook extensive curricular reforms in this new capacity, aligning the Academy's educational standards with those of leading contemporary naval institutions. By emphasizing practical training and intensifying foreign language instruction, he elevated the educational quality of the institution through the recruitment of both local and international instructors. Through these comprehensive reforms, Mehmed Said Pasha established a robust foundation for cultivating qualified naval personnel, contributing substantially to the ongoing modernization of the Ottoman Navy. During Mehmed Said Pasha's tenure as director, the Naval Academy revised and expanded its curriculum by incorporating advanced technical subjects, including physics, mechanics, fluid dynamics, and material strength. The reforms he instituted introduced contemporary educational practices modeled on the training standards of the British Royal Navy.[125] Emphasizing a balance between theoretical instruction and practical training, the Academy facilitated experiential learning aboard its vessels, providing cadets opportunities to acquire essential field experience. These curricular and

122 *Sabah*, February 14, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 10, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 11, 1311, 1; BOA. HR. MKT. 614/19; BOA, HR. MKT. 614/19 To the Ministry of the Navy (26 March 1868); Funda Songur, *Logistics in the Ottoman Navy: Facilities, Capabilities, and the Status of Bases (1867–1914)* (Istanbul: Timaş Akademi, 2022), 286-290.

123 Dal, *The Modernization of the Ottoman Navy*, 148-190.

124 BOA. İ. DUİT. 185/84 (27 October 1868).

125 Meltem Akbaş, *Modern Physics in Ottoman Turkey (19th Century)* (PhD diss., Istanbul University, 2008), 58–84.

methodological improvements enhanced the cadets' practical skills and professional readiness.[126] As a result, the Naval Academy aligned itself with the educational benchmarks of leading maritime institutions of its time, furthering the broader objectives of Ottoman naval modernization.

Complementing these curricular advancements, Said Pasha introduced several measures designed to enhance the Academy's instructional capabilities. He facilitated collaboration with the Imperial Military Academy (*Mekteb-i Harbiye*), assigning instructors to provide comprehensive gymnastics and physical training courses aimed at the holistic development of cadets.[127] Recognizing the importance of English proficiency in contemporary naval education, he recruited British instructors, thereby improving the cadets' linguistic competencies. Furthermore, by appointing educators with extensive international experience, notably Henry Felix Woods, he elevated the Academy's standards and broadened its educational perspective.[128] In response to the Ottoman Navy's persistent need for qualified personnel, Said Pasha expanded the Naval Academy's student enrollment capacity, resulting in considerable financial strain on the institution. Nonetheless, through fiscal oversight and allocation of available resources, he maintained the Academy's educational standards, institutional discipline, and academic integrity. Under his guidance, the Naval Academy evolved into a prominent educational institution, closely aligned with contemporary maritime standards and dedicated to producing competent naval officers equipped to address the technological and operational demands of the period effectively.[129]

Beyond his roles at the Naval Academy, Said Pasha was involved in broader educational reforms across the Empire. In 1872, he was appointed to a special committee formed by the Ministry of Public Education (*Maarif Nezareti*) dedicated to preparing school textbooks. The committee aimed to resolve a shortage of books that had hindered the implementation of the new educational regulations (*Maarif Nizamnamesi*) introduced in 1869. Chaired by Minister of Public Education Cevdet Pasha, it comprised Said Pasha, educational and military officials, and the directors of imperial colleges, including the *Mühendishane* (Engineering), *Tıbbiye* (Medicine), and *Harbiye* (Military). Given the significance of this initiative, Cevdet Pasha, himself an author of several textbooks, closely oversaw and accorded priority to the commission's activities.[130] Through his participation in the commission, he contributed to resolving one of the major challenges facing Ottoman educational reform by supporting the introduction of standardized curricula and preparing textbooks for both civilian and military educational institutions.

Mehmed Said's enduring commitment to naval education and instructional resources is further highlighted by his interaction with former U.S. President General Ulysses S. Grant during the latter's visit to Istanbul in March 1878. Serving as Minister of the Navy at a critical juncture marked by the tense conclusion of the Russo-Ottoman War, Said Pasha was assigned as interpreter during Grant's audience with the Sultan. Seizing this diplomatic encounter as an opportunity, he

126 BOA. A.MKT.MHM 427/34 To the Ministry of the Navy (8 November 1868).

127 BOA. İ. DUİT. 185/78 (4 March 1870); Süleyman Nutki Bey, *Süleyman Nutki Bey'in Hatıraları*, trans. Nurcan Bal, (İstanbul: Deniz Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı Yayınlar 2003), 3-4.

128 Dal, *The Modernization of the Ottoman Navy*, 98-100; Sir Henry Felix Woods, *Spunyarn: From the Strands of a Sailor's Life Afloat and Ashore; Forty-Seven Years Under the Ensigns of Great Britain and Turkey*, 1, (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1924), 12–14.

129 Akbaş, *Modern Physics in Ottoman Turkey*, 58–84; Süleyman Nutki Bey, *Süleyman Nutki Bey'in Hatıraları*, 3–4; Ali İhsan Gencer, *Bahriyede Yapılan Islahat Hareketleri ve Bahriye Nezaretinin Kuruluşu (1789–1867)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2001), 286–288.

130 Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir: 40–Tetimme*, ed. Cavid Baysun (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1991), 126.

expressed a keen interest in the curricula and instructional materials of the United States Military and Naval Academy, requesting General Grant's assistance in obtaining textbooks and course outlines. Grant willingly facilitated this request, personally ensuring the materials were sent to Istanbul.[131] This brief yet considerable incident underscores Mehmed Said's consistent dedication to advancing Ottoman education by seeking international knowledge and resources, a commitment he maintained throughout his career.

Following a period serving as the head of the Railway Construction Council (*Demiryolları İnşaat Meclisi*) under the Ministry of Public Works (*Nâfia Nezâreti*), Said Pasha assumed a new role in March 1875, becoming a member of the Artillery Department (*Topçu Dairesi*) within the Military Council (*Dâr-ı Şûrâ-yı Askerî*). This council played a central role in the Ottoman army's reform, innovation, and organizational restructuring efforts, with the Artillery Department specifically tasked with supervising critical aspects such as artillery training, weapons technology, and ammunition production.[132] Said Pasha's appointment to this position drew upon his engineering education, familiarity with contemporary European military advancements, and practical expertise developed at prominent British institutions like the Enfield Rifle Factory and Woolwich Arsenal, where he had studied artillery and ammunition manufacturing. Shortly after his appointment, the Artillery Department underwent substantial reorganization. On January 25, 1876, the Ottoman administration implemented a new arrangement designed to streamline the processes of procurement, inspection, evaluation, and quality control of military supplies and armaments required by the Imperial Arsenal (*Tophane-i Âmire*). Within this framework, the Artillery Department was abolished, and its responsibilities were transferred to the newly established Testing and Military Products Branch (*Tecrübe ve Mamûlât-ı Harbiyye Şubesi*), directly subordinated to the Imperial Arsenal. The primary objectives of this organizational reform were to accelerate procurement processes, uphold quality standards, and expedite decision-making regarding military equipment, ultimately aiming to enhance the Ottoman army's operational readiness and technical capabilities.[133]

Said Pasha was soon appointed to lead this newly formed branch. Shortly after Murad V's deposition and Abdülhamid II's accession on August 31, 1876, Said Pasha was prominent in the new imperial administration. He was appointed to the post of Aide-de-camp Lieutenant General (*Mâbeyin Feriki*), a position directly assisting the Sultan in daily affairs, ceremonial duties, and communication between the sovereign and the military establishment.[134] This appointment reflected his growing influence in palace circles and the advantage of close family ties. His stature at court was further reinforced through his brother-in-law, Mahmud Pasha, who was married to Cemile Sultan, sister of Abdülhamid II, solidifying his standing within the imperial inner circle.[135]

During the drafting of the Ottoman Constitution (*Kanûn-i Esâsî*), Said Pasha supported measures aimed at limiting monarchical authority and consistently advocated diplomatic rather than confrontational

131 Ulysses S. Grant, *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, 28, ed. John Y. Simon (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005), 354–360.

132 *Sabah*, February 14, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 10, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 11, 1311; BOA. MF.MKT 25/63 Report to the Directorate of the Imperial School appointing Said Pasha to review the academic standing of students (14 February 1875); BOA. I.DH. 697/48785 Memorandum concerning the transfer of the School Minister, Said Pasha (3 March 1875).

133 Uğur Ünal, *Sultan Abdülaziz Devri Osmanlı Kara Ordusu (1861–1876)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2008), 89–91; *Sabah*, February 14, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 10, 1311, 1; *İkdâm*, February 11, 1311.

134 BOA, C.AS. 1002/43820 (2 September 1876); François Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, trans. Ali Berktay (Istanbul: Homer Kitabevi, 2006), 60.

135 Çağatay Uluçay, *Padişahların Kadınları ve Kızları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1980), 154-155; Ali Haydar Midhat, *The Life of Midhat Pasha,* (London: John Murray, 1903), 95-97; Midhat Paşa, *Mirât-ı Hayret*, ed. Ali Haydar Midhat (İstanbul: Hilal Matbaası, 1325), 159-160.

approaches in foreign policy. These positions underscored his commitment to Ottoman modernization efforts.[136] On January 23, 1877, Said Pasha assumed directorship of the Military Academy (*Mekteb-i Harbiyye Nâzırı*), also gaining oversight of all military educational institutions.[137] He was subsequently appointed acting Minister of the Navy (*Bahriye Nâzırı*) on July 19, 1877, a position confirmed officially on December 25 of the same year.[138] On January 11, 1878, he was promoted to the rank of Marshal (*Müşir*), thereafter continuing his service as Aide-de-Camp Marshal (*Mâbeyin Müşiri*).[139]



Seal of Mehmed Said - Minister of the Navy
in the year 1295
(1878)

The defeat in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 created severe political instability in the Ottoman capital, resulting in widespread unrest. Amid this turmoil, the outbreak of the Çırağan Incident (May 20, 1878), a failed attempt by Ali Suâvi to restore former Sultan Murad V, further heightened tensions. Critical articles published in *The Levant Herald*, perceived as oppositional to Sultan Abdülhamid II, intensified suspicions within this politically charged environment. Consequently, Said Pasha, implicated by association and viewed with suspicion, was relieved of his official duties and reassigned to a provincial position, effectively distancing him from the political center in Istanbul.[140] Said Pasha served as governor of Ankara (1878), Kastamonu (1878), Aleppo (1879–1881), and Konya (1881–1887), and was also appointed inspector to investigate Armenian disturbances in Zeitun in 1879. This marked the beginning of a decade during which his modernizing efforts shifted from the imperial center to provincial administration, offering him new opportunities to implement reformist initiatives at the local level.[141] Mehmed Said Pasha passed away on February 20, 1896, and was buried in the cemetery of Sultan Mahmud II's Tomb in Istanbul, close to the grave of his father-in-law, Ahmed Fethi Pasha. His burial at this distinguished site reflects his enduring prominence among the Ottoman administrative elite.

136 Ali İhsan Gencer, "İlk Osmanlı Anayasasında Türkçenin Resmi Dil Olarak Kabulü Meselesi," *Kanun-u Esasi'nin 100. Yılı Armağanı* (Ankara: Sevinç Matbaası, 1978), 185-186; Nazan Danişmend, "Türk Demokrasi Tarihinin Unutulmuş Simalarından: Eğinli Sait Paşa," *Türklük* 9 (1939): 188; Upon his appointment as Aide-de-camp Lieutenant General (*Mâbeyn Feriki*), Said Pasha began keeping a diary, which he titled *Jurnal*, documenting events and reflections from his life between 1876 and 1887. Hereafter, it will be referred to simply as *Jurnal*.

137 BOA. MB.İ. 32/99 (23 January 1877); "Turkey," *The Morning Post*, February 13, 1877, 6.

138 BOA. İ.DH. 751/61338 (19 July 1877); BOA. İ.DH. 761/62087 (25 December 1877); BOA. MB.İ. 42/121 (25 December 1877).

139 BOA. İ.DH. 762/62141 (11 January 1878).

140 Burhan Çağlar, "Turmoil in the Capital: British Publication Alarmed the Hamidian Regime," *Belleten* 85 (2021): 138–143.

141 Çağlar, *İngiliz Said Paşa*, 45-60, Burhan Çağlar, "1878–1879 Zeytun Ermeni İsyanları ve İngiliz Said Paşa'nın Aldığı Tedbirler," *Ermeni Araştırmaları* 46 (2013): 163–165.

Constructing Anatolia: Infrastructure Works and Public Architecture

Throughout his tenure as governor in various Anatolian provinces, Mehmed Said Pasha pursued educational and infrastructural reforms, embodying the modernization characteristic of the late Ottoman era. His initiatives, including constructing masonry government buildings, roads, and bridges; establishing new schools; and developing prisons and guesthouses to enhance public safety and welfare, represented concrete manifestations of central authority and reformist aspirations extending into the provincial administration. Said Pasha's reforms thus served to institutionalize modernization at the local level, visibly reinforcing state presence and administrative coherence across the Empire's periphery.

Among Said Pasha's provincial initiatives was constructing and renovating administrative buildings in numerous provincial and district centers. He supervised the architectural designs for new governmental structures in towns such as Seydişehir, Nevşehir, and Aksaray, and improved inadequate prison facilities, most notably in Niğde (August 1882).[142] Central to these developments was the provincial administrative building erected in Konya, a tangible reflection of the empire's central authority and provincial bureaucratic reform (May 1885). Said Pasha assumed direct responsibility for this project, diligently supervising its architectural accuracy, financial transparency, and systematic implementation from inception to completion.[143] Through these transformative endeavors, he strengthened provincial administration's physical infrastructure and institutional effectiveness, extending central governance into the rural periphery and fostering the broader integration of modern administrative norms across the Ottoman countryside.

Another important aspect of Said Pasha's tenure was his commitment to road construction, which he viewed as a technical necessity and an essential driver of social welfare and civil advancement. In pursuit of this vision, he supervised extensive road-building projects, from initial route planning through detailed engineering processes. During his governorship in Konya, he developed modern road networks to connect the province to Mediterranean ports via three primary routes, boosting the local economy. His direct involvement was evident in the comprehensive renovation of the Gelemiş Pass, facilitating more efficient access from Konya northward toward Istanbul.[144] He also launched the construction of major roadways along the Konya-Karaman-Silifke, Konya-Meram, Niğde-Akköprü-Mersin, and Isparta-Burdur-Antalya routes. Among these projects, the extensive road construction he commissioned at Akköprü along the Gülek Pass (Cilician Gates), linking Konya to Adana, stood out as a significant achievement in provincial civil engineering.[145]

Beyond intercity road construction suitable for carriage traffic, Said Pasha also emphasized improvements in urban streets and thoroughfares. He promoted the McAdam method in city centers, the era's most advanced road-surfacing technique. Drawing upon his engineering expertise, he supervised the construction of exemplary roads in towns such as Aksaray and Bozkır. He guided construction crews directly and closely monitored their work to maintain high standards. Through oversight and hands-on training, Said Pasha introduced contemporary engineering methods into provincial infrastructure, improving physical connectivity, economic vitality, and social integration within his administrative districts.[146]

Under his road-building initiatives, Said Pasha undertook infrastructure projects, including

142 Mehmed Said, *Jurnal*, 4:834–845; 5:1147–1149, 1169–1182, 1193–1194; 6:1208–1210, 1264–1273.
143 BOA. Y.A. Res. 24/31; M. Said, *Jurnal*, 6:1238-1241.
144 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 4:808-810.
145 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 4:728, 768, 819–821, 893–896, 899–902; 5:1041, 1043, 1095–1134, 1157–1160.
146 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 6:1208–1210.

irrigation canals, river improvement schemes, bridges, and weirs. His endeavors, particularly notable in the provinces of Aleppo and Konya, represented ambitious engineering efforts to transform these regions' economic and social landscapes. Through such comprehensive projects, Said Pasha reshaped provincial communities, promoted agricultural productivity, enhanced local economic conditions, and further integrated rural areas into the broader modernization agenda of the Ottoman Empire.

As governor of Aleppo, Said Pasha addressed the city's increasingly severe drought by undertaking a substantial canal project that diverted water from the Sajur River to the Aleppo River. Previous efforts had failed due to engineering inadequacies, a fact he established through detailed on-site examinations. Recognizing discrepancies in elevation and other technical deficiencies within existing canal structures, he determined that constructing new canal segments and thoroughly restoring the old canal beds were essential. In June 1880, work commenced on a new canal measuring approximately 1,135 meters linking the two rivers. Closely supervising the project's execution, funded by local agricultural communities, Said Pasha also engaged the community through public meetings, addressing concerns over water usage and ensuring equitable distribution.[147]

While posted in Konya, Said Pasha responded to local requests to construct weirs along the Zondi stream near Niğde to facilitate agricultural irrigation. After inspecting the area and assessing the streambed along with the surrounding terrain, he concluded that the initially proposed location was unsuitable due to its steep and rocky topography, which would complicate construction and limit effective water retention. Investigating alternative sites, Said Pasha identified a more favorable location downstream near Değirmen village, determining that weirs approximately twenty Ottoman cubits in height (approximately 13.5 meters) would effectively capture water across a broader basin, extending irrigation benefits to neighboring villages.[148] Following his assessment, construction commenced promptly, demonstrating Said Pasha's practical application of engineering expertise in enhancing rural agricultural infrastructure.

Upon his appointment to Konya, Said Pasha revisited an unsuccessful initiative to divert water from Lake Beyşehir and Lake Suğla (Karaviran), two major freshwater sources, into the Konya Plain. Recognizing that previous attempts had inadvertently created extensive marshlands that adversely impacted public health, he conducted detailed inspections and engineering assessments. Said Pasha commissioned detailed mapping of the waterway routes connecting these two lakes to the plain, identifying technical shortcomings of earlier attempts. He proposed an advanced canal system, designed to utilize the roughly 35-meter elevation difference between the lakes, ensuring efficient water management. Additionally, he recommended partially draining sections of Lake Suğla to reduce marshlands and reclaim fertile land suitable for agriculture. However, despite his proposals' technical feasibility and innovative approach, financial constraints ultimately prevented their implementation.[149]

Near Nevşehir, within the Niğde Sanjak, the collapse of a vital bridge over the Kızılırmak River had severely disrupted transportation, causing social and economic difficulties for local communities. In response to local demands for a durable replacement, Said Pasha conducted a site evaluation in Avanos. Through detailed analyses of the river's flow rate, discharge, and the surrounding topographical conditions, he identified technical deficiencies that had led to the failure of the earlier

147 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 2:413–428.

148 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 4:839–844.

149 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 3:664–667, 675; 5:1294.

bridge near Güzelşehir (Arabsun). His investigations indicated that the Avanos site, characterized by a narrower riverbed and slower current, was more suitable for new bridge construction. Pasha closely supervised the technical aspects of the project, anticipating that the completed bridge would enhance connectivity between settlements on opposite riverbanks and thereby bolster regional commerce and economic interaction.[150]

In the Korkuteli (Istanos) district, within the Teke Sanjak, shifts in a local stream had led to frequent flooding and the gradual conversion of fertile farmland into marshlands, adversely affecting settlements extending as far as Yakaköy. In response, Said Pasha conducted detailed field assessments to identify effective solutions. After thorough inspections, he recommended clearing existing canals to redirect water to its original way and constructing additional embankments and barriers to prevent future overflows. Recognizing the sandy nature of the soil, which increased the risk of recurrence, he also proposed creating a new central canal designed specifically to regulate water flow consistently. These measures were intended to protect agricultural productivity and safeguard local communities from further flood-related disruption.[151]

In the Isparta region, heavy rainfall flowing from the surrounding mountains frequently resulted in severe floods, causing substantial damage to urban areas and agricultural lands. Said Pasha conducted field studies to develop sustainable solutions to this issue. He resumed and completed previously halted embankment and barrier constructions, establishing a canal system to collect floodwaters, effectively reducing their destructive effects. Additionally, he advocated expanding the existing irrigation channels sourced from Lake Gölcüğez near Isparta, aiming to increase agricultural productivity and water resource utilization.[152] By securing funding from local farmers and landowners, direct beneficiaries of these projects, Said Pasha encouraged community involvement, ensuring sustained local support for these infrastructural improvements.

In addition to infrastructure projects, Said Pasha intervened in local production processes, addressing technical challenges across diverse sectors ranging from mining to agricultural industries. He identified inefficiencies and implemented targeted improvements to enhance productivity. In Isparta, Said Pasha led initiatives to establish corporate structures to boost the textile industry.[153] At the Bolkar Mountain and Bereketli mines, he tackled substantial inefficiencies resulting from traditional ore processing methods by designing and overseeing the construction of calcination and smelting furnaces for more efficient ore refinement. He also advocated installing narrow-gauge railway tracks at salt mines to improve working conditions.[154] Furthermore, in Niğde, he conducted assessments to rehabilitate locally constructed yet technically inadequate windmills, reflecting his ongoing commitment to enhancing regional production through practical engineering interventions.[155] He also played a role in promoting mechanized agriculture in Ottoman provinces. Early in his career, he showcased a domestically produced locomotive prototype at the Istanbul General Exhibition (*Sergi-i Umumi*), where he also examined European agricultural machinery. As governor of Konya, he imported machinery such as reapers, threshers, sieving equipment, corn-processing machines, and grinding mills, primarily from Vienna. Despite logistical challenges in transporting these machines due to inadequate infrastructure, field trials across local villages confirmed gains in productivity

150 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 4:892–897.
151 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 4:723; 5:1038–1040.
152 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 3:690–693.
153 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 3:601; 4:821–829, 855–859.
154 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 4:908–910.
155 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 6:1363.

and labor efficiency (July 1882). Nonetheless, Said Pasha faced resistance from villagers attached to traditional farming methods, which frustrated his efforts. Recognizing these obstacles, he considered compulsory measures, engaged local officials and notables during administrative visits, and advocated infrastructure development to support sustainable mechanized agriculture.[156]

Said Pasha also demonstrated a progressive approach to urban planning through his immigrant settlement policies in the province of Konya. Addressing the housing and social integration requirements of migrants from Rumelia, the Caucasus, and Crimea, he emphasized urban planning supported by robust infrastructure. Departing from traditional local housing practices, he introduced a modern urban layout characterized by wide streets, structured neighborhoods, and residential units complemented by private gardens, envisioning this as a replicable model throughout the province. Beyond administrative oversight, he managed the technical aspects of neighborhood and housing construction to ensure compliance with contemporary urban planning standards.[157] These measures enhanced the visibility of the modern state's role in addressing settlement issues, underscoring its presence in both spatial and social terms.

Education in the Provinces: Inspections and Structural Issues

Said Pasha viewed modernization as an integrated process, where investments in physical infrastructure were accompanied by cultivating human capital, placing education at the center of social progress. In his understanding, education was not simply a pathway to individual advancement, but rather the bedrock of collective social transformation and broader modernization. This philosophy guided his contributions to the establishment of the *Ottoman Society of Science*, his role in the publication of the *Journal of Sciences*, and the educational reforms he enacted at the Naval Academy (*Bahriye Mektebi*). These initiatives reflect his unwavering dedication to embedding contemporary educational standards into Ottoman society. His governorship in Konya demonstrated this approach at the provincial level, where, alongside extensive infrastructure improvements, he placed a distinct emphasis on education. Soon after taking office, Said Pasha undertook detailed inspections of local junior secondary schools (*rüşdiye*), traditional primary schools (*sıbyan*), and non-Muslim communal schools, demonstrating his commitment to thoroughly understanding and enhancing local educational conditions.

Said Pasha's inspections of schools across the province extended beyond mere administrative oversight, forming a purposeful initiative to uncover deficiencies within the Ottoman educational structure, observe issues in their local contexts, and formulate practical responses. During these visits, he administered examinations to assess students' performance, engaged in detailed discussions with teachers to acquire insights, and monitored the local implementation of educational policies. At exemplary institutions such as the Bor Junior Secondary School (*Bor Rüşdiyesi*), he praised the dedication and effectiveness of the teaching staff, emphasizing their role in the school's overall success. Conversely, he candidly identified shortcomings at institutions such as the Ereğli and Akşehir junior secondary schools, investigating their root causes and proposing targeted interventions to foster educational improvement.[158]

156 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 4:811–813; 5:984–985; Böcüzade Süleyman Sami, *Kuruluşundan Bugüne Kadar Isparta Tarihi*, ed. Suat Seren (Isparta: Serenler Yayınevi, 1983), 240–270.

157 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 3:615, 701.

158 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 4:994; 5:1148, 1166–1167; 6:1399.

In addressing educational challenges, Said Pasha engaged with local administrators and community notables, involving them in efforts to resolve issues affecting provincial schools. He emphasized enhancing primary schools' physical conditions and educational quality, mobilizing local headmen (*muhtars*) and educational councils *(maarif meclisleri*) to support infrastructure improvements.[159] Notable outcomes of these initiatives included the establishment of the Hamidiye Primary School in Antalya, as well as the founding of new junior secondary schools (*rüşdiyes*) in Karaman and Nevşehir.[160] Furthermore, he established educational committees based on the Regulation of Public Education (*Maarif Nizamnamesi*) of 1869 to foster greater coherence in educational policies at both provincial and district levels. These committees addressed diverse issues, including curriculum development, teacher training, professional standards, and measures to encourage regular student attendance, strengthening educational quality throughout the province.

Drawing on that same commitment to close financial oversight and administrative guidance, Said Pasha then turned to the family waqf on Rhodes, which his father-in-law had founded. He took charge of the endowment's *rüşdiye* and library restorations and, finding that revenues fell short of the school's operating costs and teachers' stipends, commissioned a full audit by the Ministry of Public Education. The resulting report uncovered unpaid dues and reactivated dormant income streams, allowing the waqf to eliminate its deficit and increase its support for educational and charitable programs. He also regularly communicated with the school's administrators and ministry officials regarding teacher qualifications and pension provisions, gathering feedback to secure the foundation's long-term governance and financial stability.[161]

Said Pasha also inspected schools operated by the Greek, Armenian, and Protestant communities within the province, recognizing their multilingual curricula and practical teaching methodologies as valuable models for educational modernization. He particularly commended the achievements of these non-Muslim institutions in disciplines categorized as beneficial sciences (*ulûm-ı nâfia*), notably history, geography, and mathematics, while critically contrasting them with state-run *rüşdiye* schools, which he criticized for relying heavily on Arabic-centric, rote-learning techniques.[162] Said Pasha regarded this restrictive approach as detrimental, arguing that it hindered the development of students' proficiency in Turkish and constituted an inefficient use of the state's educational resources. Emphasizing the Turkish language as a cornerstone of the Ottoman educational framework, he associated linguistic unity with the broader vision of a modern, cohesive state. He viewed Turkish as integral to fostering a shared sense of identity among the empire's diverse communities, acting as a binding force within Ottoman society. He regarded the neglect of Turkish instruction in non-Muslim educational institutions as a critical threat to Ottoman identity and the territorial integrity of the empire.[163] From his perspective, education was crucial for reinforcing communal loyalty, social integration, and administrative coherence. Through these efforts, Said Pasha sought to reposition language within a modern context, advocating schools as essential spaces for nurturing collective identity anchored in the shared linguistic heritage of Turkish.

159 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 3:628–631.

160 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 4:736–737, 744; 5:1193–1194; 6:1277.

161 Ali Fuat Örenç, *Yakındönem Tarihimizde Rodos ve Oniki Ada* (İstanbul: Doğu Kütüphanesi, 2006), 273-276; BOA. DH.MKT. 1606/86 Notification to allocate the necessary expenses for the *rüşdiye* school endowed by Ahmed Fethi Pasha in Rhodes (19 March 1889); (9 July 1890); BOA. MF.MKT. 118/133 Request for Said Pasha's views on removing the aging head teacher of the Rhodes *rüşdiye* endowed by Fethi Pasha and for authorizing the school's repairs (9 July 1890).

162 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 3:650, 696, 708; 6:1294.

163 M. Said, *Jurnal*, 3:838; 4:874; 5:1016–1017, 1166–1167; 6:1196–1197.

Epilogue: Narrative of Ottoman Modernization

Ottoman modernization was a multifaceted phenomenon, closely linked to comprehensive institutional reforms, individual initiatives, and traditions maintained by prominent elite families. While state-directed policies aimed at reshaping the administrative structure altered or displaced numerous traditional institutions, these transformations also profoundly influenced the personal trajectories of Ottoman bureaucrats. The experiences these individuals gained through education, military affairs, and diplomatic engagements provided a foundation from which they articulated their visions of modernity and guided their ambitions towards addressing contemporary challenges. Ottoman statesmen thus emerged as active agents of modernization, employing their intellectual capacities, cultural insights, and individual aspirations to advance reforms from the imperial core outward to the provincial peripheries, ensuring continuity for subsequent generations. Among such figures were Rodosî Hafız Ahmed Ağa, Rodosîzade Ahmed Fethi Pasha, and Said Pasha the Englishman, successive generations of a distinguished lineage who collectively represented the diverse expressions of modernization from the late eighteenth through mid-nineteenth centuries. Their careers illuminate their times' social, political, and cultural contexts, enriching the analytical understanding of Ottoman modernization.

Building upon the social and cultural initiatives introduced by Hafız Ahmed Ağa through his philanthropic endeavors, his son, Ahmed Fethi Pasha, expanded these efforts into a structured dimension of Ottoman modernization. As an influential statesman of the *Tanzimat* era, Ahmed Fethi embodied the practical implementation of reform policies across the Empire, drawing upon his rigorous education at the *Enderun* and complemented by extensive experience in military and diplomatic spheres. This diverse background allowed him to interpret contemporary realities and respond to emerging reform demands, positioning him prominently in shaping the Ottoman state's modernization trajectory. Ahmed Fethi Pasha's initiatives gained further momentum through the efforts of his son-in-law, Mehmed Said Pasha, who represented a subsequent generation influenced by the reform-oriented environment of the *Tanzimat*. Said Pasha's vision was notably shaped by the progressive ideals of the Scottish Enlightenment encountered in Edinburgh, where concepts of human progress and societal advancement informed his intellectual outlook. His European education enabled him to bridge technical, scientific, and cultural connections between the Ottoman Empire and the Western world.

Ultimately, Ottoman modernization was a gradual and multilayered process, extending beyond centrally planned policies and elite-driven reforms. Local initiatives, familial legacies, and individual endeavors constituted essential components, complementing state actions. The philanthropic foundations laid by Hafız Ahmed Ağa at a regional scale became institutionalized through Ahmed Fethi Pasha's administrative vision and further enriched by Said Pasha's intellectual contributions. The collective impact of these three successive generations from a single prominent lineage illustrates the diffusion of Ottoman modernization from the imperial core to the provincial periphery, affecting diverse segments of society and leaving enduring marks through personal commitments. Hence, a comprehensive evaluation of Ottoman modernization necessitates the decisive roles played by individual agency, familial heritage, and regional dynamics in shaping its historical trajectory.

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"I would like to offer my sincere gratitude to Tarık Tüten, the deputy mütevelli of the Hafiz Ahmed Ağa foundation and the person whose brainchild is the book you are currently holding. Additionally I would like to thank my professor and now colleague and friend Elias Kolovos for his support and trust. Moreover, I am indebted to my academic comrade Faidon Moudopoulos for introducing me to Antonis Manos who made the map found in this chapter. Finally I would like to thank the Badisches Landesmuseum of Karlsruhe and Nicholas Salmon who are funding my current research on the island of Rhodes as part of the program, 'Archaeology in the Ottoman Aegean: Consuls – Culture – Commerce', which ultimately made this paper possible."

Efthymios Machairas

Following the Money

A Prosopography of Rodoslu El-Hac Ahmed Ağa

through his Commercial Ventures

Not much is known about the life and times of Hacı Ahmed Ağa of Rhodes, better known on the island for founding his *vakf* library on the upper quarter of the fortified old town[1]. His son Ahmed Fethi Paşa is comparatively quite famous. A prominent Ottoman politician, who married a daughter of Mahmud II and served as an ambassador in Vienna and Paris[2], he appears to be much more connected to the Sultan's court than his father who was executed[3] on the road to Yafa in 1800, while acting as Kaftan Ağası, the leader of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina[4]. However, as I will prove in this chapter, appearances are in this case deceitful. Hafiz Ahmed Ağa was not only, as his numerous titles attest to, a man of the Sultan who had him executed, as was the fate of many a powerful Ottoman official, but also a provincial notable and businessman, with an economic strategy congruent of what we know about the Mediterranean maritime trade in the 19th century[5].

The first clue towards our stated end is the list of titles he bore throughout his life. Hafız Ahmed rose to the rank of *Rikabdar*, i.e the Sultan's stirrup holder, and the secretary (*yazıcı*) of the *Divan-i Hümayün*, which both attest to his proximity to the center of imperial power[6]. Again not much is known on how he climbed the Ottoman hierarchy, the title of *ağa* suggests involvement in the

1 I beseech the readers to visit the websites of the *vakf*, www.fethipasavakfi.com and www.hafizahmedaga.com. For the catalogue and information on the *vakf* Hafiz Ahmed and Fethi Paşa see, Bekir Şahin, Faruk Ağartan (eds.), *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi yazma eserler kataloğu*, T.C Başbakanlık Türk İşbirliği ve Kalkınma İdaresi Başkanlığı Tika, Konya 2010.

2 İbid, p. VII-VIII.

3 While the documents pertaining to Hafiz Ahmed Ağas execution are quite nebulous at best, we can be reasonably certain that he was executed on his way back from the Pilgrimage. All the registers used for this article begin with a variation of "*Kaftan Ağalığı ile Hac-i* Şerif *avdetinde fevt olan Rodoslu Ahmed Ağa…*". While this does not prove much by itself, the documents used by İbrahim Akkurt in his chapter mention his planned execution and the need to sell off his personal items after his death. This practice is congruent with what we know of *siyaseten katl* and *müsadere* (execution and confiscation) *procedures* in the Ottoman State. The register compiling his personal items that were sold to third parties following his death can also be found in the Ottoman Archive of Istanbul. See BOA.CML.387/158 for the aforementioned register, and BOA.D.BŞM.ZMT.d.13927 for an example of the phrase denoting Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's death on the way back from the Pilgrimage. For *siyaseten katl*, Ali Irfan Kaya, "Siyaseten Katl ve Müsadere Uygulamalarında II. Süleyman Dönemi (1687-1691) Örneği", Ordu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Araştırmaları Dergisi, Vol. 8 2018, pp. 1 - 8.

4 İbid, and, Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi İstanbul (BOA.), EV.HMH.d.6905. "*Haftan ağalığı ile canib-i Hicaz'e ve dar-i Yafa'ya irtihal eden Rodosı El Hac Ahmed Ağanın…*"

5 Elena Frangakis Syrret, "Greek Merchantile Activities in the Eastern Mediterranean 1780-1820", in, Elena Frangkakis Syrret (ed.), *Trade and Money, The Ottoman Economy in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, The Isis Press 2010, pp. 307-320, and Gelina Harlaftis, *A History of Greek Owned Shipping, The Making of an International Tramp Fleet 1830 to The Present Day*, Routledge 2005, pp. 2-37.

6 As above, Bekir Şahin, Faruk Ağartan (eds.), *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi…*, p. VII.

janissary corps[7]. Though, given the wider context of the late 18th century Ottoman Empire, he was evidently not a *devşirme* convert[8]. Even more so since his father's name is known as Hasan Ağa[9]. He entered the upper echelons of the Empire's political structure under a patronage network that his father had access to. Indeed his enrollment in the *enderun*, the imperial palace school, seems to be the product of such a connection. However, to the best of my abilities I did not manage to locate any traces of his father's activities.

In spite of this hurdle, it is obvious that Hafiz Ahmed Ağa was well situated in many such networks. This is testified by the many pieces of documentation regarding his affairs kept in the Ottoman Archives of the Presidency in Istanbul. We are lucky enough that later in his life his activities were important enough to leave a bureaucratic trail, and that in death, he was wealthy enough for his legacy to continue on in the form of an estate with many and numerous recipients.

Elena Frangkakis Syrett, well known for her work about the economy of Izmir in the 18th and 19th centuries, once told me that what made her work about Izmir stand out was her ability to follow the money[10]. It is precisely this methodology that I will use for this chapter as well. Hafiz Ahmed Ağa, was a man of many ventures, of both commercial and political nature. Even more befitting, much of his business activity seems to be situated in Izmir at the time of the city's rise as one of the most important Mediterranean port-cities[11]. As such, it is my firm belief that "following the money", that is deciphering and connecting the many clues that are left about Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's economic life, is the most efficacious manner in which his life and works will come to the fore. Aiding in this quest, are the numerous defters compiled after his death, containing detailed lists of his various pieces of property and tax farms (*mukatas* or *iltizams*), as well as scattered documents about his governmental and mercantile activities[12]. Combining the two sources will paint a picture of an Aegean maritime merchant, who used his position in the Ottoman government to enhance and deepen his abilities to accrue and accumulate capital. The registers I am referring to were not compiled by mistake. Rather, they were a product of what we must assume was the process of the Ottoman State, confiscating and auctioning off his property after his execution[13]. A piece of information that might in itself provide some idea on why he was executed in the first place. Putting

7 For the evolution of the Janissary corps, see Cemal Kafadar's Thesis, Cemal Kafadar, "Yeniçeri-Esnaf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict", M.A Thesis, McGill University, 1981 and also the article by Cemal Kafadar, "Janissaries and Other Riffraff of Ottoman Istanbul, Rebels Without a Cause?", International Journal of Turkish Studies, Vol. 13 2007, pp. 113-134.

8 See Cemal Kafadar, "Yeniçeri-Esnaf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict", M.A Thesis, McGill University, 1981.

9 As above, Bekir Şahin, Faruk Ağartan (eds.), *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi*..., p. VII. In the aforementioned catalogue Hafiz Ahmed's father is stated to be Mehmed Ağa. However my esteemed colleague, İbrahim Akkurt, see his chapter in the book you are holding, makes the case that Hafiz Ahmed father was Hasan Ağa, based on his tombstone in the Murat Reis Cemetery in Rhodes and the inscription on the water fountain of the Library.

10 See, Elena Frangakis Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the Eighteenth Century (1700-1820)*, Akhens 1992.

11 BOA, EV.HMH.d.6905, which is the register of his properties compiled after his death by the State clearly puts the brunt of his immovable properties in Izmir. For Izmir see, Elena Frangakis Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna*..., pp. 23-41.

12 For the *iltizam* system see, Linda T. Darling, R*evenue-raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660*, Brill 1996.

13 Tüncay Öğün, "Müsadere", İslam Ansiklopedisi, Vol. 32, TDV, İstanbul 2006, pp. 67-68.

this matter aside for now, we shall try to put his life in perspective, by starting off with his most important source of income, the tax farms he leashed from the Ottoman State.

In total Hafız Ahmed Ağa seems to have had shares in, or held in their totality 11 tax farms[14]. This concerned the taxes of the region of Anatolikos[15], better known for the capsizing of some of the Ottoman fleet on its shores during the battle of Lepanto[16]. Moving north he benefited from half the farming of the taxes on wax candles in Izmir and its dependencies. Held a share in the *iltizam* for cotton in Gelibolu and Istanbul, while holding half the tax farm for the dues of old Istanbul, meaning the customs due of the Dardanelles[17].

The rest of his tax farms seem to be situated in what is modern day Bulgaria, starting with Dupnica, where he farmed half of the taxes of the town and the villages surrounding it. More importantly, at the time of his death he held ½ and ⅓ of the tax farm on the *ağnam resmi*, the sheep tax of Filibe, Pravadi (modern day Plovdiv and Provadia) respectively[18]. Through other documents we can also surmise that at least at times he also benefited from farming the taxes on tobacco from the same area[19]. The important element here is that both Provadia and Plovdiv have historically served as customs checkpoints and market towns, meaning that they acted as commercial outlets for both the products coming into them from the countryside, as well as for merchants who plied their trade along the balkan trade routes[20]. Provadia, after all, was the largest Balkan outlet of Ragusan trade and held a very significant colony of Dubrovnik merchants, which had even formed as an organisation with legal presence[21]. In other words, Hafiz Ahmed, took care to purchase tax farms at strategic locations which allowed him to maximise his profit on the specific item or items that were included in his tax farm.

Further, to the Bulgarian north and along todays' borders with Serbia Hafiz Ahmed held the tax farm for the salinas of Lom, Berkovitsa, Chiprovitsi and Montana[22]. The last three towns were rich in minerals, with no direct access to the Sea, hence these salinas were in actuality salt mines. The salt extracted from those towns ended up in their port on the Danube, Lom, to find its way to the market. Salt was one of the most important monopolies of the Ottoman State, and made up a sizable piece of

14 BOA.ML.VRD.d. 5114 and BOA. D.BŞM.d.6659.

15 İbid.

16 İdris Bostan, "Fetvanın Osmanlı Yönetimi ve Toplum Üzerindeki Etkisi: Ebussuûd Efendi'nin Kıbrıs ve İnebahtı Fetvaları", Tarih Dergisi, Vol. 76 2022, p. 46.

17 BOA.ML.VRD.d. 5114 and BOA. D.BŞM.d.6659.

18 İbid.

19 BOA.AE.SSLM.III.210/12446.

20 For Ottoman Plovdiv see Grigor Boykov, *Ottoman Plovdiv: Space, Architecture and Population (14th-17th Centuries)*, Austrian Academy of Sciences 2024, pp. 73-75, also see, Halil Inalcık and Donald Quataert (eds.), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, Vol. 1, 1300-1600*, Cambridge University Press 1997, pp.264, 457. For Provadia, İbrahim Etem Çakır, "XVIII Yüzyılın Ortalarında Pravadi Kazası", in Zafer Gölen, Abidin Temizler (eds.), *Balkan Tarihi*, Vol.1 2015 , pp. 125-141.

21 Zlatar Zdenko, D*ubrovnik's merchants and capital in the Ottoman Empire 1520-1620. A quantitative study*, Isis Press 2010, pp. 135-138.

22 Machiel Kiel, "Berkofça", İslam Ansiklopedisi, Vol. 5, TDV 1992, pp. 510-511 and Yonca Köksal, Davut Erkan, *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmet Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli teftişi*, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi 2007, pp. 240-244.

its budget[23]. Consequently, being a tax farmer on the dues of salt is not only very profitable, but also a politically important position, being the mediator of one of the most important items between the central state and the periphery.

Before moving forward, we should note here that the proceeds of these tax farms belonged to pious foundations of Mecca and Medina. This would explain the reason that some of the *evkaf* properties of Hafiz Ahmed seem to be devoted to the Damat Ibrahim Paşa pious foundation[24]. The pious foundation of Ibrahim Paşa and his wife Fatma Sultan was a part of the pious foundations of the Two Holy Cities, the *Evkaf-i Haremeyn*[25]. It would then stand to reason if in return for being granted the tax farm of the aforementioned salt mines Hafız Ahmed undertook to expand the holdings of the *Evkaf-i Haremeyn*, given how important they were for its incomes. Namely Hafız Ahmed seemed to have devoted one soap workshop, one slaughterhouse, one scale for the measurement of olive oil and one han, all in the city of Izmir, to pious foundation of the Two Holy Cities, through the Ibrahim Paşa Foundation, essentially repaying the aforementioned institution, albeit in the long run, for granting him its salt mine tax farms. In retrospect, Hafiz Ahmed's position as leader of the *Hac* (*kaftan ağası*), might be connected to his standing with the *vakfs* of Mecca and Medina.

On a more interesting note, all of Hafiz Ahmed's salina tax farms were directly connected to the Danube via Lom. This is probably not a coincidence. A portion of the salt mined or gathered along the same river, ended up in the salt storage of the *Fethülislam* fortress, modern day Kladovo, which also guarded its banks[26]. There, according to the registers at our disposal, Hafiz Ahmed owned fish farms[27]. This raises the possibility that along with his salt tax-farming activities, the protagonist of this article ran a salted fish business. In fact, Hafiz Ahmed's tax farm in Anatolikos can also be identified as a fish farm, strengthening the argument. Istanbul's *esnaf* and working folks seems to have constituted the prime market for such a venture, since salted fish constituted a long lasting and mostly cheap protein source. This orientation towards the market of the Ottoman capital seems to be complementary to Hafiz Ahmed's other commercial efforts, as we shall see below.

Finally, the subject of our investigation held tax farms for the ports of three towns on the Black Sea, Balcik, Karaharman and Kavarna allowing him to benefit from their customs dues[28]. However,

23 Mehmet Demirtaş, "Osmanlı Devletinde Tuz Üretimi ve Dağıtımı", Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, Vol. 3 2004, pp. 23-28.

24 For the *vakf* of İbrahim Paşa and its relation to the *Evkaf-i Muharemayn* see, İsmail Bekci, Ali Apalı and Nilüfer Karataş, "Evkaf-i Haremeyn Muhasebeciliğinde Damad İbrahim Paşa Evkafı", Muhasebe ve Denetime Bakış, Vol. 15 2015, pp. 11-32.

25 Tufan Buzpınar, Mustafa Küçükbaşı, "Haremeyn", İslam Ansiklopedisi, Vol. 16 1997, pp. 153 - 157.

26 Filiz Yıldırım, "15-16. Yüzyıllarda Tuna Havzasında Tuzlalar Ve Tuz Hukuku", Turkish Studies - International Periodical For The Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic, Vol. 9 2014, pp. 1172-1174.

27 BOA, EV.HMH.d.6905. "...*Müteveffa-i muma ileyhin hali üzerinde olunduğu Sultan Mahmud Han Gazi evkafından Fethülislam'da vaki nehir-i Tuna'da dalyan malı nısf hissesi*... Müteveffa-i muma ileyh hal-i hayatında halilesi Saliha kadına füruht eylemişdir Sultan Mahmud Han Gazi evkafından Fethülislam'da vaki nehir-i Tuna'da dalyan malı nısf hissesi...".

28 BOA.ML.VRD.d. 5114 and BOA. D.BŞM.d.6659. "...*Mukataa-i hasha-i Kavarna ve tevabi emaneten idare ile ber vech-i tahmilat hasılatı..., Mukataa-i İskele-i Balçık-i muharremi-i bedel-i iltizamı..., Mukataa-i İskele-i Karaharman-i muharremi idare ile hasılatı...*". For the *kaza* of Balçık see, Machiel Kiel, "Balçık", İslam Ansiklopedisi, Vol. EK-1, TDV 2020, pp. 165 - 167.

it is arguable that farming the taxes of port towns along the maritime trade routes of both the Dardanelles and the Black Sea was a means to an end, rather than the objective itself. This piece of evidence should be evaluated within the larger context of Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's economic strategy and commercial ventures.

On top of being a prolific tax farmer Hafiz Ahmed Ağa seems to have been involved in the provisioning of Istanbul with cereal[29]. A license from 1795 shows Hafız Ahmed purchasing cereals, "with his own capital", from Yafa which are to be shipped and sold directly to Istanbul and sold at the current price the State has set for the provisioners of the city[30]. Moreover, he seems to be a business partner of Fırtına Ahmed Reis, a local shipowner from Rhodes who our sources show to be active on the trade route between Rhodes, Egypt and Istanbul[31]. One top of that, Hafiz Ahmed Ağa, Fırtına Ahmed, and the former governor of Kos, Kapudan Paşa and finally Grand Vizier, Cezayirli Hasan all

29 For the provisioning of the Ottoman capital see, Candan Türkkan, *Feeding Istanbul: The Political Economy of Urban Provisioning*, Brill 2021, also Lynne Marie Thornton Sasmazer, *Provisioning Istanbul: Bread Production, Power, and Political Ideology in the Ottoman Empire, 1789-1807*, Indiana University 2000.

30 BOA.C.BLD.28/1367. "*Sabıka Rikabdar-i* Şehriyari *Rodosı Ahmed Ağa kulları sair tüccar misillü kendi sermayesiyle Yafa iskelesinden kırk bin kile / hınta iştira ve doğru Asitane-i Saadet'e gönderüb sairleri misillü fiyatla anbar-i amireye bey' ve ita etmek* şartıyla *sairlere / buyurulduğu gibi kendüye dahi emr-i ali inayet buyurulmuşunu taraf-i* çakerinden *istida etmekle nefs-i [ink blot] miri ve tüccar marifetiyle / Asitane-i Saadet'e külliyetlü zahire celbi matlum ve meram ve bu hususun itmamı bi'l taharri ve al tahkik rabt ve tensik olunan* şurut *ve kuyud nizama müraat ve ihtimam ile husulpezir olacağı ve areste-kayd ifham olmakdan naşı ol havalıdan miri / ve tüccar ve ashab-i sefain ve iktidar marifetiyle iştira ve Asitane-i Saadete celbine ikdam ve itina olunacak zehaire dair / mukaddem ve muahhar sadır olan ahkam-i münife ve o emrin şurut ve kuyud ve nizamına sairleri misillü mumaileyh tarafından dahi / riayet ve miri ve tüccar mübayaatına halel ve tahayyür ve Yafa bazarına kesret üzere nüzul edecek zehaire mevacib / ilel ve taksir olmamak halatına ziyade dikkat ve celbine taleb olduğu kırk bin kile hınta pak ve münkah olmak ve kaç kita / sefine isticar eder ise mikdar-i hamulesi vezni ve kapudanı isim ve şehrini taraf-i kullarına ihbar ve defterindekiye bad-el sebt çakerinden / takdım olunan takrir mücebince her bir kita sefine içün başka emr-i ali ısdar ve ol emr-i şerifle Yafa iskelesine tesyar olunub / iskele-i merkumdan iştira ve sefaine tahmiline dair şurut ve kuyud ve nizamı havı mukaddem ve muahhar sadır olan emr-i ali mucebince sair / tüccar misillü Yafa İskelesinden rayiciyle mübayaa eylediği hınta-i münkaha her bir sefineye tahmil olundukda Yafa kadısı tarafından sefinenin / kapdanı isim ve şehrini ve hamulesinin mıkdar ve gemini zahr-i emr-i alişana ilam ve hüccet ve Yafa'da zehairi mübaşırı ve mübayaacı-i hacegandan / seyyid Mehmed Reşidi efendi tarafından dahi bir kita' bu vechle irsaliye tezkeresi itasına mübaderet olunmak ve sefayin-i merkumenin / hamulesinden bir kilesi hilal rahda adalara ihraç ve berati ve müstemin sefinelerine nakl ve füruht olunmayub doğru Asitane-i Saadete / anbar-i amireye teşlim ve emr-i şerif-i merkume kabzını müşar anbar emini ilam ve sairlere virildiği fiyat üzere mevkufatdan / hesab ve mevkufat bendeganeyle akçesi zahire sermayesinden tamamen ita ve emr-i şerif-i merkum ve irsaliya tezkeresi mevkufatda hıfz / olunmak ve kırk bin kile hıntanın tekmilinde kaç kıta' sefaine tahmil olunmuş ise kezalık Yafa kazısı sicillatından her bir sefinenin mıkdar-i hamulesini ve kapudanın isim ve şehrini tarihleriyle ihraç ve işbu emr-i alinin zahırına ilam ve huccet ve mübayaacı-i mümaileyh / dahi defterinden kayılarını ihraç ve tarihleriyle bu surutda irsaliya tezkeresi ita edüb cümlesinden sonra tahmil olunan / sefine ile işbu emr-i ali ve irsaliyesi tezkeresi gelüb kularına teşlim ve defterindekiye tatbık ve kaydı balasına şerh virüb / kalemine irsal ve hıfz ve emr-i şerifin kaydı terkin olunmak şartıyla Yafa kazısı ve zahire mübaşırı ve mübayaacı hacegandan / seyyid Mehmed Reşidi efendi ve Yafa gümrükçüsü Ebu-Bakr efendi kullarına hitaben bir kita emr-i ali ısdarı babında emr ü ferman hazret-minlehülemrindir*".

31 BOA.C.İKTS.13/638 and BOA.C.BH.243/11264.

held in tandem one three mast ship's shares[32]. We will return to this association between the former Sadrazam and Kapudan Paşa Ahmed Paşa and the main character of our article at a later point. For now it is enough to stress his involvement in Ottoman shipping and maritime trade.

Indeed according to another defter compiled after Hafız Ahmed Ağa's death he seems to have had half the shares of a ship called "Mühürdar" held alongside someone called Tekfur Naima Ali Mehmed and captained by a cretan, Hüseyin Avelonakis[33]. It is within this context that we should interpret his investment into the tax farms of the Black Sea and the Dardanelles. In fact, Hafız Ahmed Ağa owned three çiftliks near the Black Sea port town of Kavarna, and another eight çiftliks in today's Eastern Thrace, in the area around Çorlu[34]. Given his activities and participation in the provisioning of Istanbul, we can assume that he would use his ships to import and sell cereals from his own çiftliks in and around the Black Sea, to the Ottoman capital. Moreover, from the same defter we learn that Hafiz Ahmed owned rice fields in Plovdiv[35], which was one of the main rice suppliers of Istanbul[36]. It would stand to reason if the rice he grew in the area also ended up in the Capital. What Hafiz Ahmed seemed to pursue more than just turning a profit from his tax farms was control. In purchasing the mukatas of the aforementioned portside towns, he could exert greater influence upon the hubs from which his wares were shipped. The same can be said about his share in the custom dues of the Dardanelles. Not only would it allow him to ship cotton from Gelibolu to Istanbul cheaply, but it would also allow him access into the Ottoman capital's market from his activities in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Based on how the *iltizam* system worked, we can theorise that the agents who would have sub-leased the tax collection from Hafiz Ahmed, would have acted as his men on the ground when it came to looking after and conducting whatever business was necessary for his shipments. Even more importantly, Hafız Ahmed Ağa, as the ultimate tax collector, could evade the tax for the goods he was exporting, or at the very least regain it through the income of *iltizam*.

In short, the picture that emerges depicts a businessman who operates along two main geographical axes. The first is the trade route that runs along the Danube and encompasses Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's salina tax farms, his fish farms upon Fethülislam, to finally flow into his çiftliks and port tax farms along the Black Sea. The second, we shall see, stretches from the Levant, to Rhodes and then Izmir. Both end in the sizable market of Istanbul. What we can say for sure then is that

32 BOA.AE.SSLM.III.157/9431. "*Sadir-ü Sabık Hasan Paşanın Fırtına El Hac Ahmed kapudan ile münasafeten bir kita' kalyon kezalik kapudan-i merkum ile süvarisi reis ve Kapıcıbaşı Rodoslu / Ahmed Ağa ile rub' - rub' olarak bir kita üç direkli sefine hisseleri olub sefineyn-i mezküründen zikr olunan kalyonun nısıf hissesini on bin / guruşa ve uç direkli sefinenin rub hissesini dahi üç bin beş yüz müştereği merküm Haci Ahmed kapudan iştiraya taleb ve mebaliğ-i merkümenin nısıfını ber vech-i beşlik eda ve nısıf-i ahirini dahi ba-avne-i sübhane tala' abd-i şerifeden teslim eylemek üzere iştirasına taleb ve rağib etdüği / malum devletleri buyuruldukda ber minval-i meşruh kapudan-i mumaileyh füruhtu ve bahasının mevacib-i kesirine murad içün tertibi muvaffık irade-i aliye ise / emr-ü ferman devletlü saadetlü sultanım hazretlerindir*"

33 BOA.D.BŞM.ZMT.d.13927. "*...Mühürdar sefinenin nısıf hissesi mutasarrıfı Tekfur Naima Ali Mehmed kapudanın zemini...*"

34 BOA, EV.HMH.d.6905.

35 İbid.

36 Aleksadar Shopov, "Cities of rice: risiculture and environmentalchange in the Early Modern Ottoman Balkans", Levant: The Journal of the Council for British Research in the Levant, Vol. 51 2019, pp. 169-183.

Hafız Ahmed Ağa seems to be profiting and utilising the same economic trends, trade routes, and strategies his christian-islander compatriots are using. He is a shipowner who deals in the bustling Mediterranean and Black Sea cereal trade of the late 18th and 19th centuries. Simultaneously, he invests his money in tax collection, much like the Greek shipowning notables of the Archipelago which was his place of origin, albeit at a much grander scale, afforded by his place in the Ottoman hierarchy. More importantly though, he seems much like them, to be following the trade routes and the money to Izmir.

According to our registers, most of Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's properties, *vakf* or privately owned, were situated in Izmir[37]. In total he either owned fully or held portions in twelve houses in the various non muslim quarters of the city, two hans, one hamam and one slaughterhouse[38]. More vital to our synthesis however, are the two soap making workshops and one olive oil mill he held. The largest of what seems to be two soap workshops was turned into a *vakf* with part of the income being funneled for the upkeep of his library in Rhodes[39].

Izmir was one of the primary hubs of the Mediterranean olive oil and soap trades in the 19th century. Riding on the wave of market demand created by the French, competing industries began to emerge in the Ottoman empire in places such as Chios, Crete and Izmir, creating a huge demand for olive oil to be processed in *sabunhanes* and then shipped out to be sold in the internal Ottoman market or Europe[40]. Hafiz Ahmed seems to have adapted to the soap manufacturing trade, benefiting from olive oil shipped to Izmir from all over the empire, by building two soap manufacturing workshops on an important hub, upon a trade route he was already active on. Being a mid way point between the Black Sea, Istanbul and Rhodes, we can summarize that Izmir served as a primary port for his commercial endeavours, given the emerging importance of soap trade in the long 18th century[41].

It goes without saying then that Hafız Ahmed Ağa follows the model of what we historically considered to be the Mediterranean merchant. Following market trends and demand, diversifying his investment into several trades, while also dispersing his property and tax farms geographically in order to truly create a solid capital base and protect himself from market fluctuations. Though this strategy did not evidently protect him from the Sultan's execution order, we should note that perhaps the Ottoman State did recognise what seems to be his knowledge of maritime affairs.

Selim III's efforts to renew the Ottoman fleet have been well studied in contemporary literature. During his reign more than 40 new ships were built and the existing fleet was outfitted with state of the art maritime technology imported from France and England[42]. Hafiz Ahmed seems to have been part of that process as well. In 1799 his tax farm on the wax candles of Izmir and its dependencies was

37 BOA, EV.HMH.d.6905.

38 İbid.

39 BOA.EV.HMH.d.6905.

40 As above, Elena Frangakis Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna* ..., Akhens 1992, pp. 120.

41 İbid.

42 Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New The Ottoman Empire Under Selim III (1789-1807)*, Harvard University Press 1971, pp. 150-166.

charged with submitting the necessary funds for the provision of materials for the Ottoman Navy[43]. Although, we do not know how involved Hafiz Ahmed was in this process, given his proximity to the Sultan it probably was no mere coincidence. Two possibilities emerge.

Since Hafiz Ahmed Ağa was invested in shipping, it would not be out of place to suggest that he was given a stewardship role in the construction of the new Ottoman fleet. This would be congruent with what seems to be his son's appointment as *nazir*, overseer, of the building of a sloop on behalf of the Imperial Arsenal in 1816/7[44], during the reign of Mahmud II, implying a sort of family specialization. More than likely, the timing, just one year before Hafiz Ahmed's execution, seems to denote a first attempt from the Ottoman State to seize some of his assets. To investigate his removal from power though we first have to explore Hafiz Ahmed's ties to the Harem.

In the same year which saw the seizing of Hafiz Ahmed's Izmir tax farm incomes for the benefit of the Imperial Arsenal, he seems to have been appointed as executor of the estate of the late Ümm-Gülsüm Sultan, daughter of Zahide and Abdülhamid I[45]. This seems to suggest a measure of proximity to Abdulhamid's family and consequently the Harem. More importantly in 1790 Hafiz Ahmed purchased some of his properties in Izmir which initially belonged to Turgudlu's voyvoda, Halil Ağa, before being confiscated. However, these pieces of property were ultimately linked to the Valide Sultana's estate and it is from the Queen Mother's *kethuda* that Hafiz Ahmed purchases them.

Indeed, a connection with Abdulhamid's I household would fit the overall pattern of Hafiz Ahmed's life. Hafiz Ahmed was closely connected to the Grand Admiralty and Cezayirli Hasan Paşa with whom he co-owned shares in the aforementioned three masted ship. Moreover, in a temporal sense his prominence in historical records aligns with the period coinciding with the naval reforms led by the very same Ottoman official, who must have acknowledged Hafiz Ahmed's expertise in this field as an islander and shipowner engaged in Mediterranean trade[46]. This aligns with the fact that Cezayirli Hasan Paşa, was a key figure in Abdülhamid's inner circle, as he had essentially thwarted an earlier coup to replace him with Selim[47]. This would tie Hafiz Ahmed, through his association with his patron, Gazi Hasan Paşa, with Abdulhamid's inner circle and family. It would stand to reason then that his fate was connected to their rise and fall from power.

Küçük Hüseyin Paşa was serving as the Kapudan Paşa at the time of Hafız Ahmed Ağa's execution. He was a childhood friend of Selim III and ultimately the person that replaced Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Paşa[48], with whom Selim III did not see eye to eye due to the former's association with Abdülhamid I. This flow of events brings to the fore two distinct but clashing possibilities. The simplest of the two would be that with Cezayirli Hasan Paşa disfavorably appointed as kazaşker of Rumelia[49], his supporters in the imperial center were no longer protected. This would mean that the new Grand

43 BOA.AE.SSLM.III.31/1778.

44 BOA.D.BŞM.d.8327.

45 BOA.HAT.267/15512.

46 For the role of the arsenal of Rhodes in the renovation of the Ottoman Fleet see, Tuncay Zorlu, *Innovation and Empire in Turkey : Sultan Selim III and the Modernisation of the Ottoman Navy*, I.B Tauris 2011, pp. 23, 55.

47 As above, Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New*..., p. 14.

48 As above, Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New*..., p. 88.

49 Mahir Aydın, "Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Paşa", İslam Ansiklopedisi, Vol. 7,TDV 1993, p. 501-503.

Admiral sooner or later moved in to dispatch Gazi Hasan Paşa's followers and replace them with his own, thus bringing an end to Hafiz Ahmed rise and life. If this is indeed the case, then Hafiz Ahmed would have been able to enlist his ties with the Harem to his favour. His superior Küçük Hüşeyin was married to one of the daughters of Abdulhamid I[50]. Thus, he would have been able to nullify, by virtue of his position and power, whatever connection Hafiz Ahmed had with this part of the former Sultan's family. This would also explain why a complaint, albeit failed, was launched against him by one of Abdülhamid's daughters in order to effectively remove him from his position of executor of the estate of Ümm-Gülsüm Sultan[51].

Alternatively, it might have been Napoleon who was the catalyst of the events to come. At the time of the French invasion of Egypt, Küçük Hüseyin seems to be spearheading, along with the Chief Eunuch, the faction which lobbied for the war to end and relations with France to be restored[52]. Should Hafiz Ahmed's relations with the New Kapudan Paşa not have been adversarial, it would be reasonable to assume that Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's fortunes would have been tied to this group. The argument is strengthened by accounting our protagonist's shipping activities, which were more than likely disturbed due to war. Afterall, the olive oil and soap trades were largely dependent on the French market. Perhaps then, the French invasion of Egypt and Syria might have the catalyst for his execution. The outbreak of the war meant that the political tide was rising against the pro French party of the court. Inversely, the position of the pro Russian and English faction was enhanced[53]. It would not be out of the realm of possibility that the latter might have struck out to weaken their enemies' positions by taking out some of their agents and relocating their wealth. If that was the case though, It is arguable that Hafiz Ahmed had taken measures to mitigate the damage that would have been dealt to his fortune and family.

Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's *müferidat* register contains forty nine entries referring to pieces of immovable property[54]. Nine of those properties were turned into *vakfs* and sold by means of *icareteyn*[55] to women in Izmir[56]. We must assume that those women were wealthy widows of Izmir, doing business with *vakf* real estate property[57]. His holdings contained in this particular defter that were turned into *vakf* reach twenty out of the said forty nine properties[58]. The Ottoman State must have had little incentive to confiscate *vakfs* that had been sold as *icareteyn* to third persons, specifically the five women that appear as Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's clients. His family then continued benefiting from a part of the incomes of these properties, as managers of his pious foundation after his death. More importantly,

50 As above, Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New…*, pp. 87-88.

51 BOA.HAT.267/15512

52 As above, Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New…*, p. 374.

53 As above, Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New…*, pp. 367 - 377.

54 BOA, EV.HMH.d.6905.

55 For the practice of selling through *icareteyn*, Ahmet Akgündüz, "İcareteyn", İslam *Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 21, TDV 2000, pp. 389 -391.

56 BOA, EV.HMH.d.6905.

57 For a case study in the business practices of Ottoman Women see, Işık Tamdoğan, *Les modalités de l'urbanité dans une ville ottomane : les habitants d'Adana au XVIIIe siècle d'après les registres des cadis*, unpublished Doctoral Thesis, EHESS, Paris 1988.

58 BOA, EV.HMH.d.6905

eight out of the forty nine properties he sold, in what were probably mock sales to his wife Saliha and daughter Ayşe[59]. It is interesting that most of those properties he bequeathed, in this manner to his female relatives, are his çiftliks[60]. This was done more than probably as a means to provide his wife and daughter with a stable source of income, either by directly exploiting the land and its produce or by renting it out. We can also theorise here that these properties were also protected from confiscation, since at least on paper they did not belong to him anymore. As such we can theorise that more than half of his fortune in landed properties survived the confiscation process and continued benefiting his *vakf* or his family. Such practices were overall common in the Ottoman Empire, as it has been shown time and time again that high officials did not create pious foundations out of their good will alone but also to protect their legacy and fortune in case they were executed and their personal property confiscated, which was a fate all too common in the Ottoman court[61].

To conclude, we can theorise with a fair bit of certainty that Hafiz Ahmed Ağa was not just an Ottoman high official, content by merely profiting from his high station in Istanbul and his proximity to the Sultan's court. Even though it is indisputable that it was this very position that afforded him the opportunity to benefit as heavily as he did from the tax farm system, his shares of *iltizams* and *mukatas* seem to serve a dual purpose. Not only were they carefully selected sources of income, but also served to strategically enhance his commercial reach, network and capital, as shipowner and maritime merchant along the Black Sea-Istanbul-Izmir and finally Rhodes trade route. His tax farms of the *iskeles* of the ports of Balcı, Kavarna and Karaharman allowed him greater control and perhaps a way to lessen the effects of taxation on his shipments from the çiftliks of the same region, his holdings in Plovdiv and along the Danube. The same can be said about his custom dues tax farm in the Dardanelles, allowing him control and cheap access to Istanbul from the South. His investment into buying up several properties and building soap workshops, olive oil mills and other commercial infrastructure properties in Izmir, set him up with a base of operations in strategic Ottoman port town which was only then emerging but which would be come to central in the soap, olive and cereal trade of the Mediterranean. These dynamics are cemented by his capacity as ship owner. Tracing the network of his economic activities, as well as the traces of his pious works we are also able to place him along the cadre of the Ottoman Grand Admiralty, which seems to be a position even his son profited from, and perhaps sketch his possible ties to the Ottoman harem.

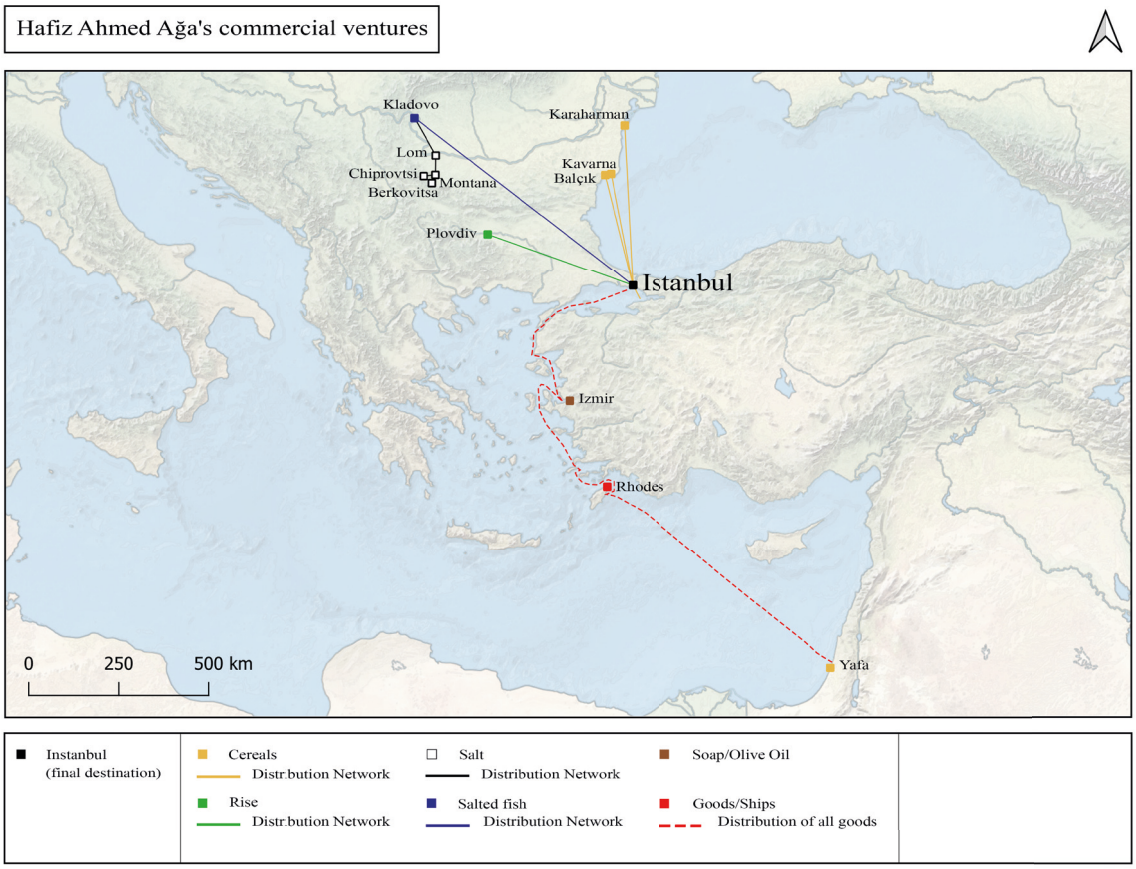
In short, Hafiz Ahmed Ağa seems to fit the model of an Aegean shipowner and maritime merchant. He follows the market trends and diversifies his investments both geographically and in kind while ensuring that those investments bolster his already existing activities. At the same time his pious foundations provided him with social capital in the locals where his property was concentrated. Finally through the very same *vakfs* he apparently managed to salvage some of his fortune when he was executed on Selim's orders, while at the same time protecting the livelihood

59 İbid. "*Halilesi Saliha ve kerimesi Ayşe hatunlara füruht…*" Ayse his daughter, was probably named after Hafiz Ahmed's mother, also Ayşe Hatun. In the very same defter she appears co-funding some of her son's works in Izmir. he water fountain bearing her name is also mentioned as "*Asitane'de çesme-i ma lezziz*".

60 Ibid.

61 For the subject of the legal status of vakf see the monumental study of Ahmet Akgündüz, *İslam Hukukunda ve Osmanlı Tatbikatında Vakıf Müessesesi*, Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı Yayınları, 2013.

of his wife and daughter by mock-selling to them important income producing pieces of property. It is not so ironic then that despite his apparent death at the hands of his executioner and the confiscation of his tax farms and some of his properties, his economic strategy and *vakf* all but assured his legacy. After all it's no mere coincidence that one obscure Greek historian at the start of his career has elected to investigate Hafiz Ahmed's life and work in the piece he wrote for the book you are holding.



One final aspect that emerges when looking into Hafiz Ahmed's life, is the role of Muslim shipping in Mediterranean maritime trade. Long has Ottoman and Greek historiography been chained to the chariot of interpreting economic maritime activities as being solely a Greek - Christian affair. The case of our protagonist illustrates the role of muslims and the merchant fleet of Rhodes, which should by no means be diminutive. More specifically, what seems to emerge is a picture where Ottoman high officials who we do not often think of as merchants or ship owners, like the Kapudan Paşa, seem to be heavily engaged not only in the economy of the provisioning of Istanbul but also Mediterranean trade as we know it. To be clear further research is required if we are to elucidate the role of muslim officials, Rhodian shipowners, captains and merchants in the wider Ottoman and Mediterranean context. However, the case of Hafiz Ahmed Ağa and his associates clearly shows that this might be a worthy cause.

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"Almost by chance, I came across Rodosîzâde Ahmed Fethi Paşa, the son of Hafiz Ahmed Ağa and the first Ottoman ambassador to Vienna, and began to trace his footsteps through contemporary Austrian newspapers. The more I learned about him, the more captivated I became – a charming and cosmopolitan figure, admired for his open-minded curiosity and vibrant presence in Viennese society. His genuine enthusiasm for art, music, culture, and all aspects of modernity, combined with his gracious social charm and remarkable generosity, made him a beloved and unforgettable personality of his time. By the time I had finished writing my paper, I felt as though I had come to know him well – as if we had, somehow, become friends. When Tarık Tüten contacted me shortly afterwards and introduced himself as a direct descendant of my Ahmed Fethi Paşa, I could hardly believe it. It was with great pleasure and respect that I accepted the invitation to this Conversation on Rhodes. Conversation – what a fitting and thoughtful format, one that I am certain Ahmed Fethi would have deeply appreciated!"

Gisela Procházka-Eisl

An Ottoman Diplomat in Vienna
Ahmed Fethi Paşa

Abstract

This paper discusses a short period of time in the life of the Ottoman Tanzimat politician Ferik Ahmed Fethi Paşa (1801-1858). In both 1835 and 1836 he spent a few months as Turkish ambassador in Vienna. The Austrian press participated lively in his numerous activities which they reported in detail and always benevolently. An analysis of these press reports as well as the memoirs of the Austrian Orientalist Josef von Hammer-Purgstall, who had both professional and private connections to Ahmed Fethi, will reconstruct Ahmed Fethi Paşa's life in Vienna and also show the prevailing discourse on the image of the Turk at that time. [1]

I came across Ferik Ahmed Fethi Paşa, one of the earliest Ottoman ambassadors to Vienna, in the course of research on another topic: namely, in preparing the edition of a treatise on Austria (*Risāle-i Avusturya*) written by someone named Enveri Efendi, who was Ahmed Fethi's embassy secretary. While on the trail of Enveri Efendi's traces in contemporary Austrian newspapers and magazines, I noticed the following advertisement:


3725] Bey J. Bermann, [3
Kunst- und Musikalienhändler, am Graben, zur goldenen Krone, ist ganz neu zu haben:
Das wohlgetroffene Porträt
des
Achmed Fethi Pascha,
Türkischen Divisions-Generals und Gesandten am k. k. Hofe.
Lithographirt von Schramm.
Preis 1 fl. C. M.

„Newly available from J. Bermann, dealer in art and music, am Graben, zur goldenen Krone: A portrait with a good likeness of Achmed Fethi Pascha, Turkish division general and envoy at the imperial–royal Court." Lithography by Schramm, price 1 guilder". Wiener Zeitung, October 24 and 30, 1835.

It seemed remarkable to me that an Ottoman diplomat should have himself painted and that this picture should have even been advertised for sale; so I set out to find further clues about this personality and his time in Vienna. As a matter of fact, I found plenty of material that I would like to present in this article.

Ahmed Fethi Paşa is quite a well-known, high-ranking official of the Tanzimat period and intimate of Sultan Abdülmecid, and some aspects of his personality have already been dealt with in various studies. Önder Küçükerman 2005: 458–481 and Ali Akyıldız (2007: 21–22, 32, 127, 129) have written on his role as an entrepreneur; Davut Hut (2009: I, 621–634) discusses his grand summer-house (*yalı*); Semavi Eyice (1985: 1596–1599) deals with his role as the founding father of the first

1 This article is a slightly expanded reprint from: Yılmaz Emine, Nurettin Demir, Emre Çetinkaya (eds.) *Andreas Tietze ve Avusturya Türkolojisi. Türkçenin Zenginliğine Efsanevî bir Katkı – Andreas Tietze und die Österreichische Turkologie* Vienna: Neue Welt Verlag, 2022, 187-205.

Turkish museum, and Serap Sunay (2013:119–145) writes about his marriage to a daughter of Sultan Mahmud II.[2] The most recent publication to date, which draws on a wealth of primary sources, appeared in 2020 and is also by Serap Sunay. In this very insightful article about Ahmed Fethi Paşa's estate register, we learn not only about his financial arrangements but also about his lifestyle, consumption, and reading habits.[3] Serap Sunay also states in this article that there is no source other than the estate registers which allow us to get to know officials from the Tanzimat period as individuals and not only as politicians (Sunay 2020:746). Well, in the specific case of Ahmed Fethi's time in Vienna, we can modify this statement a little bit: There are also other sources, namely the Austrian and international newspapers, which enjoyed reporting about him and about his private activities, which we will discuss in more detail in the following. Another source on Ahmed Fethi as an individual is the memoirs of the famous Orientalist Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall. These also contain some very amusing references and anecdotes.[4] Hammer-Purgstall was an interpreter at court at that time and had a great deal to do not only professionally but also privately with Ahmed Fethi.

First, Ahmed Fethi will be introduced in a few lines,[5] and then a closer look will be taken at his time in Vienna. This very short period in his life is repeatedly mentioned en passant in the literature, but relatively little is known about it.

Ahmed Fethi Paşa was born in Istanbul in 1801 as the posthumous son of the wealthy *rikābdār* Hafız Ahmed Ağa, who was originally from Rhodes, and hence is sometimes referred to by the bynames Rodosizade, Rodoslu, and Damad; this last meaning "son-in-law" because he was married to a daughter of Sultan Mahmud II. After an education at the Enderun Palace School, he followed a very linear military career: His entry into the *Enderun Ağaları Bölüğü*, a division which formed the core of the ʿAsākir-i Manṣūre-i Muḥammedīye, the new, modern army of Mahmud II after the abolition of the Janissaries, was followed by his participation in the 1828–29 Ottoman-Russian War.[6] He was subsequently promoted to *mīrlivā* in 1830 and *ferīk* in 1831.[7]

In the summer of 1835, Sultan Mahmud II sent Ahmed Fethi Paşa to Vienna as a special envoy for a short time. The following year, he was appointed to Vienna as a regular ambassador but again only for a few months.

In 1838 he was in London, where he was to attend Queen Victoria's coronation festivities, but he arrived too late. He was then ambassador to Paris—Reşid Paşa was actually nominated for this position[8] but, for various reasons, he was not able to take it up.[9] That same year, he also became

2 See the bibliography in Hut 2016:451.
3 "Bir Hanedan Damadının Yaşam Tarzı ve Standardı: Ahmed Fethi Paşa'nın Terekesi".
4 Joseph Freiherr von Hammer–Purgstall's (d. 1856) memoirs comprise several thousand pages. A typewritten copy, probably made during the interwar period, is available online: http://gams.uni-graz.at/context:hp.
5 Based on Hut 2016: 450–451, Koçu 1971:5708–5709, and Sakaoğlu 1994:298–299.
6 Apparently, he was awarded the epithet "Fetḥī" — "the Victorious" for his efforts in this war; see *Österreichischer Soldatenfreund,* March 10, 1858 (obituary for Ahmed Fethi).
7 Lit. "commander of an administrative district (*livā*)", but also a military title corresponding to "major general"; *ferīk* "brigade general", was the next highest rank. From the rank of *mīrlivā* and above, the title *paşa* was bestowed and the epithet "seʿādetlü" was used. See Pakalın 1983, 2: 545.
8 Mustafa Reşid Paşa (1800–1858), a high-ranking Ottoman statesman, direct colleague—and often rival—of Ahmed Fethi (Beydilli 2006:348–350).
9 A very critical comparison of the two pashas can be found in the newspaper *Agramer Zeitung,* November 17, 1841: "Fethi Pascha must now be regarded as [Reschid Pascha's] present replacement. Alone, he does not possess the spirit and the energy of Reschid Pascha, is more a man of the world than a statesman, more a blind imitator of external French forms than a real reformer, his generosity, bordering on extravagance, his command of the

the first Ottoman state official to have an audience with the Pope (Hut 2016:450–451).[10] In 1839 he returned to Istanbul after the death of Sultan Mahmud II and the accession of Sultan Abdülmecid.[11] It is feasible that he did not undertake any more journeys abroad from that time on.

The following year he married Atiye Sultan, the daughter of Mahmud II, with whom he had two daughters. As Sultan Abdülmecid's brother-in-law and confidant, he rapidly climbed the career ladder and held a number of different positions, at times several at the same time. Thus, he held the post of minister of commerce (*ticāret nāẓiri*) twice (1840 and 1853) and the post of the director of artillery (*topḫāne müşīri*) three times. He was also in charge of establishing the first Ottoman quarantine facility.[12] It was mainly his position as director of artillery that gained him fame (Sunay 2020:748). Ahmed Fethi Paşa died in 1858, relatively young at the age of 57, from a lung disease.

Ahmed Fethi Paşa was—and is—considered a worldly-wise, eloquent statesman of the Tanzimat period, open to all Western achievements.



Palais Schönborn in Vienna's 4th district, Ahmed Fethi's residence during his first stay in Vienna 1835. Photo: Gisela Procházka-Eisl.

However, he has entered history not only as a statesman but also as a bon vivant who accumulated infinite riches, while leaving behind piles of debts.[13] He was also the founding father of the first Turkish museum,[14] the owner of a steamship company on the Golden Horn (Akyıldız 2007, *apud* Sunay 2020), a brick factory, numerous estates, and the founder of the Beykoz Paşabahçe Glass and Porcelain Factory.

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fine French social tone, his light, cheerful spirit, would perhaps make him more suitable to represent young Turkey gallantly in the salons of Paris than to recognize here in the serious, ceremonial Stambul what is needful for his fatherland in the present critical period". (translation by GPE).

10 Three months later, Reşid Paşa also received an audience with Pope Gregory XVI (1831–1846), and several Austrian newspapers published Mustafa Reşid Paşas' speech (originally in French) in which he thanked the pope on behalf of Sultan Mahmud II for his good reception of Ahmed Fethi Paşa. See, for example, *Österreichischer Beobachter*, October 16, 1838.

11 Koçu 1971:5709.

12 *Steyermärkische Zeitschrift* 1844, vol. 2, p. 33

13 There is also a file from 1838 in the Austrian State Archives in Vienna with the title "Ahmed Ferik Pascha, Turkish ambassador, debt claims". Sign. Nr. AT–OeSTA/HHStA HA OMaA 71–24. It was not possible to examine this file or the files concerning his audiences with the Emperor as the archive cannot be consulted due to Covid19 restrictions.

14 It was a collection of ancient weapons in the Irene Church which now form the cornerstone of Istanbul's Archaeological Museum (Öz 1949).

Ahmed Fethi first came to Vienna from July 30 to September 24 1835, as an Ottoman special envoy.[15] This was possibly his first stay in Europe; no references to earlier travels could be found in the sources.

During the following year, from September 30, 1836 to the spring of 1837, he was in Vienna again, this time as a regular Ottoman ambassador. In total, he apparently spent less than a year in the Habsburg capital. His subsequent stays in England and France are also assumed to have been rather short, as in August 1839, immediately after Sultan Mahmud's death, all the newspapers in the Habsburg Empire unanimously reported his recall from Paris.[16] It is this period of only four years in Ahmed Fethi's career that has earned him the reputation of the well-traveled connoisseur of the West.

The reports in numerous newspapers and journals show that he made the best and most intensive use of his time in Europe. Thus, we know that within the relevant four years of 1835–1839, in addition to the countries to which he had been sent as ambassador, he also visited Hungary, Italy, Germany, Russia and Poland, and that he also traveled extensively within the Habsburg Empire. After his removal from Vienna, he visited Austria at least once more on his way to England. The Preßburger Zeitung reports that in July 1838 he had—together with the new ambassador Rıfat Paşa—an audience with the Emperor and presented him with gifts from the Sultan.[17]

Both Viennese high society and the general public had a strong interest in the Turkish ambassador and followed his activities curiously and sympathetically. As was the case with the arrival of every Ottoman delegation throughout history, the arrival of Ahmed Fethi and his entourage in Vienna caused a certain exotic sensation. Austrian newspapers throughout the Habsburg Empire, from Lviv to Budapest to Vienna to Linz and Klagenfurt, reported as early as June 1835 that Ahmed Fethi had been ordered by the sultan on May 20 to travel to Vienna and would be leaving soon.[18] He was to deliver a letter from Sultan Mahmud II expressing his condolences on the death of Emperor Franz I and congratulations on the accession of Emperor Leopold I to the throne. From the time of his departure from Semlin (today Zemun, Belgrade) via Hungary and Bratislava to Vienna, the stops on his journey are regularly reported. Numbering 18 members, it was a relatively large delegation that was on its way to Vienna. We only know that Enveri Efendi (Enverizade Saʿdullah) accompanied Ahmed Fethi as his private secretary as did the Greek Alexander Theologis, his interpreter.[19]

In Budapest, Ahmed Fethi stopped for three days for extensive sightseeing and was shown around by the Ofen Provincial Commissary Gabriel von Döbröntei and the mayor (Stadthauptmann) of Pesth, Johann Eichholz. He visited the Hungarian National Museum, the Blocksberg Observatory and other sights. Two theater performances, one in German and one in Hungarian, were also included in his program. However, he was particularly impressed by the visit to the Pest Institute for the Blind, where the pupils showed him all they had learned—including showing him his route from

15 The dates of his arrival and departure are mentioned in all major Austrian newspapers.

16 For example, *Vereinigte Ofner–Pester Zeitung*, August 22, 1839; *Lemberger Zeitung*, September 13, 1839; *Österreichischer Beobachter*, September 4, 1839; *Ofner–Pester Zeitung*, September 12, 1839.

17 *Preßburger Zeitung*, July 20, 1838.

18 For example, in *Wiener Zeitung*, June 10, 1835. The same report also appeared in the *Vereinigte Ofner–Pester Zeitung*, June 14, 1835; *Grazer Zeitung*, July 18, 1835; *Kais. Königl. Schlesische Troppauer–Zeitung*, June 12, 1835; *Brünner Zeitung*, June 11, 1835 *Österreichischer Beobachter*, July 14, 1835; *Siebenbürgener Zeitung*, June 20, 1835; *Der Wanderer*, June 9, 1835; and the *Preßburger Zeitung*, June 12, 1835.

19 *Preßburger Zeitung*, July 31, 1835. Enveri Efendi (d.1849) was present during both of Ahmed Fethi's stays in Vienna (maybe even during the months in between) and in 1839 wrote a treatise entitled *Risāle-i Avusturya* about his impressions in Austria.

Istanbul to Budapest on a map—and played music for him. When the Paşa saw the pianoforte, he asked the director of the institute to play three pieces of Turkish music for him, two marches and a polonaise. He had the sheet music of these pieces (though written for violin) with him; the director fulfilled his honoured guest's wish to his satisfaction.[20] Why Ahmed Fethi had brought sheet music of Turkish musical compositions at all, we do not know.

As he continued on his journey to Esztergom, a special surprise was waiting for him in the village of Dorogh near Eszertgom: The district governor of the county received him together with Michael von Reviczky,[21] the parish priest of Neudorf. The latter had studied oriental languages in Pesth and Vienna and had composed an Arabic welcome poem in 30 stanzas in honor of the distinguished guest. It began like this:

"Já! ajjuha Raszulu Szultáni,	O, thou envoy of the great Sultan,
Já! Áinu lágarjani, va Naziratu 'd Diváni	O, thou eye of the noble and member of the Divan,
Fa chojjita beekrámen,	Be respectfully greeted,
Va chajjita bajna keramen.	And I wish that you may live long among the honored ones". [22]

The priest gave Ahmed Fethi a copy of this poem in calligraphy, and Ahmed Fethi expressed his pleasure that the Arabic language was being learned in Hungary as well. Indeed, he himself might not have known Arabic, since Hammer-Purgstall notes in his memoirs that the ambassador was not really well educated and had only a superficial knowledge of Persian.[23]

On July 30, Alexandros Mavrogeni, the Turkish chargé d'affaires in Vienna at the time, traveled to Bratislava[24] to pick up Ahmed Fethi and his entourage and escort them to Vienna. The Paşa was accommodated in the Keglevich Palace on the Schaumburgergund.[25] Hammer-Purgstall notes that he was received everywhere in Vienna with great glamor and honor.

Ahmed Fethi was eager to see everything new that was available here, and even before he was admitted to the audience with the Emperor[26] on August 6, he had—contrary to diplomatic rules—already completed an extensive sightseeing program: the Gallery in the Belvedere, the Ambras Collection, the Natural History and Antiquities Cabinet, the Court Library, and the Academy of Engineering, forerunner of the Technical University.[27]

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20 *Wiener Theater–Zeitung* (*Bäuerles Theaterzeitung*), August 13, 1835.

21 At the University of Vienna with the Maronite priest Anton Aryda, who was employed as an associate professor of Arabic, Syriac and Chaldean language (Bihl 2009:13).

22 *Wiener Theater–Zeitung* (*Bäuerles Theaterzeitung*), August 4, 1835 and *Preßburger Zeitung*, August 11, 1835. On October 13, 1835, the Wiener Theater-Zeitung announced that the complete poem in Arabic letters would appear in the *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* publication series.

23 "I had hoped in vain to acquire the slightest literary information from the Turkish ambassadors who passed through here, or changed. All of them were educated at best in the chancery style, but otherwise they were highly ignorant in everything concerning literature, even if, like Fethi, they were very proud of their superficial command of Persian, or, like his successor Rifaat, of his chancery style". See Hammer–Purgstall, *Erinnerungen,* XLIV. Buch 155.–158 1/2. Heft, 1871 (= http://gams.uni–graz.at/hp/pdf/Typoscript–44.pdf, scan 13).

24 Hammer–Purgstall, *Erinnerungen,* XLI. Buch 146.–149. Heft, 1771 (= http://gams.uni–graz.at/hp/pdf/Typoscript–41.pdf, scan 29)

25 That is today's Palais Schönburg in Rainergasse in Vienna's fourth district.

26 Weeks before, the newspaper Wiener Zeitung reported that Ahmed Fethi would bring the Emperor "a splendidly embroidered armchair decorated with precious stones" as a gift at this audience. See *Wiener Zeitung*, July 13, 1835.

27 Hammer–Purgstall, *Erinnerungen,* XLI. Buch 146.–149. Heft, 1772 (= http://gams.uni–graz.at/hp/pdf/

And he continues at this speed: When he decamped from Vienna in September 1835, all the newspapers wrote that, following Mahmuds II's order, he had thoroughly informed himself about modern advances in the West:

> "The inhabitants of the imperial city have repeatedly witnessed how much Fethi Ahmed Paşa endeavored to fulfill this latter mission. None of the numerous scientific and charitable institutes flourishing there, none of their art and teaching institutions, technical collections no less than natural history collections, remained unvisited by the aforementioned ambassador. His attention was especially directed to the military and the institutions and auxiliary means involved in the subject of military science; thus he visited not only the military institutes, engineering and artillery schools, depots and armories located here [i. e. in Vienna], but also the Imperial and Royal Military Academy in Wiener Neustadt, the Maximilian towers in the vicinity of Linz, the Imperial and Royal foundries and mines in Mariazell and Eisenerz".[28]

The great interest of the Paşa is always emphasized, which, thanks to good interpreters and the basically friendly relations between the two countries, great pains were taken to satisfy: He is given plans, sketches, instructions and notes to take to Istanbul.

It is quite obvious that this first stay in Vienna was very formative for Ahmed Fethi and thus laid the foundation for numerous later activities in Istanbul—be it the founding of the first museum, the modernization of the military in the course of his office as director of artillery, or his efforts to advance and modernize medical education, for which he also invited doctors to the Ottoman Empire thanks to his contacts in Austria.

When Ahmed Fethi came to Vienna for a second time in September 1836, he traveled with an entourage of nine people via Venice and Klagenfurt. This time he arrived as a permanent representative of the Porte, not as a special envoy; he was, of course, still well remembered by the Viennese population and was able to draw on the network of contacts he had made the previous year. During this second stay, he lodged at Palais Esterházy in Vienna's Laimgrube neighbourhood.[29]

Ahmed Fethi was a generally popular diplomat, a socialite who occupied a firm place in Viennese social circles and was a welcome guest everywhere, with an air of the exotic about him. He loved invitations and receptions, both as a guest and as an animated host. In Turkish sources there is a reference made to invitations by Ahmed Fethi which were so ostentatious that the fish served there had had emeralds inserted in place of their eyes (Sunay 2020: 751 and Öz 1949:4, n. 1). Hammer-Purgstall reports that in December 1836, on the occasion of Sultan Mahmud's birthday, he received the entire diplomatic corps together with their wives,[30] and in January 1837 he hosted a grand and

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Typoscript–41.pdf, scan 30)

28 *Wiener Zeitung*, September 28, 1835 and many other newspapers.

29 Also known as Palais Kaunitz and Albrechtsburg; the structure, a garden palace, was demolished in 1970 for the construction of a new high school. Apparently, a crescent moon had been placed on the building's facade, for the journal *Der Humorist*, March 29, 1837 writes: "We want to go up to the Laimgrube, admire the Esterhasi Palais, and look at the crescent moon of Ferik Achmet".

30 Mahmud II was the first Ottoman sultan whose birthday was celebrated "in the European way" ("Avrupa devletlerinde cari olan usulü[...]"). Olgun (2018:113) notes that for the first major birthday celebration in 1838 in Istanbul, Ahmed Fethi Paşa, Mustafa Reşid Paşa, Serasker Halil Rıfat Paşa, and Kaptanıderya Ahmed Fevzi Paşa were consulted because they knew how such an occasion was orchestrated in France, England, Austria, and Russia. However, Mustafa Reşid Paşa, then ambassador in London, was one of the first diplomats to celebrate the Sultan's birthday abroad as early as 1836. Olgun made no mention of the fact that a reception had also been held in Vienna in that same year.

sumptuous ball— the first to be held in Vienna by a Turkish diplomat. Since he had no wife in Vienna, Princess Metternich substituted for the lady of the house at these two major social events.[31] Ahmed Fethi always treated Mrs. Metternich with great respect, presenting her with oriental fabrics and shawls, and having long, recurring discussions with her about the issue of turbans and fez.[32] But there were other ladies he admired, such as the beautiful Countess Wickenburg, whom he had met during his first stay in Vienna and for whom, to show his adoration, he organized an elaborate dinner.[33] Unfortunately, however, he was not able to communicate easily with the ladies: When he paid his respects to the Princess of Wasa, whom he particularly admired, it was without an interpreter and they could not converse, since he spoke only a few words of French; so they sat facing each other in silence for some considerable time. The princess recounted this scene, and it became a talking point in Viennese salons, even reaching Metternich's ears.[34] All in all, the Paşa was very fond of the Viennese ladies and enjoyed flirting—for the noble ladies of Viennese society he had flowery compliments and generous gifts ready, and, as Hammer-Purgstall observes, he was also very convinced of his effect on women. When a lady gifted him a model of St. Stephen's Tower as a souvenir of Vienna, he interpreted this as an allusion to his virility, and when he and Hammer visited the observatory in the Urania together, he only wanted to be shown Venus, because this was his personal lucky star.[35]

Although he was uninterested in literature, he wrote a verse on Viennese women and their alleged false-heartedness:

Ne deñlü lutf[ı] çok olsa inanmasa[36] *yok Bec yāre*
Ki hercāyī–tabīʿatdür katı māʾildür aġyāre

نه دکلو لطف چوق اولسه انامسه یوق بج یاره
که هر جاي طبیعتدر قتي مائلدر اغیاره

"Even if they are very graceful, do not trust the Ladies of Vienna,
Because they are of a flighty nature and tend to turn to rivals". [37]

The Viennese press unanimously reports that the Turkish ambassador had a great interest in European art. In addition to factories, he visited numerous artists' studios, acquired a taste for painting, music and theater, and "attended all the theaters as well as public musical academies and evening entertainments".[38] Ahmed Fethi was obviously enthusiastic about the Viennese music scene. It was a time when Johann Strauss was virtually adored like a pop star and regularly staged concerts in the salons in Hietzing, near Schönbrunn. On August 21, 1835, the journal *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände* writes about one such concert on a hot summer night:

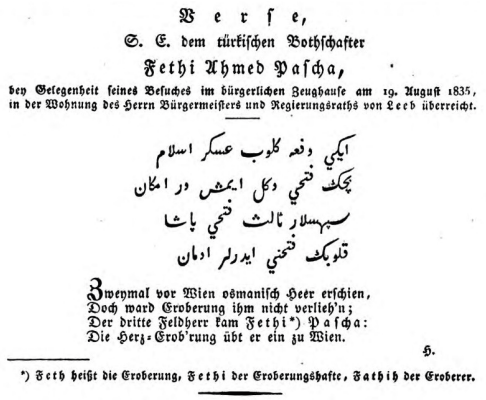
31 Hammer–Purgstall, *Erinnerungen,* XLII. Buch 150.–152 1/2. Heft, 1819. (= http://gams.uni–graz.at/hp/pdf/Typoscript–42.pdf, scan 32) and XLIII. Buch 152 1/2.–154. Heft, 1839 (= http://gams.uni–graz.at/hp/pdf/Typoscript–43.pdf, scan 18).
32 Ibid, 1838.
33 Passim.
34 Ibid. 1839. It is not known how well Ahmed Fethi had ever known French, if at all. Serap Sunay notes in her research of his estate register that he owned surprisingly few books in Western languages. She compares this situation with that of his contemporary Mehmed Emin Ali Paşa (who, incidentally, was his second secretary in Vienna), who left behind considerably more foreign-language books, and concludes that the two men had a very different worldview (Sunay 2020:770). It is possible, however, that the reason simply lies in Ahmed Fethi's lack of knowledge of foreign languages.
35 Hammer–Purgstall, *Erinnerungen,* XLI. Buch 146.–149. Heft, 1773., (=http://gams.uni–graz.at/hp/pdf/Typoscript–41.pdf, scan 31).
36 Maybe a misprint of *inanması*?
37 *Wiener Zeitschrift*, September 5, 1835.
38 *Allgemeine Theaterzeitung und Originalblatt für Kunst, Literatur, Musik, Mode und geselliges Leben*, November 4, 1835.

"[...] and indeed a more colorful picture of life is hard to imagine. The presence of Feryk Ahmed Fethi Paşa with his fantastically costumed entourage certainly adds to this charm, even if the Viennese eye is accustomed to oriental appearance and costume due to the many Turkish and Greek families living here. The ambassador of the Porte [...], obviously astonished by the pleasant freedom of our public lifestyle, which is advantageously distinguished from life at any other diplomatic residence by the popular connection of the nobility, now enjoys all the pleasures that are offered in the countless *points de réunion*. Thus, the day before yesterday, at midnight, he appeared in the large garden of the inn "Zur [goldenen] Birne", which is equipped with a magnificent salon, surrounded by more than five thousand people from all social classes, who were brought together by the splend ball held for the benefit of our above-mentioned waltz virtuoso [i.e. Johann Strauss]"[39]

One sign of Ahmed Fethi's popularity is certainly the fact that several artistic works were dedicated to him: Johann Strauss composed the "Ball Rackettenwalzer" for him and Josef Lanner the waltz "Die Osmanen" (Eğecioğlu 2010:22). Also, the booklet published by I. Pfeiffer "Sylphide. Taschenbuch für Damen" was dedicated by the Viennese publisher I. F. Mechtler to Ahmed Fethi Paşa.[40] When the Mayor of Vienna, Leeb, received him for a tour around the Vienna Armory, an Ottoman poem which Hammer-Purgstall had composed for this occasion was recited in his honor:[41]

İki def'a gelüb ʿasker–i islām
Beçüñ feṯḥi degül imiş der imkān
Sipehsalār-i ṣāliṣ Feṯḥi Pāşā
Kulūbuñ feṯḥini ėderler idmān

"The muslim soldiers came twice,
But they were not able to conquer Vienna.
Fethi Paşa, the third commander,
Exercises the conquest of the hearts".



Verſe,
S. E. dem türkiſchen Bothſchafter
Fethi Ahmed Paſcha,
bey Gelegenheit ſeines Beſuches im bürgerlichen Zeughauſe am 19. Auguſt 1835, in der Wohnung des Herrn Bürgermeiſters und Regierungsraths von Leeb überreicht.

ایکي دفعه گلوب عسکر اسلام
گچمك فتحي دگل ایمش در امکان
سپهسالار ثالث فتحي پاشا
قلوبگ فتحني ایدرلر ادمان

Zweymal vor Wien osmaniſch Heer erſchien,
Doch ward Eroberung ihm nicht verlieh'n;
Der dritte Feldherr kam Fethi*) Paſcha:
Die Herz-Erob'rung übt er ein zu Wien.

H.

*) Feth heißt die Eroberung, Fethi der Eroberungshafte, Fathih der Eroberer.

39 „[...] und in der That läßt sich ein bunteres Leben kaum denken. Die Anwesenheit Feryk Ahmed Fethi Pascha's mit seinem phantastisch kostümierten Gefolge erhöht diesen Reiz natürlich, wenn auch das Auge der Wiener an orientalische Gestalt und Tracht durch die vielen türkischen und griechischen Familien, die hier leben, gewöhnt ist. Der Botschafter der Pforte [...] genießt nun, in Erstaunen, wie man sieht, über die gefällige Freiheit unseres öffentlichen Lebens, das durch das populäre Anschließen des Adels von jedem andern Residenzleben sich vorteilhaft unterscheidet, aller Vergnügungen, die sich in den zahllosen *points de réunion* bieten. So fand er sich vorgestern um Mitternacht in dem, mit einem prächtigen Salon geschmückten, großen Gasthausgarten zur Birne ein, umwogt von mehr als fünftausend Menschen aus allen Ständen, die das, zum Benefiz unseres oben genannten Walzervirtuosen [d.i. Johann Strauß] veranstaltete, glänzende Ballfest zusammenführte."

40 *Der Österreichische Zuschauer. Zeitschrift für Kunst, Wissenschaft und geistiges Leben*, December 6, 1837: "Dedicated to Sr. His Excellency Ahmed Fethi Paşa, the vizier, mushir [=müşīr], holder of the First Class Badge of Glory by the publisher". Incidentally, the book was mercilessly reviewed in this magazine. Unfortunately, the book could not be found, and it cannot be said whether I. Pfeiffer was the well-known Austrian world traveler Ida Pfeiffer.

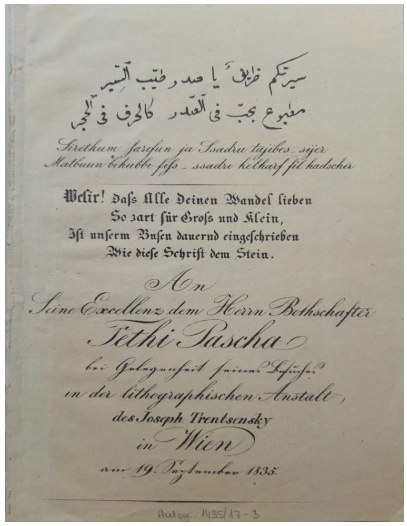
41 *Wiener Zeitschrift*, August 22, 1835.

When visiting Josef Trentsensky's lithographic institute he is also presented with an Arabic verse with suitable content, also written by Hammer-Purgstall.[42]

But it is not only newspaper reports and various dedications that remain as traces of Ahmed Fethi in Vienna—there are at least two images of him which he sat for during his first stay.

The advertisement shown in the introduction to this article is promoting a portrait of Ahmed Fethi with the reference "lithographed by Schramm". It is possible that this refers to the well-known Viennese painter Johann Heinrich Schramm, who painted numerous portraits of celebrities, preferably in watercolor. However, it is not known whether he also painted Ahmed Fethi. [43]

Another picture appeared in a supplement to the *Wiener Theaterzeitung* and shows Ahmed Fethi with Prince Gustav Wasa and his adjutant.[44]

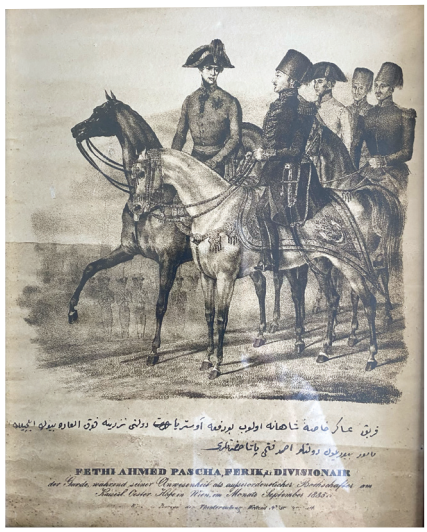

سیرتکم فردیق یا صدر طیب السیر
مطبوع محبب فی الصدر کالوف فی الحبر

Serrethum fardfun ja Sadra tajibes sejer
Matbuun ehubbi fifs – ssadre kelharf fil hadscher

Welt! daſs Alle Deinen Wandel lieben
So zart für Groſs und Klein,
Iſt unſerm Buſen dauernd eingeſchrieben
Wie dieſe Schrift dem Stein.

An
Seine Excellenz dem Herrn Bothschafter
Fethi Pascha
bei Gelegenheit seines Besuches
in der lithographischen Anstalt
des Joseph Trentsensky
in Wien
am 19 Novembar 1835

A verse composed by Hammer-Purgstall for Ahmed Fethi Paşa on the occasion of his visit to a Vienese printing house.



Ahmed Fethi Paşa with Prince Wasa, *Wiener Theater-Zeitung (Bäuerles Theaterzeitung)*, November 4, 1835 (Courtesy of Esra Birgen Jah).

There are two men in the background who evidently belonged to Ahmed Fethi's entourage but their identity is not known. However, one might assume that they were his secretaries Enveri Efendi and Ali Efendi, who used to accompany him. The picture was painted near the Glacis while the ambassador was attending a military show. The Theaterzeitung emphasizes that the image was considered good by Ahmed Fethi and approved for publication and that it did indeed look very much like him. Numerous other newspapers and magazines commented on this lithograph and complimented the Theaterzeitung for this supplement.[45]

42 *Allgemeine Theaterzeitung und Originalblatt für Kunst, Literatur, Musik, Mode und geselliges Leben*, November 4, 1835. This newspaper article also explains the puns and double meanings that are contained in the poem to the readership.

43 Johann Heinrich Schramm (1810–1865), well-known portrait painter; (*ÖBL* 1997, 11:169). We were not able to locate this portrait.

44 *Wiener Theater–Zeitung (Bäuerles Theaterzeitung)*, November 4, 1835.

45 For example, *Der Österreichische Zuschauer. Zeitschrift für Kunst, Wissenschaft und geistiges Leben*, November 11, 1835, and also *Carinthia. Zeitschrift für Vaterlandskunde, Belehrung und Unterhaltung*, December 12, 1835 and *Vereinigte Laibacher Zeitung*, December 12, 1835.



Ahmed Fethi Paşa
gouache portrait, 1836
Moritz Michael Daffinger (1789-1849)

Private collection
Courtesy of Ömer Koç
with special thanks to Esra Birgen Jah

A third portrait was probably painted during his second stay in Vienna and is the work of the Austrian painter Daffinger;[46] the Ottoman note gives the year as 1256 of the Hijra (=1836).

When Ahmed Fethi Paşa leaves Vienna for the second time not a single newspaper mentions it. This is amazing, since usually each and every step he took, no matter how small, was commented on. Yet the Austrian press did not give up on him after his departure and continued to follow him faithfully until his death. All of his numerous career advances are reported—from promotions to honorary gifts to awards to salary increases. The interested Viennese public is even privy to events in his private life. His marriage to Atiye Sultan in 1840, his wife's pregnancy and the birth of a daughter in 1842, the great fire in the Istanbul district of Fındıklı in 1848 during which his mansion burned down,[47] and also a spectacular theft when his "private Circassian" (Leibtscherkesse) fled with jewelry and jewels valued at 20,000 piastres.[48]

It seems that Ahmed Fethi Paşa is present at all activities at the Porte involving foreigners. A few examples of the events that were prominently reported by the Austrian press and demonstrate Ahmed Fethi's tireless involvement were:[49]

Archduke Johann visits Istanbul in October 1837; his visit and sightseeing program is recounted in detail. Ahmed Fethi Paşa is also present at the audience with the Sultan, guides the Archduke through the palace gardens, and escorts him to his ship on the day of his departure.[50]

When the extraordinary Austrian envoy Baron von Koller arrives in Istanbul by steamship in March 1855, he is received by the staff of the Austrian Internuntiature. Ahmed Fethi Paşa provides magnificently harnessed horses and escorts the guest to the embassy building.[51]

When the first public annual examinations were held in the Galata Medical School in 1840, the Sultan, numerous statesmen, and, of course, Ahmed Fethi and the Austrian physician Dr. Bernard were present. Ahmed Fethi assures Bernard that he will take over the direction of this institute.[52] During a stay in Vienna in 1838, he had not only found provided Bernard but also a second prominent physician, Jakob Anton Neuner; the latter was charged with setting up the first quarantine station in the Ottoman Empire.[53]

Ahmed Fethi apparently maintained good contacts with the Austrian Internuntiature and was always ready to help, whether in receiving guests from Austria or in arranging for Austrians visiting the empire to perform certain honorable services: In the spring of 1857, the young Styrian flutist Wilhelm Humpl, who was residing at the Internuntiature as a guest, gave a private concert in a *köşk* in Tophane attended only by the Sultan, Ahmed Fethi, and a chamberlain.[54]

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46 Moritz Michael Daffinger (1789–1849), Wiener Porträt– und Blumenmaler. See Daffinger Moritz Michael (*ÖBL* 1957, 1:166).

47 *Die Presse*, September 13, 1848.

48 *Salzburger Zeitung*, May 10, 1855.

49 One definitely gets the impression that Ahmed Fethi Paşa is always involved when it comes to Austrians. However, it must be borne in mind here that the Austrian press naturally writes primarily about events related to Austria.

50 *Österreichischer Beobachter*, November 1, 1837 (and several other newspapers).

51 *Innsbrucker Nachrichten*, March 6, 1855

52 *Populäre österreichische Gesundheits–Zeitung*, November 30, 1840. The physician Karl Ambros Bernard (1810–1844), was sent to Istanbul in 1839 together with Dr. Neuner on behalf of the Sultan to organize the Galata Medical School based on the model of the Josephinum in Vienna (ÖBL 1945, 1:75).

53 *Steyermärkische Zeitschrift*, vol. 2, 1844.

54 In appreciation, the Sultan presents him with a diamond studded snuff box. *Grazer Tagespost*, April 29, 1856.

In 1857, when Ahmed Fethi's son marries a daughter of the Sultan, the well-known Austrian pyrotechnician Anton Stuwer is invited to give a few demonstrations of his firework craft for the festivities.[55]

When the Austrian Major Franz Ritter von Hauslab came to Istanbul in 1839 to deliver gifts from the Imperial Court to Sultan Abdülmecīd and to visit a number of military institutions, of course Ahmed Fethi was his companion. The two men had become friends during Ahmed Fethi's time in Vienna, where Hauslab served as his companion on many excursions and also took a journey through Upper Austria and Styria with him.[56]

Ahmed Fethi is also a frequent guest at social gatherings at the Internuntiature in Istanbul. For a number of years, whenever the newspapers report on Emperor Ferdinand's grand saint's day celebration at the Internuntiature, they always mention that Ahmed Fethi Paşa is raising a toast to the Austrian Emperor.[57] His sympathy and, in particular, his open mindedness did not exclude religious celebrations: for example, he sent a detachment of his men as stewards to the great Corpus Christi procession in Istanbul in 1856 in support of the Austrians. The Sonntags-Blatt reported on this, praising him lavishly for his helpfulness, together with the remark that he had and his band of musicians had even helped out at the same celebration the previous year. [58]

When Ahmed Fethi fell ill in the fall of 1857 and finally died of a pulmonary disease in February 1858, there was hardly an Austrian newspaper that did not report his death. This was a very painful loss for the Sultan, since his second confidant, Muṣṭafā Reşīd Paşa, had also died the previous month. Newspapers report that ʿAbdülmecīd roamed the Dolmabahçe Palace yelling "Aman, aman"! all day long, redecorated his chambers, and even had the parquet floors painted black.[59] The funeral itself is also described in great detail, in particular the striking fact that apparently not a single European played a part in the funeral of this great friend of Europe.[60]

In connection with the death of the Paşa, several papers mention a very bizarre prophecy that was a topic of great excitement in Istanbul at the time: There was a Hungarian nobleman who had come to Istanbul in the revolutionary year of 1848, joined a dervish order, and wandered the streets of Istanbul barefoot, wearing a dervish cap and mostly intoxicated with hashish, much to the annoyance of the Hungarian diaspora community. Upon the death of Reschid Paşa, he predicted the death of 20 more high-ranking Paşas, first and foremost Ahmed Fethi, and, lastly, a mortal event in the Sultan's household itself. [61] Since five high-ranking government officials were indeed seriously ill at this time, great value was attached to this prophecy, which gave Ahmed Fethi's demise yet a further, apocalyptic dimension.

In the numerous obituaries in Austrian newspapers and magazines, no praise is spared. The reformer, friend of Austria, and friend of women is honored accordingly. Only rarely are there subtle allusions suggesting that he was actually a person without any special talents or abilities.

55 *Österreichische Zeitungshalle*, September 6, 1857.
56 *Oestreichische Illustrirte Zeitung*, July 24, 1854.
57 Z.B. *Vereinigte Ofner–Pester Zeitung*, June 23, 1836; *Wiener Zeitung*, June 17, 1844; *Österreichischer Beobachter*, June 14, 1846.
58 *Sonntags–Blatt*, July 13, 1856.
59 *Salzburger Zeitung*, March 11, 1858 (and several other newspapers).
60 *Die Neue Zeit: Olmüzer politische Zeitung*, March 4, 1858 (and several other newspapers).
61 *Kronstädter Zeitung*, March 5, 1858 (and several other newspapers).

Conclusion

The press' portrayal of Ahmed Fethi's time in Vienna and Hammer-Purgstall's memoirs may give the impression of a succession of anecdotal episodes. In fact, however, both sources provide a very clear picture of the contemporary discourse in Austria on the image of Turkey — with a focus on different aspects in each case. For centuries, the stereotype that the population of the Habsburg Empire had of the Turks was that of bloodthirsty, tyrannical barbarians. This was an image of the enemy that was formed not only, but above all, by the fear of a real threat. From around the time of the reconquest of Buda by the Habsburgs in 1686, this image slowly changed, and fear gave way to a new interest, which developed into an enchantment with the exotic and is referred to in German as "Türkenmode" ("Turkish fashion"). This was especially widespread in Western and Central Europe and particularly in courtly milieus. When Ahmed Fethi Paşa visited Vienna, more than four decades, i.e., almost two generations, had passed since the last Austrian Turkish war that ended with the Peace of Sistowa in 1791 (Bernard 2009). Even the 1815 Congress of Vienna in which European matters were reorganized, had no influence whatsoever on Turkish-Austrian relations. It was thus a time when relations between Austria and the Ottomans were both good and relaxed. Both the weakness of the Ottoman state and its need for reform were evident. The former "hereditary enemy" had become an exotic, interesting, and sometimes ridiculed figure.[62]

The press reports on Ahmed Fethi Paşa are subordinate to this prevailing discourse. There are extensive descriptions of Ahmed Fethi's efforts to learn as much as possible about modern European institutions and also of his visits to concerts, theaters, and museums. The benevolent, laudatory tone certainly did not fail to have an effect on the readership and the formation of collective opinion toward a changed image of the Turks—the Ottomans as eagerly keen but by now harmless apprentices of the West. Ahmed Fethi, with his open, curious, and unbiased approach was naturally an ideal personality to represent this discourse.

This discourse can also be detected in Hammer-Purgstall's memoirs, albeit with a somewhat different nuance: Hammer-Purgstall knew Ahmed Fethi very well through the translation services he provided for him; he went on excursions with him and also met him privately on many occasions. While the newspapers report positively on the activities of the Paşa, Hammer is obviouly amused by him, so that Ahmed Fethi actually seems a bit operetta-like in his view: not able to speak French, a womanizer, not really educated, without any outstanding talents, but harmless and sympathetic—and presumably precisely for this reason so well liked.

The numerous press reports about the Paşa, together with Hammer-Purgstall's depictions of Ahmed Fethi's restless performance in the Viennese salons and the effect he had on the aristocratic ladies as a most welcome exotic attraction, allow a vivid social portrait of the 1830s to emerge before our eyes—a time when countesses wore turbans in honor of the Turkish ambassador, when priests composed Arabic poetry, and when Austrian dailies printed Ottoman quatrains in Arabic script on their front pages.

62 For example, there was the stereotype of the "reform Turk", a figure that went quite far into ridicule. In 1876 Franz von Suppè wrote his operetta "Fatinitza", in which the reform Turk İzzet Paşa figures prominently.

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Appendix

Ahmed Fethi's letter of recommendation for an Austrian scientist

This document, which is kept in the Diocesan Archives of St. Pölten, was issued in May 1837 by Ahmed Fethi Paşa as a letter of recommandation for the well-known physician and geologist Ami Boué (1794-1881). Ami Boué undertook lengthy research journeys between 1836 and 1838 through the Balkan Peninsula and the European part of Turkey. The result of these jour-neys was a publication in four volumes, entitled La Turquie d'Europe, ou Observations sur la géographie, la géologie, l'histoire naturelle, la statistique et les moeurs de cet empire. We do knot know when exactly Ahmed Fethi left Vienna, only that it was somewhere in spring 1837. This letter shows that he still was in Vienna in May 1837.

Transcription:
hüve
Devletlü ʿināyetlü ʿāṭıfetlü reʾfetlü velīʾü n-niʿam efendüm ḥażretleri Avusturya devlet-i faḫīmesi tebʿasından ve aşılzādegāndan Ami Dubovay nām ṭabīb Rumėlide kāʾin memālik-i maḥrūse-i ḥażret-i şāhāneyi ziyāret ü temāşā ėderek der-seʿādete ʿazīmet eylemek üzre bu ṭarafdan ḥareket eylemiş olmaġla mersūmuñ dāḫil-i kalem ü ḥükūmet-i destūräneleri olan Manastıra bi-l-vuṣūl-i zāt-i ʿalīleriyle mülākātında ḥakkında muʿāmele-i cemīle-i dil-nüvāzīve iltifāt-i mekārim-sāzīleri bī-dirīġ u şāyān buyurularak mümkün el-ḥuṣūl olan niyāz u iltimāsātınıñ karīn-i isʿāf buyurılması ḫuṣūṣı mütemennā-yi ʿācizānem idügi ve devlet-i ʿalīye ile dost u muʿāhid olan bi-l-cümle düvel-i müteḥābbe tebʿasınıñ her ḥālde ḥimāyet ü ṣıyānetleri ʿahdnāmeler şerāyiṭi iktiżāsından oldıġı rehīn-i ʿilm-i ʿalīleri buyruldukda her ḥālde emr ü irāde ḥażret-i men lehü l-emrüñdür fī 5 Ṣ sene 53
Mühür: Aḥmed Fetḥī

Translation:
He
His Highness, my lord – happy, gracious, powerful and merciful benefactor!
As the physician named Ami de Boué, a subject and aristocrat of the highly esteemed country of Austria, set out from here with the destination of the sublime porte, to visit in Rumeli the well-protected domains of his Majesty, the padishah, it is my humble wish, that the aforementioned (Boué), when he arrives in Manastir, which belongs to the office and administration of the grand vizier, and meets the high person, he will be received with utmost politeness and generosity and be treated with the unrestricted beneficence worthy of him, and his wishes and pledges will be generously faciliated as well as possible. The conditions of the treaties require each and any protection and safeguarding of the subjects of all befriended countries, which are on good terms with the Ottoman Empire. When [all this] is left to his exalted knowledge, wish and order are left by all means to the highness who has the [power to] order.
On Safer 5, year [12]53 (= May 11, 1837) - Seal: Ahmed Fethī

وقتله عنايتلو عاطفتلو رأفتلو والنعم اقسم حضرتلرى

اوسنيا دولت فخيمه‌سى تبعه‌سنده واصلزادكانده آمى زبوى نام طبيب روم ايليده كائنه ممالك محروسه‌ده مقيم

زيارت وتماشا ايدرك دوستانه عزيمت ايلمك اوزره بوطرفلره حركت ايلمش اولغله مسلوملك افضل

قاعده حكومت دستورلرى اولانه مناسبتله بالوصول ذات عاليلريله ملاقاتنده حضنده معاملة جميله ونوازش

والتفات مكارمتسازيلرى بيدريغ ونسيانله بيورديغه وسايانه بيورديله روميه محصول اولانه نياز والتماسانك قبيله اسعاف

بيورلمسى خصوصى متمناى عزيزانه‌لرم ايدوب ودولتعليه‌ايله دوست ومعاهد اولانه باجمله دول متحابه‌نيك

حالك حمايت وصيانتلرى عهده‌لرنه‌سابط اقتضاسنده اولديغى جهته علم عالميرى بيورلدقده هحالده امر واراده

وضع منه الاسكندر ص ٥٣٤



Ömer Eğecioğlu was born in 1954 in Ankara, Turkey. After graduating from Robert College of Istanbul, he studied Mathematics at the Middle East Technical University. For his graduate studies, he went to the United States on a scholarship, focusing on Mathematics alongside Computer and Information Sciences. He obtained his PhD in Mathematics from the University of California, San Diego, in 1984. Having lived in the United States for many years, the author is an emeritus professor of computer science at the University of California, Santa Barbara. In addition to numerous scientific publications and books on computers and mathematics, his passion for music has also led him to conduct historical research in music and music history, specializing in the interactions between the Ottoman Turkey and the West during the 19th century. He has published a five-book anthology series in Turkish titled "Classical Music Articles from the Past and Present." His other music related books in Turkish include "20th Century's Violin Virtuoso: Child Prodigy Florizel von Reuter," "Franz Liszt's Pupil from İstanbul: Faik Bey Franz Della Sudda and his Family," "Musical Strausses and the Ottoman Dynasty." He is also the author of music related articles in English that appeared in journals and magazines such as Studia Musicologica, Musical Times, and Musical Opinion Quarterly.

"I have long wondered why there is no comprehensive biographical work on the life and times of Ahmed Fethi Paşa—an influential 19th-century figure in the Ottoman administration with close ties to the Sultan. He initiated the establishment of a number of important institutions, represented the Ottoman state as an ambassador in many Western countries, and moved easily in the cultural circles of European aristocracy. When Tarık Tüten approached me with the idea of an article for this volume, incorporating a number of episodes from the Paşa's life that I had researched, I was delighted. This was my chance to contribute to the unwritten biography. My particular interest in the Paşa centers on his experiences in the vibrant valse culture of Vienna and his mission to attend the coronation of Queen Victoria, among other notable episodes. It is a privilege to contribute to Conversation in the Library and to help shed light on a life that deserves greater recognition."

Ömer Eğecioğlu

Three Highlights from the Life of Ahmed Fethi Paşa

Strauss and Lanner Dedications and Queen Victoria's Coronation

The Strauss family of Vienna, renowned musicians of the 19th century, dedicated several works to Ottoman sultans and senior statesmen. The nature of these works, as well as what the artists received in return for their creations, is quite intriguing. These ties reflect the Ottomans' attitude toward Western culture and music, revealing their efforts to modernize and align with European ways. Furthermore, the exchange between the Strauss family—who greatly influenced the popular music of the time—and Ottoman dignitaries from a vastly different cultural sphere creates a fascinating cultural bridge between these two worlds.

Not all the Strausses of interest belonged to the famous Viennese Strauss musical dynasty. For example, the polka *Constantinople*, composed for Sultan Abdülmecid in 1849 and sent to the Sublime Porte via the Marseille consulate of the Ottoman Empire, was actually the work of a French composer named Isaac Strauss. The similarity of his surname to that of the Viennese Strausses has caused considerable confusion among music historians and led to several—perhaps understandable—errors in music history investigations in Turkey.[1]

In addition, Eduard, the youngest of the Viennese Strauss brothers—Johann, Josef, and Eduard—composed a waltz titled *Arz-ı Tâzimat Valsi* (*Huldigungen-Walzer*, Opus 88) in 1872, which he dedicated to Ottoman Sultan Abdülaziz and sent to the Sublime Porte. In recognition of this dedication, Eduard was awarded the Mecidiye Medal in 1873.[2]

More significant is the dedication by Johann Strauss II, the "Waltz King" and the composer of *The Blue Danube Waltz*, and the eldest son of the family patriarch, Johann Strauss I. Among the notable works of the younger Strauss is a magnificent waltz dedicated to Sultan Abdülhamid II. Titled *Tales from the East* (*Märchen aus dem Orient*, Opus 444), Strauss composed this ambitious work in 1892 to mark the sultan's fiftieth birthday. In recognition, he was awarded the Mecidiye Medal of the 3rd order.[3]

The patriarch of the Viennese musical dynasty, Johann Strauss I (or Johann Strauss Senior) was known as the first "Waltz King" in music history. He dedicated the waltz *Ball-Racketen* (*Ballroom Fireworks*, Opus 96) to Ahmed Fethi Paşa. The work was first performed publicly on June 26, 1837. At the time, Ahmed Fethi Paşa was serving as the Ottoman ambassador to Vienna.

While researching the history of *Ball-Racketen*, and the connection between Johann Strauss I and Ahmed Fethi Paşa, I came across a pleasant surprise. The Viennese composer Josef Lanner, a pioneer of the waltz form alongside Johann Strauss I, composed a piece in 1839, which he also dedicated to Ahmed Fethi Paşa. At that time the Paşa was the Ottoman ambassador to Paris. This waltz, titled *Die Osmanen* (*The Ottomans*, Opus 146), was first performed in Vienna on July 8, 1839. It is intriguing that both Lanner and Strauss, friends, colleagues, and later competitors —whose names are often mentioned together in discussions on the historical origins of the waltz—dedicated compositions to the same Ottoman ambassador just two years apart. This connection adds to the appeal of both Strauss's *Ball-Racketen* and Lanner's waltz *Die Osmanen*.

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1 Ömer Eğecioğlu, *Sultan Abdülmecid ve J. Strauss,* Musiki Magazine, No. 474 (Special Issue). March 2006, pp. 6-37.
2 Ömer Eğecioğlu, *E. Strauss'un Sultan Abdülaziz'e Ithaf Ettiği Beste,* Musiki Magazine, No. 477, December 2006, pp. 2-17.
3 Ömer Eğecioğlu, *Doğu Masalları: Johann Strauss'un Sultan II. Abdülhamid'e* İthafen *Yazdığı Vals,* Sanat Dünyamız, No. 108, Fall 2008, pp. 12-25.



Johann Strauss is on the left of the stage in the back, Joseph Lanner is prominent in the center of the stage.

Strauss und Lanner mit Kapelle bei einem Ball, 1906. Charles Wilda (1854-1907), Historisches Museum der Stadt, Vienna.

Vienna and the waltz

During the 19th century, as Vienna emerged as an international cultural center of Europe, the waltz evolved in parallel. Originally, the waltz was a dance and musical genre associated with the common people, not the aristocracy. It took shape in Vienna and eventually gained international recognition. The development of this form and its peak in popularity can be traced through the works of three Austrian musicians: Josef Lanner (1801–1843), Johann Strauss I (1804–1849), and Johann Strauss II (1825–1899).

The enormous popularity of the waltz in Vienna can be illustrated through some striking statistics. In the first half of the 19th century, the combined capacity of Viennese dance halls was 50,000, while the city's adult population was around 200,000. These halls and casinos were almost always crowded, making it difficult to find space.[4] In other words, the numbers suggest that approximately one in four adults in Vienna either listened to music or danced in one of these venues every evening.

The waltz, along with the minuet, is one of the most cultivated forms in the history of music. It evolved beyond a mere dance form, becoming an integral part of the works of prominent classical composers of the 19th and 20th centuries. For example, Franz Schubert's piano compositions include *34 Valses Sentimentales* and *12 Valses Nobles,* which are not dance music but are instead experimental and academic in nature. Carl Maria von Weber, with his *Invitation to the Dance,* composed in 1819, brought the waltz from the dance hall to the concert hall and gave an unforgettable example in the form of a miniature symphonic poem. Chopin's waltzes constitute a valuable part of the piano repertoire.[5] Among Liszt's piano output, we see works such as the *Mephisto Waltz* and the *Valse Oubliée,* which indicate his interest in the waltz form. The waltz also quickly found its place in ballet music and opera.

4 Hans Fantel, *Johann Strauss, Father and Son, and Their Era,* David & Charles, 1971, p. 32.
5 Carl Maria von Weber originally composed *Invitation to the Dance* for solo piano.

Among the notable works composed at the beginning of the 20th century are Ravel's beloved *La Valse* (1918) and Richard Strauss's opera *Der Rosenkavalier* (1911), a masterpiece that showcases the refinement and evolution of the waltz form.[6]

Two pioneers of the waltz: Strauss and Lanner

Josef Lanner (1801–1843), one of the Viennese musicians regarded as a father of the waltz, had curly blond hair and blue eyes. Johann (Baptist) Strauss (1804–1849), by contrast, had a North African appearance, with dark straight hair and dark eyes. The nicknames given to them by the people of Vienna reflected these traits: Lanner was called "Flaxen Head" (*Flachskopf*), while Strauss was known as "Moor Head" (*Mohrenschädel*).

Lanner had a soft, calm, and gentle personality, whereas Strauss was impatient, irritable, and restless. These differences in temperament were mirrored in their musical styles. Lanner's music was characterized by delicacy and melodic richness, while Strauss's compositions stood out for their rhythmic variety. A contemporary critic expressed the difference between them as composers of dance music as follows:

> "Lanner's message to us is 'I implore you to dance.' Strauss's message is 'I command you to dance.'" [7]

The two musicians had a large following of passionate admirers among the people of Vienna, much like modern football fans. However, one of the key factors that endeared them to the public and heightened the appeal of their compositions was their mastery of orchestration. They excelled at presenting their melodies in ways that captivated listeners.

Chopin, who visited Vienna in the 1830s, wrote that all the musicians in the city were overshadowed by Lanner and Strauss. Similarly, Richard Wagner, who visited Vienna at the age of 19, was captivated by Strauss's music. He underscored Strauss's overwhelming influence on Viennese musical life, remarking, "The popular spirit of Vienna lives in this devil."

Johann Strauss I (Senior)

The elder Johann Strauss was born in Vienna in 1804. After the death of his father, a Hungarian immigrant who made a living running a tavern, Strauss took violin and instrumentation lessons and earned money by playing in various ensembles in Vienna. In 1819, he joined a trio founded by Lanner as a violist. As the youngest member of the ensemble, Strauss was responsible for collecting money from the audience after the group's street concerts. By 1824, the ensemble had grown large enough to become an orchestra. Shortly after, it split into two: one under Lanner's direction and the other under Strauss's. In 1825, Strauss founded his own orchestra.

Lanner's and Strauss's waltzes achieved universal popularity, largely thanks to the numerous concert tours Strauss undertook with his orchestra. Partly due to these tours, Strauss's fame surpassed Lanner's after the 1840s. Beginning in 1830, Strauss introduced the waltz to the rest of Europe with the zeal of a devoted missionary, helping to popularize the genre. These tours ensured that the waltz became an essential part of the music played at balls, dance halls, and public parks.

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6 Peter Gammond and Andrew Lamb, "Waltz", *The Oxford Companion to Music,* Alison Latham (ed.), Oxford University Press, 2002.
7 Hans Fantel, p. 36.

Between 1834 and 1836, Strauss took his orchestra to Germany, followed by a visit to Louis Philippe's France in 1837. During his three-month stay in Paris, he gave nearly ninety concerts. At one of these concerts, the renowned Niccolò Paganini embraced Strauss and said, "I am very pleased to have met you. I believe that you have brought boundless happiness to the world."

In April 1838, Strauss traveled to England with his orchestra and performed at the coronation of Queen Victoria on 28 June 1838. Incidentally, Ahmed Fethi Paşa was sent by the Sublime Porte to London to represent the Ottoman state at Queen Victoria's coronation, one of the key events discussed in the present article.

Strauss gave concerts at numerous venues across London during the three weeks of celebrations leading up to the coronation. Concert posters reveal that the *Ball-Racketen* waltz was part of the repertoire for this series of performances.

During his four-month stay in England, Strauss gave more than seventy concerts. A chronological list of his tour dates and the venues where he performed is provided in full detail by Schönherr and Reinöhl. [8] The geographical variety of these locations is quite astonishing.

In 1829, Strauss was appointed music director of the Sperl, Vienna's famous music hall, and in 1846 he was appointed music director (Hofball-Musikdirektor) of the Redoutensäle of the Hofburg Palace.

The Austrian writer and poet Ludwig August Frankl (1810–1894) wrote the following words about Strauss in 1849, reflecting the stature the musician had attained in his later years:

> "Strauss is the world's most famous musician. His waltzes fascinate Americans, are heard beyond the Great Wall of China, and echoes are heard in the African deserts. A friend of mine wrote to me from Vienna recently, saying how impressed he was in Australia by a beggar who was playing Strauss to him." [9]

After Carl Maria von Weber, who expanded the waltz format by adding an introduction, Strauss placed the format in the form of Introduction – Five (double) Waltzes – Coda in the musical literature. His most famous works include *Cachuga Galop* (1837), *Donaulieder* (1841), *Annen Polka* (1842), *Lorelei-Rheinklänge* (1843) and *Radetzky March* (1848).

Joseph Lanner

Along with Strauss, Josef Lanner was a pioneer of the waltz craze. Born in Vienna in 1801, Lanner began his musical career without any formal training as a violinist or composer. He joined Michael Pamer's group (1782-1827) when he was only 12 years old. Shortly after, in 1818, he founded his own trio, consisting of two violins and a guitar, and began earning his living by playing dance music in cafés and halls in and around Vienna.

Lanner was a highly talented and versatile musician. His skill as a violinist far exceeded that of a typical casino and dance hall artist. In addition to the dance music featured in his programs, he enjoyed performing concertos by violin masters such as Bériot, which required a great deal of virtuosity.[10] Lanner transformed the waltz form from its primitive roots in Pamer's hands

8 Max Schönherr & Karl Reinöhl, *Das Jahrhundert des Walzers, I.Band, Johann Strauss Vater, Ein Werkverzeichnis,* Universal Edition, London, 1954.
9 Heinrich Eduard Jacob, *Johann Strauss, A Century of Light Music, (translated by Marguerite Wolff),* Hutchinson & Co, London, 1940, p. 78.
10 Belgian violin virtuoso Charles Auguste de Bériot (1802 –1870) left behind concert etudes and various other educational works for violin instruction, in addition to the 10 violin concertos.

into a melodically developed, lyrical structure, incorporating minor-key passages and musical experimentation. Although he had a cheerful and outgoing personality, his works are often dominated by a melancholy atmosphere due to these minor passages.



Lithographies by Viennese artist Josef Nikolaus Kriehuber (1800-1876) of Johann Strauss (left, 1835) and Joseph Lanner (right, 1830).

Lanner was also a shrewd businessman who knew how to promote himself to a wide audience. He toured the Austro-Hungarian Empire with his orchestra and went to Italy for the coronation of Ferdinand I in Milan. Ahmed Fethi Paşa was also in Milan for this ceremony and represented the Ottoman state. Lanner worked as the musical director of the Hofburg Palace Redoutensäle (from 1829), the conductor of the open-air concert programs in the Volksgarten (from 1831) and the conductor of the Vienna 2nd Regiment Band (from 1833). Lanner died of typhoid fever in 1843, at the age of only 42, at the peak of his artistic career. He left behind over 200 compositions, including many waltzes. The best known of these are the *Pesther Waltz,* the *Hofballtänze Waltz, Die Werber Waltz, Die Romantiker Waltz* and *Die Schönbrunner Waltz*. There is an excerpt from this last work that makes an appearance in the famous ballet music *Petrushka,* composed by Igor Stravinsky in 1911.

Even though they were professional rivals, Lanner and Strauss remained friends until Lanner's death. They never forgot their impoverished youth, when they became close friends, sharing a room and even the same shirt at times.

Ahmed Fethi Paşa

Ahmed Fethi Paşa, a 19th century Ottoman soldier and statesman, was born in the Eyüp district of İstanbul in 1801, the same year as Josef Lanner. He is known as *Rodosizade* because his family came from Rhodes, and also as *Damat* (Bridegroom) because he married Atiye Sultan, the daughter of Sultan Mahmud II.

As the son-in-law of Sultan Mahmud II and brother-in-law and friend of Mahmud's son Sultan Abdülmecid, Ahmed Fethi Paşa gained great influence and wealth. Consequently, he made many friends but also many enemies.

He had his name attached to several firsts in Ottoman history. He founded the porcelain factory in Beykoz and created the quarantine centers as protection from the rampant pandemic diseases of the time. He owned the Pembe Yalı in Kuzguncuk, İstanbul and also owned Sedef Island, one

of the nine Princes' Islands in the Sea of Marmara. He took part in many enterprises, from laying the foundations of the first Ottoman museum to *çeşm-i bülbül* (traditional opaque, twist-patterned glassware) production, from the decoration of the Dolmabahçe Palace to the operation of the passenger ferries in the Golden Horn. He served as the field marshal of Tophane for many years. In the summer of 1838, he was sent for an audience with Pope Gregory XVI at the Vatican and became the first Ottoman statesman to meet with the Pope.

Ahmed Fethi Paşa traveled around Europe in various capacities during the decline period of the empire. He served as the Ottoman ambassador or official representative in Austria, France, England and Russia.

He died in İstanbul in 1858 and is buried in the garden of the Mahmud II Tomb in Divanyolu. Reporting the death of Ahmed Fethi Paşa, *The Times* newspaper stated that the cause of death was heart failure, which he had been suffering from for some time.[11]

Strauss' Ball-Racketen Waltz

The *Ballroom Fireworks* waltz, which Strauss dedicated to Ahmed Fethi Paşa, is also known as *Ball-Racketen*, *Raketen*, and sometimes *Ball-Raketen*. A literal English translation would be "Ball Rockets." Composed in 1837, during Ahmed Fethi Paşa's tenure as the Ottoman ambassador to Vienna, it was first performed publicly at the Dommayer Casino in Vienna on June 26, 1837. The work appears in the catalog of new music from the publishing house of Tobias Haslinger in the 21 August 1837 issue of the *Wiener Zeitung* newspaper. The original score is kept in the Vienna City Library (Wiener Stadtbibliothek). According to Schönherr and Reinöhl:

> "In the summer of 1837, there were more rainy days than sunny days, but fortunately Strauss's open-air festival, *Rendezvous at the Temple of Night* (Stell' Dich ein im Temple der Nacht), fell on a sunny evening. Since all of Vienna wanted to watch the fireworks display accompanied by a waltz by Strauss-Stuwer, the halls of the Dommayer Casino were too small for this show. Fireworks were a magic word in Vienna. Strauss challenged the previously popular fireworks displays on water with his own pyrotechnic display. This project was very successful; at the end of the waltz, the cannon fire with applause was added to the cannon fire with music.
>
> Ahmed Fethi Paşa, to whom Strauss dedicated the work, is one of the most notable figures of Viennese society. Ahmed Fethi Paşa represented the Ottoman Empire as the ambassador to Vienna and was one of the Sultan's trusted pashas. He gave a ball at the embassy residence on January 22, 1837. Strauss was responsible for the music at this ball. Among the guests were Archduke Franz Karl and some other members of the royal family. The host Paşa opened the evening by dancing the first dance with Princess Luise von Vasa. The princess had arrived accompanied by her husband, who was a member of the royal family. A portrait of Sultan Mahmud II, decorated with flowers and lit by candles, was a striking sight in one room of the residence." [12]

11 *The Times,* 2 March 1858.
12 Max Schönherr & Karl Reinöhl, p. 148.



[6875] **Johann Strauß,** [1]

Capellmeister, gibt sich die Ehre den hohen Adel und das geehrte Publicum zu einer außergewöhnlichen Festunterhaltung mit Ball, unter der Benennung:

Das Stell' dich ein

im Tempel der Nacht,

ergebenst einzuladen, welche er Montag den 26. Junius 1837 in Dommayers Casino in Hitzing zu geben beabsichtiget.
Näheres enthält der Anschlagzettel.

The announcement of "*Rendezvous at the Temple of Night*" themed concert in which Johann Strauss Senior's Ball-Racketen Waltz was first performed for the public, *Wiener Zeitung*, 21 June 1837.

Franz Karl mentioned in the news was the father of both Franz Joseph I, Emperor of Austria from 1848 to 1916, and Maximilian I, who was briefly the Emperor of Mexico until his execution by the Mexican Republic in 1867. Franz Karl was the grandfather of Franz Ferdinand, whose assassination is taken to be one of the reasons for the start of World War I. In 1837, his brother Ferdinand I was on the throne of Austria. Princess Luise von Vasa mentioned (1811-1854) was Louise Amelie of Baden, a cousin of Prince Gustav of Vasa who was the son of King Gustav Adolf IV of Sweden. After Prince Gustav of Vasa married his first cousin Louise Amelie, the couple lived in the Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna for political reasons.

Thomas Aigner writes the following about the dedication of *Ball-Racketen*:

> "It came with a dedication to Ahmed Fethi Paşa, the Imperial Ottoman ambassador in Vienna: Strauss had performed the music at one of his balls in January 1837, shortly after returning from his tour of Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium." [13]

In other words, Strauss performed his *Ball-Racketen* for the guests at the ball given by Ahmed Fethi Paşa on January 22, 1837, before playing it for the public at the Dommayer Casino on June 27, 1837.



Princess Luise von Vasa (1811-1854) (Louise Amelie of Baden) with whom Ahmed Fethi Paşa danced the first dance at his ball in Vienna on January 22, 1837. Engraving: Josef Nikolaus Kriehuber.

13 Thomas Aigner, Walzer, Op. 96 (Ball Rockets), Naxos, 8.225287 - STRAUSS I, J.: Edition - Vol. 11.

In the introduction of *Ball-Racketen,* three fireworks are launched by the beat of the bass drum following three measures in unison. The small stars sprinkled in the night sky are scattered down to earth by the flute, clarinet and bassoon. Then Strauss uses a pizzicato passage to five waltzes, each waltz painting a different scene. The titles are: *Rendezvous* (Stelldichein), *Delights of the Countryside* (Ländliche Freuden), *Love Starlets* (Liebes-Sternchen), *Sparkling Joy of the Dance* (Sprühende Tanzlust), *Forget-me-not* (Vergis mein nicht). The coda of *Ball-Racketen* brings together the important ideas of the work. The themes of the waltzes are treated one by one in a different order and in different tonalities. The fireworks light up the sky with the bass drum beats and the piccolo ornaments, accompanied by the whole orchestra.[14]


Comme
Souvenir de Vienne
à Son Excellence
ACHMED FETHI PASCHA
Général de Division des Gardes du Grand-Seignr.
et Ambassadeur extraordinaire d'Empire Ottoman
par
Jean Strauß
maître de chapelle.
T.H. 7351.

Dedication page of the piano version of Johann Strauss' waltz Ball-Racketen published by T. Haslinger in Vienna in 1837. Strauss used the Frenchified version of his name Jean.


[1756] Ankünd. Nr. 847. [1]
Im Verlage der k. k. Hof- u. priv. Kunst- und Musikalienhandlung
des Tobias Haslinger
in Wien, am Graben, im Eden v. Trattnern'schen Freyhofe Nr. 618,
sind ganz neu erschienen,
und auch in allen Musikalienhandlungen des In- und Auslandes zu haben:
Ball-Racketen-Walzer
von
Johann Strauß.
96stes Werk.
in C. M.
Für das Pianoforte allein . . . fl. 45 kr.
Für das Pianoforte zu 4 Händen . . 1 » 15 »
Für Violine und Pianoforte . . . — » 45 »
Für 3 Violinen und Baß . . . 1 » — »
in C. M.
Für die Guitare allein . . . fl. 30 kr.
Für die Flöte allein . . . — » 15 »
Für den Eskaon . . . — » 15 »
Für das ganze Orchester . . . 3 » — »

The first announcement of the sheet music for the Ball-Racketen waltz that appeared in the 21 August 1837 issue of the *Wiener Zeitung*.

14 Max Schönherr & Karl Reinöhl, p. 146.

On the recordings of *Ball-Racketen*

There is a recording of the solo piano version of *Ball-Racketen* made by Aydın Karlıbel in 2002.[15] The version for orchestra is available as a recording by the Slovak Sinfonietta Žilina conducted by Christian Pollack.[16]

Die Osmanen waltz by Lanner

Ahmed Fethi Paşa was in Paris in 1839 when Josef Lanner composed his *Die Osmanen.* The first public presentation of *Die Osmanen* was at the *Splendor of the East* festival held at the Golden Birn in Vienna on July 8, 1839. Otto Brusati provides the following information about this festival:

> "Lanner organized a big festival in Golden Birn on the evening of July 8, 1839 which was publicized as *The Splendor of the East.* For this reason, the whole place was decorated with the theme of 'Eastern world': there was a magnificent panoramic view of a mosque at the entrance. The 75-meter-long path passing between the arches decorated with torches created a flood of light with the combination of red and white ornaments, lamps and flames that would make the ladies of the festival look most attractive. The waltz Opus 146 *Die Osmanen,* which Lanner composed specially for this festival, was greeted with a thunderous applause and repeated three times. In the introduction of the waltz, it is possible to hear the rhythms of Ottoman military music. Lanner here also uses a melody from the overture of the opera *Die Felsenmühle* by Karl Reissinger. Although this opera was never staged in Vienna, its overture was quite famous. Lanner dedicated the waltz to Ahmed Fethi Paşa, the ambassador of the Turkish Sultan. Paşa, a young and active member of the Viennese society, was among the guests of this festival. The cover of the first edition of the work includes words written in Arabic script. It is understood that the Orient, which has recently begun to attract the attention of both scientists and travelers, also influenced Lanner." [17]


[177] Großes [1]
Garten-Fest
mit Ball
bey außerordentlicher Beleuchtung und Decorirung
im Hotel
zur goldenen Birn,
unter der Bezeichnung:
Pracht des Orients,
welches auf Veranstaltung des Capellmeisters
Joseph Lanner,
Montag den 8. Julius d. J.
bey günstiger Witterung Statt findet.
Das Nähere enthält der große Anschlagzettel.

The premiere of Lanner's *Die Osmanen* waltz was made on 8 July 1839 in Vienna's Goldenen Birn hotel. The ad for that night's Splendor of the East-themed festival appeared in the *Wiener Zeitung*. Beethoven was a frequent customer of the Goldenen Birn's restaurant.

15 Aydın Karlıbel, *A Turkish Historical Album for Piano,* Kalan Music CD, 2002.
16 Slovak Sinfonietta Žilina, conductor Christian Pollack, *Johann Strauss I Edition, Vol. 11,* Marco Polo CD, 8.225287, 2008.
17 Otto Brusati & Isabella Sommer, *Joseph Lanner, Compositeur, Entertainer & Musikgenie,* Böhlau Verlag, Vienna, 2001, p. 151.

Die Osmanen was first published by the Pietro Mechetti company. Known by the nickname "Carlo", Mechetti (1777-1850) was the owner of one of Vienna's largest music publishing houses, like Haslinger. Founded in 1798, the company made its name by publishing the first editions of works by composers such as Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Schubert, and Strauss.

The dedication on the cover of *Die Osmanen* that Brusati mentions is in the form of a couplet in old Turkish: [18]

Namedür rağbet veren serverlere
Sikkedür halet veren sim-ü zere

These lines can be roughly translated into English as follows:

What's written of them makes leaders revered
Its hallmark is the reason gold is endeared.

Researcher Herbert Krenn gives the date of composition of *Die Osmanen* as the summer of 1839, and gives the date and place of the premiere as 9 July 1839 (Goldenen Birn), and the date of the publication's advertisement in the newspaper as October 12, 1839. [19]

The Osmanen consists of an Introduction, 5 Waltzes and a Finale. In the introduction and the 5th waltz, passages that resemble Turkish music are used. At the beginning and end of the piece, one can hear the drum sounds of a military band along with forte chords.



The cover of Joseph Lanner's *Die Osmanen* waltz dedicated to Ahmed Fethi Pasha published by Pietro 'Carlo' Mechetti in Vienna, 1839.

18 I would like to thank Dr. Selman Can for the reading of the text and its translation into Turkish.
19 Herbert Krenn, *"Lenz-Blüthen" Joseph Lanner, Sein Leben – sein Werk,* Böhlau Verlag, Vienna, 1994, p. 110-11.

On the recordings of Die Osmanen

In the *Gramophone* magazine of the 1970s, there are articles on Lanner's works that were recently recorded. However these do not properly examine the catalog of his works. The news and advertisements from Lanner's time are not consulted either. An early example is a record review in the November 1970 issue. The recording reviewed is *The Vienna Dances (Vienna Dances 1650-1850),* released by the *Classics for Pleasure* company under the number CFP149, and includes works by Mozart, Schubert, Schmelzer, Strauss, and Beethoven, as well as Lanner's *Die Osmanen*. Music critic W. A. Chislett wrote about this record and noted in his review that the date of composition of Lanner's *Die Osmanen* is unknown. [20] Andrew Lamb, another music critic and a contributor to various music encyclopedias, responded to Chislett as follows:

> "W. A. Chislett's statement that the date of composition of the work is unknown seems to be in error... In fact, the work was originally written for large orchestra, as was Lanner's custom. The fact that it bears the number Opus 146 also suggests that it was composed in 1839."[21]

Following this, R. W. Dyson responds to both authors by claiming that a large orchestra version of *Die Osmanen* was published later.[22]

Among its first publications were scores adapted for various musical instruments, including versions for full orchestra, piano, four-hand piano, violin and piano, three violins and double bass, solo flute, solo guitar, and full orchestra. The list of editions for various instruments is clearly noted in advertisements in the newspaper the *Wiener Zeitung*.

The Concerto Köln / Sarband group has included the 4th and 5th waltzes from *Die Osmanen* in their CD, which is a synthesis of East and West. [23] This recording includes the two waltzes for three violins and a double bass. There is also a recording of the entirety of *Die Osmanen,* performed by the quartet Das Wiener Solistenquartett for two violins, viola and a double bass. [24]

Other dedications

It is not known what Ahmed Fethi Paşa presented to Strauss and Lanner in appreciation of the compositions they dedicated to him.

Ahmed Fethi Paşa's extensive travels across Europe, the ease with which he moved among the continent's nobility and high society, and his considerable wealth make it plausible that other musicians of the time also dedicated works to him. However, there is no definitive information on this matter as yet.

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20 W. A. Chislett, *The Gramophone,* November 1970, p. 120.
21 Andrew M. Lamb, *The Gramophone,* December 1970, p. 168.
22 R. W. Dyson, *The Gramophone,* February 1971, p. 132.
23 Concerto Köln / Sarband, *The Waltz – Ecstasy and Mysticism,* Archiv Produktion, CD B0004765-02, 2004.
24 Das Wiener Solistenquartett in Originalbesetzung, *Josef Lanner und Johann Strauss,* Preiser Records, CD 90252, 1995.

Ahmed Fethi Paşa's foreign service

In an article he wrote on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the founding of Turkish museums, celebrated in 1996, Doğu Mermerci summarized the life of Ahmed Fethi Paşa based on the inscription on his grave, located in the cemetery of Mahmud II's tomb in İstanbul. In this article, one can find a detailed chronology of the state duties carried out by Ahmed Fethi Paşa.[25] According to Mermerci's biography, Ahmed Fethi Paşa served as the Ottoman State's temporary representative in Vienna as an ambassador in early 1834 for six months. He then returned to Vienna as an ambassador in early 1835 and attended the ceremony marking Ferdinand's accession to the throne. In late 1836, he returned to İstanbul via Moscow. The biography also notes that Ahmed Fethi Paşa represented the Ottoman Empire at the coronation of Queen Victoria of England before being appointed as the Ottoman Ambassador to Paris. In 1839, following the accession of Sultan Abdülmecid, he resigned from this position and returned to İstanbul

Sicill-i Osmanî, a fundamental work that includes the biographies of many individuals who left their mark on Ottoman history, also provides information about Ahmed Fethi Paşa. In particular, it is noted that Ahmed Fethi Paşa represented the Ottoman Empire in London during the coronation of the Queen of England on June 28, 1838.[26]

More significantly, we find the following words in the life story given in the inscription on Ahmed Fethi Paşa's tombstone itself:

> "He attended the coronation ceremony of the Queen of England on behalf of the Ottoman Empire and then proceeded to the Paris embassy."[27]

In Azmi Süslü's study on Ottoman ambassadors and the travelogues they wrote, the places and periods in which Ahmed Fethi Paşa served as ambassador are given as Austria 1835, Austria (for the second time) 1836, England 1838, and France 1838.[28] In his book *Osmanlı Sefirleri ve Sefaretnameler,* Faik Reşit Unat also lists the ambassadors sent to various countries by the Ottoman state, stating that Ahmed Fethi Paşa was appointed as ambassador to France in 1834 and again in 1835, and in his list of Turkish ambassadors sent to the government of Great Britain, he notes that Ahmed Fethi Paşa was sent to London in 1838 (as *Sefaret-i Mahsusa*) for the coronation of Queen Victoria. [29]

Most writings on Ahmed Fethi Paşa concur that he represented the Ottoman Empire at the Queen's coronation ceremony. Among the Turkish sources providing information in this regard are Tahsin Öz's 1949 article titled "Ahmet Fethi Paşa ve Müzeler",[30] the book by Mehmet Nermi Haskan titled *Yüzyıllar boyunca* Üsküdar,[31] the one by Eser Tutel titled *Gemiler...Süvariler...* İskeleler...[32]. From foreign sources, Wendy Shaw's *Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archaeology,*

25 Doğu Mermerci, *Türk Müzeciliğinin 150. Yılında Ahmed Fethi Paşa ve Bastırılan 150. Yıl Hatıra Madalyonları,* Türk Nümismatik Derneği Bülteni No. 35-36, İstanbul 1999, pp. 71-77.
26 Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî Osmanlı* Ünlüleri, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları 30, İstanbul, Mayıs 1996, Vol. 2, p. 522.
27 Doğu Mermerci, p. 71-77.
28 Azmi Süslü, Un *Aperçu sur les Ambassadeurs Ottomans et leurs Sefaretname*. A:Ü. Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi, Atatürk'ün 100.Doğum Yılına Armağan, XIV, 1983, From No. 25, p. 233-260.
29 Faik Reşit Unat, 1968, List XVI.
30 Tahsin Öz, "Ahmet Fethi Paşa ve Müzeler", *Türk Tarih, Arkeologya ve Etnografya Dergisi,* Milli Eğitim Basımevi, İstanbul, 1949, No. V, p. 4.
31 Mehmet Nermi Haskan, *Yüzyıllar boyunca Üsküdar,* Üsküdar Belediyesi Yayını, 2001, Vol.1, p. 195.
32 Eser Tutel, *Gemiler...Süvariler...* İskeleler..., İletişim Press, 1998, p. 176.

and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire,[33] Max Kortepeter's *The Ottoman Turks: Nomad Kingdom to World Empire,*[34] and Chris Hellier's *Splendors of İstanbul: Houses and Palaces Along the Bosporus*[35] are other examples.

We see that a number of independent sources assert that Ahmed Fethi Paşa represented the Ottoman Empire at the coronation of Queen Victoria in London. While it is true that Ahmed Fethi Paşa was sent to London as the representative of Mahmud II for the coronation ceremony, he actually did not attend the event. The actual Ottoman representative at the ceremony was the Ottoman ambassador to London at the time, Sârim İbrahim Paşa. The coronation took place on June 28, 1838. Ahmed Fethi Paşa arrived in London about a month and a half after the ceremony.

Queen Victoria's coronation

In early 1838, the excitement over the coronation of the young Queen gripped England. Victoria ascended to the throne at the age of 18, after the deaths of five of her relatives who had preceded her in the throne: her father, grandfather and three uncles. She reigned over England for 63 years, from 1837 to 1901. Victoria left behind an impression of a dour old widow who symbolized the conservative values of the middle class. But a livelier side of her is evident from the words she wrote in her diary after a party at her coronation festivities in 1838: "I danced until four o'clock in the morning..."

Victoria's coronation took place on 28 June 1838, exactly one year and eight days after her accession to the throne. The celebrations were officially opened with a ball held at the newly restored Buckingham Palace on 10 May 1838. The number of enthusiasts who came to London to watch the parade on the day of the young queen's coronation was over four hundred thousand. Before the coronation, London and its environs were the scene of concerts, balls and open-air parties for nearly a month. On the day of the ceremony, the skies resounded with the constant noise of cannon fire, bells ringing, people shouting and singing and musical groups performing. Thousands of people, including those who had camped out on the roads the night before, took to the streets to see the Queen's cortege.

The day began with the cannon salute at four in the morning. At ten, the cortege set off from Buckingham Palace. From 11 o'clock onwards, foreign dignitaries and ambassadors began to take their places in the boxes assigned to them in Westminster Abbey. Around noon, accompanied by her escort and eight maids of honor dressed in pure white, young Victoria entered Westminster Abbey. The ceremony lasted more than five hours.[36]

A comprehensive book written about Victoria in 1840 gave details of the procession from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey.[37] Statesmen and ambassadors were part of this procession. After the band and the cavalry, the carriages of the permanent ambassadors and statesmen in England followed. In the list of these statesmen we find Ahmed Fethi Paşa. The same list that names him as the Ottoman representative also appears in an American newspaper.[38] Additionally, in a collection of significant 19th-century news articles published as *Newspaper Reader*, he is again noted

33 Wendy M. K. Shaw, *Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archaeology, and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire,* Univ. of California Press, 2003, p. 48.
34 C. Max Kortepeter, *The Ottoman Turks: Nomad Kingdom to World Empire*, Isis Press, 1991, p. 313.
35 Chris Hellier, *Splendors of İstanbul: Houses and Palaces Along the Bosporus,* Abbeville Press, 1993, p. 100.
36 Sidney Lee, *Queen Victoria, A Biography*, The MacMillan Co., New York, 1903, p. 88.
37 Anonymous, *Personal Traits, and Characteristic Sketches of Victoria The First*, William Benett, London, 1840, p. 581-2.
38 *Extra Globe*, Washington D. C., 2 August 1838, p. 303.

as the Ottoman representative among the foreign statesmen who attended the Queen's coronation.[39] However this list is merely the formal order of the protocol that was planned in advance.

Ahmed Fethi Paşa misses the coronation

The information that Ahmed Fethi Paşa actually missed the ceremony is as follows:

> "The Sultan's extraordinary ambassador, Ahmed Fethi Paşa, could not take his place at the ceremony. Unfortunately, due to a serious health problem that arose while His Excellency was travelling to England, he was able to arrive on our shores much later than the coronation ceremony. The absence of the Paşa was a great disappointment, because the people expected his carriage, as the representative of the Eastern ruler, to be very different and extraordinarily ornate." [40]

We also find in the August 30, 1838 issue of *The Times newspaper* published in London a news item that Paşa could not attend the coronation ceremony because he was ill:

> "Ahmed Fethi Paşa was sent to the queen's coronation ceremony as the Sultan's representative, but he could not attend the ceremony due to his illness." [41]

Thus, it is confirmed by a second independent source that Ahmed Fethi Paşa was not present at the coronation ceremony.

Additionally, *Gentleman's Magazine*, published in London in August 1838, listed only the ambassador Sârim Efendi as the Ottoman representative among those who participated in the procession. [42]

When did Ahmed Fethi Paşa arrive in London?

According to Tahsin Öz's article, Ahmed Fethi Paşa also stopped in Rhodes on his journey to London.[43] Reports about him appeared across Europe, especially in London newspapers in 1838. These documented his movements, various activities during his stay in England, and the people he met there. *The Times* newspaper regularly communicated news about him during the period from June 1838 to September 1839:

> "[According to a report received from Rome on June 16, 1938] Ahmed Fethi Paşa set off for Florence yesterday." *The Times,* June 30, 1838.
>
> "His Excellency Ahmed Fethi Paşa, the extraordinary ambassador of the Sultan, arrived at the Turkish embassy in Regent's Park yesterday evening, accompanied by the first secretary Sami Bey and the second interpreter Arakel Dadian." *The Times,* 21 August 1838.
>
> "Turkey's extraordinary ambassador Ahmed Fethi Paşa, accompanied by the first secretary Sami Efendi and the translator Arakel Dadian, was presented to the Minister

39 H. F. Bussey ve T. Wilson Reid, "Coronation of her Majesty Queen Victoria", *The Newspaper Reader*, Blackie & Son, London, 1879, p. 167-175.
40 Anonymous, 1840, p. 583.
41 *The Times*, 30 August 1838, p. 4.
42 *Gentleman's Magazine*, "Coronation", August 1838, London, p. 189.
43 Tahsin Öz, 1949, p. 4.

> of Foreign Affairs Viscount Palmerston by Sârim Efendi yesterday afternoon." *The Times,* 23 August 1838.
>
> "His Excellency Ahmed Fethi Paşa, the extraordinary ambassador of the Ottoman state, set out from the residence of the Turkish ambassador in Regent's Park to the castle with his entourage yesterday morning [29 August 1838] to be presented to the queen at Windsor... Among those who will attend the banquet to be given by the queen on the evening of 29 August are the French ambassador Sébastiani and his wife, Sârim Efendi, the Turkish ambassador His Excellency Ahmed Fethi Paşa and Viscount Palmerston." *The Times,* 30 August 1838.

What emerges from these reports is that Ahmed Fethi Paşa arrived in London in mid-August 1838. He arrived at the embassy in London on 20 August, was presented to British Foreign Minister Palmerston by Sârim Paşa on 22 August, and was presented to Queen Victoria herself on 30 August 1838.

Sârim İbrahim Paşa and the coronation ceremony

According to *Sicill-i Osmanî,* Sârim İbrahim Paşa was born in 1801. He was the Ottoman Ambassador to London twice: first in September 1837 and again in November 1844. In October 1845, he was appointed Ambassador to Paris. He served as the president of the Meclis-i-I Vâlâ and as the grand vizier in 1848. He died in 1854.[44]

Before Queen Victoria's coronation ceremony, the Ottoman statesman who conveyed Mahmud II's congratulations on her accession to the throne was also Sârim İbrahim Paşa. According to a news report from Buckingham Palace published in the *London Gazette* on December 13, 1837, the Ottoman permanent ambassador İbrahim Sârim Efendi, visited Queen Victoria on December 11, 1837. During this visit, he presented the queen with a letter containing the Ottoman Sultan's congratulations on her accession to the throne.

Sârim İbrahim Paşa was awestruck by the splendor of the coronation. *The New Yorker* magazine's 1838 coverage of the ceremony detailed the attire of the representatives and ambassadors who occupied their assigned seats in Westminster Abbey. The report highlighted the elegance of the French representative, Duke of Dalmatia Marshal Soult, and noted that the Austrian ambassador Prince Esterházy was admired for his uniform adorned with diamonds. The report also described the Ottoman ambassador Sârim İbrahim Paşa, who took his designated place in Westminster Abbey:

> "When the Turkish ambassador arrived, he was so amazed by the magnificent view around him that he didn't know what to do. He looked around as if speechless for several minutes until he was told that he had to sit down." [45]

Sârim İbrahim Paşa's admiration for the opulence he observed at Westminster Abbey on June 28, 1838, was noted in several other sources as well.[46]

Even though he did not make it to Queen Victoria's coronation ceremony, Ahmed Fethi Paşa was well-known and respected in the capitals and aristocratic circles of Europe, to the extent that two of the giants of Viennese music at the time, Johann Strauss I and Josef Lanner, both dedicated waltzes to him.

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44 Mehmed Süreyya, August 1996, Vol. 5, p. 1482.
45 *The New Yorker*, 28 July 1838, Vol. V, No. 19, p. 299.
46 John McGilchrist, *The Public Life of Queen Victoria*, Cassell, Petter and Galpin, London, 1869, p. 79.

Notes

This article is essentially a synthesis and English translation of my previous research on Ahmed Fethi Paşa, conducted over the course of several years and originally published in Turkish.

The music dedicated to him by Johann Strauss I and Josef Lanner was studied in depth in "Strauss ve Lanner'in Fethi Ahmet Paşa'ya İthaf Ettiği Valsler," *Sanat Dünyamız*, No. 118, September 2010, pp. 14-24.

Misconceptions about Ahmed Fethi Paşa and the coronation of Queen Victoria were addressed in the 2011 article "Kraliçe Victoria'nın Taç Giyme Töreni ve Fethi Ahmed Paşa," *Toplumsal Tarih*, No. 211, July 2011, pp. 68-72.

The music scores of *Ball-Racketen* and *Die Osmanen* for solo piano are given at the end of my book *Müzisyen Strausslar ve Osmanlı Hanedanı*, Yapı Kredi Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, İstanbul, September 2012. The scores of the works by the Strausses mentioned at the beginning of this article can also be found there.

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[1] Ömer Eğecioğlu, *Sultan Abdülmecid ve J. Strauss*, Musiki Magazine, No. 474 (Special Issue). March 2006, pp. 6-37.

[2] Ömer Eğecioğlu, *E. Strauss'un Sultan Abdülaziz'e Ithaf Ettiği Beste*, Musiki Magazine, No. 477, December 2006, pp. 2-17.

[3] Ömer Eğecioğlu, *Doğu Masalları: Johann Strauss'un Sultan II. Abdülhamid'e İthafen Yazdığı Vals*, Sanat Dünyamız, No. 108, Fall 2008, pp. 12-25.

Hans Fantel, *Johann Strauss, Father and Son, and Their Era*, David & Charles, 1971, p. 32.

Carl Maria von Weber originally composed *Invitation to the Dance* for solo piano.

Peter Gammond and Andrew Lamb, "*Waltz*", *The Oxford Companion to Music*, Alison Latham (ed.), Oxford University Press, 2002.

Hans Fantel, p. 36.

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Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Library

Across Centuries and Sea



John Robert Barnes is a scholar of Ottoman and Near Eastern history. He holds a BA in Arts from Stanford University, an MA in History from New York University, and a PhD in History from the University of California, Los Angeles. Dr. Barnes' research spans the historical and legal development of religious foundations in Islam and the Ottoman Empire, the origins of Turkish Sufism, and Bektashi and Alevi rituals. His work also explores the history of Ottoman Rhodes, nineteenth-century Ottoman intellectuals on the island, the *tekke* and cemetery of Murad Reis, Ottoman epigraphy in the cemeteries of Murad Reis and Gani Ahmed, and the classificatory headings and catalogues of the Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library.
He has published extensively on Ottoman history, including his landmark book, *An Introduction to Religious Foundations in the Ottoman Empire* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986); "Murad Reis Tekkesi (Rodos)," in Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, ed., *Osmanlı Toplumunda Tasavvuf ve Sufiler*, 2nd ed. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2014), pp. 375–408 [1st ed. 2005]; "Some Cases of Mistaken Identity in the Ottoman Epigraphy of Murad Reis on Rhodes," in *σοφία άδολος*: Studies in Honor of Ioannis Papachristodoulou (Archaeological Institute of Aegean Studies, Rhodes, 2014), pp. 233–57; and 'Σχόλια γύρω από την ιστορία του Καστελλορίζου με αφορμή την Οθωμανική *Ιστορία της Νήσου Μέις* του Χαμπιμπζαντέ Αχμέντ Κεμάλ' [Comments on the History of Kastellorizo in Light of *A History of the Island of Meis* by Habibzade Ahmed Kemal], *Δωδεκανησιακά Χρονικά*, vol. 23 (Rhodes, 2010), pp. 62–84.

"My association with the Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Library began in 1997, when Elias Kollias, then director of the Ephorate of Antiquities, invited me to translate its original catalogue from Ottoman Turkish into English. At the time, Dr. Kollias imagined that the task would require no more than a month. Were he alive today, he would, I suspect, be surprised—if not appaled—to learn that the project has now extended over three decades.

The reasons for this protracted endeavor lie in the nature of the original catalogue itself. Abbreviations are frequently used for the names of authors and titles of works, but these are of little help in securely identifying either. Moreover, the catalogue provides no account of the twenty-five classificatory headings, most of them being Islamic sciences, into which the library's holdings are divided, nor does it offer biographical information on the scholars whose works defined the sciences. It soon became clear that the project could not remain a mere inventory of books. Rather, it had to evolve into a broader undertaking: a historical survey of the Islamic sciences, a biographical study of their authors, and a contextual discussion of the Prophet Muhammad, the Kur'ān, and the formative period of Islam.

In this light, an almost thirty-year effort for what was once thought to be a one-month task is perhaps not as implausible as it may seem. The British historian Arnold Toynbee confronted a similar experience: what began as a modest set of notes eventually grew into his monumental 'A Study of History', a multi-volume work that took him three decades to complete and expanded into nothing less than a history of the world.

At the close of my own study of the library, I was fortunate enough to be introduced to Tarık Tüten, the representative (mütevelli vekili) of the administrator (mütevelli) of the library's pious foundation. Tarık has been an unfailing source of patience and support, particularly as I have contended with a debilitating illness. His encouragement has extended well beyond friendship: he has been an ardent advocate of my research on the library and on the history of Ottoman Rhodes, and he has shown himself to be a first-rate scholar through his involvement in the field of Ottoman studies and in the publication of this volume."

John Robert Barnes

The Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library*

Due to a theft from the Library of two valuable Kur'ān̄s in 1990 and their sale at Sotheby's auction house in London, while they were subsequently recovered through Interpol, there was a concern for the creation of a catalogue that would be comprehensible either in English or Greek that would make every volume in the Library easily identifiable. Having someone with a knowledge of Ottoman translate the catalogues was found to be expedient since employing a team of specialists in Near Eastern bibliography examine and record each of the 828 volumes would have been labor-intensive and time consuming, not to mention expensive. The Ottoman catalogues were not of much use to Ephorate officials for they presented a problem on two counts. First the inventory found in the vakfiye of Hafız Ahmed Ağa, in the first *1795 Catalogue*[1a], and in the two 1923 catalogues were written in Ottoman in the Arabic script. And while the *1995 Catalogue* was written in transliterated Ottoman in modern Turkish using the Latin script, the titles of the volumes are the same abbreviated descriptive titles given in all previous catalogues in Ottoman and on the spines of the cartons housing the volumes. These brief entries are not the actual full titles of given works, nor do they provide the full names of the authors. Needless to say, repeating this shorthand in yet another catalogue would be of little value in identifying a work or its author. In spite of the significant contribution their inventory has provided for the Library, the catalogue compiled in 1995 by Hüsnü Özer and Ali Çakır from the General Directorate of Religious Foundations in Ankara remains for the specialist.

A problem then of all the catalogue entries, with the exception of the 2010 *Resimli Katalog*[1b] and the present catalogue, is that they are written in a kind of shorthand which in its brevity is meant to

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* The present study was undertaken at the request of the Fourth Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities on Rhodes, presently styled the Ephorate of Antiquities of the Dodecanese, a department of the Greek Ministry of Culture responsible for the historical, archaeological and architectural monuments of the Dodecanese islands. It was originally published in Greek in *Δωδεκανησιακά Χρονικά*, περιοδική επιστημονική έκδοση της Στέγη Γραμμάτων και Τεχνών Δωδεκανήσου, Τόμος ΚΣΤ' (Rhodes 2014), 333-90 and Τόμος ΚΖ' (Rhodes 2017), 963-1043. The article in this volume is an abbreviated version and the first publication in English.

[1a] The original leatherbound catalogue of the Hafız Ahmed Ağa collection placed in his library is undated. In a supplement to Prof. Ettore Rossi's article on the Ottoman siege and conquest of Rhodes, he has written an addendum on the Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library, which he visited in 1924. On p. 58 he makes the notation that while the catalogue is undated, it does bear the seal of the founder, Hafız Ahmed Ağa, and provides the date at the bottom of the seal which is 1207 in the Islamic calendar beginning the 19th of August 1795. This leads the reader to infer that the date of the catalogue is the Gregorian calendar date 1795 anno domini. However, the Islamic date of 1207 is not the equivalent of the year 1795; it corresponds to the Christian calendar date of 1792-3, the date when the Library was established according to vakfiye pious foundation deeds of Hafiz Ahmed Ağa relating to the founding of the Library. How a meticulous scholar such as Ettore Rossi failed to notice this egregious error and allowed it to go into print is beyond comprehension. An inscription in stone (levha) over the entrance to the library complex has the foundation date of 1208, not 1207, due to the fact that the buildings and library personnel were created as pious endowments by a series of vakfiye attachments which had been added as supplements to an original vakfiye deed creating vakıf property in Smyrna as a source of revenue for various pious foundations Hafız Ahmed Ağa had established there. See Ettore Rossi, *Assedio e Conquista di Rodi nel 1522, Secondo le Relazioni Edite ed Inedite dei Turchi, Con una notizia sulla Biblioteca Hafiz di Rodi* (Roma: Libreria di Scienze e Lettere del Dott. G. Bardi, 1927), p. 58.

[1b] *Resimli Katalog* (Photographic Catalogue) is an abbreviated title used throughout this study for *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafız Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi Yazma Eserler Kataloğu* (A Catalogue of Manuscript Works in the Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library, a Part of the Fethi Paşa Religious Foundation on Rhodes), Editors Bekir Şahin and Faruk Ağartan, with the Assistance of Mikail Bayram and Mehmed Tığlıoğlu, Konya 2010. The study is authoritative and is a state of the art production for the original collection of 828 volumes that Hafız Ahmed Ağa placed in his library and some 1200 volumes that have come to the Library as pious donations over time.

be descriptive; the titles are intended to be instantly recognizable; and while they are, they remain intelligible only to the adept. For anyone not intimately acquainted with the material, however, they are not at all helpful for they presuppose a considerable knowledge about the title and author on the part of the reader.

By way of explanation, take for example the title written in the vakfiye, the first *1795 Catalogue*, the two 1923 catalogues, and the *1995 Catalogue*. The title is, briefly, *Hafidî ale'l-Muhtasar*. What, exactly, does this mean? In point of fact, it means a good deal as there is a wealth of information that lies behind this short entry. To begin with, it should be noted that the lâkab Hafidî is not particularly self-evident; it is not at once apparent that Hafidî is a by-name for Saifaddīn Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad Sa'daddīn *Ḥafīd at-Taftāzānī* al-Herewī, who died in either 906/1500 or in 916/1510. Ḥafīd at-Taftāzānī wrote a gloss (*ḥāshiya*) entitled *Sharḥ ash-sharḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* on the second interwoven commentary (*sharḥ*) by yet another scholar named at-Taftāzānī, specifically *Sa'daddīn* Mas'ūd b. 'Umar *at-Taftāzānī* (d. 791/1389), whose commentary is entitled *Mukhtaṣar al-Ma'ānī*. This work is a commentary on the abridgement by Muḥammad b. 'Abd ar-Rahmān al-Kazwīnī, Khaṭīb Dimashk entitled *Talkhīs al-Miftāḥ*, which is a synopsis of the third part of a comprehensive study on rhetoric known as the *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm* by Sirādjaddīn as-Sakkākī (d. 626/1229).

None of this information, obviously, is evident from the abbreviated title. The entry provided in the 2010 *Resimli Katalog* (Kayıt no. 12, p. 533) certainly fares better as it is more informative. The authors have provided the following: Hâşiye ale'l-Muhtaşarı'l-Meani by Hafid at-Taftazani Seyfeddîn Ahmed b. Yahya el-Herevî (d. 916/1510). Here it is clear that the work is by Ḥafīd at-Taftāzānī and that it is a gloss (*ḥāşiye*) on a commentary (*şerh*) entitled Muhtaşarı'l-Meani, although it is rather doubtful that any reader who is not an adept in the Islamic sciences would be able to get much farther beyond that. For the full names of authors and the complete titles of works, the authors of the *Resimli Katalog* appear to have relied upon the *Keşf el-Zunun* of Kâtib Çelebi, which is given in their bibliography.

For anyone not well-versed in the Islamic sciences, it would not be possible to follow the trail of commentary that leads back to the original source. Fortunately, the existence of Brockelmann's *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* makes this reconstruction possible. Apart from providing an entry on Ḥafīd at-Taftāzānī in the second volume of his study, Brockelmann fully enumerates the commentaries and glosses in his entry on as-Sakkākī in volume I. The pertinent information regarding the gloss by Ḥafīd at-Taftāzānī is found in the GAL in GI 294, whıch is presented as follows:

GI 294. Sirādjaddīn a. Ya'qūb Yū. b. a. Bakr b. M. b. 'A. *as-Sakkākī*, geboren 555/1160 in Khwārizm, starb in Qaryat al-Kindī bei Ma'lī i.J. 626/1229. I. *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm* in 3 Teilen: I. *'Ilm aṣ-ṣarf*, 2. *'Ilm an-naḥw*, 3. *'Ilm al-ma'ānī wal-bayān*. After listing the numerous commentaries on the third part of the *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm*, Brockelmann then presents various synopses of the *Miftāḥ*, followed by an abridgement of the third part, *'Ilm al-ma'ānī wal-bayān*: Auszüge aus dem 3 Teil: I. *Talkhīs al-Miftāḥ* v. Djamāladdīn M. b. 'Ar. al-Qazwīnī Khaṭīb Dimashq, gest. 739/1338. This is followed by numerous commentaries on the abridgement by al-Qazwīnī. Included among them are two commentaries by at-Taftāzānī (gest. 791/1389), followed by a number of glosses. The first commentary (A.) is entitled *ash-Sharḥ al-Muṭauwal*, while at-Taftāzānī's second interwoven commentary (B.) is entitled *ash-Sharḥ al-Mukhtaṣar*. This second commentary has given rise to a number of glosses. Among them is that of the author in question, which is presented as the second entry: Glossen: –b. v. A. b. M. b. Ya. b. M. al-Herewī *Ḥafīd at-Taftāzānī*, gest 916/1510 (GII 218).

In addition, Brockelmann provides a separate entry for Ḥafīd at-Taftāzānī in the second volume of his study (GII 218). Although his biography of the author is brief, it is nevertheless informative in identifying who he was and how he died. Ḥafīd at-Taftāzānī followed his father in becoming Shaikh al-Islām in Herāt. He was executed by the command of Ismā'īl, the founder of the Shi'ite Ṣafawid dynasty in Iran: GAL GII 218: Saifaddīn A. b. Ya. b. M. Sa'daddīn *Ḥafīd at-Taftāzānī* al-Herewī folgte seinem Vater als Shaikh al-Islām in Herāt und wurde im Ram. 916/Dez. 1510 auf Befehl des Ṣafawiden Ism. hingerichtet (n.a. 906/1500). –5. *Sharḥ ash-sharḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* I, 355.

As the majority of the volumes in the Library are in Arabic and comprise renowned works by celebrated authors, for the present study recourse was to the most authoritative and complete reference work for Arabic titles and authors, Carl Brockelmann's *Geshichte der arabischen Literatur*. This has been followed by reference to Bursalı Mehmed Tahir's *Osmanlı Müellifleri* (Biographies of Ottoman Authors), and Mehmed Süreyya's Sicill-i Osmânî (An Ottoman Biographical Dictionary). Other reference works that were consulted are the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, both first and second editions, the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi* in Turkish, the TDV *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, which is Online, and the *Türk Ansiklopedisi*. It should be noted that not all of the authors and titles of the volumes in the Library were found in these reference works. Corrections and additions of titles and authors have been supplied by the 2010 *Resimli Katalog*. Another concern was to make the Islamic sciences comprehensible in English to the non-specialist by providing an introduction to each category. A perceived need for those unacquainted with the authors or the titles was to offer the reader a brief biography of the author which would explain why this person achieved enduring renown in his particular field or in a variety of fields in the Islamic sciences.

The present system of enumerating the volumes is to provide a running list of works that continues through all categories including Kur'an, sciences and literature. Thus, if the number of books in the Kur'ān category is six, the Tafsīr category that follows begins with the number 7, not with the number 1. This continuous numbering that runs through all the categories is called the *sıra numarası* in the 1923 catalogues and in the *1995 Catalogue*. After the numbering that represents the running list, there is the numbering system that corresponds to the books within a given category of the sciences. The first book in any category begins with the number 1 and continues to the end of the books in that category. Within the Kur'ānic Commentary category of Tafsīr, for example, the volumes are enumerated 1 through 72. In the two 1923 catalogues this numbering of volumes within a category is known as the *vakıf numarası*.

It should be noted that this double listing of continuous numbering and enumerating books within a category was first employed in the two 1923 catalogues, inventories which have been designated by their author Hafız Celaleddin Müftizade as *Fihrist* and *Evkaf Dairesi*. This method of double enumeration was not used for the *vakfiye* listing nor the first *1795 Catalogue*; in fact, these first inventories have no numeration system at all. The authors of the *1995 Catalogue* have used a *sıra numerası*, a single continuous numbering throughout the categories. The double numbering system has been employed again in the 2010 *Resimli Katalogue* and is used here in the present catalogue.

The kind of information provided about the books in the vakfiye and *1795 Catalogue* is virtually identical. In the *vakfiye* listing, for each volume there is a description in Ottoman in the Arabic alphabet of the type of script, the color of the cover of the volume, the number of lines per page, the number of pages, the name of the author (at times), and an abbreviated title of the volume in a unbroken, extremely dense, and continuous series of works divided only by the expression *ve def'a* (and again) or by *ve yine* (and moreover; and again), and by the introduction of the next category of science. For example, in the Tafsīr category the first, second and third entries appear as the following: *ve* arab hattile cild-i ahmer kırk üç satır ve beşyüz doksan dört kağıdlı tefsir-i kurtubi'nin cild-i evveli *ve kütüb-i tefasirden* nefis nesih hattile cild-i ahmer yirmi beş satır ve beş yüz yedi kağıdlı bir cild tefsir-i allametü'l-beyzavi *ve yine* müzeyyen nesih hattile cild-i esved kırk yedi satır ve sekiz yüz yetmiş beş kağıdlı bir cild kadi üzerine haşiye-i şeyhzade.[2]

2 *And moreover,* in the arab script, with a red cover, 43 lines to the page and 594 leaves, volume I of the Kur'ānic commentary by al-Kurṭubī, *and from the books on Tefasir*, in the nesih script, with a red cover, 25 lines to the page and 507 leaves, one volume of the Kur'ānic commentary by the learned al-Baiḍāwī, *and again*, in the nesih script, with a black cover, 47 lines to the page and 875 leaves, an illuminated volume of a gloss by Shaikhzāde on the

In dealing with the vakfiye entries, copying out this extensive and closely compacted list of works can be more than a little taxing, and the monotony of the activity itself has proven to make transcribing by the recorder repeatedly error-prone in an attempt to follow accurately the entries in proper sequence. The problem of following the miniscule script in Arabic orthography is rendered all the more difficult by the complete lack of any punctuation or capitalization of proper nouns, and disregard for any space separation between entries. A bibliographer would fare better in dealing with the first *1795 Catalogue*, which inscribes the details of each entry in the novel shape of an inverted triangle with an average of only ten to twelve entries per page. Unlike the dense vakfiye listing, there is considerable space around and between entries. Naturally by comparison this style of presenting the contents of the collection makes for relatively easy reading.

The first catalogue of the Hafız Ahmed Ağa collection has been dated to the year 1795, although there is no specific date when it was compiled in its pages. The date 1795 is suggested here, which was not long after the vakfiye list was written in 1792-3, although the first catalogue may have been compiled as early as 1793. This catalogue has a number of blank pages between each category. The reason for this is not entirely clear since there should not have been additional entries to the founder's collection—unless he or his descendants were to have made them. But there are no additional works in any of the categories by Hafız Ahmed Ağa, or by his son Ahmed Fethi Paşa. The spaces may have been reserved for comments regarding the existing corpus of books, but it is impossible to say. Some pages do have entries of books bequeathed by donors at various times, but they are spare.

For the sake of brevity and simplicity, the first 1923 catalogue is designated as 1923 *Fihrist* (List), since that is the title written on the cover of this register. It was compiled remarkably within a month's time in cemaziyelâhır 1341/January 1923 by Hâfız Mehmed Celâleddîn Müftizâde Efendi, a scholar from the island of Limni (Lemnos). Mehmed Celaleddin had originally come to Rhodes simply for a change of air (*tebdil-i hava*), but chose to occupy himself during his stay on the island by making gratis a record of the original collection of the Library. The inscription on the outside cover informs the reader that the *Fihrist* was compiled during the time when Hoca Mahmud Efendi was acting as head librarian.

The second catalogue was recorded at the same time and was intended as a copy for the *Evkaf Dairesi* (Office of Religious Foundations) on Rhodes, as clearly stated in large letters on the cover and on the first pages. This duplicate list was also wrıtten by Hâfız Mehmed Celâleddîn Müftizâde Efendi. Both catalogues have the approximately the same format, with some variations and additions in the comment section, and both are written in hardcover registers produced by the English Manufactory of Book and Register.

As for the *1995 Catalogue*, it was composed by Hüsnü Özer and Ali Çakır, two scholars from the Vakıf Genel Müdürlüğü, the General Directorate for Religious Foundations in Ankara.[3] While making an inventory of the books in the Library, these scholars have followed closely the fırst *1795 Catalogue*, as

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Kur'ānic commentary by Kāḍī Baiḍāwī.

3 The actual title of the hardbound catalogue, as a desktop publication produced on a computer, is "Rodos'ta Fethi Paşa Kütüphanesinde Mevcut Kitaplarla ilgili 29.10.1995—06.12.1995 Tarihleri arasında Yapılan Çalışmaların Raporu" (A Report of work which was done between the dates 29.10.1995 and 06.12.1995 in connection with Books Existing in the Fethi Paşa Library on Rhodes). A copy of the study is housed in the Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library in the Medieval Town of Rhodes. Note: The Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library is also known by some as the Fethi Paşa Library due to the fact that the religious foundation of Hafız Ahmed Ağa was taken over by his son Fethi Paşa in the mid-nineteenth century. The name of the founder of the library, Hafız Ahmed Ağa, is retained here, however, to avoid the mistaken notion recorded elsewhere that Ahmed Fethi Paşa created the Library when in fact the Library was his father's creation.

evident from numbers they have wrıtten in pencil next to the entries. The hardbound desktop publication they have compiled covers the entire contents of the Library, that is, both the 828 volumes Hafız Ahmed Ağa purchased and placed in his library, and the some 1200 works that were later donated over time to the Library as pious donations.

It should be noted that the two 1923 catalogues and the *1995 Catalogue* have not maintained the original sequence of the classificatory headings as presented in the vakfiye list or in the first *1795 Catalogue*. Further, they have not respected the original order of entries for each category. This is apparent right from the beginning in the recording of the Kur'āns. The first Kur'ān is a work that has 13 lines to the page and 228 leaves, according to the vakfiye inventory and the *1795 Catalogue*. This Kur'ān appears however not as the first, but as the third Kur'ān in the 1923 catalogues, and as the fourth Kur'ān in the *1995 Catalogue*. Ideally, the original order of the first *1795 Catalogue* should have been maintained, both for the sequence of the categories and for the order of books. That however would have entailed a complete reconfiguration of the Library. Unlike the other catalogues, it is the 2010 *Resimli Katalog* alone that reflects the present order of books in the Library, as well as the present order of the classificatory headings, which, oddly, does not conform either to the order of previous catalogues or that of the vakfiye list or the original *1795 Catalogue*.

Rodosî El-Hâc Hafız Ahmed Ağa

The information concerning Hafız Ahmed Ağa is minimal. What little Mehmed Süreyya provides in his biography of Ottoman officials may have come from his grave stele. While the date of his birth is not known, it is clear that he came from the village of *Uzgur köyü* (Asgourou) on Rhodes and apparently was from an established Ottoman family. Nothing is known about his father, Hasan Ağa, whom Mehmed Süreyya has mistakenly identified as Mehmed Ağa, as the epigraphic evidence on Rhodes concerning him is quite spare and uninformative. Over the fountain in the courtyard of the library founded by Hafız Ahmed Ağa there is a dedication to his father, and there is the inscription on his grave stele located in the cemetery of the tekye of Murad Reis, which indicates that Hasan Ağa was a member of the Ottoman ruling class, although it remains unclear if he was from the civil service or from the military. It is also not known how his son entered the palace service as a youth from Rhodes. All that is known is that Hafız Ahmed Ağa received his early education in the Inner Service (*Enderun-i hümayun*) of the Imperial Palace in Istanbul, and rose through the ranks to one of the highest offices, that of Chief Equerry to the Sovereign (*Rikabdar-i Hazret-i Şehryarı*). He held this office until 8 Muharrem 1204/28 September 1789, when he retired. Some time later, it is not clear when, he was appointed Hicaz Kaftan Ağası. In this capacity he annually accompanied the Sürre Emini, the official entrusted with sending gifts from the Sultan to the Şerif of Mekka. On his return from the Ḥidjāz, in 1215/1800-01 he died.[4] The reason for his

4 "Elhac Hafız Ahmed Ağa, Rodosîzâde," *Sicill-i Osmânî*, vol. I (Westmead: Gregg International Publishers, 1971), 276; originally published in Istanbul: Matbaa-i âmire, 1308/1890. The authors of a 2010 publication of manuscripts in the Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Library apparently derived their brief biographical entry on Hafız Ahmed Ağa from *Sicill-i Osmânî* as well-including Mehmed Sürreya's error in stating that the father of Hafız Ahmed Ağa was Rodosî Mehmed Ağa. See *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafız Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi Yazma Eserler Katalaloğu*, ed. Bekir Şahin and Faruk Ağartan (Konya 2010), p. VII. Then in his study on the history of Rhodes, Mr. Nasuhoğlu provides a Türk Dil Kurumu journal publication which repeats the same information on Hafız Ahmed Ağa given in *Sicill-i Osmânî,* beginning with the statement that his father was Rodosi Mehmet Ağa. On page 72, however, he has given the correct name of Hafız Ahmed Ağa's father (Hasan Ağa) inscribed in Ottoman on a fountain in the courtyard of the Library In his study on Rhodes, the çeşme inscription is clearly legible in a phtograph on page 252. Apart from a number of the Türk Dil Kurumu publication (401 sayılı), he provides no other information. But Mr. Nasuhoğlu should not be taken to task for not following scholarly protocol: he received his professional training as a lawyer, not as an academician. His not having proper note citation or an index aside, Mr. Nasuhoğlu's study is a valuable mine of information on the history, customs, and culture of the Turkish community on Rhodes, especially for the twentieth century. See Mehmet Sadi Nasuhoğlu, *Rodos: Anılar-Tarihçe*,

death is not known, but according to one account he was killed in the region of Antalya, his death having been ordered by the Sultan,[5] perhaps with the usual object of confiscating his wealth. As a man of considerable means, Hafız Ahmed Ağa wanted to do something for the place of his origin, the island of Rhodes. After his retirement as Chief Equerry to the Sultan, he determined on building a library in the Turkish quarter of the Old Town of Rhodes. What he envisioned was more than a library, however. He thought of it as a *külliye*, that is, as a number of buildings with various functions. Apart from the central building of the library within the walled compound, he also built a two-storey school house to educate boys in Arabic and the Kur'ān. In back of the school was a storehouse that acted as a kind of pantry where cooking utensils such as a large caudron (*kazan*) was kept. This came into service on holy days and sacred nights of the year to serve religious meals (*kanduri*) to the staff members of the library complex at the end of their fast during the six holy nights of Şevval (Shawwal), for dervishes who recited litanies for the souls of the founder's family during the four sacred nights of the year, and to serve the poor on these occasions, as well as at the end of Ramazan during Şeker Bayramı, and on the day of Kurban Bayram.

The library was intended to be open to the public:—specifically to that sector of the public that was literate in Arabic, Persian and Ottoman. Since the educated class was limited in the main to the religious, civil and military officials that comprised the ruling class of the Ottoman Empire, it naturally exluded the majority of the Muslim population of Rhodes who were not literate; that is, fishermen, seamen, traders, merchants, and anyone engaged in agriculture, except perhaps for a class of large landowners (*ağalar*) and certain members of their extended family. Individuals of the ruling class, whether high-ranking civil, religious or military personnel, could not be classified as residents of Rhodes since their tour of duty often lasted for a few years before being transferred to some other location in the empire. These Ottoman officials were necessarily then a transient population. Another sector of the transitory literate class comprised visitors to the island. They consisted primarily of ranking members of the religious class (*ulema*) and above all members of the Egyptian aristocracy and their entourage. Often they came to Rhodes during the hot summer months for a change of air (*tebdil-i hava*),[6] while a number of them had summer residences on the island. Another class of visitors that were of the Ottoman ruling class were those who stopped in Rhodes as the last port of call on their way to Alexandria, or who disembarked on the island as part of a maritime stage on route to making the pilgrimage to Mecca. During their stay on Rhodes it would have been natural for them to spend their leisure hours in the library.

Hafız Ahmed Ağa may have been aware of the fact that his library would be of benefit to only a narrow segment of the Rhodian population. The school he created on the Library grounds would have had the purpose of ameliorating this situation. There were no schools on Rhodes before 1793 when he established his educational complex. Specifically, there were no religious primary schools for boys at the elementary level (*mekâtib-i sibyân*) either in the medieval walled town or in Turkish towns and villages throughout Rhodes. Basic instruction in Arabic and the Kur'ān was left to the imams of the mosques

second printing (Muğla Üniversitesi Basımevi, 2008), 69.

5 Ibid., 70.

6 Unfortunately for some, instead of finding a change of air, they encountered the plague. Serious pandemics repeatedly broke out throughout the Levant, especially during the course of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries. A number of those who fell victim to the bubonic or pneumonic plague acquired the disease in Alexandria and died after their arrival on Rhodes, or they became infected while they were on the island. A number of them are found in the cemetery of Murad Reis near the port, which was a graveyard reserved for the Ottoman aristocracy, class distinction being maintained even in death.



Hafız Ahmed Agha Library
Orfeos Street entrance at night (left) and courtyard and the library with guardian Mitso in front.
Photos: T. Tuten

within the medieval town. The more promising students continued their education in the *medreses* (in Arabic madrasas). The Old Town had three *medreses* as noted by Evliya Çelebi: namely, the Demirli, Hurmalı, and İbrahim Paşa *medreses*.[7] There is no mention by Evliya Çelebi, who visited Rhodes in 1671-2, of a medrese founded by Sultan Süleyman as part of his külliye, although one source reports that the first *medrese* that was established in the Old Town (*iç kale*) was the Süleymaniye medrese, which was established in 1549.[8] Apart from a *cami* and an *imaret* (soupkitchen), Süleyman's pious endowments (*evkaf*) included a *hamam*, identified as the *Ḥamam-ı cedîd*, the Yeni Hamam or New Hamam, which has traditionally been associated, mistakenly, with the baths of Sultan Mustafa III (*regn*. 1757-1774).[9]

7 Uğur Ünen, "XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İdaresinde Rodos Adası," Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tarih Anabilim Dalı, Aydın 2013. Doctoral Dissertation online. Only three medreses are mentioned for the 17th century: Hurmalı, Demirli and İbrahim Paşa (p. 43).

8 Ünen, "XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İdaresinde Rodos Adası," p. 43.

9 According to a ferman of Sultan Selim II dated 1568, the *yeni hamam* was among the religious and charitable foundations established in Rhodes by his predecessor Sultan Süleyman (*regn*. 1520-1566). The Yeni Hamam is the name by which the public bathhouse next to the Sultan Mustafa III Camii has traditionally been known. It has been assumed until recently that the hamam adjacent to the cami was created as a vakıf and source of revenue for the Sultan Mustafa III mosque. The correct identification of the men's baths as the baths of Sultan

The women's baths were added to the men's baths of Sultan Süleyman as a source of revenue for the maintenance of the Sultan Mustafa III mosque across the way, and were built at the same time as the Sultan Mustafa mosque during the third quarter of the eighteenth century.[10] In the sixteenth century then only two public baths existed: the *Hamam-ı atîk* (the Eski or Old Hamam), already in existence before the Ottoman conquest of Rhodes in 1522, and the *Hamam-ı cedîd* (the New Hamam), the men's baths of Sultan Süleyman.[11]

The school established by Hafız Ahmed Ağa conformed to a Kur'anic school where instruction was limited to Arabic and reading the Kur'an. The head librarian and assistant librarian, who were both employed to teach in the school, were *müderrisîn*, persons who reached a grade in the hierarchy of the ulema which qualified them to teach at the medrese level. The instructor that evidently replaced them under Ahmed Fethi Paşa's reorganization of his father's foundation in the mid-nineteenth century is styled as a *ders-i âm* (*dersiâm*), who also attained the educational level of a *müderris*. İbrahim Edhem Efendi was a preacher (*vaiz*) in the Süleymaniye mosque, a müfti of Rhodes, and a müderris. It is stated on his grave stele that over the course of a long teaching career he had taught thousands of boys Arabic and the Kur'ān. It may be assumed that İbrahim Edhem Efendi taught his students in the Süleymaniye Camii where he served as the imam.

Süleyman was first made by Giulio Jacopi. See his "Il Bagno di Solimano a Rodi," Estratto dal III Fascicolo—XI Anno di *Dedalo*, Agosto 1930 (VIII), (Milano-Roma: Casa Editrice d'Arte Bestetti & Tumminelli S. A.), 170. While recognizing that there has been some controversy over how to name the baths, in his study on the Turkish monuments and history of Rhodes, Zeki Çelikkol believed the proper appellation is the Baths of Sultan Mustafa since they were built to serve as religious foundation revenue for the Mosque of Sultan Mustafa III nearby. See Zeki Çelikkol, *Rodos'taki Türk Eserleri ve Tarihçe* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1986), 73. According to M. Sadi Nasuhoğlu (*Rodos: Anılar ve Tarihçe*, Muğla, 2008, 53; 61-2), the same architect and contractors (*müteahhitler*) were used for the construction of the baths and the mosque, although he cites no source to support this. Mr. Nasuhoğlu states that although the baths were made vakıf as a source of revenue for the mosque, for whatever reason, this arrangement was not adhered to, and administration was transferred from the Evkaf to the Ottoman government treasury (*miri*) which became a source of income for the maintenance of the baths. He does provide a story however of how the baths were completed before the mosque. A construction worker was seen putting a foundation stone to the mosque and after hesitating, taking it away a number of times. The foreman in charge of the construction called him over and asked for an explanation of what he was doing. The worker replied that he had not performed his ritual ablutions and was reluctant to place a cornerstone to a house of God with canonically unclean hands. The foreman agreed with this excuse, and for this reason the baths were completed first before the mosque. But this hardly seems plausible. Charming as the story is, a more likely explanation for the interruption, assuming that it had actually happened, would have been for the foreman to have simply called for a timeout from work until the worker had performed his ablutions, and the work on the mosque could then have proceeded on schedule.

10 Based on a study of the two different archtectural styles for the baths, it has come to the light that the baths for men were constructed in the time of Süleyman, while the women's baths were added in the eighteenth century under Sultan Mustafa III (*regn*. 1757-1774), a recent architectural confirmation of Giulio Jacopi's 1930 study It was the revenue from the additional women's baths, and not the men's baths, that served as a source of income for the salaried staff of the Sultan Mustafa III Camii and for maintenance of the mosque. See *Δημοτικά Λοθτρά: Yeni Hammam*, text by Άννα Παρασχευοπούλου and Νίκος Ζαρίφης, Εκδόση Δήμος Ροδιών, 2000.

11 Ünen, opera citato, p. 42.



Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, the reading room.
Photo: T. Tuten

The İbrahim Paşa Medrese was situated across from the Ibrahim Paşa Camii at the lower end of the Old Town. By the beginning of the twentieth century, it had been reduced to a ruined condition and was torn down to be replaced by a series of shops that were made vakıf. The school had been known as the İsmail Paşa Medrese which served as an "iptidaî medrese" for boys at an elementary school level.[12] It would appear then that the İbrahim Paşa medrese ceased to function as such, although it is not clear when or exactly why. It may be assumed that the medrese ended its operation as a higher level theological school most probably during the course of the nineteenth century, and was converted to a primary religious school due to a lack of sufficient income from the vakıf. The Hurmalı Medrese may have suffered the same fate, for the only medrese known to have been functioning during the first part of the twentieth century was the Demirli Medrese. It is probable that the religious scholars and personnel suffered gradual reduction in their salaries with the establishment of the Evkaf-ı Haremeyn Nezareti, the Ministry for Haremeyn Estates, which had been established in 1249/1833 as a ministry separate from the jurısdiction of the Darüssaade Ağası.[13] By 1843, their income from this foundation was lowered to the point that it was virtually nil.[14] With their teaching staffs reduced to penury by the mid-nineteenth

12 Nasuhoğlu, *op. cit.*, 56.

13 John Robert Barnes, *An Introduction to Religious Foundations in the Ottoman Empire* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986), 77; and Chapter VIII for the general decline of religious foundations under the Imperial Evkaf Ministry, pp. 118-53.

14 Bekir Şahin et al., *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafız Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi Yazma Eserler Kataloğu* (hereafter *Resimli Katalog*), p. VIII: Haremeyn Evkafı arasında yer alan Ahmed Ağa kütüphanesi'nin görevlileri ve cami imamları ile medrese hocaları 1842 yılı itibariyle devlete müracat ederek ücretlerinin azlığı nedeniyle sefalet içinde bulunduklarını bildirmişlerdi. (Dating from the year 1842, the salaried officials of the Ahmed Ağa Library as well as the imams of the mosques and the teachers of the medreses who drew their salaries from the

century, it is suspected that the İbrahim Paşa and Hurmalı medreses would no longer have operated, and their buildings either would have been abandoned or would occasionally have served as primary-level theological schools (*mekâtib*).[15] The medrese and library established by Hafız Ahmed Ağa would suffer a marked diminution in vakıf revenue by the mid nineteenth century as well.

Rodosîzade Ahmed Fethi Paşa, Son of Hafız Ahmed Ağa

Ahmed Fethi Paşa was born several months after his father's death, some time between the years 1801 and 1802. In 1809-10, as a youth who had attained the age of eight, he entered the Inner Service (*Enderun-i hümayun*) of Topkapı Palace in Istanbul, as his father had. In 1825-6, at the age of twenty-five, he graduated from the Palace Service (*çıkma*), and entered the Imperial Ottoman Army to begin a career in the military. Following his appointment as adjutant major in 1828-9, he took part in military action and he became a major, advancing rapidly in rank to become lieutenant colonel, and then full colonel in 1830 by the age of thirty. He then became the officer in charge of the Munitions Arsenal Barracks in Istanbul. Later in the same year, he became Court Chamberlain in the Imperial Palace to Sultan Mahmud II and then Chief Equerry to the Sultan, the high office his father had been associated with. In March-April of 1831 he became Divisional General of the Imperial Guards Regiments.

Being exceptionally bright and recognized for his skill in political and social situations, Ahmed Fethi Paşa was called upon to use his talents in a diplomatic capacity.[16] He was sent to Vienna as provisional ambassador of the Ottoman government in June 1835 to congratulate Ferdinand I upon his succession to the throne of Austria, which had occurred on 2 March 1835. A year later, in June 1836, he was appointed full ambassador to Vienna, and held that position until October 1837 when he was dismissed. At the same time, as an additional concurrent office, in July of 1837 he was appointed governor of the province of Aydın with the rank of vizier. In January-February 1838 he was made ambassador to London, and was officially present as a representative of the Ottoman Empire at the coronation of Queen Victoria in Westminster Abbey on 28 June 1838. Shortly after that time he was appointed Ottoman ambssador to Paris in March-April 1838.

Ahmed Fethi Paşa's role as ambassador to the capitals of Europe did not extend beyond this brief period of a few years. Upon his return to Istanbul in 1839, he found himself embarking on yet another career as the head of various ministries within the Ottoman government. This began with his appointment as Minister of Commerce (*Ticaret Nazırı*) on 8 January 1840. It was at this time that he became engaged and married to Atiye Sultan, the daughter of Sultan Mahmud II. As son-in-law to the Sultan, he became

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Haremeyn Pious Foundations petitioned the government and made it known that owing to a reduction in their pay they were reduced to a state of penury.)

15 Nasuhoğlu, *op. cit.*, 56. According to Mr. Nasuhoğlu, before the medrese located across from the İbrahim Paşa Camii was torn down in the 1920s to be replaced by a number of shops that were made vakıf, it had been known as the "İsmail Paşa Medresesi" which was under the direction of a religious scholar know as Hacı Şerif. The building then served as an "iptidaî medrese" administered by someone known as Hoca. The name of this medrese remained the "Şehir İçi Mektebi" until the building was demolished. It would appear from Mr. Nasuhoğlu's description that there was a confusion of terms in designating the building either a medrese or a mekteb. The school probably served as a mekteb, a theological primary school for boys, during the latter part of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. This structure may have been the original İbrahim Paşa medrese until it was deprived of revenue during the course of the first half of the nineteenth century. But this is no more than a surmise, and what happened to the medrese awaits further investigation.

16 This ability to recognize and promote talent by government officials and influential persons who had the means to do so was a basic characteristic of the Ottoman Empire, which accounts in part for the empire's dynamism and longevity.

known as Damad Ahmed Fethi Paşa. He held the post briefly as Undersecretary to the Minister of War (*Serasker Kaimakamı*), but was soon dismissed from that office in April 1840. In April 1842 Ahmed Fethi Paşa was invited to become a member of the law court created in 1837 to try cases of high-ranking officials (*Meclis-i Vala-yı Ahkam-ı Adliye*). He was made head of that court in November 1843, and dismissed a year later. In March of 1845 he was appointed Minister for War Minitions (*Mühimmat-i Harbiye Nazırı*), and in August of that year was made for the first time Commander of the Arsenal (*Tophane Müşiri*) while still acting as Minister for War Munitions. He held the office of Tophane Müşiri for seven years, until July 1852, the longest period he held any offcial government appointment. After a brief appointment for the second time as Minister of Commerce in February 1853, he was again appointed Tophane Müşiri in May 1853. Dismissed on 9 September 1857, he was again for the third time made Commander of the Arsenal the following month on 22 October 1857.

Ahmed Fethi Paşa died in that office on 14 February 1858 at the relatively young age of 57 or 58, depending on which date is given for his birth. Because of the amount of time he spent as Tophane Müşiri until death, Ahmed Fethi Paşa's name is usually associated with that office.

As to his character, he has been described as extremely intelligent and highly cultured, and it is worthy of note that he was never out of imperial favour. As to his appearance, he tended to be a little on the heavy side, and was said to be afflicted with chronic asthma as well. The cause of his death is unknown. On Rhodes he left a clock tower and a school, and, according to Mehmed Süreyya, a library.[17]

Ahmed Fethi Paşa was something of an enthusiast for Western timepieces, and is known for his having built a European-style clocktower. The tower is adjacent to the Süleymaniye mosque and across from the library of his father. He also furnished a clock for the new Rüşdiye school he built next to the clock tower. The longcase clock was supplied by Edward Prior of Clerkenwell, London, who supplied clocks and timepieces for the Ottoman empire. For some time the clock has been out of operation. It is now housed in the courtyard of the clock tower as a non-functional heirloom.

Something else that attracted Ahmed Fethi Paşa's attention while in Europe was museums. On his return to Istanbul, he was determined to initiate something similar, if only on a modest scale. He decided upon creating a military museum in the region of the former Byzantine church of Haghia Irene. In the new museum, which he named *Mecma-ı Asar-ı Atika*,[18] he displayed historic pieces of military ordnance.

Apart from creating in 1852 a European-style clock tower in the Old Town and a Rüşdiye secondary school next to it, Ahmed Fethi Paşa took over the pious endowment of his father and added it to his own. The reason for doing so was to ensure the financial soundness of the foundation, which since the early 1840s had failed to yield sufficient income from the revenue-bearing landed and roofed property that Hafız Ahmed Ağa had endowed for his Library. According to his foundation deed (*vakfiye*), Hafız

17 "Fethi Ahmed Paşa, Rodosîzade," *Sicill-i Osmânî*, iv, 9-10. The authors of the *Resimli Katalog* (Introd. VII) have reproduced in Turkish the list of Ahmed Fethi Paşa's appointments as a military officer, a high-ranking government official, and as an Ottoman ambassador found in *Sicill-i Osmânî*, but without the benefit of equivalent terms in apposition and without commentary. "Ahmet Fethi Paşa, Rodosizade, Damat," *İnönü Ansiklopedisi*, vol. I (Ankara: Millî Eğitim Basımevi, 1946), 256; "Fethi Paşa, Rodosizade Damat Ahmet," *Türk Meşhurları Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Yedigün Neşriyatı, 1946-7), 138. The mistaken notion that Ahmed Fethi Paşa created a library that is found in *Sicill-i Osmânî* is repeated in İbrahim Gövsa's *Türk Meşhuları Ansiklopedisi.* More correctly, he inherited and took over his father's library complex.

18 M. Sadi Nasuhoğlu, opera citato, 70.
Note: *Mecma-ı Asar-ı Atika* is not fully descriptive of Ahmed Fethi Paşa's military museum. It translates as "a place of assemblage of antiquated works," without specifying that the antiquated works are of a dated military nature such as canons, cannonballs and the like. Still, Fethi Paşa's military museum represented a prototype of museums such as the Istanbul Archaeological Museum of today.

Ahmed Ağa created revenue for his library from property which he owned throughout the city of Smyrna (İzmir). There is no mention of his creating vakıf property in Rhodes. At some point in time, Hafız Ahmed Ağa's foundations in Smyrna must have become *bi-kudret*, that is, powerless to yield an income, although it is unclear why. It is possible that vakıf property may have declined in value due to inflation, or it may have been abandoned as the result of the plague. Roofed property would have been exposed to repeated outbreaks of fires, while crops on landed property in Smyrna were often subject to the ravages of crop pests.[19] Whatever the cause, the loss of income from religious foundation property in Smyrna may have compelled the Library's personnel to petition the Darüssaade Ağası to receive income from the Haremeyn evkafı, although when this was done is not clear. By 1843 this income was no longer sufficient, and the library personnel had to apply to the Ottoman government for a living wage. This dire state of affairs compelled Ahmed Fethi Paşa to create his own vakıf by purchasing eighteen shops throughout the walled town of Rhodes and devoting the income to his father's library, in effect making the library his own pious foundation since Hafız Ahmed Ağa's evkaf had ceased to exist.



Clock Tower, built by Ahmed Fethi Paşa
1852-1853
Photo: T. Tuten

In taking over his father's pious endowment, for the sake of economy Ahmed Fethi Paşa altered some of the original terms of the foundation deed, specifically in cutting back on what he must have regarded as superfluous personnel such as a second guard to the library grounds as well as second doorman, and two librarians who were paıd additional salaries to teach boys Arabic and the Kur'an on alternating days. While the sequence of events presented here is only conjecture, further research in the archives should clarify what actually happened.

As for Ahmed Fethi Paşa's own endowments, they comprised a clock tower in the vicinity of the Library and a *rüşdiye* secondary school for boys adjacent to it, where, according to his *vakfiye*, the students would be instructed in Arabic, Persian, and reading the Kur'ān. As to the school, it was staffed by an instructor (*muallim-i sibyan*), an assistant in charge of discipline (*muavin*), and a doorman (*bevvab*), who drew their salaries from the seventeen shops Ahmed Fethi Paşa had created and had made vakıf.[20]

19 Vitalis Strumza was appointed head of a commission to eradicate phylloxera attacking vines in the viticulture industry in Smyrna during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Avram Galanti, *Histoire des Juifs de Turquie*, Tome VII (Istanbul: Editions Isis, n.d.), 145.

20 T. C. Vakıflar Umum Müdürlüğü sayı 410. Müşarünaleyh Ahmed Fethi Paşanın 21 Safer 1269 tarihli vakfiyesinin muhakeme kısmı hariç olarak çıkarılan örneğidir.

As for the imposing European-style Clock Tower, the inscription that Ahmed Fethi Paşa placed on it is worthy of note, and is presented here in English translation:

The fame of Sultan Abdülmecid Han's liberality that has captivated the world has come to this city and provided this majestic spectacle.

A love of country and a desire to give thanks to his homeland inspired Ahmed Fethi Paşa to build this Clock Tower.

May the soul of his father, Hafiz Ahmed Ağa, rejoice with the knowledge that this edifice has been added to the works of benefice he has created for this city.

It is fitting and proper that the construction of this building was made sound under the sign of Scorpio.[21]

Every hour that the people observe the time, it is as if the clock gives the path of the fixed times of the world-adorning sun as it traverses the heavens.

God created that Shah that affixes the stated hours with his Minister.[22]

The clock mechanism moves purely with a natural grace, like a pendulum, and provides two beautiful times.[23]

This charming and lovely Clock Tower is now a part of Rhodes. With its ring may the heavens resound with the liberality of Ahmed Fethi Paşa.

By way of a final note, some four years after the Clock Tower and Rüşdiye school were built, on 6 November 1856 at 3.45 pm, lightning struck the Ottoman Arsenal (*cebhane*) located in front of the conventual Church of St. John the Baptist and its campanile. Apart from completely destroying the church and sheering off the top half of the former Palace of the Grand Masters, the blast damaged a number of buildings along the Street of the Knights, part of the wall surrounding the Old Town,[24] and numerous buildings throughout the Turkish quarter. The explosion is estimated to have killed eight hundred people, primarily Turkish Rhodians residing in the Old Town. It also seriously damaged both the Clock Tower and Rüşdiye secondary school. Both edifices were restored to their original condition however from the revenue of the endowment Ahmed Fethi Paşa had created.[25] Further damage to the Library was sustained in 1863 as a result of a major earthquake that struck Rhodes.[26]

21 Undertakings such as building projects were considered auspicious if carried out under the proper astrological sign.

22 The Shah and his Minister are the Sun and the Moon.

23 This probably refers to the clock ringing on the half hour and the hour.

24 There is an inscription on the upper part of the wall surrounding the Old Town (*kale, iç kale*) to the left of the Amboise Gate. It states that the wall was repaired by Dizdar Mustafa, but the date has been effaced. It is likely that the restoration was undertaken after the explosion of the Ottoman Arsenal in 1856.

25 The reader is referred to the dedicatory inscription on a large stone for a new Arsenal created in 1276/1859-60 by Sultan Abdülmecid located in the garden of the Villa Dragut inside the Archaeological Museum within the Old Town. The inscription states that Sultan Abdülmecid had made an Arsenal once before (probably in the 1840s), but by chance it had been destroyed when it was struck by a bolt of lightning; consequently he was restoring the arsenal anew. See John Robert Barnes, "Gunpowder and the Explosion in 1856 of the Former Church of St. John in the Medieval Town of Rhodes," *Fortifications of the Ottoman Period in the Aegean*, Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference held in Mytilene 30th - 31st October 2018, Edited by Pavlos Triantafyllidis (Mytilene 2021), 321-28. The paper is accessible in Volume II.

26 *Resimli Katalog*, Introduction, p. VIII.

The Nature of the Library

There are two basic categories of books in the Library. The first category comprises those books purchased by the founder, Hafız Ahmed Ağa, and placed in his Library. They occupy the first two top rows of three levels of glass door wooden cases, and represent with the Kur'ān twenty classificatory headings. In all, Hafız Ahmed Ağa donated 828 volumes to his library. Most of the books are bound manuscript copies of classical Arabic, Persian and Ottoman works copied by hand at various times, but many of them during the course of the eighteenth century and purchased by the founder from the *sahhaflar*, the secondhand bookseller's markets in Istanbul and elsewhere. A number of them are illuminated manuscripts that are beautiful examples of the bookmaker's art.

The second category, housed in the bottom third row of the bookcases, represents pious donations (in Arabic *waqf*, in Turkish *vakıf*) to the Library made by individuals over the course of time, as well as collections of volumes from various Islamic institutions on Rhodes such as theological schools (A. pl. *madāris*, Tr. *medaris*) and congregational mosques (A. pl. *djawāmi'*, Tr. *cevami*). This collection amounts to some 1200 volumes in all. Taken as a whole, the physical quality of books in the secondary collection cannot compare with the original founder's donation. A good many of these works are printed and the paper and bookbinding material are not of the best quality.

Both collections were intended to be separate and remain distinct. By way of example, all volumes placed in the Library by Hafız Ahmed Ağa had the large circular seal of the founder on the last page.[27] This identified the work as an original volume purchased by the founder. Books that were subsequently bequeathed to the Library by individuals are without the founder's seal, but have been given a number, which clearly indicates that the work was a donation by a private individual.

Regrettably, this arrangement has not been respected, and as a consequence books that should have been placed in the bottom row as later additions to the Library have found their way into the two top shelves. How this occurred came about in the following manner. From the outset in creating his library, Hafız Ahmed Ağa took careful measures to guard against possible theft and loss of these valuable works by stipulating that no book was to be taken out of the Library. Visitors were only allowed to read the books in the outer reading room (*tedkik odası*) during Library hours. At the end of the day, all books taken out of the back room of the Library had to be returned by the Librarian to the shelves from which they were taken. The collection of volumes were not, then, to be used as in a lending library. In addition, it was stated in Hafız Ahmed Ağa's foundation deed that there should be two salaried officials to watch each other to note and report any irregularity committed by the other. In his *vakfiye* Hafız Ahmed Ağa provided for two gatekeepers (*bevvab*) at the entrance to the Library compound, two custodians for the grounds (*mustahfaz*), and two librarians (*hafız-ı kütüb*) in attendance within the Library proper who also served as teachers of the Kur'ān to boys in the classrooms on the Library's grounds. He also stated that in the event that a book was lost or stolen, or if an original volume was substituted by another, the head librarian would be personally held responsible and would be required to replace the volume at his own expense.[28]

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27 In addition, each page of the first catalogue for the Library, designated here as the *1795 Catalogue*, was stamped with the seal of Hafız Ahmed Ağa, which gives the assurance that this long, leather-bound catalogue is an accurate and authorized list of the founder's books. The *1795 Catalogue*, with few exceptions, follows the order of the classificatory headings and the sequence of volumes in the list of books recorded in Hafız Ahmed Ağa's pious foundation deed (*vakfiye*).

28 T.C. Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü. 743 numaralı defterin 79 sahife ve 26 sırasında kayıtlı Hasan oğlu Rikapdar Rodoslu Ahmed Ağanın 13 rabiulahir 1208 tarihli (Monday, 18 November 1793) vakfiyesi, and separately,



Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, still life on the shelf.
Hadith (left) and Tafsir (right) sections
Photos: T. Tuten

This last stipulation was fine, in theory. However, the head librarians were not men of substantial financial means. Often they were found to be teachers of Arabic to school children, professors in the medreses, or imams of one of the many congregational mosques found throughout the medieval town of Rhodes. While highly educated, they eked out their living as religious salaried officials; consequently, they hardly had the means to pay for a missing volume—especially given the financial straits they found themselves in by the mid-nineteenth century. The volumes Hafız Ahmed Ağa bequeathed to his library were copied by master calligraphers and represented outstanding examples of the bookmakers' art. While a number of these bound manuscripts date back to as early as 1450, many of them seem to have been made during the course of the eighteenth century. A single volume, then, would have been prohibitively expensive to purchase, especially during the nineteenth century when inexpensive printed works began to replace these single labor-intensive copies. Added to this, it would not have been easy for librarians situated on Rhodes to locate and replace books in the booksellers' markets of Istanbul and İzmir, assuming they had the means to do so.

It would appear that Hafız Ahmed Ağa's system of dual guardians worked quite well, for it is probable that no book from his original collection was ever lost or stolen. But exactly within a half century of the Library's creation, the founder's stipulation that there were to be two gatekeepers, two custodians of the grounds, and two librarians was no longer financially feasible due to a loss of revenue from the endowment's roofed and landed property.

When Ahmed Fethi Paşa created his own pious endowment in 1852, in place of the two gatekeepers (*bevvab*) and two guards of the grounds (*mustahfaz*), there was to be one gatekeeper who also functioned as a guard of the library complex. In addition, a servant was appointed to ensure the cleanliness of both the buildings and the grounds; and as evident from his title, *ferraş*, he had the specific duty of spreading and removing carpets during the canonical times for prayer. At this time both the head and

vakfiyesinin aynen örneği. Ve beher sene mah-i muharrem ü'l-haram duhul eyledik de cezire-i mezkurenin ulema ve ayan ekabir ve ağniyasi kütübhane-i mezkurede cem' olub hakim-i belde huzurunda kütübhane-i mezkurede mevzu' kütüb-i mücellide mumza ve mahtum defteri mantukunca yegân yegân olunarak devir ve ta'dad ve yine yerlü yerine vaz' olunub maazallahü taalâ defter-i mezkurdan ancak bir varak noksan bulunub yahud kütüb-i mezkure tebdil ile yerine âhar kitap vaz' olunmuş bulunmak ihtimal olur ise hafız-i kütüb efendilere ve küfelasına alaeyyihalin tazmin ettirilüb yine yerine vaz' ettireler.

assistant librarian may have been relieved of their duty to instruct children in Arabic and the Kur'ān, for the school within the Library complex was assigned a separate teacher (*dersiâm*).[29] It is also possible that Ahmed Fethi Paşa found the existence of a second librarian superfluous, and from 1852 on there was only one head librarian for the library. Added to this, Ahmed Fethi Paşa may have found the annual review of books ın the Library by a committee unnecessary, although, like the appointment of a single head librarian, this is not mentioned in his *vakfiye*. Regrettably, after the original *1795 Catalogue*, there was no additional catalogue made for the Library until 1923. Apart from the *vakfiye* of Ahmed Fethi Paşa in mid-century, there is no other information about the operation of the Library throughout the entire nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth.

As for the conditions for the operation of his Library complex, Hafız Ahmed Ağa stated in his vakfiye that apart from their duties in the Library, the head librarian and his assistant had the additional responsibility of teaching boys the Kur'ān, for which they were paid a separate stipend. The head librarian received sixty akçes daily as *hafız-ı kütüb* and forty akçes daily as a fee for teaching (*dersiye*). The assistant librarian was to receive fifty akçes daily as a librarian and thirty akçes daily as a *dersiye* or teaching fee for hs instruction. Under this arrangment the librarians must have alternated as teachers since both were responsible for being in the library during library hours and teaching students as well. As for the two gatekeepers and two guards, they were each to receive ten akçes daily for their services. Apart from their daily salaries, the personnel of Library complex received gratis cakes of made of white flour (*fodula*) from the nearby public kitchen (*imaret*) of Sultan Süleyman: the librarians were to obtain daily six to twelve loaves each and the *mustahfazlar* and *bevvablar* were allotted four to eight loaves daily. [30]

The school of the Library complex consisted of a two-storey wooden structure comprising an upper and a lower level classroom (*dershane*) located immediately to the left of the entrance to the Library grounds. It was designed to accommodate forty students, who were to receive one akçe daily. They were allotted twenty *guruş* (*kurush*) to cover food expenses for an excursion that took place once a year,[31] As for instruction, the students were to be taught every day of the week except Tuesdays and Fridays and designated holidays from dawn until three o'clock in the afternoon.[32] With regard to the two days of the week when instruction was not given, Friday was a day of assembly in the congregational mosques, while Tuesday was set aside as a holiday for children from school in celebration and remembrance of the Muslim conquest of Palestine. The holiday was originally set on Thursday, but within the Ottoman dominions it fell on Tuesday.[33]

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29 Ibidem.

30 T.C. Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü. 743 Numeralı Defteri 153 sahife ve 36 sırasında kayıtlı Hasan oğlu Rikapdar Rodoslu Ahmed Ağa'nın 7 Muharrem 1211/13 July 1796 tarihli vakfiyesin aynen örneğidir.

31 Ibidem.

32 T.C.Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü. Rodosî Hafız Ahmed Ağa vakfiyesi. Ve kütübhane-i mezkurede bir fazıl ve âlim bir kimesenin hafız-ı kütüb-i evvel ve müderris olub kütübhane-i mezkureye bervech-i ati müdavemet ve hazırun alan talebeye beher hafta salı ve cumadan maada eyyam-ı sairede ulum-u nafiadan dersi talim edüb hizmeti mukabelesinde yevmi altmış akçe hafız-ı kütüblük ve yevmi kırk akçe dersiyye ki cem'an yüz akçe vazifeye mutasarrıf ola ve kezalık ulemadan bir kimesene dahi hafız-ı kütüb-i sâni ve müderris olub oldahi bervech-i ati hizmeti mukabelesinde yevmi elli akçe hafız-ı kütüblük ve otuz akçe dersiyye ki oldahi cem'an yüz seksen akçe vazifeye mutasarrıf olalar ve mezburan efendiler vazifelerinden maada babüssaade ağası nezaretinde olan cezire-i rodosta vaki merhum ve mağfurunleh Sultan Süleyman Han tabesirrahü cami-i şerifi imaretinden alınmak üzere taraf-ı padişahiden vakf-ı müşarünileyh zavaidinden olmak üzere müteayyin buyurulan cem'an yirmi çift foduladan hafız-ı kütüb efendilerden her biri yevmi altışar çiften on iki çift fodulayı ahz edeler ve mustahfaz ve bevvablardan her biri dahi yevmi dörder çiften sekiz çift fodulayı dahi imaret-i mezkurdan ahz edeler ve ber vech-i muharrer hafız-ı kütüb ve müderris ve bevvab ve mustahfaz olan efendilerden her biri yevmi cuma ve salı ve îdinden maada beher yevm kütübhane-i mezkureyi tulu-i şemsden vakt-ı asra değin küşad edüb...

33 "Maktab," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, first edition, 1993 repr. V: 178: "Tradition has it that the Caliph 'Umar (who

The Library as a Place of Vigil and Ritual Prayer

Apart from its primary function as a library, and secondarily as a school, Hafız Ahmed Ağa intended that the grounds of his Library would also be a place of Islamic ritual and prayer. Vigils were to be held on the four sacred nights of the Islamic year, namely, the *Lailat al-Mawlid* (Tr. *Leyle-i Mevlid*), the night preceding the anniversary of the birth of the Prophet on 12 Rabi' al-awwal; *Lailat ar-Raghā'ib* (Tr. *Leyle-i Ragaib*), the night preceding the first Friday in the month of Radjab, considered the anniversary of the conception of the Prophet; *Lailat al-Mir'ādj* (Tr. *Leyle-i Mirac*), anniversary of the night of the Prophet's ascension into heaven, the night before 27 Radjab; and *Lailat al-Bara'a* (Tr. *Leyle-i Berat*), the 15th night of the month of Sha'bān. Apart from being a night for the forgiveness of sins,[34] the last sacred night, *Lailat al-Bara'a*, was an evening devoted to commemorating the dead.

What is of interest is that Hafız Ahmed Ağa stipulated that not just on *Leyle-i Berat*, but on each of the four sacred nights, apart from the litanies special to them, the evening would be spent in prayers for the souls of the departed, and specifically for the souls of his parents and relatives. As stated in the vakfiye, on each of these nights the head librarian was to invite twenty members of a Ṣūfī brotherhood and assemble them in the Library and in the classrooms where they were to recite seventy thousand times the *kelime-i tevhid* [35] for the souls of the parents of Hafız Ahmed Ağa and of his relatives. In return for this service, they were to receive sixty para each for a total of thirty guruş.

During the four sacred nights, religious meals (*kanduri*) were to be provided for those performing the litanies and partaking in the ritual, and helva would be served, while food would also be distributed to the poor. At the end of their litanies, the dervishes would be offered *gaziler helvası* to be cooked on the Library premises, while on the six holy days of the month of Shawwāl ash-sharīf (Tr. Şevval-i şerif), the staff of the Library who kept the fast on each of these nights were to be fed from the revenue of the founder. It was further stipulated in Hafız Ahmed Ağa's vakfiye that every year on the 15th of Muharrem, one hundred guruş from the founder's revenue was to be expended on the cooking of *aşure*, a sweet, pudding-lıke dish consisting of cereals, nuts and raisins, and distributed to the Muslim poor, while seven and a half guruş was to be given to each of the servants responsible for its preparation. On *Kurban Bayramı* (*'Īd-i Aḍḥā*), the Festival of Sacrifice, by agency of the *mütevelli vekili*, the administrator's representative, a sheep was to be purchased and slaughtered in the courtyard of the Library, and the meat was to be distributed among the Muslim poor for the sake of the souls of the parents of the founder and his relatives. It was stipulated that the butcher (*kassab*) was to receive seven and a half guruş for his services. As the sacred nights were evenings of celebration and nights of illumination, it may be assumed that, like the mosques, the

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founded the first Kur'ānic schools) prescribed the Thursday rest. It is said in explanation that the triumphal return of the Muslim troops after the conquest of Palestine took place on a Thursday; the pupils having had a holiday to take part in the festivities, the Caliph 'Umar decided that henceforth Thursday should be a holiday in the schools. In the Ḥidjāz the holiday is Tuesday (cf. W. Marçais, *Textes Arabes de Tanger*, p. 184, note 2)." In the Ottoman Empire, the holiday was held on Tuesday as well.

34 A "night of quittancy" for the forgiveness of sins, which has been compared to the Jewish Day of Atonement. See "Sha'bān" by A.J. Wensinck in the *Ency. Isl.*, first edition, 1993 reprint VII: 239.

35 Recitation of the *kelime-i tevhid* 70,000 times during the course of an evening may strike the reader as excessive; but this number of repetitive litanies does not seem so unusual with the realization that adherents of the Djazuliya, a sect of the Shādhilīya order of dervishes, recited the *basmala* (Tr. *besmele*) formula "In the name of God, the Compassionate and the Merciful" 14,000 times a day. They were also to recite twice a day the *Dalā'il al-khairāt*, a collection of prayers for the Prophet written by al-Djazūlī, the founder of the sect. In the evening they were to recite the *Dalā'il al-khairāt* again followed by a recitation of the fourth part of the Kur'ān. See "Al-Djazūlī," *Ency. Isl.* first edition, 1993 repr. II: 1032-3.

grounds and buildings of the Library complex would have been brightly lit as well.[36]

As a final requisite, Hafız Ahmed Ağa stated that twelve hundred guruş was to be set aside for the liberation of Muslim slaves held captive by the Knights of St. John on the island of Malta.[37] If slaves were not purchased in a given year, then the money was to be kept and added to the following year's ransom. He could hardly have foreseen however that within two years' time Napoleon would take Malta from the Knights of St. John and put an end to slavery, thereby obviating this last provision in the vakfiye.

Conditions under which the Library operated according to the founder's endowment deed no longer apply today since dating from the early 1960s Hafız Ahmed Ağa's foundation has ceased to operate as a library. Religious observances have been maintained in the Library complex, however. Fruit juices are distributed from the Library every year on *Şeker Bayramı* at the end of Ramazan. During *Kurban Bayramı* a sheep is still slaughtered on the Library grounds and the meat distributed to "the poor." The preparation and cooking of *aşure* on the premises is still observed and is distributed to members of the Muslim community and to friends of the Library. And while prayers are still recited for the souls of the founder and his parents in the reading room of the Library, this ritual is kept brief and carried out by the *mütevelli vekili* and a few individuals, as opposed to twenty dervishes reciting litanies throughout the night.

Head Librarians in the Twentieth Century

Şeyh Abdullah had been head librarian of the Library for at least thirty-six years, or probably longer. In all likelihood, he had also been shaikh of the Murad Reis tekye as well. With Şeyh Abdullah's death in January 1909,[38] he was succeeded as head librarian by Danazade Yusuf Dana Efendi, who had been appointed Hafız-i kütüb by the representative administrator of the foundation (*mütevelli vekili*) Eyübzade Eşref Efendi. But upon Yusuf Dana Efendi's death not long thereafter, Mahmud Kemal Efendi was authorized by *mütevelli vekili* Eyübzade Eşref Efendi to assume duties as head librarian. Mahmud Kemal remained head librarian until he was appointed *mütevelli vekili* and his place as head librarian was taken by Koca Hafız Mustafa Efendi, the imam for the Hüdayi quarter of the Old Town. As Mustafa Efendi was ostensibly called to Istanbul on business in 1923, he was replaced as head librarian on 14 cemaziyelevvel 1341/2 January 1923 by Hafız İbrahim Edhem Efendi, the müderris of the Süleymaniye cami-i şerifi.[39]

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36 Candle-lit and torch-lit processions, along with the illumination of buildings such as mosques, minarets, libraries and madrasas, were originally quite alien to Muslim thinking and may have been adopted from Christian practice. Devotion to Muḥammad, whether visiting his tomb in Medina or the place of his birth in Mecca or partaking in evening rituals celebrating his conception and birth (*mawlid an-nabī*), were criticized by ultra conservative pietists such as Ibn Taimīya who saw in them acts of piety more properly reserved for God. See H. Fuchs "Mawlid," in the *Ency. Isl.*, first edition, 1993 repr. V: 419-22.

37 T.C. Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü. 743 Numeralı Defteri 153 sahife ve 36 sırasında kayıtlı Hasan oğlu Rikapdar Rodoslu Ahmed Ağa'nın 7 Muharrem 1211/13 July 1796 tarihli vakfiyesin aynen örneğidir.

38 Surrounded by its own iron fencing, Şeyh Abdullah's grave is the first cenotaph at the beginning of the third row of graves and is situated directly opposite the mosque of Murad Reis. The date of death is 18 Muharrem 1327/ Wednesday, 20 January 1909.

39 Notes section on page 136 at the end of the 1923 *Fihrist* Catalogue, and on page 158 of the identical 1923 *Evkaf Daires*i Catalogue. Both catalogues were compiled by Hafız Mehmed Celaleddin Müftizade in 1923. The notes section at the end of the catalogue inventory has been periodically added to from 1923 until 1995, with the remarks of Messrs. Hüsnü Özer and Ali Çakır from the General Directorate of Religious Foundations in Ankara, the two scholars responsible for creating the *1995 Catalogue* in transliterated Ottoman. The above record of the head librarians from the time of the death of Şeyh Abdullah in 1909 to Koca Hafız Mustafa Efendi's resigning the office, due to his having no desire to continue in it (*rağbetsizliği*), and the appointment of İbrahim Edhem Efendi in his place in 1923, are described in a single document dated 1 Şubat 1338, 14 Cemaziyelevvel 1341/ 2 January 1923, signed and sealed by various officials such as the Rodos Müftüsü Sami Efendi, Mütevelli vekili Mahmud

After virtually six years of serving as head librarian, İbrahim Edhem Efendi was appointed Müfti of Rhodes on 15 safer 1347/3 August 1928. The position of Hafız-ı kütüb was then assigned to Çankazade Hafız Mustafa Lutfi Efendi, the imam and hatib for the Enderun cami-i şerifi.[40] When Çankazade Mustafa Efendi left Rhodes to reside in Turkey, on 27 zilkade 1369/10 September 1950, Hoca Mahmud Kemal became head librarian,[41] and he retained this office until his death in 1963.[42] The following year, at the request of Kaymakam Muhittin Rifat Bey, Mütevelliye Madame Fatma Saide Argeşo was invited from Istanbul to receive a copy of the inventory of books from Mütevelli vekili Mehmed Kumanyacı on 20 June 1963.[43] This ceremony formally closed the Library, and from that time on the Library has become a museum for tourists who are invited to visit the former Reading Room (*tedkik odası*), inspect photocopies of works in the display cases, and sign their names in the guest book. Although they are not allowed into the library room proper, from their comments in the guest register it is obvious that visitors are appreciative of the opportunity to experience something of the Library as it once was, if only on a superficial and impressionistic level.

A Possible Reason for the Reconfiguration of the Contents of the Library

Anyone looking through the various catalogues of the Library will be surprised to find that the original order of the classificatory headings that is presented in the 1793 vakfiye list of books and the first *1795 Catalogue* has not been maintained in subsequent catalogues. This includes the two 1923 catalogues entitled *Fihrist* and *Evkaf Dairesi*, the *1995 Catalogue*, and the *Resimli Katalog* published in 2010. Why this is the case is not at all apparent. It can only be conjectured that the order of the categories changed because of a preference of the head librarian. It may be that his decision to change the sequence of the categories was based on a personal value judgement, but this is simply a surmise. The first instance of a change of order in the classificatory headings is with the two 1923 catalogues. As the compiler of the catalogues was a visiting scholar from the island of Limni who performed his service gratis, it is doubtful if he would have originated the change of sequence but simply followed the order he found existing in the Library. The *1995 Catalogue* follows the order of the two 1923 catalogues, but for whatever reason, it appears that the 2010 *Resimli Katalog* does not.

Apart from a rearrangement in the sequence of the categories, something else that has been noted is that the distinction between the two top rows of bookcases reserved for the original collection of 828 volumes that Hafız Ahmed Ağa placed in his library and the bottom row assigned for books that were later donations has not been maintained. Added to this, the seal of the founder, which is stamped on all volumes of the original collection, has been used on volumes that were additions to the library as pious bequests. This free use of the Founder's seal makes the bibliographer who encounters these volumes believe that he is looking at an original volume.

Kemal, Hafız-i kütüb İbrahim Edhem Efendi , the Evkaf Müdürü Vekili, the Head of the Turkish Islamic Religious Community Association of Rhodes (*Cemaat-i İslamiye Reisi*), and other members of the Cemaat-i Islamiye.

40 Notes section, page 134 of the 1923 *Fihrist* Catalogue. The document is signed by former head librarian and Müfti of Rhodes, salef-i Hafız-i kütüb-i evvel ve Müfti-i belde İbrahim Edhem Efendi, and his successor, halef-i Hafız-i kütüb Mustafa Lütfi Efendi and Mütevelli-i kaimmakam-i vekili Mahmud Kemal.

41 Notes section, page 131 of the 1923 *Fihrist* Catalogue. The document on this page is signed and dated by the former Hafız-i kütüb (Çankazade Hafız) Mustafa Efendi, the current Hafız-i kütüb Mahmud Kemal, with the date 11 Eylûl 1950 and the Mütevelli Vekili Ali, dated 27 Zilkade 1369/10 Sept. 1950

42 This information was provided by in a personal interview with the author by Ferdevs Hanım, niece of Şeyh Süleyman Kaşlıoğlu, Shaikh of the Murad Reis Tekyesi and Müfti of Rhodes. Şeyh Süleyman died in 1974.

43 End section of 1923 *Fihrist* Catalogue, page 129. The statement is signed by Rodos Müftüsü Şeyh Süleyman Kaşlıoğlu, by the Rodos Cemaat-i Islamiye Reisi Sadettin Sami, and by the Mütevelli Vekili, Mahmud Kumanyacı, with the date 20 June 1963.

Then there is the fact that various printed volumes have found their way to the top shelves when it is obvious that these works, given their publication date, could not have been part of the library's original collection. Some volumes clearly represent additions and replacements of books that are missing, as the two Kur'āns that have replaced two missing *An'ām ash-sharīf*s. But others, such as multi-volume printed works, clearly do not fit this category.

How this free-handed intervention in the organization of the Library came about and who was responsible for it is an open question. There is some evidence, however, that leads to a specific individual. Şeyh Abdullah was shaikh of the Murad Reis tekye. Concurrently, he was librarian for the Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library for almost forty years (or possibly longer) until his death in 1909. Virtually nothing is known about his life; but there are two colorful incidents that are worth retelling.

That he was acting librarian as early as 1873 comes from the fact that in that year he befriended Ebüzziya Tevfik and Ahmed Midhat, two journalists from Istanbul who had been exiled to Rhodes. Not long after their arrival on the island, Şeyh Abdullah paid the two distinguished prisoners a visit in their new quarters, a small structure that had been built into the wall of the Old Town that was located down the street from the Library. During the time Şeyh Abdullah spent with them in their confined quarters, he regaled them with lectures on the *Shifā' ash-sharīf* of Ibn Sīnā and the life and works of Kāḍī Mīr,[44] subjects on which he was well-qualified to discuss. Before leaving, Şeyh Abdullah may have noticed a book Ebüzziya was reading, a work entitled *A Million Mistakes in French Grammar*. When queried why he was reading it, Ebüzziya replied that the book helped to distract him from his horrid place of confinement, where scorpions and spiders as big as his hand came out from the walls at night.[45] Taking due note of his literary interest, Şeyh Abdullah returned with a volume of *Durrat al-Ghawwāṣ* from the Library, a book on mistakes in Arabic often made by the well-educated. Ebüzziya found the work taxing and difficult to get into, especially when listing mistakes in grammar, and finally he had to put it down. It was only then that he discovered to his surprise that the book was written by none other than Harīrī, the celebrated author of the fabled *Makāmāt*.[46]

Another notable incident occurred toward the last years of Şeyh Abdullah's life when he received a distinguished visitor to the tekye of Murad Reis. While Victor Emmanuel was still heir-apparent to the throne of Italy, he came to Rhodes in 1900 and paid a visit to the tekye. He noticed the bits of cloth and kerchiefs suspended around the catafalque-like structure over the grave of Murad Reis, and asked Şeyh Abdullah the meaning of them. The shaikh responded that owing to the sanctity of Murad Reis' tomb, the faithful came to pray there and left pieces of clothing as a remembrance of their visit in the hope that they would achieve their desire in whatever they prayed for. Sceptical, Victor Emmanuel wondered if Şeyh Abdullah ever witnessed any miracle the saint had performed. Being both clever and wise, the shaikh had a ready answer. He asked "Isn't it the clearest sign of sanctity to compel such a prince as yourself to visit his tomb? You too will attain your desire." By curious coincidence, while he was still on Rhodes, Victor Emmanuel discovered that his father, Umberto I, had died, and that he had been declared king of Italy on 9 July 1900.[47]

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44 Mithat Cemal Kuntay, *Namık Kemal, Devrinin İnsanları ve Olayları Arasında*, vol. II (İstanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi, 1949), 443. GI 451, SI 812. Abū 'a. al-Ḥu. (Ḥ) b. 'Al. *b. Sīnā* al-Qānūnī, gest. 428/1037. –18. *Kitāb ash-Shifā'*. GAL GII 210, SII 294. Ḥu. b. Mu'īnaddīn *al-Maibudī* Qāḍī Mīr Manṭıqī, gest. um 904/1498. –2. *al-Hidāya*, Einleitung in die Philosophie. –3. *Sharḥ Ḥidāyat al-ḥikma*.

45 Kuntay, *opera citato*, 434.

46 Ibid., 443-4.

47 The story is recounted by Celalettin Rodoslu in his *Rodos ve İstanköy Adalarında Gömülü Tarihî Similar* (Historical Personages Buried on the Islands of Cos and Rhodes) (Ankara: Çankaya Matbbası, 1945), 18-19.

Şeyh Abdullah died on 18 Muharrem 1327/Wednesday, 20 January 1909. His successful long career as a shaikh and scholar was marred by the tragedy of his three daughters having predeceased him. While the information about his personal life is virtually nil, this appied to his professional life as well: there is no mention on his grave stele of his being *hafız-ı kütüb* for the Library. He wished only to be remembered as shaikh (*postnişin*) of the tekye primarily and as *nakibüleşraf*, chief of the Descendants of the Prophet on Rhodes. He also wished to be remembered as a learned scholar and a cultured shaikh. A biography of the life of this important figure for the history of Rhodes still awaits further research.

A scholar of the first order, Şeyh Abdullah main interest was in *Falsafa*, Islamic Philosophy. He wrote a translation and commentary on al-Abharī's *Kitāb al-Īsāghūdjī*, an adaptation of Porphyri's *Eisagoge*. He is also said to have collaborated with 'Abidīn Pasha in his translation of Djalāladdīn Rūmī's *Mathnāwī* from Persian to Ottoman. This however is doubtful since it is known that 'Abidīn Pasha published his translation of the *Mathnāwī* in 1886 when he was governor of Ankara. It is evident from the works sent to the Library by illustrious officials and scholars that during much of his tenure as head librarian Şeyh Abdullah was well-connected to people in high places. He received publications from two governors of the Province of the Archipelago,[48] 'Abidīn Pasha and Nazım Pasha, from Süleyman Rahmi Bey and Cafer Paşa el-Çerkezi both from the ruling class of Egypt, and from Sultan 'Abdülhamid II.

It also may well be that during his long tenure in office, in consideration of Şeyh Abdullah's probity and scholarly attainments, there was no longer need for a committee to meet yearly to inspect and individually count all the volumes one by one in his presence. There is no evidence of a separate register in the Library recording a yearly official inventory. In fact, there is only one instance of this record keeping by a committee headed by the lieutenant-governor of Rhodes, and that was on 21 Receb 1261/26 July 1845.[49] In this official declaration, fifteen volumes were said to have been missing at the time. This recording took place at a time when the Library and its staff were experiencing financial difficulty.

Some seven years later in 1852, Ahmed Fethi Paşa, the son of Hafız Ahmed Ağa, was compelled to take over the foundation of his father to place it on a firmer financial foundation. It is possible that due to financial constraints, during the last half of the nineteenth century an assistant librarian was considered redundant and during that period of time Şeyh Abdullah was acting alone as head librarian. As librarian of the Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library for almost half a century, Şeyh Abdullah saw himself as more than just a custodian serving patrons of the Library. The circumstance of being free from supervision would have given him the liberty to put his own stamp on the Library's collection, and through his corrspondence and personal contacts with scholars and high officials to make the Library renowned throughout the Levant.

Interference in the original order of the volumes placed in the Library by the founder was not without precedent; there is some evidence of personal intervention having occurred in the Library before. On page 175 of the first *1795 Catalogue*, there is an entry that Ömer Rasım Efendi, a former cashier of the treasury (*Defterdar Kesedarı*),[50] had made vakf and placed in the Library the following number of books. A published three-volume translation of the Arabic dictionary *Kamus* [51] from Arabic to Ottoman, and a single published volume of a translation to Ottoman of the Persian dictionary entitled *Burhan-ı Katî'*.[52]

48 *Cezayir-i bahr-ı sefid vilayeti*.

49 As stated on the last page (p. 175) of the first *1795 Catalogue*.

50 Ömer Rasim Efendi was probably Defterdar Kesedarı for the Province of the Archipelago (*Cezayir-i Bahr-ı Sefid Eyaleti)*.

51 An Arabic to Ottoman translation by Mütercim Ahmed Âsım of the Arabic dictionary of Fīrūzābādī entitled *El-Okayunusü'l-basıt fî tercemeti'l-Kamusi'l-Muhit,* published in 3 vols. in İstanbul 1814-17.

52 A Persian to Ottoman translation by Mütercim Ahmed Âsım of the Persian dictionary *Burhan-ı Kati'* entitled

Both translations were by Mütercim Ahmed Âsım. The date that these two pious donations to the Library were made is recorded as 25 Rebiyülâhır 1246/13 October 1830. Of the two works, the *Tercüme-i Burhan-ı Kati'* published in İstanbul in 1214/1799 is listed in the *1995 Catalogue* in the Lugat category as sıra no. 658 (p. 52). The three-volume Arabic-Ottoman translation of the *Kāmūs al-muḥīṭ* of Fīrūzābādī is not recorded, however. It is probable that the work disintegrated over time due to overuse. But the fact that the Ottoman translation of the *Burhan-ı kati'* appears as part of the inventory of the original collection of Hafız Ahmed Ağa is evidence that both works were placed in the first tier of the Founder's collection. Ömer Rasim Efendi's bequest appears to have been the first and an isolated instance during the first half of the nineteenth century of published works that were later donations to the Library finding their way onto the shelves of the original collection reserved for bound manuscript copies of the founder.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, under his stewardship of the Library Şeyh Abdullah was to increase this activity by placing a number of donated printed volumes in the shelves set aside for Hafız Ahmed Ağa's collection. And he must have done so for the same reason. To his mind, these works should not have been consigned to the bottom row of bookshelves where they would be lost among an undifferentiated mass of volumes. They deserved pride of place on the top shelves because of their importance and the fact that they were given by high-ranking and distinguished benefactors.

A number of examples of this irregular activity can be found in the *1795 Catalogue*, the first catalogue of the Library. On the bottom of page 30 of the catalogue, in his own hand and signed with his signature, Şeyh Abdullah states that in the year 1324/1906 he placed in the Library ten volumes of the commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī entitled *Irshād as-sārī fī sharḥ al-Bukhārī* by Kasṭallānī. The work, which was published ın Būlāk in 1288/1871-2, was donated by Süleyman Rahmi Bey, a member of the Egyptian ruling class and resident of Rhodes. A six-volume publication of *Tafsīr Rūḥ al-bayān* by İsmā'il Hakkı printed in Istanbul in 1187/1773-4 was donated by Süleyman Rahmi Bey as well.[53] Separately, yet another ten-volume copy of the *Irshād as-sārī* of Kasṭallānī published in 1302/1884-5 was donated to the Library by Çerkes Cafer Paşa.

A certain Cafer Bey (the same Cafer Paşa from Egypt?) is known for having made a pious donation in the Fıkh category to the Library. According to Hafız Celaleddin Müftizade, the author of the two 1923 catalogues, Cafer Bey gave the Library a three-volume edition of *Şerhu Ahkamu Şeria* by Muhammed Zeyd el-Elbani, published in Egypt in 1903. Although registered with No. 861 as a later addition to the Library and described as *mühürsüz*, without the seal of the founder, it is listed in Celaleddin Efendi's inventory of the original collection and given vakıf numbers 121, 122, and 123 beyond the 120 official volumes comprising the Fıkh/Fıkıh category.[54] The 1923 *Fihrist* Catalogue gives a vakıf number, No. 124, for a translation of a gloss by *Ṭahṭāwī* on the commentary by *Shurunbuālī* on his *Nūr al-īdāh wa-nadjāt al-arwāh*.[55] In addition to the three printed volumes of *Sharḥ al-aḥkām ash-shari'a* by al-Albanī, the *1995 Catalogue* lists *Şerhu Gureru'l-Ahkam*, a commentary on the *Gurar al-aḥkām* of M. b. Farāmurz b. 'A. *Mollā Khosraw* in Ottoman, 927 pages, printed in 1258/1842-3, and *Fetavayı Ali Efendi*, a printed work in Arabic, 337 pages, without a series number. These unauthorized additions to the original collection were in the Fıkh category alone.

Tıbyan-ı nafi der terceme-i Burhan-ı Kati', published as a single volume in İstanbul, 1799. See "Âsım, Ahmet, (Mütercim)," *Türk Ansiklopedisi*, iii: 448-9.

53 Süleyman Rahmi Bey died in Rhodes in 1309/1891-2, and was buried in the cemetery of the tekye of Murad Reis. His grave is in the first row of graves to the left of the mausoleum of Murad Reis beginning left to right.

54 1923 *Fihrist* Cat. p. 163:

55 Brockelmann, GAL. GII 313. Abu'l-Ikhlāṣ Ḥ b. 'Ammār al-Wafā'ī *ash-Shurunbuālī* al-Ḥanafī, Professor in al-Azhar in Kairo, st. 1069/1658. –4. *Nūr al-īḍāh wa-nadjāt al-arwāḥ*, die Gottesdientlichen Pflichten. –Cmt. a. v. Verf. *İmdād al-fattāḥ*, verf. 146/1636. Auszug: *Marāqi 'l-falāḥ*, gedr. K. 1305, 1308, 1321. –Glosse. v.Shihābaddīn A. b. M. *aṭ-Ṭahṭāwī*, (*Sharḥ Marāqi 'l-falāh*) gest. 1233/1818; gedr. Būlāq 1269, 1279, K. 1304, 1318.

On page 40 of the *1795 Catalogue* Şeyh Abdullah wrote that in the year 1324/1906 the governor of the Province of the Archipelago Nazım Paşa made vakf and placed in the Library a number of works on the Islamic sciences of Siyar, Taṣavvuf and Tarīkh. In the Siyar category of the Islamic sciences, two works have been added: *Şerhu Kaside-i Dimyatiyye* (Anon.) and the collection of commentaries *Şerhu Kaside-i Nuniyye, Şerhu Kaside-i Munferice,* and *Şerhu Kaside-i Tantaraniyye*. While these two works are listed in the two 1923 catalogues, the *1995 Catalogue* and the *Resimli Katalog,* they are not recorded in the vakfiye listing nor in the first *1795 Catalogue*. According to the *1995 Catalogue* (p. 54), *Şerhu Kaside-i Dimyatiyye* is *mühürsüz* (without the founder's seal). Nevertheless, the *Resimli Katalog,* No. 461, Kayıt no 22 (p. 244) has Şerhu Kaside-i Dimyatiye as having the founder's seal: Hafız Ahmed Ağa *Kütüphanesi mühürleri vardır*.

Apart from these works, the authors of the *1995 Catalogue* list the following in the Tafsīr category as later additions to the Library. Sıra no. 78: The aforementioned *Tefsir Ruhu'l-beyan*; Sıra no. 79: *Tefsiru Kadı Beydavi* li Kadi Beydavi; Sıra no. 80: *Tefsīru Sure-i Yusuf ilel Ahzap* (No. 859, *mühürsüz*). At the end of the Ḥadīth category, apart from the two mentioned ten-volume commentaries by al-Kasṭallānī, there are two published volumes of the *Buhari-i Şerif* donated to the Library by Sultan Abdulhamid II. It should be noted that all of these donations occurred during Şeyh Abdullah's tenure as librarian, and they all have been placed in the upper shelves reserved for the Library's original collection of 828 volumes. Added to this, the large circular seal of the founder that has been stamped on all of the original volumes to identify them as part of the donation of Hafız Ahmed Ağa has been used repeatedly on volumes that are later donations to the Library. Because of the additions by later donors and the misuse of the founder's seal, it is impossible to know by examining them on the shelves which books are part of the original corpus of volumes. Furthermore, Şeyh Abdullah has added his own translation from Arabic to Ottoman of the *Īsāghūdjī* of al-Abharī as the last work at the end of the Manṭik ilkh section of the original *1795 Catalogue*.[56] (p. 117, the last entry). This makes the reader believe that the study is part of the original collection. In point of fact, in order to avoid confusion, it should have been placed on the opposite blank page with an explanation that the work is an addition to the founder's collection written by the head librarian. Finally, it is alarming to find that Şeyh Abdullah had taken the liberty of writing a marginal commentary in one of the original volumes, to which he had signed his name.[57]

Arrangement of the Order of the Classificatory Headings and the Sequence of Books

In the first years since the Library's opening in 1793, it may be assumed that the arrangement of the books must have followed the original vakfiye list and the order of the first *1795 Catalogue* which is virtually the same as that of the vakfiye. Over the course of the nineteenth century—and it is not possible to determine when—the order of the categories in the Library changed. Why this was done is not clear. It may have been due to the personal preference of the head librarian, or the priority of those members of the ulema from the Library's annual committee to review the books, or it may have been the decision of the founder's son, Ahmed Fethi Paşa. The new arrangement of the classificatory headings might have come about when the books were placed in cartons for their protection; when that was done, however, cannot for the present be determined. The *Resimli Katalog,* on the other hand, does not follow the order of the categories as presented in the two 1923 catalogues; for whatever reason,

56 *Terceme-i İsaguci*. *1795 Catalogue,* p. 117, entry 58, the last entry in the category Kütübü'l-Mantik ve'l-Hikme ve'l-Hey'e ve'l-Adab. This work is missing from the Manṭik ilkh category

57 The following is from the 2010 *Resimli Katalog*. *Resimli Kat.* No. 231, Kayıt no. 86/12 (p. 123): *Semeretü'l-Fuad ve Tuhfetü'l-İbad vallahi'l-Müveffiki'l-Hadi ile'r-Reşad* (*Aşerete Ehadis*) by Abdurrahman b. Abdüllatif b. Yahya el-Hüseyni, Arabic, in the nesih script, 35 lines to the page and leaves 114b-118b. Eser ve müellif adı mukaddimeden alındı. 117b-118a sayfa kenarlarında Abdullah er-Rodosi imzalı Türkçe bazı açıklamalar vardır.

the authors of the catalogue have given a different order. That order in all likelihood was not their own but was that of the volumes as they encountered them. The original order presented in the vakfiye list and the *1795 Catalogue,* followed by the order found in the 1923 catalogues, the *1995 Catalogue,* and the *Resimli Katalog,* are given here in transliterated Ottoman to show the contrasting varying arrangement of the classificatory headings in the Library over time. The number of the classificatory headings, under which the Kur'ān is listed is twenty. This number is misleading, however, since several sciences have been grouped together. There are two instances of this grouping: Kalām (Theology), has been added to 'Akā'id (Articles of Faith), while Ḥikmet (Philosophy), Hai'a (Astronomy), and Adab al-Munāẓara (the Art of Dialectic) have been added to Manṭik (Logic). Adding these individual intellectual disciplines makes a total of twenty-four headings, including the religious ones, not twenty. Why this grouping was done is not clear; but since this arrangement is found at the outset in the vakfiye listing and first *1795 Catalogue,* it is retained here as a matter of consistent form that has been maintained throughout all the catalogues. In spite of the reader's awareness that the total is twenty-four, the number of classificatory headings remains twenty, with the Kur'ān.

The first *1795 Catalogue* follows the vakfiye order of the categories, except for the case where Kirā'āt comes after Tāfsīr instead of Aḥādīth. The present catalogue follows the order of the categories in the *vakfiye* and specifically the *1795 Catalogue*.

Within each category the books have been numbered with a numeral in Arabic on the top side of the carton. In the middle of the carton a short descriptive title of the volume has been inscribed on a label, a title which usually does not differ from the vakfiye entry or that found in the first catalogue. It is important to note that with the rearrangement of the order of the categories, the order of books within a category changed as well. What this meant was that it was no longer possible to follow the order of books presented in the first *1795 Catalogue* or in the original vakfiye list. At some point in time over the course of the nineteenth century, a new catalogue must have been created (if not several) to correspond to the new order, but no other inventory between 1795 and 1923 has thus far been located.

The earliest catalogues that reflect the new order are two hardbound registers in the Ottoman script dating from the year 1923. A second catalogue in transliterated Ottoman based in part on the 1923 catalogues, but also on the first 1795 register, was made as recently as 1995. Anyone encountering the contents of the Library today would assume that what he sees is the original order of the volumes, and indeed it would be difficult to assume that it had ever been arranged in any other way.

Naturally, the most sensible thing to do for anyone contemplating making a recording of the Library would be to simply follow the present order of volumes. But there are problems in doing this. The basic problem is that it would be impossible to know the exact number of books Hafız Ahmed Ağa bequeathed to his library. Apart from this, it would also not be possible to know how many volumes were missing from this original list, and how many had been added, for it is now known that a number of books that bear the founder's seal were not part of the original collection. The only way to have answers to these questions is to have recourse to the original vakfiye list and the first *1795 Catalogue*. Such a task involves recreating the original list, which entails adhering to the order of the classificatory headings and the order of the volumes within each category found in the vakfiye and in the original *1795 Catalogue*—in fine, recreating the founder's collection as it was. This is the method that has been adopted for the present study. However, that recreation can only remain on paper since a major physical reordering of the contents of the Library would entail changing the sequence of the categories and the books within each category, an undertaking which cannot be seriously contemplated at this time.

From what has been described in the vakfiye thus far, it is apparent that Hafız Ahmed Ağa went to great lengths to ensure that none of the volumes in his collection would be lost or stolen. What did occur, however, was something that he may not have entirely forseen. Some works were more popular than others, and in greater use and demand. Over time, due to the wear and tear of constant use, a

number of volumes began to become loose from their binding, and consequently became unusable. It may be imagined that the patchwork repair performed by local bookbinders only went so far, and, inevitably, despite the repair, some books simply disintegrated over time due to excessive use.[58] As a result of constant use and the humidity of Rhodes, books can dissolve to the point of becoming virtually unusable within the space of a few years, and this is the fate of many books today. The eventuality of having to repair volumes was something that was anticipated by the founder. Apart from revenue for the repair of buildings within the Library compound, Hafız Ahmed Ağa stipulated in his vakfiye that money was also to be set aside for the restoration of books. But in spite of this foresight and good intention, repeated repair could not prevent the inevitable dissolution of books over time to the point they ceased being usable. A noted example is the fate of two *An'ām ash-sharīf*s that were part of the Kur'ān collection. Although recorded in the two 1923 catalogues, they are not listed in the *1995 Catalogue* and are presently missing.

Configuration of the Library

As for the configuration of the Library, it is divided into two high-ceilinged rooms with lofty cupolas. The rooms are separated by a wall with two large wooden doors and two iron-barred windows on either side of the doors. The actual library where the books are housed is located in the second room to the rear. The book room of the library consists of two free-standing bookcases connected by two wooden arches for stability. Each bookcase has three rows of interior and exterior glass-door cabinets with each row comprising seven cabinets, making eighty-four cabinets in all. The founder's collection begins at the end of the bookcase immediately on the right as the visitor enters the Library proper. At the end of the top third row of cabinets is the glass-door cabinet housing the Kur'āns. The problem of creating an accurate inventory at once presents itself in any effort to establish an exact record the Kur'āns. Scholars engaged in a straightforward attempt to catalogue the library's holdings will inevitably encounter confusion if they assume that the two basic divisions of the collections has been adhered to, and this confusion begins right with the first category of the classificatory headings, the Kur'āns.

To begin with, it is immediately apparent that the cabinet is a jumble of Kur'āns of various sizes, as exemplified by one Kur'ān that is actually pocket-sized and was made for a seaman. It is obvious from their lack of the founder's seal that these Kur'āns do not belong to the third-level upper tier of the bookcase; rather, they belong to the bottom level as subsequent donations to the Library. If the original vakfiye list and later catalogues are consulted, it is discovered that there are two volumes of an *An'ām ash-sharīf* (Tr. *En'am-ı şerif*), a collection of verses from the Kur'ān, that are listed in the 1793 vakfiye, in the first *1795 Catalogue*, and in the two 1923 catalogues. Nevertheless, they are missing in the *1995 Catalogue*, and are currently not in the Library. To make up for this loss, some time after 1923 two valuable Kur'āns that are bound illuminated manuscripts have been added to the list of Kur'āns. These two Kur'āns do not have the founder's seal and are from the collection of later donations to the Library. However, in order to maintain the original number of volumes in the Kur'ān category, they have been included in the list of Kur'āns. The total number of six Kur'āns has been maintained until the *1995 Catalogue* compiled by Hüsnü Özer and Ali Çakır. It has not been adhered to by the authors of the 2010 *Resimli Katalog*, however, who have recorded no

58 Messrs. Hüsnü Özer and Ali Çakır, the two exceptional scholars from the General Directorate of Religious Foundations in Ankara responsible for compiling the *1995 Catalogue*, have carefully noted in the comment section of their ledger those books that have seen repair (*tamir görmüş*). The authors of the *Resimli Katalog* have done so as well.

less than seventeen volumes in the Kur'an category. The reason for this is that the compilers of the *Resimli Katalog* recorded each volume as it was found in the bookcase cabinets, without, evidently, consulting the previous catalogues too closely as a guide, if at all.

Because of the need to maintain the number of works within a category, the replacement of original works with others that do not have the same title and author creates problems in innumerating the books in the Library. This practice is evident in the first category that comprises Kur'āns. The total number of Kur'āns listed in the first *1795 Catalogue* is six. It has been noted that while the two *An'ām ash-sharīf*s have been recorded in the vakfiye list, in the first *1795 Catalogue*, and in the two 1923 catalogues, nevertheless they are not recorded in the *1995 Catalogue*. Their absence reduces the Kur'ān category to four volumes in the *1795 Catalogue*, but to three Kur'ans in the *vakfiye* list owing to the fact that a two-volume Kur'ān with the commentary in Ottoman by Abu'l-Laith in the margin is counted as one item in the vakfiye inventory. There is a discrepancy right from the beginning then between the vakfiye list and the first *1795 Catalogue*.

The Resimli Katalog

Apart from the vakfiye list, the *1795 Catalogue*, the two 1923 catalogues, the *1995 Catalogue*, and the present study completed as a rough draft in 2001, a most welcome addition to the catalogue collection of the Library has been the appearance of a color photographic publication entitled *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafız Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi Yazma Eserler Kataloğu* (hereafter cited as *Resimli Katalog*) prepared by Bekir Şahin and Faruk Ağartan with the assistance of Mikail Bayram and Mehmed Tığlıoğlu. The work was published in Istanbul in 2013 through IRCICA, the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture centered in the Yıldız Palace complex in Beşiktaş, Istanbul, and is available for downloading on the Internet through Academia.edu.

The *Resimli Katalog* is a virtually flawless scholarly production in which any detail concerning the volumes housed in the Library can be found. This includes color photographic reproductions of the following: the cover of a volume, the first two pages of the work, a side of the carton housing the book showing the number of the book within a category, and a label on the side of the carton with a descriptive title of the work. Particulars about the volume are then provided such as the complete title and full name of the author, both in the Arabic script and in Ottoman transliteration, the number of lines per page, the total number of leaves, the name of the calligrapher who made the copy and the date and location where the work was copied, full dimensions of the volume, and a detailed physical description of the condition of the book, including whether or not it has seen repair. Further details are provided such as the previous owners of the work, when stated, or from signet seals, and a color photograph in illuminated manuscripts of the *mihrabiye*, the artistic colorful design over the first page in the shape of a *miḥrāb*.[59] In fine, the description of each volume is exhaustive as well as accurate. It should be added that a welcome feature unique to this study is the inclusion of listing the authors and titles in various collections of treatises (*mecmua*). All previous catalogues have simply provided a general title that covers the entire collection of essays within a volume without identifying the individual treatises on the subjects or their authors. The *Resimli Katalog* is the first catalogue to provide an itemized inventory of all the treatises in a given collection (*madjmū'a*)

If there is any drawback to this study, as a minor criticism it is the fact that as a published book it is primarily of interest to scholars who are bibliographers of works in the sciences and those of classical Islamic literature, whether in Arabic, Persian or Ottoman. Further, while the full names of authors and titles are provided in the Arabic script, they are transliterated into Ottoman using the modern Turkish

59 The prayer niche in a mosque or mausoleum (*türbe*) indicating the direction of Mecca.

alphabet which corresponds to Latin characters with a few modifications. The Ottoman transliterations of author and title give the appearance of taking precedence over the Arabic as they are written in large letters.[60] What is provided for the reader then is a transliteration in Ottoman, not in Arabic, of the Arabic titles and authors. The catalogue follows therefore all previous catalogues, whether in Ottoman in the Arabic script or transliterated Ottoman as in the *1995 Catalogue*. There is no univerally recognized transliteration style for Arabic as found in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* or in Brockelmann's *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*. The fact remains, however, that the majority of the titles in the sciences are in Arabic. For the benefit of the community of scholars at large, they should as a matter of course be transliterated with an Arabic transliteration system. The present study attempts to fulfill this need.

Added to this, in the *Resimli Katalog* the biographies of Hafız Ahmed Ağa and his son Ahmed Fethi Paşa are brief, comprising little more than a few paragraphs, and they are written in Turkish, which limits the readership to Turkish scholars primarily, and secondarily to scholars of Turkish and Ottoman—that is, mainly to scholars of Turkish and Ottoman as languages within the field of Islamic Languages and Literatures. Precise as the recording is, there is no presentation on how the Library and the buildings within the larger library compound were to be used according to the stipulations laid down by the founder in his vakfiyes, nor is there a study of the vakfiyes themselves. Further, there is no analysis of the material in the Library or how it has come to be catalogued, no introduction to each category of the sciences, and no biographies of eminent authors which would be of considerable interest to the reader. Once again, given the nature of the catalogue, its readership is limited primarily to the scholar with a knowledge of Turkish specializing in biblographical recording of mainly the Islamic sciences—a fact which narrows the market for this kind of work considerably.



60 The small point size of the Arabic script may have been due to an economy of space since the full names of authors and titles of their works are usually found to be long.

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"In one of our long email chains with Tarık Tüten, I wrote: 'I began to think that Hafiz Ahmed Agha's soul somehow finds me.' After my very late realization, I suspected that the places I frequently visit that are very close to my home, such as the mosque in Karacaahmet built by him or the Fethi Pasha Grove, once belonged to his son. Now I am writing an article about the inventory that was so close to his heart that he prayed not to miss a page in the future; God forbid (ma'āzallāhü ta'ālā)! Therefore, it is a privilege and a debt to be part of this Conversation, which is, among other things, a reverence for his donations, starting with the beautiful library he built in Rhodes. I would like to thank the people who made this possible, especially Tarık Tüten, who was always on hand to answer my questions and provide the necessary documents and corrections at every stage of this article. His friendship is one of the indirect 'endowments' of Hafiz Ahmed Agha to my life. My dear professor İsmail Erünsal also contributed to this study with his 'field-constituting' research on Ottoman libraries and catalogs, and also with our 'conversations' in another library, İSAM."

Elif Sezer-Aydınlı

Founding Inventory (*Defter*) of Ahmed Agha Library in Rhodes
Text, Context, and Para-Text

Pour qu'une chose soit intéressante, il suffit de la regarder longtemps.
(Anything becomes interesting if you look at it long enough)
Gustave Flaubert[1]

It was on the news of 2 July 1991 that two missing Qurans were put on preview at a renowned auction house for 2 billion liras in London. These books –a Mamluk Quran dated 1427 and an Iranian Quran dated 1555– were stolen from Ahmed Agha Library in Rhodes in November 1990.[2] Fortunately, Interpol seized the manuscripts following the auction and returned them to the library in Rhodes. This was one of the rare unpleasant events - closing with a happy end - that the original manuscript collection of the Ahmed Agha Library with its 828 core bound volumes endowed in the 18th century has gone through while being preserved in an exemplary way until today. As opposed to many of its contemporaries, the collection succeeded standing ahead in its original building and in the hands of the founding family with minor missing elements thanks to the registration and preservation programs of many people in its history starting from its donator/founder Ahmed Agha to the chief librarians (*hafız-ı kütüb*), local religious leaders (imams, muezzins, muftis), members of the Islamic community (*cemaat-i İslam*), trustees, and deputy trustees up until today.[3]

This article scrutinizes one of the most crucial documents in Ahmed Agha Library's history of preservation: its founding inventory that is still in the library's collection. Alongside the comparisons with the proceeding inventories or with the inventories of other contemporary libraries, I will particularly focus on this inventory book with a holistic approach. As a veneration to the centuries-long legacy of this beautiful library and as a contribution to the field of Ottoman book culture, I will discuss the content, physical aspects and registers on the inventory after contextualizing its patronage and function.

Context: A Typical 18th Century Inventory of Books

Regarding the detailed discussions of other articles in this edited book on the biography of the founder Ahmed Agha (ca. 1740-1801) and the founding history of his library, I will be settled for the historical context of this inventory in particular. It is registered today as *Fihrist-i Kütübhāne-i Hāfız Ahmed Ağa* with a registration number of 441 although the inventory itself does not bear a title.[4] Missing a title page is not highly probable since all pages of the inventory are numbered and the book list starts on the page numbered as 1 (١).

As its title, date of the inventory is also ambiguous although one may speculate that it should be on the year of 1793 -just before 18th November of this year- which is the writing date of the addendum (*zeyl*) of Ahmed Agha's endowment deed (*vakfiyye*) that mentions an inventory (*defter*). Although it is

1 Letter to Alfred Le Poittevin dated 16 Sep 1845.

2 *Cumhuriyet*, 2 July 1991, p. 16.

3 There is a notebook (*fihrist)* in the library including a dozen of inventory registers by these people in the 20th century. *Defter-i Vukuāt ve Fihrist-i Kütüphane-i Hafiz Ahmed Ağa,* Rhodes, Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library, MS Donations 442 and 443.

4 *Fihrist-i Kütübhāne-i Hāfız Ahmed Ağa*, Rhodes, Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library, MS Donations 441.

not certain that this is the exact mentioned inventory, Ahmed Agha's seal pressed on the middle of each of two corresponding pages on the inventory and almost identical classification systems, titles and qualifications of books with this addendum suggest that this must be the founding inventory (*defter*) of the library.[1] Lack of a title and colophon may also be caused by the designation of the document as a suffix to the endowment deed and as a trustable check-list for the annual inventories. Thus, the scribe did not deem it necessary to assign a separate title, an introductory part to explain the applied classification system or context of patronage, or a colophon on the inventory itself.

As already mentioned, the very first list of the endowed books is present in the addendum (*zeyl*) of the library's endowment deed originally penned on 26 February 1792 preceding its addendums dated 18 November 1793, 13 July 1796, and 8 July 1808.[2] In the addendum of 18 November 1793 copied by the inspector of endowments (*müfettiş-i harameyn-i şerifeyn*) Mehmed Münif Efendi, the books endowed by Ahmed Agha are listed with some of their physical aspects. The list starts with the phrase - from the mouth of Ahmed Agha: "I put [them] to the closets of the mentioned library from my own purchase and property [*kendi malim ile iştirā ve kütübhane-i merkume dolablarına vaz' eylediğim*...]"[3] Then the books are listed consecutively as embedded in the text without any title or sign of categorization, Figure 1-2.



Figure 1: Ahmed Agha's endowment deed dated 26 February 1792: *Vakfiyye-i Rodosī Ahmed Ağa*, Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, MS Yazmalar B.260, f. 1b-2a. The booklist starts on the page 34a.

1 This inventory is referred to as the *1795 Catalog* including in the library's website www.hafizahmedaga.com

2 See: VGMA 743/37/11, 743/79/26, 743/153/36, 743/159/37 for the endowment deed and addendums besides *Vakfiyye-i Rodosī Ahmed Ağa*, Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, MS Yazmalar B.260.

3 In this article, I benefited from the transliterations of the endowment text and its addendums from *Rodosi Ahmet Ağa Fethi Paşa Vakıfnamesi.* This is an unpublished source from the archive of Hafız Ahmed Ağa & Ahmed Fethi Paşa Vakfı archive.



Figure 2: The endowment deed dated 18 November 1793. The book list starts in the middle of the left page after a panegyric introduction to its patron. VGMA 743/79/26.

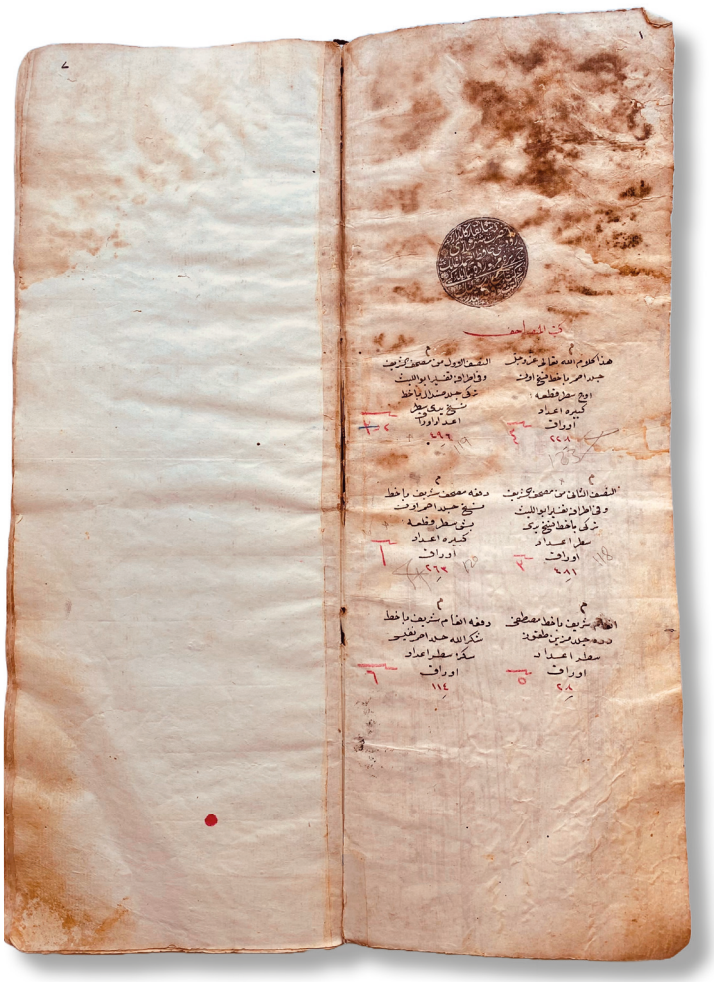


Figure 3: The seal of Ahmed Agha first appears on top of the first section of books, Qurans [*kütübü'l-mesāhif*], f. 1-2 (The pages of the inventory follow single page numeration; thus, they will be referred to accordingly in this article). *Demirbaş Defteri*, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library.
Photo: T. Tuten

After the book list that will be analyzed later, the passage written in Ahmed Agha's voice is crucial for understanding the function of the founding inventory:

> ...each year when the month of muharrem arrives, the scholars and notables and the gentry of the mentioned island should gather in the mentioned library, and they should survey the bound volumes in the mentioned library one by one according to the signed and sealed inventory (*defter*). They should be circulated and repaired and put in their place again. God forbid, if there is even one page missing from the mentioned inventory (*defter*) or the mentioned books were replaced by another book, the librarians and their guarantors should compensate and replace it...[4]

Firstly, the physical evidence on the inventory proves that this is the *mümzā* (signed) and *mahtūm* (sealed) *defter* mentioned in this paragraph. As seen in Figure 3 and Figure 4, there are Ahmed Agha's seals on the inventory twenty-six times situated in the middle of corresponding pages.[5] Double (just for two times) or single time pressed seals are situated on the corresponding pages (except for the first page). Without exception, each section of the book bears the seals, but a section could also have seals for two distinct corresponding pages, especially if

4 ...ve beher sene māhı muharram'ül-haram duhūl eyledikde cezīre-yi mezkūrenin ülema ve āyān ve ekābir ve ağniyāsı kütüphāne-yi mezkūrede cem' olup hākim-i belde huzūrunda kütüphāne-i mezkūrede mevzu' kütüb-i mücellide mümzā ve mahtūm defteri mantukunca yegān yegān tatbīk olunarak devir ve ta'dād ve yine yerlü yerine vaz' olunup ma'āzallāhü ta'ālā defter-i mezkūrdan ancak bir verak noksan bulunub yāhūd kütüb-i mezkūre tebdīl ile yerine āher kitab vaz' olunmuş bulunmak ihtimāli olur ise hāfız-ı kütüb efendilere ve küfelāsına ala-eyyi-hālin tazmin ettirilüp yine yerine vaz' ettireler... Translations are mine if not indicated otherwise.

5 The seal reads: "These are the books endowed by the former *rikābdār* (lit. stirrup-holder) of the Sovereign Sultan, Hafiz Ahmed Agha of Rhodes to the library he built up in the aforementioned island [*sābikan rikābdār-ı hazret-i şehriyārī Rodosī Hāfız Ahmed Ağa'nın cezīre-i mezbūrda binā eylediği kitābhānesinin kütüb-i mevkūfesidir*]."

this section is relatively long such as the hadith section. The function of these seals, as also stated clearly in the endowment deed, is demonstrating the legal status of the document and preventing the (God forbid! [*ma'āzallāhü ta'ālā'*]) loss of pages from the inventory.

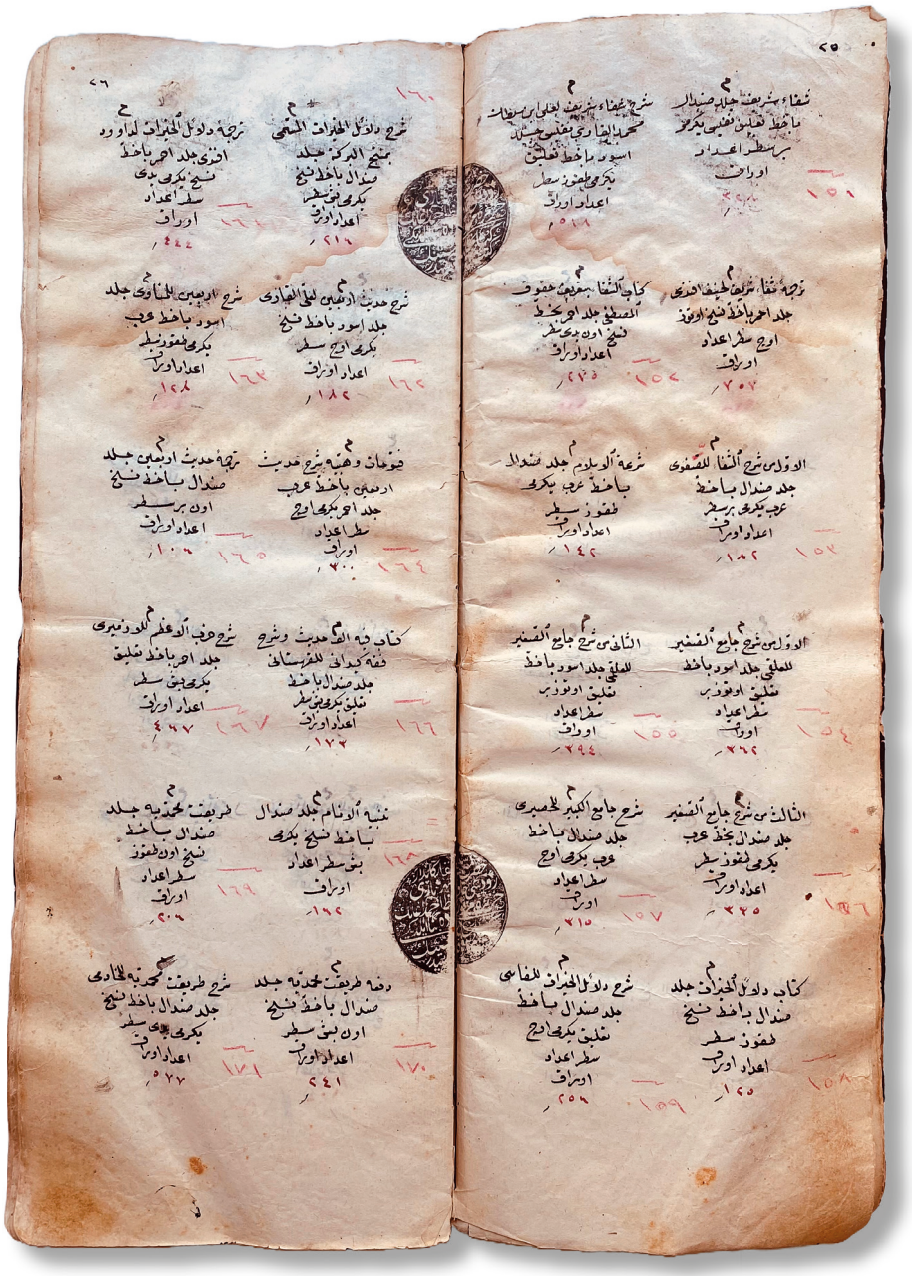


Figure 4: Double-time pressing of the seal in the middle of corresponding pages under the hadith books (*kütüb-i ahādis-i şerīfe*), f. 25-26.
Demirbaş Defteri, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library. Photo: T. Tuten.

Apart from the physical evidence, the parallelism in the order of scientific classes and book entries also strengthens the function of this document as a founding inventory. The inventory follows the order in the endowment deed, except for the case where Quranic recitations (*kıra'āt*) come after exegesis (*tefāsīr*) instead of hadith (*ahādis*).[6] The order of entries under each title also show a remarkable similarity. As a sample for this similarity, the following chart show the order of books under the title of literature mentioned as "from the science of literature (*fenn-i edebiyāttan*)" in the endowment deed, and titled as "the books of literature (*kütübü'l-edebiyyāt*)" in the inventory:

Endowment Deed (*Vakfiyye*)	**Founding Inventory (*Defter*)**
Esāsü'l-iktibās	Same
Makāmāt-ı Harīrī	Same
Şerhü'l-makāmāt li'ş-Şerīşī	Same
Ravzātü'l-ahyār	Same
Şerh-i dīvān-ı mütenebbitü'l-Vāhidī	Same
Dīvānü'l-Mütenebbī ve Dīvān-ı Ebu İshak	Same
Kāmilü'l-Müberred	Same
Dürretü'l-Gavvās li'l-Harīrī	Same
Hamāse fi'l-edebiyye	Same
Yetimetü'd-dehr fi'l-edebiyye	Same
Riyāzü'l-inşā li'l Hāce-yi Cihān	Same
Şerh-i dīvān-ı hāfız li's-Sūdī	Same
Dīvān-ı Hāfız bā tertīb-i Sūdi Efendi	Same
Şerh-i dīvān-ı Hāfız li's-Surūrī	Same
Şerh-i dīvān-ı Hāfız li's-Surūrī	Same
Gülistān ve bostān li'ş-Şeyh Sūdī	Same
Li's-Sūdī	*Şerh-i Gülistān-ı Sūdī*
Şerh-i Gülistān ve bostān li's-Surūrī	*Şerh-i Güistān-ı Sürūrī ve şerh-i bostan-ı Surūrī*
Şerh-i bostān li-ş Şemi'	Same
Kitābü'l-ikd fi'l-edebiyye	*Kitābü'l-ikd fi'l-edebiyyetü'l-Ferīd-i ibn-i Abdürabbih (the author's name seem to be inserted later)*

6 For a comparison of all library's catalogs in terms of the order of classifications, see John R. Barnes' article in this volume. Ottoman scholar John R. Barnes' in-depth study on Hafız Ahmed Agha Library in Rhodes was originally published in Greek in *Δωδεκανησιακά Χρονικά*, περιοδική επιστημονική έκδοση της Στέγη Γραμμάτων και Τεχνών Δωδεκανήσου, Τόμος ΚΣΤ' (Rhodes 2014), 333-90; and Τόμος ΚΖ' (Rhodes 2017), 963-1043. The abbreviated version of this remarkable piece of work in this volume is the first publication in English with the kind permission of the author and the editor of *Δωδεκανησιακά Χρονικά*.

Şerh-i şebistān li's-Surūrī	Same
Tuhfetü'l-harameyn li Nābī Efendi	Same
Külliyāt-ı divān-ı Sāib	Same
Divān-ı Örfī-yi Şirāzī	Same
Divān-ı külliyāt-ı Şevket	Same
Şerhü'l-lāmiyeti'l-Acem li's-Safedī	Same
Şerh-i nihāyet-i İbn-i Hācib ve şerhü'l-hazreciyye ve Endülisī	Same
Şerh-i hazreciyye li'd-Demāminī ve's-seyyīd	Same
Nefhatü'r-reyhāne	Same
Dīvān-ı Sāmi	*Kitāb-ı Divān-ı Sāmi*
Dīvān-ı Münif	Same
Divān-ı Hilālī ve Vecdī ve Neşātī	Same
Hayriyye-yi Nābī Efendi	Same
Şerh-i bostan li's-Sūdī	Same
	Fakihetü'l-hulefā
Yevākitü'l-mevākid li's-Se'alebī	Same
Mecmu'a-yi arūz	Same
Mecmu'a-yi keşkül	Same
Şerh-i kitābü'ş-Şihāb fi'l-edebiyye	Same
Şerh-i risāle-yi İbn-i Zeydūn	Same
Mecmu'a-yi Şefīk	Same
Şefiknāme	Same
Hilye-yi hākānī	*Hilye-yi hākānī aleyhi rahmetü'l-bārī*
Sa'atnāme	Same
Münşe'āt-ı Takiyüddin bi lisanü'l-Arab	Same
Divān-ı Külliyāt-ı Vehbī	Same

As seen in the chart, the order of the entries is almost identical except the insertion of *Fakihetü'l-hulefā* in the inventory and some minor differences in the definition of some books such as *Kitābü'l-ikd fi'l-edebiyyetü'l-Ferīd-i ibn-i Abdürabbih* instead of *Kitābü'l-ikd fi'l-edebiyye, Kitāb-ı Divān-ı Sāmi* instead of *Divān-ı Sāmi,* and *Hilye-yi hākānī aleyhi rahmetü'l-bārī* instead of just *Hilye-yi hakānī* in the endowment deed.

Descriptions of books are also very similar, if not identical. As a sample, the following chart shows the order of the entries and physical definitions in the section of Qurans (*kütübü'l-musāhif*):

Endowment Deed (*Vakfiyye*)	Founding Inventory (*Defter*)	Today[7]
Kebīr kıt'a nesih hat ile on üç satır ikiyüz yirmi sekiz kağıtta bir kıt'a mushāf-ı şerīf	*Hazā kelāmullah-ı ta'ā'lā 'azze ve celle cild ahmer bā hatt-ı nesih on üç satır kıt'a-yı kebīre a'dād-ı evrāk 228*	Existent
Iki cildde nesih hat ile yedi satır ve etrāfı Ebu'l-leys tefsīri tahrīr olunmuş mushāf-ı şerīf	*El-nısf-ı evvel min mushāf-ı şerīf ve fī etrāf-ı tefsīr-i Ebu'l-leys-i Türkī cild sandal bā hatt-ı nesih yedi satır a'dād-ı evrāk 496*	Existent
Nesih hatla on beş satırda ve ikiyüz altmış üç kağıtlı bir kıt'a mushāf-ı şerīf	Different order	Existent
Already mentioned as 2 volumes	*El-nısf-ı sānī min mushāf-ı şerīf ve fī etrāfı tefsīr-i Ebu'l-leys-i Türkī bā hatt-ı nesih yedi satır a'dād-ı evrāk 481*	Existent
Different order	*Mushāf-ı şerīf bā hatt-ı nesih cild ahmer on beş satır kıt'a-ı kebīre a'dād-ı evrāk 263*	Existent
Mustafa dede hattile nesih dokuz satırda yirmisekiz kağıtlı müzeyyen bir kıt'a enām-ı şerīf	*Enām-ı şerīf bā hatt-ı Mustafa Dede cild mezin tokuz satır a'dād-ı evrāk 28*	Non-existent
Şükrullah hattile nesih sekiz satır yüz on dört kağıtta bir kıta nefīs enām-ı şerīf	*Enām-ı şerīf bā hatt-ı Şükrullāh cild ahmer nefīs sekiz satır a'dād-ı evrāk 114*	Non-existent

As seen in the chart, the only difference in the order of Qurans is on two volumes of Qurans with the exegesis of Ebul'l-leys-i Türkī which is registered together in the endowment deed. Apart from the order, the physical definitions of books look very much alike except the inventory gives extra information on the covers of pages (underlined on the chart) probably for easier navigation of the books during inventory. Unfortunately, two precious Qurans from the original Quran collection

7 According to *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafız Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi Yazma Eserler Kataloğu*, eds. Bekir Şahin and Faruk Ağartan (Konya: TİKA, 2010).

of the library, penned by two famous calligraphers of the city Amasya, Mustafa Dede (d.1438) and Şükrullah (d.1543/4) are lost today. The absence of these two *enām-ı şerif* are indicated also in the 20th century inventories.[8]

Despite this similarity in the order of sciences and entries, endowment deed and inventory were designed to serve distinct purposes. After the completion of the book list without any diacritical mark, the endowment deed announces -in Ahmed Agha's voice- the landing property of the library, then the teaching days, salaries of teachers and librarians, and the prohibition of any lending outside of the library.[9] Programs on praying and teaching in the 'agha-endowed,' individual (*müstakil*) libraries is nothing but typical in the 18th century Ottoman book culture looking at the endowment deeds of other libraries with the same character such as Yusuf Agha's library in Konya or Hacı Selim Agha's library in Üsküdar from which Ahmed Agha seems to be inspired while establishing his library.[10] We learn that these programs of Ahmed Agha were well applied in the following years from the travel account of Edward Forbes written fifty years after the establishment of the library. He flatters the education on the island and in the library by saying there were one hundred and fifty students from the madrasa and higher schools funded by the bequest of Ahmed Agha as he learned from the chief librarian at that time, "a true book-worm Mehemet Effendi."[11]

On the other hand, the founding inventory does not have any clue of these functions on the document itself. As already said, it lacks any part for the reason of writing (*sebeb-i telif*), or an introductory part as well as any colophon to inform on the name of the scribe, date, and place of writing. Therefore, although it is a separate document, the inventory could be envisioned as a legal appendix to the endowment deed, but this time, instead of showing the grandeur and generosity of the endower, the aim was forming a checklist for the future librarians and prominent figures (*eşrāf*) of the island to detect any possible absence of books.

Other possible functions of a catalog as a practical tool to locate the books on the shelves should be listed out considering that there are no location numbers on the inventory.[12] It was also not

8 For example, the inventories in the years of 1955 and 1963, see: *Defter-i Vukuāt ve Fihrist-i Kütüphane-i Hafız Ahmed Ağa,* Rhodes, Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library, MS Donations 442, p. 125 and 129. They are not the same Qurans stolen and auctioned in London in 1990. They were the Mamluk Quran on top of the chart and the other one is not from the original collection but from later donations.

9 VGMA 743/79/26.

10 İsmail E. Erünsal, *Osmanlılarda Kütüphaneler ve Kütüphanecilik* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları: 2015), 233-5.

11 This passage deserve to be quoted in whole, especially regarding the scantiness of accounts on the library from the 19th century: "In the town of Rhodes that Osmanlis have a public library, containing about one thousand volumes, and placed in a neat building erected for the purpose, founded about fifty years ago by Turbend Agasi Achmet Aga. We had an interview with the present librarian, Hadgi Mehemet Effendi, a highly intelligent old man, at his house, where we found him, buried among manuscripts, like a true book worm. He took much interest in the account of what we had seen in Lycia, and discourse, according to the learning of the East, on the ancient history of the country, as described in volumes around him. To the library in his charge, the students of the Madraseh or higher schools, have access. These students, about one hundred and fifty in number, are instructed, boarded, and lodged out of funds provided from private bequest [...] These facts show how our Turkish friends of Rhodes are to the value of instruction for the young." Edward Forbes, *Travels in Lycia, Milyas, and the Cibrratis*, v. II, London 1847, p. 6-7. I learned about this account from Erünsal, *Osmanlılarda Kütüphaneler ve Kütüphanecilik*, footnote 531.

12 For an excellent discussion on which signs on the catalogs might indicate the practical use, see Hirschler's study on the catalog of Ashrafiyya Library in the 13th century Damascus: Konrad Hirschler, *Medieval Damascus: Plurality and Diversity in an Arabic Library The Ashrafiyya Library Catalogue* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), p. 60-100.

organized as a lending library because only *in-situ* reading and copying books were allowed, lending books -even a single page to be read or copied- outside of the library was strictly prohibited by the endower.[13] Therefore, the title of "inventory" fits perfectly regarding the way this document has been organized by the patron and -in later centuries it has served- as an inventory for 'protecting the collection.' This function is typical to 18th century Ottoman catalogs called *defter*s which have started to be organized as separate documents while the list of endowed books was mostly given in the addendums of endowment deeds in the previous centuries."[14]

Text: Classification and Qualification of Books

As discussed in detail, the function of the founding inventory that was probably written in the year 1793 was neither to facilitate the navigation of books in the library shelves nor register the lending activities but "to correctly count and to place the books one by one [*mantukunca yegān yegān tatbīk olunarak devir ve ta'dād*]" in Ahmed Agha's words.[15] This function has an influence also on the content of the document in which the books were organized according to their subjects not to their locations or physical aspects to identify them during annual inventories.

Apart from being an 'inventory-catalog', the founding inventory of Ahmed Agha's library is typically subject-oriented since from the 15th century, organizing booklists according to their subjects was the most conventional and dominant method in Ottoman catalogs. As early as the reign of Murad II, in his endowment deed dated 1435, the books were listed according to their subjects (first exegesis and hadith). Or, after the conquest of Istanbul, in the endowment deed of Fatih Complex dated 1470, the order of sciences was exegesis, hadith, and jurisprudence although it lacks proper titles.[16] In the following centuries, the books have continued to be classified according to the Islamic sciences in the endowment deeds or in the individual catalogs despite some changes, insertions, and modifications of titles in time. For example, the eulogies constitute an individual title in the catalog of Turhan Vālide Sultan Library in the 17th century or in the catalog of Ragıp Paşa Library in the 18th century, the section of exegesis divides into two sub-sections as "the exegesis and commentary of Keşşāf" and "the exegesis and commentary of Kādī" that would be interpreted as the abundance of books under these sections.

The taxonomies of books in the catalogs deserve to be studied as sources for the field of classification of sciences.[17] Since they are organized according to the subjects, the library catalogs are crucial documents to illuminate the current classification of sciences in Ottoman scholarship. From this perspective, Berat Açıl interrogated the titles of books in three library catalogs from three

13 "Ber vech-i muharrer hāfız-ı kütüb ve müderris ve bevvāb ve müstahfız olan efendilerden her biri yevm-i Cuma ve Salı ve iydinden maada beher yevm kitabhāne-yi mezkūreyi tulu'-i şemsden vakt-i asra değin küşād idüb mütāli'in ve müstensihine iktizā eden kütübü ihrāc ve vakt-i asırda alub yine birine vaz' ve takfīl ve kemāl-i mertebe hıfz ve hirāset eyleyeler ve kütüb-i mezkūreden ancak bir varakı mütāla'a veyahud istinsah içün rehin veyāhūd āher bahane ile bir vechile kütübhāne kapusundan taşraya çıkarmayalar..." VGMA 743/79/26.

14 Erünsal, "Katalog," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, accessed online on 15.01.2025 https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/katalog. For an early example to individual catalogs in the Ottoman culture, see the voluminous and brilliant discussion on the inventory of Topkapı Palace Library penned by the librarian Atūfī (d.1541) in the 16th century: *Treasures of Knowledge: an Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/3–1503/4)*, eds. Gülru Necipoğlu, Cemal Kafadar, and Cornell Fleischer (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

15 VGMA 743/79/26.

16 Erünsal, "Katalog," accessed online on 16.01.2025.

17 For the current discussions and main sources of this field, see: Müstakim Arıcı, *İlimleri Sınıflamak: İslām Düşüncesinde İlim Tasnifleri* (İstanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2020).

distinct centuries, the catalogs of Mahmud Paşa (15th century), Habeşī Ahmed Ağa (16th century), and Fazıl Ahmed Paşa (17th century) libraries.[18] Although Açıl is cautious about the representativeness of these catalogs to all of their centuries regarding the personal choices of the endowers and the reason for endowment (such as education), the formation of new titles such as literature (*edebiyyāt*), or the increase in the books of history (*tārih/tevārih*), prophetic biographies (*siyer*), and hadith in the 17th century is a sign for a transformation in Ottoman library collections and scholarship. Looking at other Ottoman catalogs in the 18th century, the subject-oriented organization of books in the catalogs still seems the most common and dominant method. For example, the books in the catalogs of Sultanic libraries/ collections of Mahmud I (r.1730-1754), Ayasofya, Fatih and Galatasaray Libraries, or Ahmad al-Jazzar library in Acre were all classified according to their subjects although the number of titles varies.[19] This system has been applied in other collections such as İsmihan Sultan or Şehid Ali Paşa, or the libraries of 'aghas' as an increased phenomenon in the 18th century such as Yusuf Ağa, Hacı Selim Agha, or our Ahmed Agha.[20]

The collection at Ahmed Agha's library in Rhodes shares the same approach with its contemporaries by its subject-oriented taxonomy of books and by the diversification of titles. The following list shows the titles of sections and the numbers of books in each section:

Genre	**Title of Section**	**Number of Books**	**Blank pages afterwards**
Quran	*kütübü'l-musāhif*	6	3
Exegesis	*kütübü'l-tefāsir*	72	3
Quranic recitation	*kütübü'l-kırā'at*	27	3
Hadith	*kütübü'l-ahādis-i şerīfe*	110	4
Exhortations	*kütübü'l-mevā'īz*	23[21]	3
Prophetic bibliography	*kütübü's-siyer*	20	4
Dogmatics and theology	*kütübü'l-akā'īd ve kelām*	51	3
Jurisprudence	*kütübü'l-fıkh-ı şerīf*	120	5
Manners of jurisprudence	*kütübü'l-usūl-i fıkh*	22	4

18 Berat Açıl, "Fazıl Ahmed Paşa Koleksiyonu ve İlimler Tasnifi: Karşılaştırmalı Bir Deneme," *Darulfunun İlahiyat* 35 (1), pp. 129-152.

19 The studies on Ottoman catalogs are inspiringly developing. See: Yoichi Takamatsu, "I. Mahmud'un Kurduğu Üç Kütüphane: Ayasofya, Fatih, Galatasary Kütüphaneleri, in *Osmanlı Kitap Koleksiyonerleri ve Koleksiyonları: İtibar ve İhtiras*," eds. Tülay Artan and Hatice Aynur (İstanbul, Dergah Yayınları, 2022). In the same book: Hatice Aynur, "Vakfiyesine Göre İsmihan Sultan'ın (ö. 1585) Medresesine Bağışladığı Kitaplar;" Tülay Artan, "On Sekizinci Yüzyıl Başında Osmanlı Bilgi Üretimi ve Dağılımı: Yazma Eser Koleksiyonları ve Koleksiyonerler Arasında Şehid Ali Paşa'nın Yeri," *Müteferrika* 58, no. 2 (2020): 5–40. The latest study on Ottoman (ized) catalogs, see: *The Library of Aḥmad Pasha al-Jazzār: Book Culture in Late Ottoman Palestine*, eds. Said Aljoumani, Guy Burak, and Konrad Hirschler (Leiden: Brill, 2025).

20 For the increased involvement of the aghas into the Ottoman book culture, see: Zeren Tanındı, "Bibliophile Aghas (Eunuchs) at Topkapı Saray," *Muqarnas* 21 (2004): pp. 333-343.

21 This number is 24 on the website of the library.

Islamic law	*kütübü'l-ferā'iz*	14	2
Sufism	*kütübü'l-tasavvuf*	47	5
Rhetoric	*kütübü'l-me'āni ve'l beyān*	21	6
Dictionaries	*kütübü'l-lügāt*	35	6
Logic, philosophy, etiquette	*kütübü'l-mantık ve'l-hikmet ve'l-ādāb*[22]	57	5
Arabic grammar	*kütübü'n-nahiv*	45	6
Arabic grammar	*kütübü's-sarf*	17	6
Literature	*kütübü'l-edebiyāt*	46	6
History	*kütübü'l-tevārih*	52	5
Medicine	*kütübü'l-tıbb*	18	6
Astrology	*kütübü'l-nücūm*	24	1
Albums	*murakka'āt*	2[23]	5 blank pages before the end of the inventory

As seen on this chart, under 21 sections among which 3 of them are compound titles (exp. logic, philosophy and etiquette), there are 829 items in the inventory of which 22 are lost today.[24] The numbers of books that are not arranged in alphabetic order under jurisprudence (120 items) and hadith (110 items) outnumbered the following titles exegesis (72 items), logic& philosophy& etiquette (57 items), history (52 items), then dogmatics and theology (51 items). High numbers of books under the subjects of jurisprudence, hadith, and exegesis books are expected in any of the Ottoman catalogs since they are part of the madrasa education curriculum. But the section of history books in the inventory is worth focusing on, firstly because of the separation of history (*tevārih*) and prophetic biographies (*siyer*) which seems a 18th century phenomenon. Besides, 52 among 829 books is remarkable for the section of history. This portion contributes to the 'common wisdom' in Ottoman studies that the military men and bureaucratic class has gained a specific interest in

22 This title is written only as mantık on the website of the library.

23 There are three entries but the last one seem to be inserted later with a distinct handwriting. This title is not included on the website of the library but the title in the inventory seems original with its color and handwriting.

24 Total number is 828 on the website that is due to the number of exhortations books which is 24 on the website but 23 according to my counting from the inventory. The number of losses is according to the website of the library.

history among others such as literature (*edebiyāt*), Sufism (*tasavvuf)* and (*ādāb).*[25] One can assume the books under these sections especially reflect Ahmed Agha's personal reading choices since he clearly states that he purchased these books himself (*kendi malim ile iştirā),* so they are not part of the madrasa curricula.

Apart from the numbers, the content of books is crucial to see that Ahmed Agha who held top positions in the Ottoman bureaucracy followed the current publications of his time. Alongside the 'classical' history books such as the history of Taberī, *Mukaddime* of İbn Khaldun or Taşköprüzāde's *Şakāyık-ı Numāniyye*, the books written in the 17th and even 18th centuries are remarkable in Ahmed Agha's collection which might reflect his personal tastes, and the bestseller history books of the period. The history of Altıparmak, Cihād-ı Sadrāzam Fāzıl Ahmed Paşa, Katip Çelebi's *Takvīmü't-Tevārih* and *Cihannümā*, and the history of Naīmā are some examples for the 17th century histories while the history of Subhī, Nazmizāde's-*Gülşen-i Hulefā*, or the history of Rāşid are some examples of 18th century histories in the inventory. Two books under the history section are especially meaningful within a collection endowed to be stored in a library in Rhodes. One of them is the history of the island of Rodos (*Tevārih-i Feth-i Rodos*) written by el-Hacc Halīl Sofyavī, and the other is Kātib Çelebi's *Keşfü'z-Zünūn an Esāmi'l-Kütüb ve'l-Fünūn* which is registered only as *Esāmi'l-Kütüb*. The latter should have played a role in the categorizations of books on this inventory as it played a significant role in the Ottoman classification of Islamic sciences after the 17th century.

Finally, on its content, the inventory is typical also on the qualifications of books. For each entry, other than the title (mostly in its abbreviated version) and -sometimes- the author's name, the physical features of the book are indicated. This information has a documentary value for the field of book culture which developing towards the studies of the materiality of manuscripts.[26] The physical features given in the catalogs contribute to the art history on one hand, and the perception of Ottomans over the physicality of books. The studies on bindings in Ahmed Agha's collection are no surprise regarding the well-preservation of the books which can be supported by the written evidence in the inventory.[27]

In a typical entry which acts like an identity card of each book, firstly, the title of the book or the author's name (if the book is known by its author) is given. If it is a certain volume from this work, the entry also indicated the volume number at the beginning. The inventory tends to register each volume (*cild*) of a work separately. After the title and volume numbers, the entries continue in this order: the material and color of the binding, the type of script, the number of lines per page, and the total number of pages, as in this following example:

25 See: Hülya Canbakal, Meredith Quinn, and Derin Terzioğlu, "Book Ownership Across Centuries: The Case of Military Men in Bursa, 1620-1840," in *Crafting History: Essays on the Ottoman World and Beyond in Honor of Cemal Kafadar* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2023). This study on the book ownership of military men in Bursa according to their probate registers (1620-1840) has similar conclusions, also footnote 35 on this article for other studies on that 'common wisdom.' For the title of *edebiyyāt*, the authors say: "The term seems to have gained currency as a comprehensive descriptor for a multitude of literary genres only towards the end of the seventeenth century," p. 156. Berat Açıl had a similar statement in his aforementioned article: Açıl, "Fazıl Ahmed Paşa Koleksiyonu."

26 See the publications and activities of two prominent institutions: Center for Manuscripts Studies at Fatih Sultan Mehmed University and Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC) at Hamburg University.

27 For example: Ayşe Ergin, "Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafız Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi'ndeki XII. Ve XIII.Yüzyıl Ciltleri," M.A. Thesis, Necmettin Erbakan University, 2019.

Sa'di Çelebi ale'l-Beyzavī cild sandal bā hatt-ı nesih yigirmi tokuz satır ādād-ı evrāk 403	Sa'di Çelebi over Beyzavī binding is green, script is naskh, twenty-nine lines, number of pages 403

The colors of bindings throughout the inventory are yellowish green (*sandal*), red (*ahmer*) (Figure 5), brown (*mezīn*), yellow (*asfer*), colorful (*ebrū*) and black (*esved*). Types of scripts are *nesih, arab*, and *ta'lik* whereas the number of lines and total pages vary immensely as other records of the books' physicality/materiality while navigating the books during the inventories.

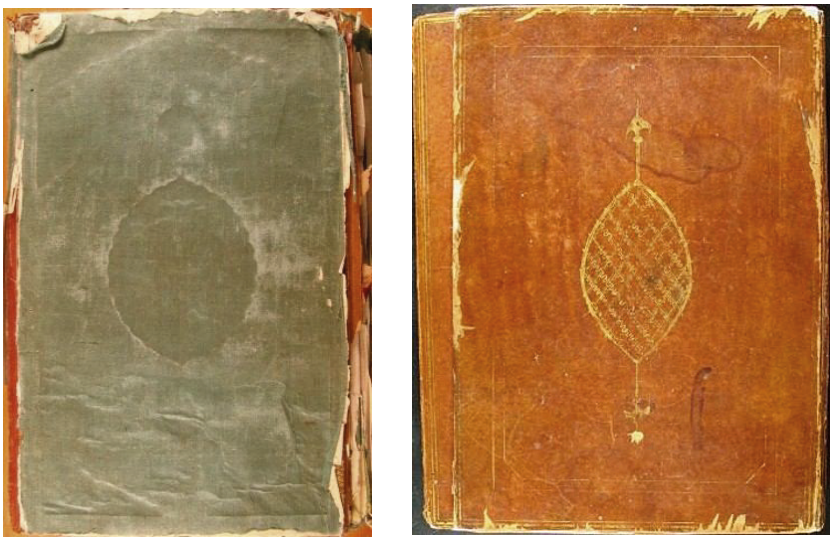


Figure 5: *Sandal* (left) and *ahmer* bindings on two Qurans from the original collection registered with the numbers 2 and 4.

Paratext: Triangles, Notes, and More

For book entries, the most remarkable aspect is their shape which is an inverted pyramid (see Figures 3 and 4) marked with total page number in red at the end. Although a detailed analysis and comparison to previous catalogs and other contemporary catalogs are required to have a concrete conclusion, this triangular shape was probably invented in the 18th century by the proliferation of individual catalogs to dissociate the entries from other textual parts and to facilitate navigation during inventories. See for example, Figure 6, 7, and 8 from the catalogs of Ayasofya, Ragıp Paşa, and Al-Jazzar libraries, respectively:

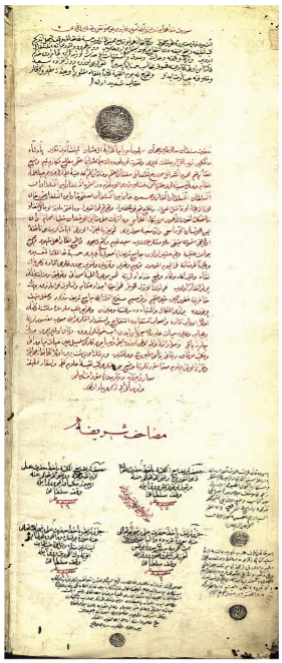


Figure 6: The first page of the inventory of the Ayasofya Library. Süleymaniye Library, MS Yazma Fihrist 25-2.

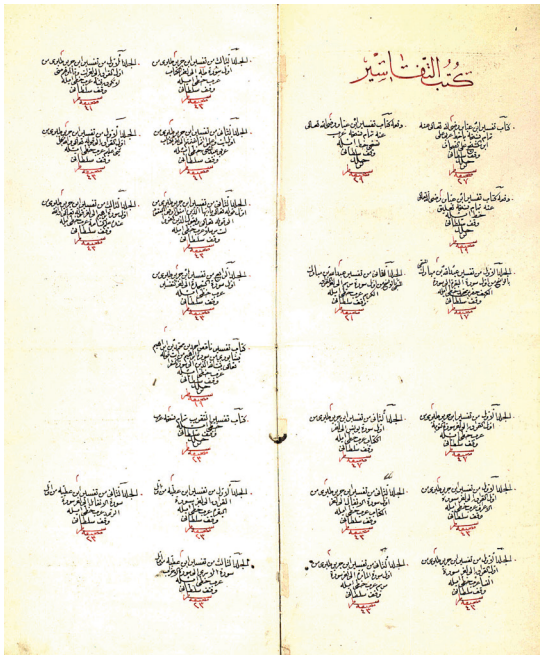


Figure 7: The first two folios of the inventory of the Ragıp Paşa Library. Süleymaniye Library, Ragıp Paşa 4111.

Except the page of Quran section which only has six entries and the end of other sections, pages in the inventory of Ahmed Agha library have two columns, and each column has six entries. Thus, a typical page totally comprises twelve entries, Figures 3 and 4. All of the entries are written in riqa script with black ink except the numbers showing the total number of books' pages in red which should be -again- for easy navigation.

Looking at other materialities of the inventory, it is in codex form with 432x150-340x105 mm measurements and bound with a border-lined (*zencīrekli*), burgundy, leather cover, Figure 9.

As opposed to the traditional way in Ottoman manuscript culture, not the folios but pages are numbered with Arabic-Indic numerals with the last page number 178. There are book entries only on 83 pages whereas the rest of the pages are reserved blank for future additions, or they are the front or back cover pages (*zahriye* and *vikāye*) that have some manuscript notes.

On the cover page and *zahriye* page, there are 'modern' seals in Latin alphabet that reads "The Foundation of Fethi Pasha Hafız Ahmed Agha Library Rhodes [*Fethi Paşa Evkafı Hafız Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi Rodos]*." After a blank page, there is a table of contents (*fihrist*) showing the first-page number for each section, Figure 10.

In this *fihrist*, apart from the original sections, there is a section titled "dictionary books endowed by Ömer Rāsim Efendi [*Ömer Rāsim Efendi'nin vakf eylediği kütüb-i lügat*]," Therefore, this *fihrist* should be added around 1830s regarding Ömer Rāsim Efendi was in Rhodes in the years 1828 and 30. Under the *fihrist*, there is a calculation that sums the page numbers for each section probably by a misunderstanding that the numbers display the total books for each section. The pray that reads

"O God, may your blessings and peace be upon us, you created our Master, our Master Muhammad, the soul of the body of the two universes, and upon his family and companions as numerous as your words" stands alone in the whole page preceding this *fihrist* after a blank page also resembles to the handwriting on the book entries.

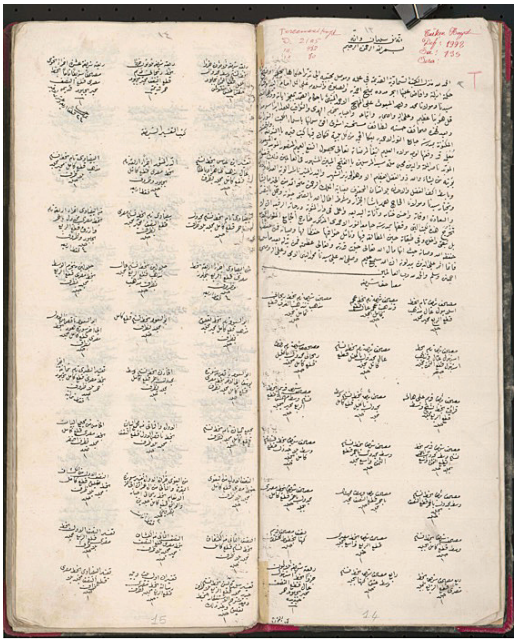


Figure 8: First pages of the Quran section in the inventory of Al-Jazzar library. Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü (Ankara), Defter 1626, 13-14.

Another note is on page 30 under the hadith section that tells the 10th volume of *Şerh-i Buhāri* was endowed in the year [1]304 with a signature that probably reads the name Ömer. Another endowment note that is almost-full page long stands on page 44 informs on Nāzır Nāzım Paşa's endowment of 10 volumes of the books under the titles Sufism and History.[1] On the last page (p.175) of the inventory is another endowment note that reads "these are the names of the books endowed to Rhodes library by Ömer Rāsim Efendi who was head of the financial department [*esbak defterdār kīsedārī Ömer Rāsim Efendi'nin Rodos kütübhānesine vakf ve vaz'eylediği kütübü-i mevkūfesinin esāmisidir*]" preceding the names of two books: *Kāmūs Tercemesi* and *Burhān-ı Kātı*.' Ömer Rāsim Efendi (1778-1846) whose name also appeared on the aforementioned *fihrist* was exiled to Rhodes in the year 1828 because of the report he presented to the Sultan on the Russian war. Therefore, his note dated 1831 should demonstrate his generosity towards the library he was acquainted with during this exile.

Last note on the same page is critical for deciphering some paratextual elements of the inventory. It tells that a new inventory was made after the chief librarian Mehmed Efendi passed away and Mehmed Nuri became the chief librarian, Figure 11. During this inventory, fifteen missing books were detected and were displayed over the catalog as present (*mevcūd*) or non-present (*lā-mevcūd).* The letters *mim* (م) seen on top of the entries are common to other Ottoman catalogs meaning present (*mevcūd*). The dots on *mim*s are probably marked during a following inventory. 17 entries in total don't bear *mim*s and some of them are marked with the letters *lamelif* (ال) meaning non-present (*lāmevcūd*). So, we understand these marks were made during the inventory of Esseyyīd Mehmed Nuri el-Hacc as he indicated on his note dated 21 Receb 1261 [27 July 1845], Figure 11. It is also the same Mehmed Efendi that Edward Forbes had a chat with on Hafız Ahmed Agha's library in the year 1847![2]

1 Probably the war minister Hüseyin Nāzım Paşa (1848-1913).

2 See footnote 16.

Lastly on the marks and signs, there are numbers that start with red ink then changeably continue with blue ink and pencil black in Arabic-Indic numerals near all the entries, Figure 12.

However, these numbers that ends with 843, are not in correlation with the numbers registered on the 20th century inventory book. In this book, the inventory dated 1341 (1923) is a list of books with their detailed physical features and there are two numeration system of books that are the endowment number (*vakıf numerosu*), and order number (*sıra numerosu*), Figure 12.[3] Therefore, these numbers on the founding inventory were probably put just to determine the total number of books in the founding inventory maybe by the hand of 1923 inventory-writer or by someone else.



Figure 9: Burgundy-leather, border-lined binding of the inventory, the *Demirbaş Defteri*, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library. Photos: T. Tuten.

3 *Defter-i Vukuāt ve Fihrist-i Kütüphane-i Hafız Ahmed Ağa,* Rhodes, Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library, MS Donations 442 and 443. In this inventory, two *enām-ı şerīf* which are lost today are present.

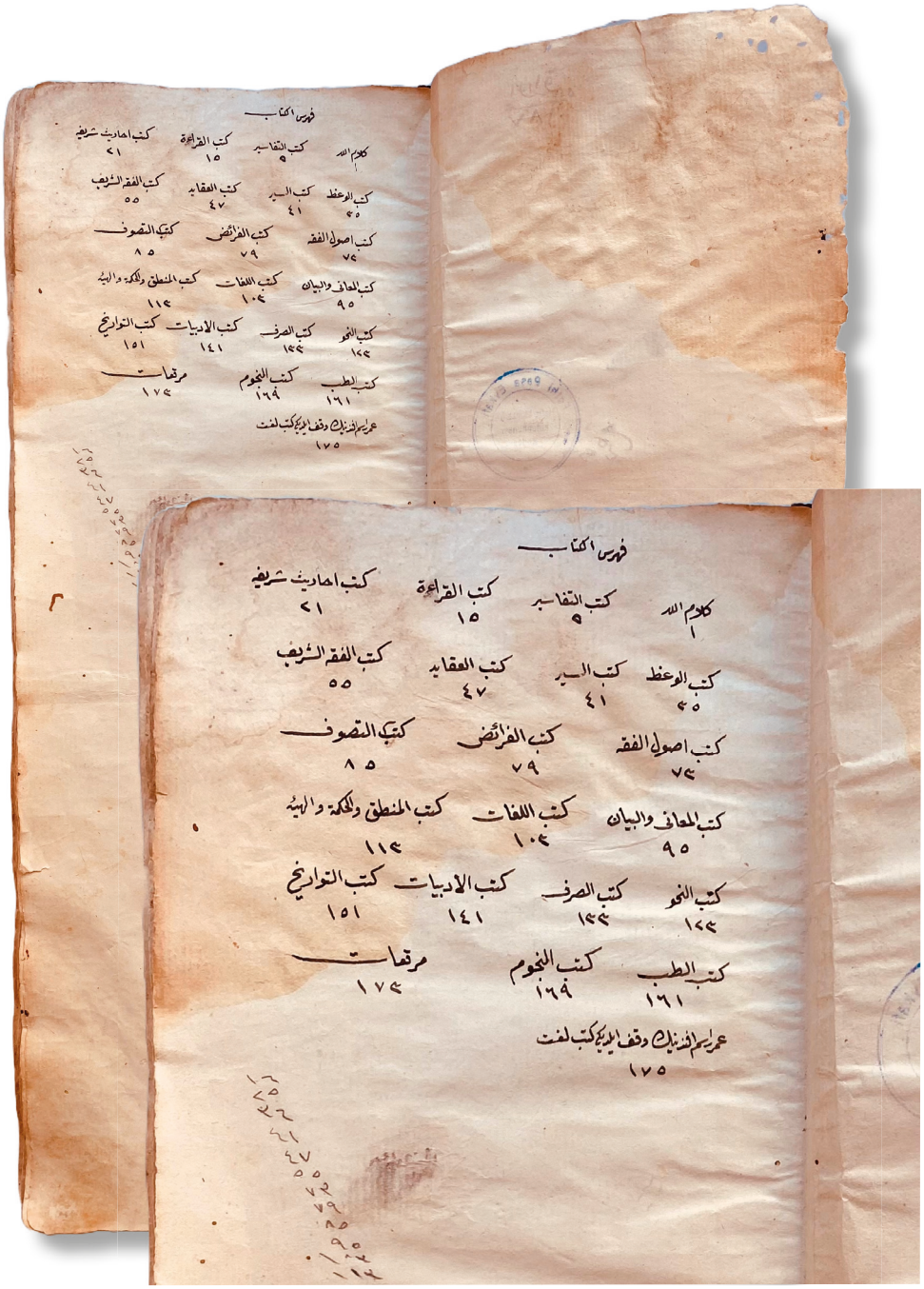


Figure 10: A table of contents (*fihrist*) showing the first-page number for each section, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, *Demirbaş Defteri*, Photo: T. Tuten.

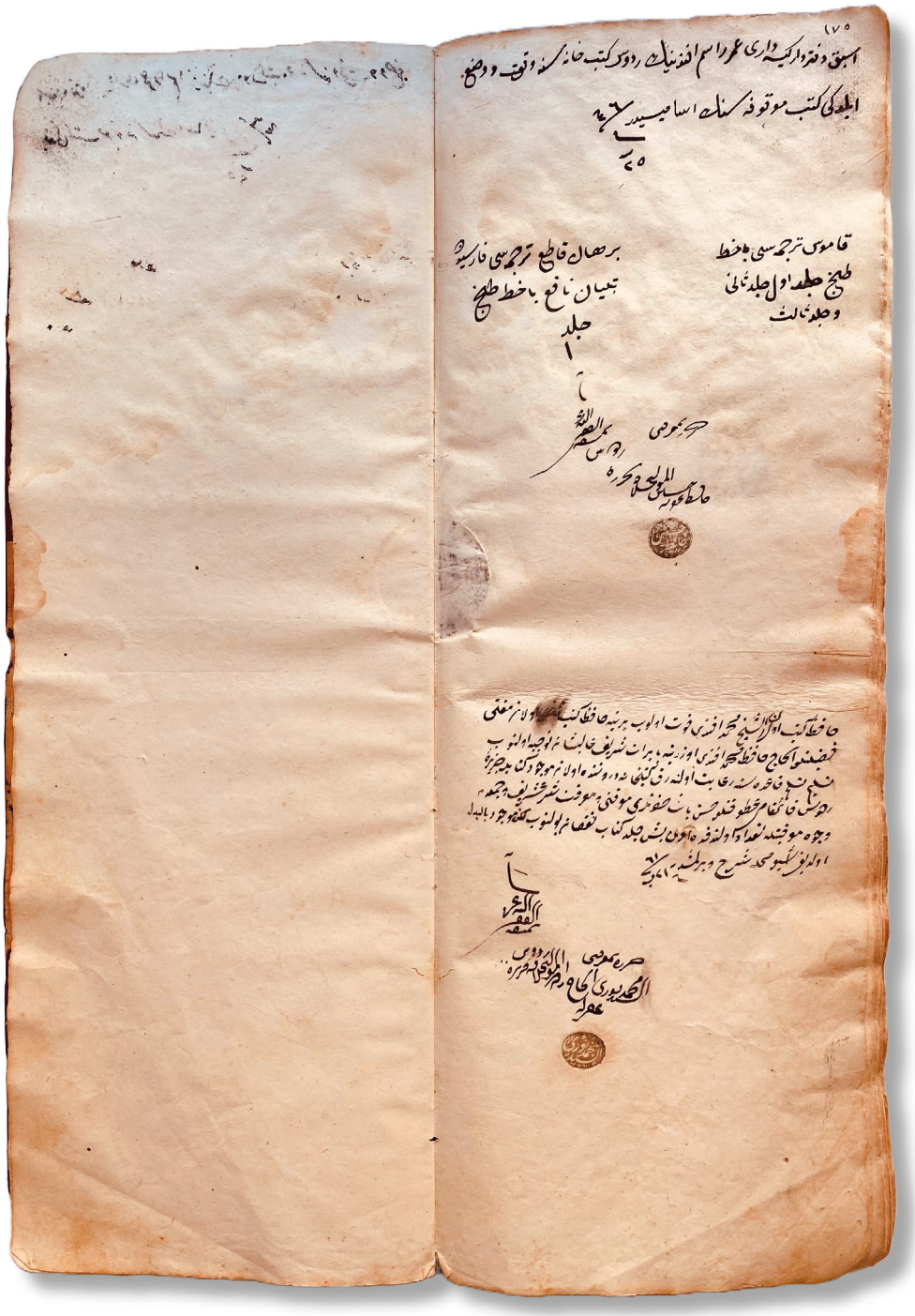


Figure 11: The endowment note of Ömer Rāsim Efendi and the books he endowed. The note on the lower right dated 1845 informs on the inventory made during the chief librarianship of Mehmed Nuri Efendi. Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, *Demirbaş Defteri.* Photo: T. Tuten.

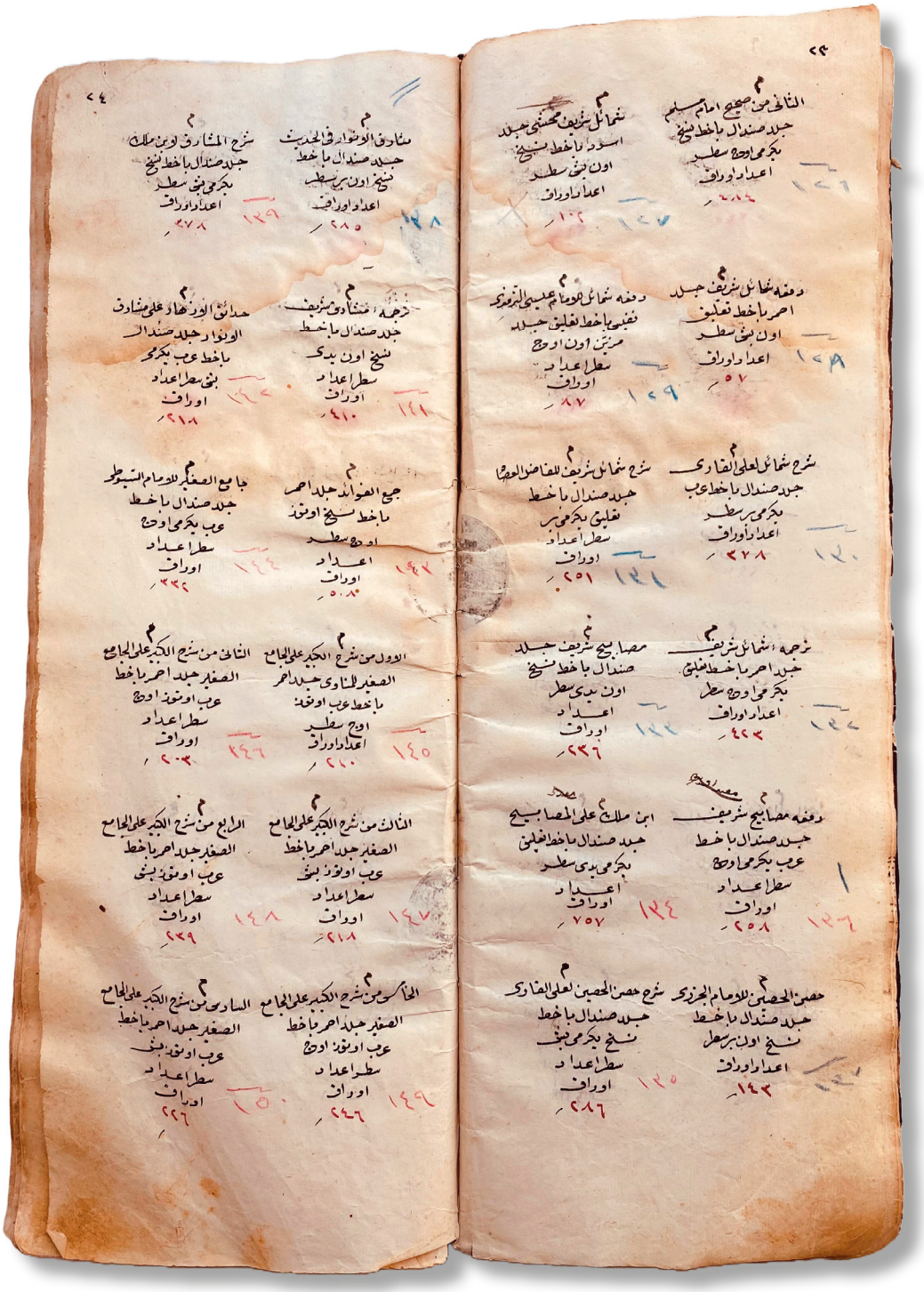


Figure 12: Consecutive numbers in blue and red inks on each entry, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, *Demirbaş Defteri*, Photo: T. Tuten

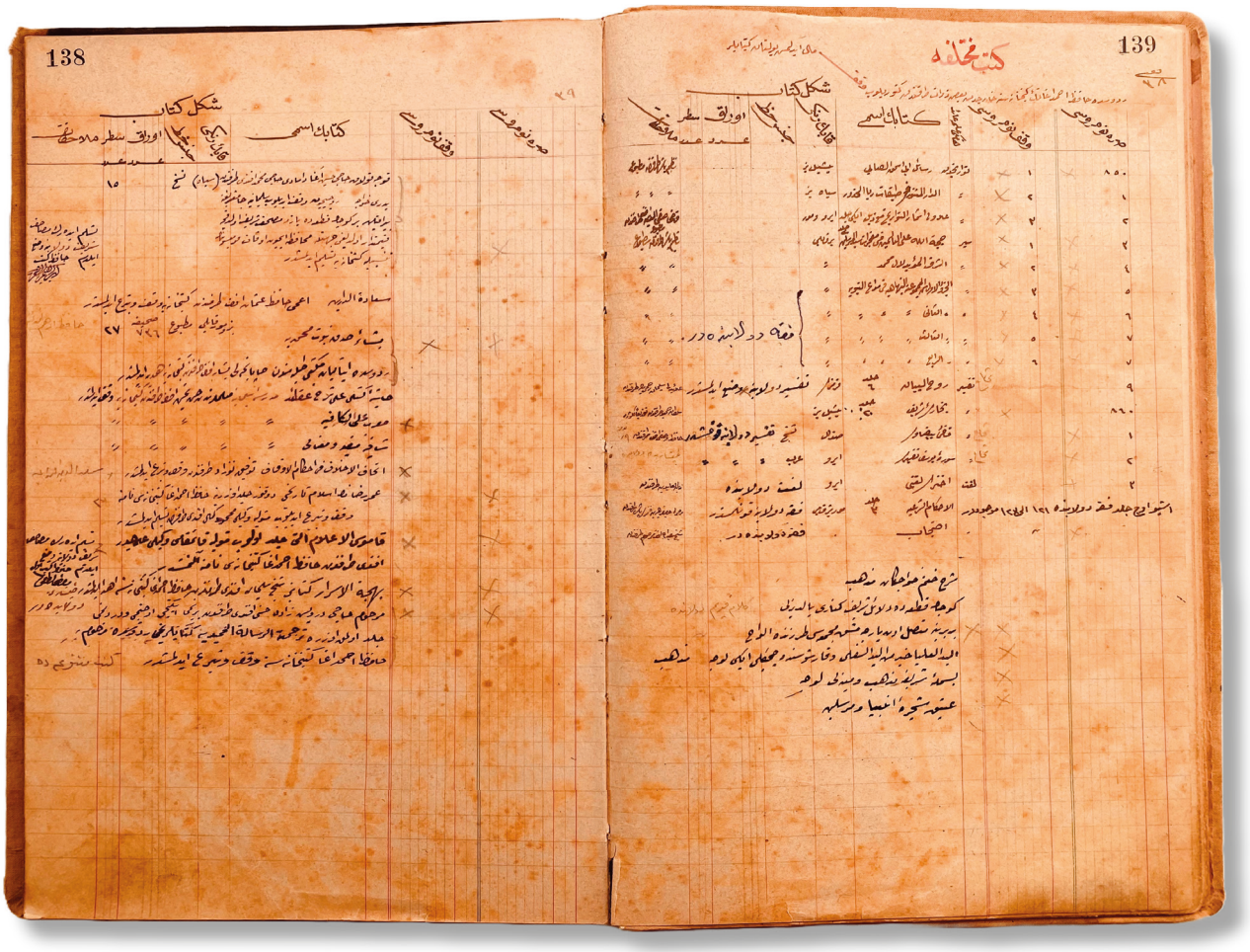


Figure 13: Two types of numeration systems on the 20th century that are not the same with the numbers on the inventory. *Defter-i Vukuāt ve Fihrist-i Kütüphane-i Hafız Ahmed Agha*, Rhodes, 1923. Photo: T. Tuten.

Conclusion

Turning back to our starting point, preservation was (and still is) the main motivation behind the inventories, from the first one to the ones registered on the 1923 inventory book. Despite some losses precisely over two hundred and thirty-three years, the founder of the library and endower of its collection, Ahmed Agha, has fulfilled his aspirations over the protection of his books. Unlike many others of their contemporaries, the books succeeded to stand in their original place and subjected to a diligent care by their protectors, chief librarians, at first but also the trustees, the local administrators, men of religion, and anyone from the islander community. Starting from the son of Ahmed Agha, Fethi Pasha (1801-1858) whose life and endowments deserve a distinct study, the donors carried this collection one step further than just protection by expanding the collection almost double in size until today.

As the development of literature on the Ottoman libraries, collections and catalogs has shown, the 18th century was a special period for the Ottoman libraries since they grew in number, expanded geographically and established/supported by the patrons from a more diversified administrative and social backgrounds. Ahmed Agha was one of the bibliophile aghas in this period who collected books by his own purchase and endowed them to the library he established in his hometown to primarily serve the students. He determined the non-negotiable rules and regulations of his library from the numbers and salaries of the librarians to the days of praying or lending prohibitions. One of them was about a signed and sealed inventory book (*defter*) of which even a page should not be lost and which should be used during the annual inventories. Like the teaching or praying functions assigned to his library, the function of this *defter* was also not uncommon in the 18th century Ottoman world as an item on the checklist to be approved by the patron himself and it was designed as a separate but attached document to his endowment deed.

However, remembering the epigraph I quoted from Flaubert, anything becomes interesting when you stare at it for a long time, because, in time, you realize the bits and pieces of something which are authentic and distinctive from its counterparts. This study stares for a long -but never enough- time to decipher the similarities and differences of this 'inventory-catalog' in terms of the definitions and classification of books, layout of the entries, shapes and colors dominant in the pages, and manuscript notes that whisper on the afterlife of the inventory. Looking closely on more of such catalogs will certainly illuminate their historical and cultural context besides contributing to the field of Ottoman book culture.

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VGMA 743/37/11; 743/79/26; 743/153/36; 743/159/37.

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Tefsir, Commentaries (left), *Tasavvuf,* Mysticism (center), *Hadis,* Hadith (right) sections.
Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library, Rhodes
Photos: T. Tuten

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"When Tarık Tüten first visited our Center for Manuscript Studies, I could not have imagined that I would develop such a close connection with the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Collection. What began as a formal institutional collaboration—and, admittedly, with a degree of reluctance—gradually came to occupy a meaningful place in my academic life. But the story did not end there; with my visit to the library and through the people I met, this relationship took on an even more personal and intimate character. It is not uncommon for historians, especially those whose research centers on a particular historical figure, to develop a sense of familiarity or even affinity with their subject. For me, that connection was established even before the research began, during my very first visit to the library. The hospitality and friendship I experienced on the Island and within the Library gave rise to a genuine sense of responsibility toward the legacy of Hafiz Ahmed Agha, as if I had become part of his extended family. This article, a preliminary exercise related to my doctoral dissertation, was written with deep affection and gratitude for all the friendships the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library has brought into my life."

Elif Derin

Gülsüm Gülsev Şanver completed her BA in 2016 at the Department of History at 29 Mayıs University with a thesis titled "*Scholars and Intellectual Life during the Reign of Murad II According to Şakâik-i Numâniyye.*" She earned her master's degree at the same university in 2019 with a thesis titled "*Şeyhülislam Molla Arab (d. 1496) and an Analysis of His Fatwa Collection*," under the supervision of Ertuğrul Ökten. She is currently pursuing her doctoral studies in the Department of History at Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University, working on a dissertation titled "*Kuyûdât as Historical Material: A Socio-Cultural Analysis Based on Notes in Ohrid Manuscripts*." Since 2022, Şanver has been serving as a specialist at the Center for Manuscript Studies at the same university. Her research focuses on manuscript culture, Ottoman manuscript collections, the use of manuscripts as historical sources, and the socio-cultural history of the Ottoman Empire.

"Each manuscript copy (nüsha) contains unique examples of kuyûdât—notes, marginalia, and other handwritten records—that await discovery by manuscript researchers. Given the nature of their content, these materials hold the potential to serve as primary sources for historical research. In this article, as in my broader scholarly work, what I pursue is the effort to interpret the meanings expressed through these words and small phrases penned by individuals. One of the most important factors that enabled us to carry out this publication was the accessibility and examinability of Ottoman manuscript collections. I would like to specifically acknowledge Tarık Tüten's efforts in increasing our curiosity about the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Collection and in his dedication to constructing its historical background. Since the day we met, he has regarded even our slightest interest in the collection as meaningful. I sincerely thank him for the attention and support he has shown us throughout this research."

Gülsüm Gülsev Şanver

Manuscript Notes as Sources

Tracing the History of a Library and Collection through the Rodosî Hafız Ahmed Agha Manuscripts

Introduction

In recent years, manuscript notes (*kuyûdât*)—including ownership statements, endowment notes and seals, colophons, and marginal annotations—have garnered increasing scholarly attention as valuable sources for understanding the social, intellectual, and material dimensions of manuscript culture in the Islamic world. While traditionally overshadowed by the primary texts they accompany, these paratextual traces have emerged as critical tools for reconstructing the lived histories of individual codices, their users, and the institutions that housed them. This shift reflects broader developments in manuscript studies and material philology, which have increasingly emphasized the codex not simply as a container of texts, but as a historical artifact shaped by usage, transmission, and context.

Among the various manuscript collections that lend themselves to such inquiry, the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library on the island of Rhodes stands out as a unique case. Founded in 1793 by Rikâbdâr Hafız Ahmed Agha and later sustained by his son, Fethi Pasha, the library represents a rare example of a provincial family waqf that has survived to the present day. Its holdings contain a wealth of manuscript notes that document not only the collection's initial formation, but also its continued transformation through donations, repairs, and various forms of user interaction.

This paper asks how manuscript notes serve as historical evidence for the construction, transformation, and use of a family waqf library in the Ottoman world. It focuses on manuscript notes identified during the sample cataloguing phase of a digitization project conducted at the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library. The study situates these notes within broader trends in manuscript scholarship and examines them through selected examples—including endowment inscriptions, ownership entries, endowment notes, and *fâ'ida*—to explore the circulation of manuscripts, the development of the collection, and the profiles of its users. In doing so, the paper contributes to emerging methodologies that treat *kuyûdât* not as peripheral curiosities, but as integral historical data for the study of Ottoman book culture and library history.

This study examines the manuscript notes (*kuyûdât*) identified during the sample cataloging phase of the digitization project concerning the holdings of the Rodos Hafız Ahmed Agha Library. Established in 1793 on the island of Rhodes by Rikâbdâr Hafız Ahmed Agha and later maintained by his son, Ahmed Fethi Pasha, the library constitutes a rare example of a family endowment that has preserved its manuscript collection to the present day. The study seeks to assess the insights these paratextual notes offer regarding the history of the library and its collection. Focusing on various types of notes—particularly those pertaining to ownership, copying, reading, and endowment—it investigates the circulation of individual manuscripts, the processes of collection formation, and the profiles of users. Additionally, it discusses the methodological potential of such notes in reconstructing the intellectual and social contexts of manuscript culture.

The Place and Function of *Kuyûdât* in Manuscript Studies Literature

One of the primary ways in which *kuyûdât* are utilized in current literature is through their documentation in manuscript catalogues compiled by librarians and researchers. This approach has significantly enhanced the accessibility of such notes for scholars; however, it also draws attention to a critical limitation of conventional cataloguing practices: their predominant focus on textual content often comes at the expense of the manuscripts' material and historical dimensions. Yet, notes related to ownership, copying, reading, and endowment offer crucial insights into the circulation of individual copies, user engagement, and the formation of collections—elements essential for reconstructing the cultural life of manuscripts. In response to this gap, several catalogues have begun to integrate kuyûdât more systematically. Notable examples include those prepared by Ali Emre Özyıldırım and Sami Arslan for the Koç University Suna Kıraç Library, both of which foreground these paratextual elements.[1] Likewise, Sadık Yazar's catalogue of Turkish manuscripts housed in the Algerian National Library features a dedicated "Records" (*Kayıtlar*) section, in which such notes are compiled.[2] These catalogues represent a promising shift toward more research-oriented and contextually rich cataloguing practices, reflecting the broader methodological transformations currently underway in the field of manuscript studies.

Indeed, it is also worth noting the emergence of online catalogues that, recognizing this need, aim to make not only the works themselves but also individual manuscript copies more visible to researchers through digital cataloguing methods. One such example is the *Khizana* platform, which currently contains 68,496 entries in its "MS Notes" section. These entries include transcriptions of common types manuscript notes such as ownership records and seals, colophons, and endowment statements and seals, as well as less frequently encountered notes like purchase records and birth records. Each note is accompanied by the bibliographic citation of the manuscript in which it appears, along with a direct link to the holding library.[3] Similarly, the "manuscript notes" section of the *Qalamos* platform provides access to a wide range of note types—ownership, endowment, reader, and birth-death records—alongside other relevant catalogue data pertaining to each manuscript.[4]

The second approach involves the direct academic study of *kuyûdât* found in manuscripts housed in various collections. For instance, marginal notes in the Carullah Efendi Collection have been used both to reconstruct Carullah Efendi's biography and to examine these notes within the broader context of manuscript culture.[5] Building on this approach, colophons in the Fazıl Ahmed Pasha Collection have been analyzed to interpret the collection from the perspective of its copyists, thereby enabling the reconstruction of copyist profiles.[6] Ownership notes in the same collection

1 *Koç Üniversitesi Suna Kıraç Kütüphanesi Yazmalar Kataloğu 1*, ed. Ali Emre Özyıldırım (İstanbul: Koç Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2019). *Koç Üniversitesi Suna Kıraç Kütüphanesi Yazmalar Kataloğu 2*, ed. Sami Arslan (İstanbul: Koç Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2021).

2 Sadık Yazar, "Cezayir Milli Kütüphanesi'ndeki Türkçe Yazmaların Kataloğu," *Hikmet - Akademik Edebiyat Dergisi*, December 2018, 274–335.

3 https://khizana.saw-leipzig.de/#

4 https://www.qalamos.net/content/index.xed

5 *Osmanlı Kitap Kültürü: Carullah Efendi Kütüphanesi ve Derkenar Notları*, Ed. Berat Açıl, İstanbul: İlem yay., 2020.

6 Sami Arslan, "Metin İçinde Metin: Müstensihlerinin Gözünden Fazıl Ahmed Paşa Koleksiyonu," in *Osmanlı Tarihinde Köprülüler Dönemi (1656–1710): Yeni Kaynaklar, Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, ed. Fatih Çalışır (Istanbul: İbn Haldun Üniversitesi yay., 2024).

have proven useful in shaping the identity of a library.[7] In this context, a doctoral dissertation focusing on the Reisülküttab Acem Bekir Efendi Collection, based on such records, can also be cited.[8] Although methodologically distinct from the aforementioned works, another study centered on the Âşir Efendi Collection examines the *kuyûdât* found specifically on *zahriya* (1a) pages, with a particular focus on their spatial and functional significance within the manuscript.[9]

The third and final approach involves the independent study of specific types of *kuyûdât*, such as colophons, ownership notes, and audition certificates. The first comprehensive study employing this method is Sami Arslan's doctoral dissertation on copy records, in which each element of the record is meticulously analyzed—offering a model for future research on other types of manuscript notes.[10] For example, Fatma Esmanur Koç's work attempts to understand the production and circulation of a hadith text through a focused analysis of ownership and copy records.[11] Similarly, Elif Sezer-Aydınlı's doctoral dissertation explores Ottoman reading culture in the 18th and 19th centuries through reader annotations found in *Hamzanâme* and *Ebu Müslimnâme* manuscripts. [12] Further examples include Tatjana Paić-Vukić's reconstruction of a Bosnian *qadi*'s biography using ownership notes,[13] and Asim Zübčević's use of such records to examine patterns of book ownership in Ottoman Bosnia. [14]

In sum, *kuyûdât* have been utilized in manuscript studies through three primary approaches: as elements incorporated into cataloguing processes to enhance the visibility of manuscript-specific features; as subjects of scholarly inquiry within specific collections to reconstruct biographical, institutional, or scribal networks; and as independent research topics centered on a particular type of note, such as colophons, ownership statements, or audition records. Beyond these, a growing number of studies on waqf or madrasa libraries and private collections also make use of *kuyûdât* as supplementary sources. While such works—like Kyle Winter-Stoner's study of the Mahmudiye Library[15] or Tülay Artan's exploration of knowledge production through the Şehid Ali Pasha Collection[16]—offer valuable insights, they typically do not place manuscript notes at the core of their analyses.

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7 Tufan Kara, "Temellük Kayıtlarından Tarih Yazmak: Köprülü Kütüphanesi Örneği," in *Osmanlı Tarihinde Köprülüler Dönemi (1656–1710): Yeni Kaynaklar, Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, ed. Fatih Çalışır (İstanbul: İbn Haldun Üniversitesi yay., 2024).

8 Ali Aslan, *18. Yüzyıl Osmanlı İlim Hayatından Bir Kesit: Sıdkî Mustafa Efendi'nin Günlüğü ve Mülâzemet* Yılları (PhD diss., İstanbul University, 2015).

9 Elif Derin, "Osmanlı Kitap Kültüründe Kuyûdât Mahalli Olarak Zahriye: Âşir Efendi Koleksiyonu Örneği". *Yazmabilim 1/1* (Eylül 2025): 159-184.

10 Sami Arslan, *Bilgiyi İstinsahla Çoğaltmak: Osmanlı İlim Kamuoyunda Bilginin Dolaşımı (İznik Medresesi–Süleymaniye Medreseleri Dönemi)* (PhD diss., Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University, 2019).

11 Fatma Esmanur Koç, *Yazma Eser Kültürü Bağlamında Bir Hadis Metninin Üretim ve Dolaşımı: Mebāriku'l-Ezhār Örneği* (MA thesis, Marmara University, 2022).

12 Elif Sezer-Aydınlı, *A Manuscript Community in Ottoman Istanbul (18th-19th Centuries): Heroic Stories, Social Profiles, and Reading Space* (PhD diss., Freie Universität Berlin, 2022).

13 Tatjana Paić-Vukić, *The World of Mustafa Muhibbi, A Kadi from Sarajevo*, trans. Margaret Casman-Vuko, Tatjana Paić-Vukić ve Miroslav Vuko (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2011).

14 Asim Zubcevic, *Book Ownership in Ottoman Sarajevo 1707–1828* (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2015).

15 Kyle Winter-Stoner, *The Maḥmūdīyah: The History of a Library, Its Books, and Its Readers*, (PhD diss, University of Chicago, 2022).

16 Tülay Artan. "On Sekizinci Yüzyıl Başında Osmanlı Bilgi Üretimi ve Dağılımı: Yazma Eser Koleksiyonları ve Koleksiyonerler Arasında Şehid Ali Paşa'nın Yeri". *Müteferrika*. 58/2 (2020): p. 5-40.

One final category—though not easily fitting into the previous classifications—includes important theoretical contributions on *kuyûdât*. Notably, Andreas Görke and Konrad Hirschler have defined kuyûdât as 'manuscript notes,' emphasizing their historical value due to their diversity and richness of information.[17] The number of related studies has steadily increased, and with growing scholarly awareness, further substantial contributions to this body of literature are likely to emerge. Indeed, the range of papers presented at the 2024 symposium organized by the FSMV University Center for Manuscript Studies on the theme of *kuyûdât* clearly reflects the richness of data these manuscript notes offer.[18] Furthermore, it is important to mention *Keshif*, a digital journal project that focuses particularly on documents and manuscript notes—such as poetry, prescriptions, biographical narratives, or records of daily life—aiming to present these in micro-edition format. By accumulating these records in a digital environment, *Keshif* aspires to pave the way for a broader understanding of the "big picture" through the aggregation of these micro-histories.[19]

Examples of *Kuyûdât* as Paratextual Elements in Manuscripts

In this section, various types of records such as endowment records, ownership records, *fâ'ida*s (useful notes) records, and repair records found in selected manuscripts from the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library are discussed under separate headings. These records are then evaluated together in terms of the information they provide about the library and the collection. Thus, a narrow-scope, applied example of the aforementioned research methods is presented.

Endowment Notes

Since Ahmed Agha's library is an endowment institution, the first notable type of paratextual notes in this collection are waqf records. An endowment note signifies that a book has been removed from private ownership and made available for communal use. In the Islamic world, the practice of endowing books to mosques, madrasas, dervish lodges, and public libraries has been widespread for centuries. In such cases, a waqf record is written on each manuscript individually. On the other hand, in cases where a large number of manuscripts are endowed, the record can be standardized by applying a seal directly to the manuscripts.[20]

The endowment of manuscripts is a controversial topic from the perspective of Islamic law, but according to François Déroche, endowment notes for manuscripts can be found from the 3rd century AH onwards.[21] The most basic indication that a book has been endowed is the appearance of the term "waqf" written on various pages, along the top or side margins of the book. In addition, notes indicating that the book has been donated for the sake of Allah are usually placed at the beginning of the book, often on the *zahriya* page, or in rarer cases, on the *khatima* (end) page. These notes sometimes simply indicate that the manuscript has been endowed, while at other times, they include the name of the place where it was endowed or the name of the endower. Over time, endowment seals also appeared on manuscripts, often found alongside written records.

17 Andreas Görke and Konrad Hirschler, eds., *Manuscript Notes as Documentary Sources* (Beirut: 2011).

18 https://www.fsm.edu.tr/resim/Dosya/Kuyûdât_Sempozyumu_Program_Akisi2024-05-10-02-43-11pm.pdf erişim: 27.04.2025.

19 https://journals.univie.ac.at/index.php/keshif/index

20 Orhan Bilgin, "Temellük ve Tesâhüb Kaydı", *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi,* https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/temelluk-ve-tesahub-kaydi (25.04.2025).

21 François Déroche *et al. 2006. Islamic codicology: an introduction to the study of manuscripts in Arabic script,* London, p.330.

In Ahmed Agha's collection, the only handwritten records encountered are the words of 'waqf,' and the manuscripts' endowment status is validated by Ahmed Agha's personal endowment seal. Although there are no handwritten endowment notes in the manuscripts, the seal specifically created for the library itself serves as a form of record. The text of the seal includes the name of the endower, the location of the endowment, and the date: "*Sâbıkan rikâbdâr-ı hazret-i* şehriyârî *Rodosî Hafız Ahmed Ağa'nın cezîre-i mezbûrda bina eylediği kitâbhanesinin kütüb-i mevkûfesidir 1207*".[22] This seal has been stamped on the *zahriya*, final pages and some occasional pages of the manuscripts (Figure 1).



Figure 1: The endowment seal of Hafız Ahmed Aga

Importantly, the seal of Ahmed Aga does not represent the sole form of waqf-related evidence within the library's holdings. Although an endowed manuscript is generally expected to remain permanently in the location to which it was donated, this is not always the case in practice. The books of foundations that have become inactive or dysfunctional were donated again to other libraries or institutions, thereby continuing their lives within different waqf contexts. At least in the case of the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, this phenomenon can be clearly observed. Some manuscripts originally endowed to different locations in Rhodes appear to have been transferred to this library under the title "Donated Collection."[23] The most effective and definitive way to identify such transfers is by examining the earlier waqf records still present on the manuscripts themselves.

Further supporting this observation, several manuscripts in the collection include detailed information about earlier endowments. For example, a book endowed by Murabıtzâde Hasan Beg to a new cell in the *Teymurlı* Madrasa includes not only the name of the endower but also the name of the trustee, Karacazâde Mustafa bin Hacı İbrahim.[24] Similarly, in the waqf record of the *Lugat-ı Ahterî* endowed by Hacı Yūsuf to the İçhisar Madrasa, one finds heartfelt expressions written with

22 Translation: "These are the endowed books of the library established by the former stirrup-holder of his Imperial Majesty, Rodosi Hafız Ahmed Agha, on the aforementioned island, 1207 [1792–93]."

23 The Donation Collection comprises 898 works contained in 459 volumes.

24 Mecd ed-dîn Abd er-Rahmân b. Ömer İbn Ebû Cerad, *el-Alîm ve'l-Müte'allim*, Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1312, 1a.

the hope that those who benefit from the book will pray for the endower.[1] In some manuscripts, the waqf record appears in the form of a seal—for instance, the seal inscribed with "*Rodosî Ser'azeb es-seyyid Mustafa Ağa'nın kütüb-i mevkûfesidir 1228*" appears in multiple copies.[2] (Figure 2)



Figure 2: The endowment seal of Serazeb Mustafa Agha (Hafız Ahmed Agha 2172)
Photos: T. Tuten

1 Muslih ed-dîn Mustafâ b. Şems ed-dîn Karahisârî, *Ahterî-i Kebîr*, Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1289, 1a.

2 Celâl ed-dîn Abd er-Rahmân b. Ebî Bekr es-Suyûtî, *ed-Dureru'l-Muntesire fî'l-Ehâdîsi'l-Müştehire*, Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, 2172, 151a. Translation: These are the endowed books of Rodosî Ser'azeb al-Sayyid Mustafa Agha, dated 1228 AH.

Another endowment note that clearly states the name of the trustee and the location of the endowment also highlights another important aspect of cultural history: the contributions of women to waqf activities. In one manuscript, it is understood that the book was endowed by a woman named Aişe Hatun, and the note includes both the name of the endower and the trustee: *"Bu şerh Talamânî Aşçı Saran'ın ehli Aişe Hatun vakfetmişdir, mütevellisi ise Nalıncızâde Molla Mustafa'dır medrese-i İçhisar".*[3] (Figure 3) This note provides critical evidence of women's participation in the establishment of waqfs and their contributions to cultural heritage, highlighting the significant role played by women in the educational and cultural spheres of the period.



Figure 3: The endowment record belonging to Aişe Hatun (Hafız Ahmed Agha 1381)
Photos: T. Tuten

3 Alî Sadrî Kônavî, Şerh-i Vasiyet-i *Birgivî,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1381, 1a. Translation: This commentary was endowed by Aişe Hatun, the wife of chef Saran from Dalaman; its trustee is Nalıncızâde Molla Mustafa, [for] the İçhisar Madrasa.

These examples demonstrate that the Ahmed Agha Library not only possessed a formal institutional waqf structure but also functioned as a rich archival resource, incorporating books from various periods and diverse endowment networks.

Ownership Notes

Notes indicating the ownership of manuscripts vary widely, ranging from simple inscriptions such as *min kutubi* ("from among my books") to elaborate and ornate ownership medallions.[4] These types of ownership records not only document who owned a manuscript in the past but also play an important role in understanding the material and cultural value of the work, and even in tracing the historical trajectory of the copy. Typically, these records include verbs or adjectives that explicitly express ownership and intent to claim possession, and they sometimes provide biographical information about the owner, such as their profession or place of origin.[5] When a date is included, the record offers more concrete information regarding both the manuscript and the owner's historical context. Additionally, some ownership notes may explain how the manuscript was acquired—through purchase, inheritance, or other means.[6] The language used in such inscriptions often reflects not just factual data but also the owner's personal, emotional, and spiritual relationship with the book. Especially when books are referred to with phrases like "a blessing from God" or "a trust," these expressions reveal the deeper meaning and reverence attributed to them by their owners.

In addition to written ownership inscriptions, seals were also commonly used to mark possession, adding another layer to the documentation of manuscript history. However, unlike waqf seals, these ownership seals were generally simpler and more personal in nature rather than detailed. In addition to explicit records directly stating ownership, there are also other types of notes that, while not primarily intended to document ownership, nonetheless imply it. For example, when a scribe indicates that they copied a manuscript for himself, this can be interpreted as an indirect declaration of ownership. Similarly, *ijâzât* written on a manuscript often indicate that the recipient of the certification was the owner of that particular copy. Likewise, *mukâbala* (comparison) and *tashîh* (correction) records can provide clues as to who may have owned the manuscript.[7]

In this context, purchase records also stand out as a significant category. These records, which document the acquisition of a manuscript through purchase, are typically found on the first page (*zahriya*) and include details about who bought the work, when it was purchased, and sometimes even the price. A number of these records can be found in the manuscripts of the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, offering concrete examples of how such notes reveal the evolving ownership, circulation, and institutional affiliations of the manuscripts. For instance, the note by Zeynelabidin Efendi, the preacher of Kirkuk, goes beyond a simple ownership statement and is enriched with a highly personal and supplicatory tone. Zeynelabidin Efendi states that he acquired the *Akhtarî-i Kebîr* through *bayʿ-i sharʿī*—a lawful Islamic sale—and emphasizes that he obtained it as "a poor servant of

4 Adam Gacek, *Arabic Manuscripts: A Vademecum for Readers*, Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1 The Near and Middle East, vol. 98 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), p. 174.

5 Saʿdeddin Mesʿûd b. Ömer b. Abdullah et-Taftazânî el-Horasânî, *et-Telvîh ilâ Keşfi Hakâ'iki't-Tenkîh*, Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1332, 1a.

6 Zeynüddin el-Merginânî, Ebu'l-Feth Abdurrahîm b. İmâdüddin b. Ali el-Merginânî es-Semerkandî, *Fusûlü'l-İhkâm* fî *Usûli'l-Ahkâm,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 472, 1a.

7 Saʿdeddin Mesʿûd b. Ömer b. Abdullah et-Taftazânî el-Horasânî, *et-Telvîh ilâ Keşfi Hakâ'iki't-Tenkîh*, Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1332, 33a-37a.

God," declaring his reliance upon the Almighty.[8] Similarly, a note by Hâfız Muhammad, a judge of Amed (Diyarbakır), explicitly states that he purchased a copy through lawful means, providing clear information about the process of acquisition.[9] Another example is a record by Judge Abdurrahman, who noted that he bought a manuscript from its previous owner in the year 1045 AH (1635/36 CE).[10] This entry not only documents a transfer of ownership but also reflects the legal practices of the time. (Figure 4)



Figure 4: Purchase note by Judge Abdurrahman (Hafız Ahmed Agha 957)
Photos: T. Tuten, A. Bostancı

Such records provide critical evidence of both individual and institutional ownership of manuscripts. Moreover, they serve as key historical documents, offering insights into the mechanisms of manuscript transfer, the intentions underlying these exchanges, and the evolving relationships between manuscripts and their owners over time.

8 Muslihuddin Mustafa b. Şemseddin el-Karahisârî, *Ahterî-i Kebîr,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1289, 1a.

9 Zeynüddin el-Merginânî, Ebu'l-Feth Abdurrahîm b. İmâdüddin b. Ali el-Merginânî es-Semerkandî, *Fusûlü'l-İhkâm* fî *Usûli'l-Ahkâm,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 472, 1a.

10 Ebu'l-Fazl Celâleddin Abdurrahman b. Ebû Bekir b. Muhammed el-Kâhirî el-Hudayrî eş-Şâfi'î, *Hem'u'l-Hevâmi' fî Şerhi Cem'i'l-Cevâmi'*, Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 957, IIa.

Fâ'ides

The brief notes found on the blank pages or margins of manuscripts—often no longer than a few lines[11]—not only reflect traces of personal interest or reading experience but also offer highly valuable insights into the social, cultural, and scientific life of their time. Among these are short texts known as *fâ'ide*s, which record useful information compiled from other sources or derived from personal experience, thereby reinforcing the notion of manuscripts as "living documents." These notes may include a recipe for a medicinal remedy, an explanation of an astronomical term, or practical knowledge relevant to daily life. While their sources are sometimes cited, they are more often anonymous. In some cases, they preserve traces of now-lost works; in others, they offer rare glimpses into the worldview of the person who read or owned the manuscript. In this sense, *fâ'ide* records shed light not only on the text itself, but also on the mindset that formed around it.

Among the manuscripts held in the Ahmed Agha Library, there are also striking examples of such records. One of them is a medical prescription intended for treating physical ailments such as pain. The recipe, which involves the use of the herb *muhallasa*, recommends a specific mixture to be taken in measured doses both in the morning and evening, particularly in cases where the pain shifts within the body. (Figure 5)

> "Şol *sancı ki insânın a'zâsında devrân üzere olup ahyânen hareket eylese, muhallasa didükleri devâdan alup süfûf olunup ahşâm ve sabâh iki dirhem mikdârı isti'mâl oluna, bi-izni'llâh def' ola."* [12]



Figure 5: Prescription for pain (Hafız Ahmed Agha 1289)
Photo: T. Tuten

11 Orhan Bilgin, "Fevâid Kaydı", *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/fevaid-kaydi (25.04.2025).

12 Muslihuddin Mustafa b. Şemseddin el-Karahisârî, *Ahterî-i Kebîr,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1289, 1a. Translation: "That pain which moves around the limbs of a person and occasionally shifts from place to place — let the medicine known as muhallasa be taken, prepared as a powder, and used in the amount of two dirhams, morning and evening. With God's permission, it will bring relief."

Another beneficial note pertains to the method used by *helvacı*s (confectioners) for boiling syrup.[13] This type of record holds significance not only for the history of gastronomy but also for advancing our understanding of how artisanal classes produced, transmitted, and preserved technical knowledge. Another *fâ'ide* concerning the transmission of scientific knowledge highlights the significance and versatile use of *zîj*s (astronomical tables). In this note, attributed to Nimetullah, it is stated that *zîj*s are described as tools employed in warfare, celestial observation, and various practical or technical fields of knowledge.

> *"Zîc* güften ve bir âlet-i *cengdir ki ceng* gününde ederler ve bir 'alemdir ki *rasd 'alemine mukârin ve zirih ve bennâ ipi ve bir kitâbdır nukilehu min ni'metillâh."*[14] (Figure 7)

These examples reveal that *fâ'ida* notes extend beyond the main textual content of manuscripts, offering valuable insights into the informational needs, intellectual curiosities, and cultural context of their historical readership. The records found in the Ahmed Agha Library reveal the richness of manuscript culture and highlight the role of these works as living repositories of memory.

Repair Notes

Repair records, a relatively rare type of paratextual elements, are among the notes that are noticed in manuscripts but seldom encountered. It is quite common for manuscripts to undergo repairs over time, such as the restoration of their spine or the re-binding of their cover; however, it is not always possible to come across documented examples of such interventions. Similar to endowment notes, if the repair was carried out for the sake of Allah's approval, or if the person performing the repair expected a prayer in return for their service, this can be documented with a note on the manuscript.

The library's donation collection provides particularly rich data in this regard. In the donation collection, multiple works that were repaired in 1280 are observed. However, these repairs were carried out by different individuals but were documented in a similar manner. These repair records typically request prayers for the endower first, followed by the person who commissioned the repair. In one of the records, the person who commissioned the repair is referred to as Faralyalı-zâde Hafız Hüseyin Agha[15], in another record as el-Hâc Omer Agha[16], and in yet another record as Dökmeci-zâde Mustafa Agha[17], and so on.

13 Şemseddin Ahmed b. Hayreddin el-Güzelhisarî el-Aydınî, *Aksâ'l-Ereb* fî *Tercemeti Mukaddimeti'l-Edeb,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1103, 420b.

14 Muhammed Turgay b. Şahruh b. Timur el-Azerbeycânî er-Riyâzî, *Zîc-i Uluğ Bey,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1186, Ia. Translation: "a zīj is both a device used in times of war and an instrument employed in astronomical observations; it also serves as a tool for armorers and architects. Ultimately, it is a book that encompasses all these functions"

15 Ebû'l-Kâsım Abd el-Kerîm b. Hevâzin el-Kuşeyrî (376-465/986-1072) *er-Risâletü'l-Kuşeyriye,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1344, 1a.

16 Sadr eş-Şerî›a es-Sânî Ubeyd-Allâh b. Mes'ûd el-Buhârî, *Şerhu Vikayeti'r-Rivaye fi Mesaili'l-Hidaye,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1328, Ia.

17 Ebu'l-Hüseyin Ahmed b. Muhammed el-Kuduri, *Muhtasarü'l-Kuduri,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1324, Ia.



Figure 6: Repair note belonging to el-Hâc Omer Agha (Hafız Ahmed Agha 1328)
Photos: T. Tuten

Manuscript Notes as Sources for the History of a Library and Its Collection

In his endowment deed dated 1208 AH (1793 CE), Hafız Ahmed Agha states that he built, on a 1,500-*zira*ʿ[18] plot in the İmaretönü neighborhood of Rhodes, a masonry library, a classroom, and six rooms, all from his own property, and that he also donated books to this complex.[19] Through this endowment, Ahmed Agha's book collection was transformed into an institutional entity. Importantly, the date of the foundation does not mark the beginning of the manuscripts' histories; rather, in line with the logic of waqf institutions, it represents the culmination of their individual trajectories. Each manuscript, bearing its own provenance, was unified into a collective corpus through Ahmed Agha's endowment. In subsequent periods, the collection continued to grow through donations from various individuals across the island. Understanding how Ahmed Agha acquired his books, the nature of later donations, and the collection's evolution after his death requires close examination of the manuscript notes.

The first phase centers on Ahmed Agha's efforts to assemble his personal collection, embodying a cultural ideal rooted in the waqf tradition: the transformation of private intellectual resources into a public good, laying the foundation for the library.

The layered history of the Ahmed Agha Collection can be analyzed in two main phases. The first centers on Ahmed Agha's efforts to assemble his personal library, reflecting a cultural ideal embedded in the waqf tradition: the transformation of private intellectual resources into a public good, laying the groundwork for the library. While the initial formation of the library was shaped by Ahmed Agha's personal initiative, its transformation into a dynamic corpus occurred in the following phase. Manuscripts incorporated over time not only increased the library's size but also reshaped it thematically and functionally. Works arriving from various endowments, individual contributions, or donations added multiple layers to the collection, transforming it into a historically and culturally rich entity. As a result, the Ahmed Agha Library should be understood not merely as a repository of books endowed by a single individual, but as a living collection that bears the traces of multiple forms of ownership and successive acts of donation over time.

User Profiles

Ownership notes inscribed in the margins of manuscripts do not merely identify past owners; they also offer valuable insights into the social structure, scholarly networks, and user profiles of the period. Within the Ahmed Agha Collection, such notes—bearing the names of individuals from diverse social and professional backgrounds—illuminate the collection's layered history and highlight the diversity of its users. For example, manuscript no. 1289 bears the seal of Zeynelabidin Efendi, the preacher of Kirkuk, indicating the manuscript's circulation within religious scholarly circles.[20] Similarly, manuscript no. 1103 contains an ownership note belonging to Fehim Süleyman, a professor (*müderris*) at the Ali Pasha Madrasa,[21] offering a window into the intellectual networks of the period.

18 *Zira*ʿ: an Ottoman unit of length roughly equivalent to 68–75 cm.

19 General Directorate of Foundations Archive 743/79/26.

20 Muslihuddin Mustafa b. Şemseddin el-Karahisârî, *Akhtarî-i Kabîr,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1289, 1a.

21 Şemseddin Ahmed b. Hayreddin el-Güzelhisarî el-Aydınî, *Aksâ'l-Ereb* fî *Tercemeti Mukaddimeti'l-Edeb,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1103, IVa.

One particularly revealing example is manuscript no. 1186, a *zîj* (astronomical table) once held by Emrullah bin Ahmed, the timekeeper (*muvakkit*) of the Yeni Cami in Edirne, and later by Süleyman Dürrî, the timekeeper of the Fatih Mosque.[22] This case illustrates how such works circulated across different hands and institutional settings, reflecting the dynamic transmission of religious and scientific knowledge. These manuscripts were not confined to single owners but moved within networks of religious specialists, demonstrating their practical value and symbolic importance.

Crucially, these examples highlight that manuscripts functioned not only as texts to be read but also as social objects intertwined with personal, professional, and religious identities. Over time, they became material repositories of memory, linking individuals, institutions, and intellectual traditions. The Ahmed Agha Library, therefore, should be understood not merely as a static book collection, but as an evolving site of social memory that encapsulates broader dynamics of religious authority, scholarly interaction, and knowledge transmission in Ottoman society.

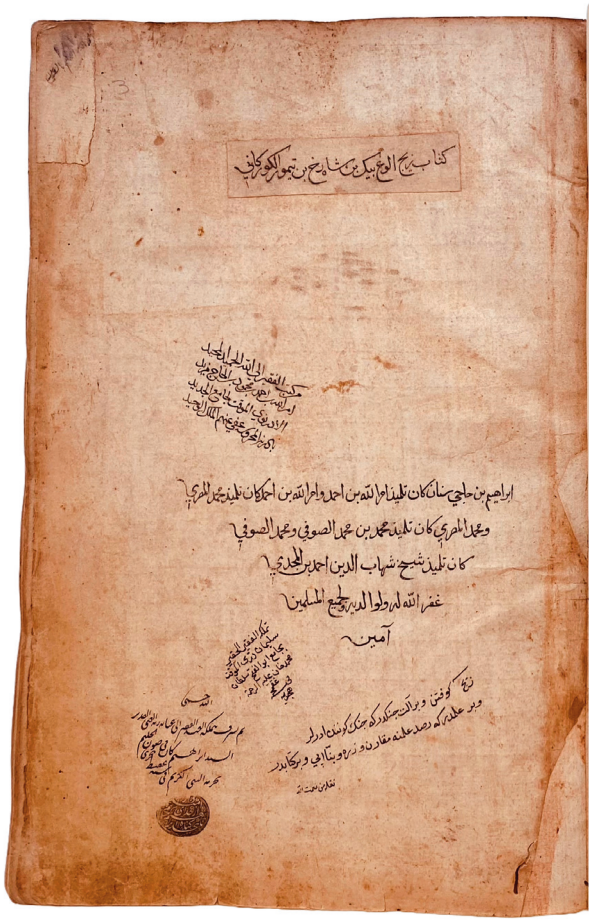


Figure 7: Zahriya page of *Zîc-i Ulug Beg* (Hafız Ahmed Agha 1186)
Photo: T. Tuten

22 Muhammed Turgay b. Şahruh b. Timur el-Azerbeycânî er-Riyâzî, *Zîc-i Uluğ Bey*, Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1186, Ia.

Circulation of the Manuscripts

In addition to seals and purchase records, extra-textual notes provide valuable insights into the circulation of these works across time and space. The geographical mobility of the books in the Ahmed Agha Collection indicates that the collection was not confined to a single individual or location but moved through various cultural and scholarly centers.

For example, manuscript no. 1103 was copied at the Muradiye Madrasa in Bursa, one of the major intellectual hubs of the Ottoman Empire.[23] Similarly, manuscript no. 1332 originated from the Karatay Madrasa in Konya.[24] These examples suggest that manuscript production often took place in prominent urban centers, but also that books circulated well beyond their points of origin.

Another revealing case involves a manuscript of unknown provenance, transcribed in Dhul-Qa'dah 1055 (December 1645/January 1646), which was acquired about a century later, in 1743/44, by Zeynelabidin b. Abdullah Efendi, a preacher in Kirkuk, as recorded in the ownership note. This trajectory illustrates the considerable distances manuscripts traveled within Ottoman lands, passing through multiple hands and regions.[25]

Collectively, these examples demonstrate that the books in the Ahmed Agha Collection were not confined to individual or local use but formed part of a broader regional network of circulation, embedding them within a multilayered cultural heritage. Tracing their geographical movements sheds light not only on the historical context of the collection but also on the social, institutional, and intellectual networks that facilitated the transmission of knowledge across the empire.

Manuscript Notes in the Cataloging Process

In the cataloging process of manuscripts, it is essential to record manuscript notes *(kuyûdât)* as part of the data, as they play a vital role in establishing the identity and provenance of each copy. Therefore, in addition to major entries such as colophons and endowment notes, attention should be paid to other types of annotations, including reader's notes and *fā'ide* records, which preserve a wide range of information. It is equally important to identify additional types of notes, such as price records and birth and death entries.

To accurately document *kuyûdât*, manuscripts must undergo a systematic survey and examination process. This includes observing the physical condition of the manuscript, recording the precise locations of the notes, and analyzing details such as the number of hands involved, variations in ink, and chronological indicators. These steps are crucial for the accurate classification and interpretation of the records.

The specific information included in catalog entries often varies depending on the institution, project timeline, and intended purpose. While incorporating manuscript notes into the cataloging process may initially slow progress, the resulting catalog ultimately becomes significantly more useful and accessible to researchers. For this reason, as resources allow, it is highly recommended to include as many types of records as possible. Whenever feasible, each piece of information should be accompanied by details such as language (e.g., Arabic, Ottoman Turkish), date, and physical location within the manuscript (e.g., page numbers or section headings).

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23 Şemseddin Ahmed b. Hayreddin el-Güzelhisarî el-Aydınî, *Aksâ'l-Ereb* fî *Tercemeti Mukaddimeti'l-Edeb,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1103, 419b.

24 Sa'deddin Mes'ûd b. Ömer b. Abdullah et-Taftazânî el-Horasânî, *et-Telvîh ilâ Kesfi Hakâ'iki't-Tenkîh,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1332,

25 Muslihuddin Mustafa b. Şemseddin el-Karahisârî, *Ahterî-i Kebîr,* Rhodes Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1289, 1a-515b.

To enhance both the usability and clarity of the catalog, it is beneficial to provide sample entries supported by example records and visual materials. Demonstrating how to describe an ownership note, formulate colophon data, or transfer manuscript notes into the catalog entry not only improves the quality of documentation but also promotes best practices in manuscript studies. By emphasizing the integration of manuscript notes, such practices not only enhance catalog quality but also contribute to the broader goals of preserving cultural heritage and facilitating interdisciplinary research across the fields of codicology, paleography, and intellectual history (Figures 8, 9).

Conclusions

This study has demonstrated that manuscript notes (*kuyûdât*)—often dismissed as marginal or incidental—constitute essential sources for reconstructing the historical formation, development, and circulation of Ottoman library collections. By focusing on the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library in Rhodes, the paper has shown how such records offer detailed insights into the lifecycle of manuscripts: their acquisition, use, repair, endowment, and eventual incorporation into an institutional archive. The examined examples, ranging from endowment seals to personal annotations and purchase records, reflect a multiplicity of actors—scribes, patrons, owners, and endowers—whose individual engagements collectively shaped the library as a cultural and intellectual institution.

The Ahmed Agha Library serves as an apt case study that intersects all three methodological approaches discussed earlier in the article—namely, the inclusion of manuscript notes in cataloguing practices, collection-based historical analyses, and focused studies on specific record types such as colophon or ownership. Its layered structure and diverse corpus of manuscript notes exemplify how microhistorical readings of manuscript notes can illuminate broader patterns of knowledge transmission, social networks, and institutional memory in the Ottoman world.

By demonstrating the analytical potential of *kuyûdât*, this study calls for greater attention to paratextual material not merely as supplementary evidence but as a distinct category of primary source material. In doing so, it contributes to the growing body of scholarship that seeks to recover the material and social dimensions of manuscript culture—one manuscript note at a time.

Bibliographic Details	
Collection No	**1289**
Former Collection	Donated Collection-1
Title of Book	Ahterî-i Kebîr
Author	Muslihuddin Mustafa b. Şemseddin el-Karahisârî (968-1560)
Copyright Date	952 / 1545
Language	Arabic - Turkish
Subject	Lexicon
Date of Copying	Dhul Qadah 1055 (December 1645/ January 1646)
Scriber	Emîn bin Yûsuf
Bibliography about the author	"Ahterî", Hulusî Kılıç, *DİA*, İstanbul:1989, c. 2, 184-185. "Ahterî Mustafa Efendi'nin Hayatı ve Eserleri", Mustafa Güneş; Ed. Bilal Kemikli, Ahmet Türkan. Ankara, 2018. *Ahterî ve Dönemi Bilgi Şöleni Bildirileri*, Kütahya, 7-9 Kasım 2013, 53-61.
Publications of the Work	The work was printed for the first time in 1242/1827 in Dârü't-tıbâ'a in Istanbul, and many editions followed. There is also a Latinized edition prepared by İbrahim Ulaş and Abdülkadir Dedeoğlu. (İstanbul 1979).
Copies	There are more than three hundred manuscript copies of the work in libraries in Turkey.
Content	The work contains approximately 40,000 words. It alphabetized Arabic words according to their spelling rather than their roots, gave Arabic synonyms of the words along with their Turkish equivalents, and reinforced the meaning by exemplifying them in sentences. These features have been effective in making the work highly preferred
Physical Description	
Leaf	458 (jumped from 239 to 300 during the numbering of the leaf)
Line	25
Dimensions	300x180-225x11mm
Calligraphy	Nash. The titles, the redactions and leaf numbers are in red.
Paper	Watermarked paper, worm-eaten in places
Binding	Brown binding with round medallion with pendants, edges and corners damaged, wormholes. The flap has fallen off and the spine is torn. Edges repaired with red leather.
Manuscript Notes / Kuyûdât	
Endowment seal of the Fethi Pasha Foundation [Ia]	*Fethi Paşa Evkafı Hafız Ahmet Ağa Kütüphanesi Rodos*
Ownership Notes of Yûsuf bin Ahmed [1a]	*min mütemellikâti'l-fakîr ileyhi subhanehu Yûsuf bin Ahmed 'ufiye 'anhümâ*
Purchase note belonging to orator of Kirkuk Zeynel Abidin Efendi [1a]	*lekad dehale fî silk-i milk-i el-hakîr el-fakîr kitâb-ı Ahterî bâ-bey'-iş-şer'î ve ene'l-hakîr ila'l-l-lahi'l-ganî Zeynel'âbidîn bin Abdullah Efendi el-hatîb bi-Kerkük gaferallahu lehümâ ve'l-cemî'ul-müminîn ecmaîn sene 156* (1743/44)
Endowment note of el-Hâc Yûsuf's endowment of the manuscript to the İçhisar Madrasah [1a]	*El-hâc Yûsuf'un* İçhisâr *Medresesine vakf eyledigi lugat-i Ahterî'dir her kim isti'mâl ider nef'alanırsa* sâhibini *du'âdan unutmaya her kim du'â iderse* âhir *nefesde Allahu te'âlâ imânıyla hatm eyleye*
Fâ'ide: Recipe for the use of *muhallasa* herb for pain [1a]	Şol *sancı ki insânın a'zâsında devrân üzere olup ahyânen hareket eylese muhallasa didükleri devâdan alup süfûf olunup ahşâm ve sabâh iki dirhem mikdârı isti'mâl oluna bi-izni'llâh def' ola Diger sancı içün çakmak kâvî bir mikdâr yudalar def' ola bi-izni'llâhi te'âlâ*

Figure 8: A sample entry from the preliminary catalog of manuscripts in the Ahmed Agha Library.

Bibliographic Details	
Collection No	**1186**
Former Collection	*Nücûm*/Astronomy - 1
Title of Book	Zîc-i Uluğ Bey
Author	Uluğ Bey, Muhammed Turgay b. Şahruh b. Timur el-Azerbeycânî er-Riyâzî, (853/1449)
Copyright Date	1437-1440
Language	Persian
Subject	Astronomy
Date of Copying	-
Scriber	-
Bibliography about the author	Unat, Yavuz. "Uluğ Bey." Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi, vol. 42 (2012): 127–129.
Publications of the Work	Uluğ Bey'in Astronomi Cetvelleri: Zic-i Uluğ Bey (trs. Atilla Bir – Mustafa Kaçar), Ankara 2012, I-II. Ulugh Beg's Catalogue of Stars (ed. E. Ball Knobel), Washington 1917.
Copies	There are more than twenty copies of the work in libraries in Turkey.
Content	The work was prepared based on the results of observations and research conducted at the Samarkand Observatory in the 15th century. The work is also known as *Zîc-i Gürgânî*, *Zîc-i Hâkânî*, and *Zîc-i Cedîd-i Sulṭânî*. The work was first written in Persian (allegedly in Tajik) and later translated into Arabic and Turkish. It consists of four books and includes tables on trigonometry, astronomy, geography and astrology. The first part is devoted to chronology and different types of calendars. The second part is about astronomy, the third part about planets and stars, and the last part about astrology. The *zîj*, which is very close to today's calculations in terms of both trigonometry and the annual movements and positions of the planets, was considered the most perfect of the astronomical catalogs prepared until the seventeenth century and was used as the basic book of positional astronomy until this time. Flamsteed, the founder of the Greenwich Observatory, also made use of Ulug Bey's *zîj* while preparing his catalog of fixed stars (Historia Coelestis Britanica, London 1725).
Physical Description	
Leaf	183
Line	Varying number of lines and tables
Dimensions	343x235-260x168mm
Calligraphy	Ta'liq. Titles and tables in red ink.
Paper	Paper watermarked, with moisture stains and ink burns.
Binding	Burgundy oak binding. Covered in red leather with a marbled cover.
Manuscript Notes / *Kuyûdât*	
Ownership note of the timekeeper of Edirne New Mosque [Ia]	*min kütübi'l-fakîr ila'llâhi'l-hamîdü'l-mecîd Emrullâh bin Ahmed bin Mahmûd bin el-hâcc Mürîd el-Edirnevî el-muvakkit el-câmi'ü'l-cedîd bi-Edirne-i mahrûse 'ufiye 'anhüm el-mülkü'l-vahîd*
Ownership note of timekeeper of Fatih Mosque [Ia]	*temellekehu el-fakir el-hakîr Süleymân Dürrî el-muvakkit bi-câmi' Ebu'l feth Sultân Mehmed Han 'aleyhi'r-rahme fî sene gkmh [1148 (1735/1736)] hicriyye*
Ownership note and seal of Seyyid İbrahim [Ia]	*Allahu hasbî sümme şerrefe bi-temlikihi el-'abdü'l-fakîr ilâ 'inâyeti rabbihi'l-ganî [...] es-seyyid İbrâhîm kâne fî sene 'aft -- has a seal under the record*
***Fâ'ide* on the value of the of zîj [1a]**	*Zîc güften ve bir âlet-i cengdir ki ceng gününde ederler ve bir 'alemdir ki rasd 'alemine mukârin ve zirih ve bennâ ipi -- nukilehu min Ni'metullâh*
Ownership seal [1a]	Two identical seals of Monla Muhammad in octagonal form, one of which is erased
Ownership Record of Muhammed Said (1a)	*sümme teşerrefe ve temellekehu hazihi'n-nüsha-i şerîfe el fakîr Muhammed Sa'îd el-ma'rûf yazıcı-zâde mine'l-medreseyn 'ufiye 'anhümâ fî sene-i grb [1202(1787/1788)] hicrî*
Endowment seal of Hafız Ahmed Agha	*Sâbıkan rikâbdâr-ı hazret-i şehriyârî Rodosî Hafiz Ahmed Ağa'nın cezîre-i mezbûrda bina eylediği kitâbhanesinin kütüb-i mevkûfesidir 1207*

Figure 9: A sample entry from the preliminary catalog of manuscripts in the Ahmed Agha Library.

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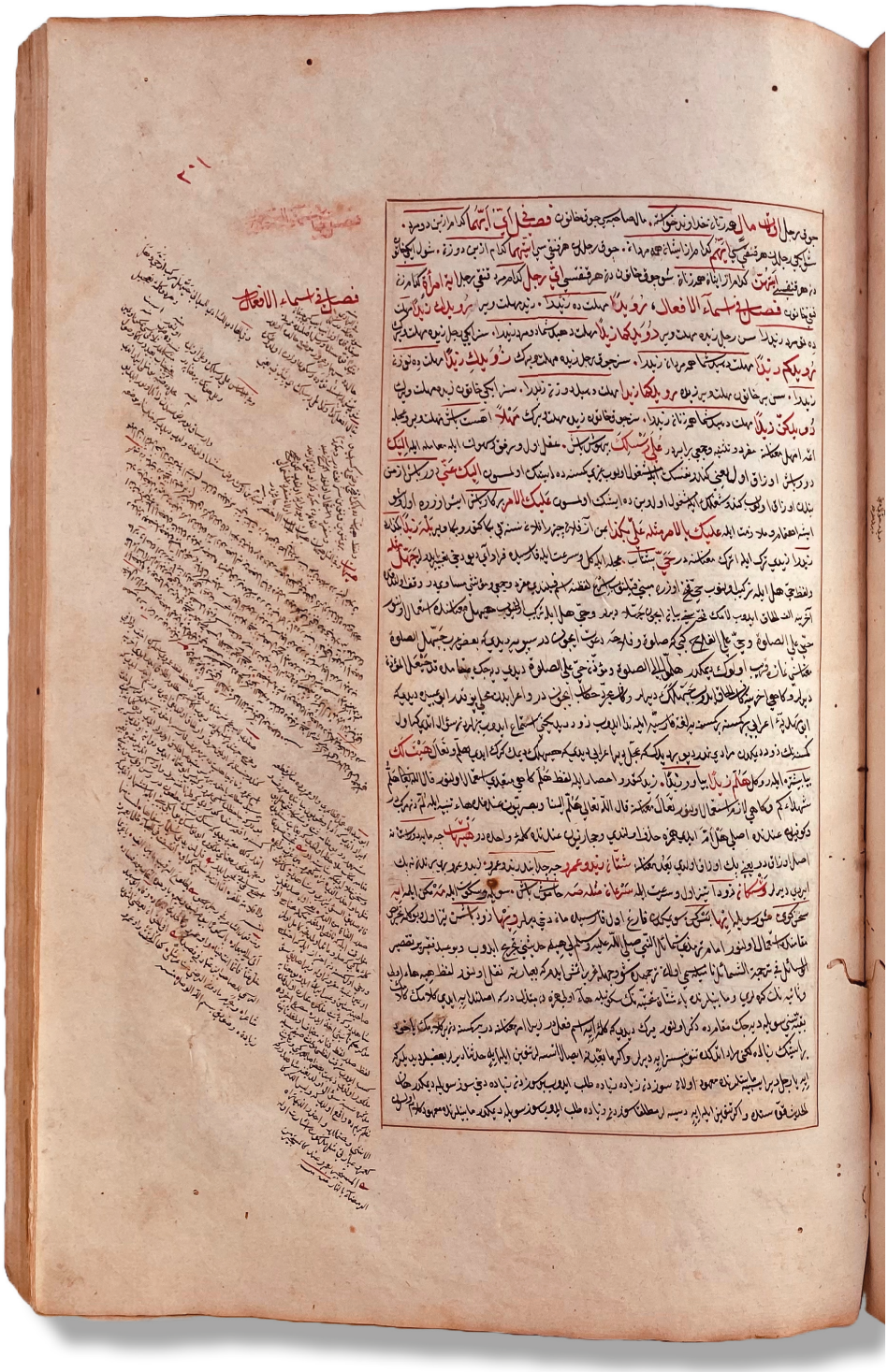
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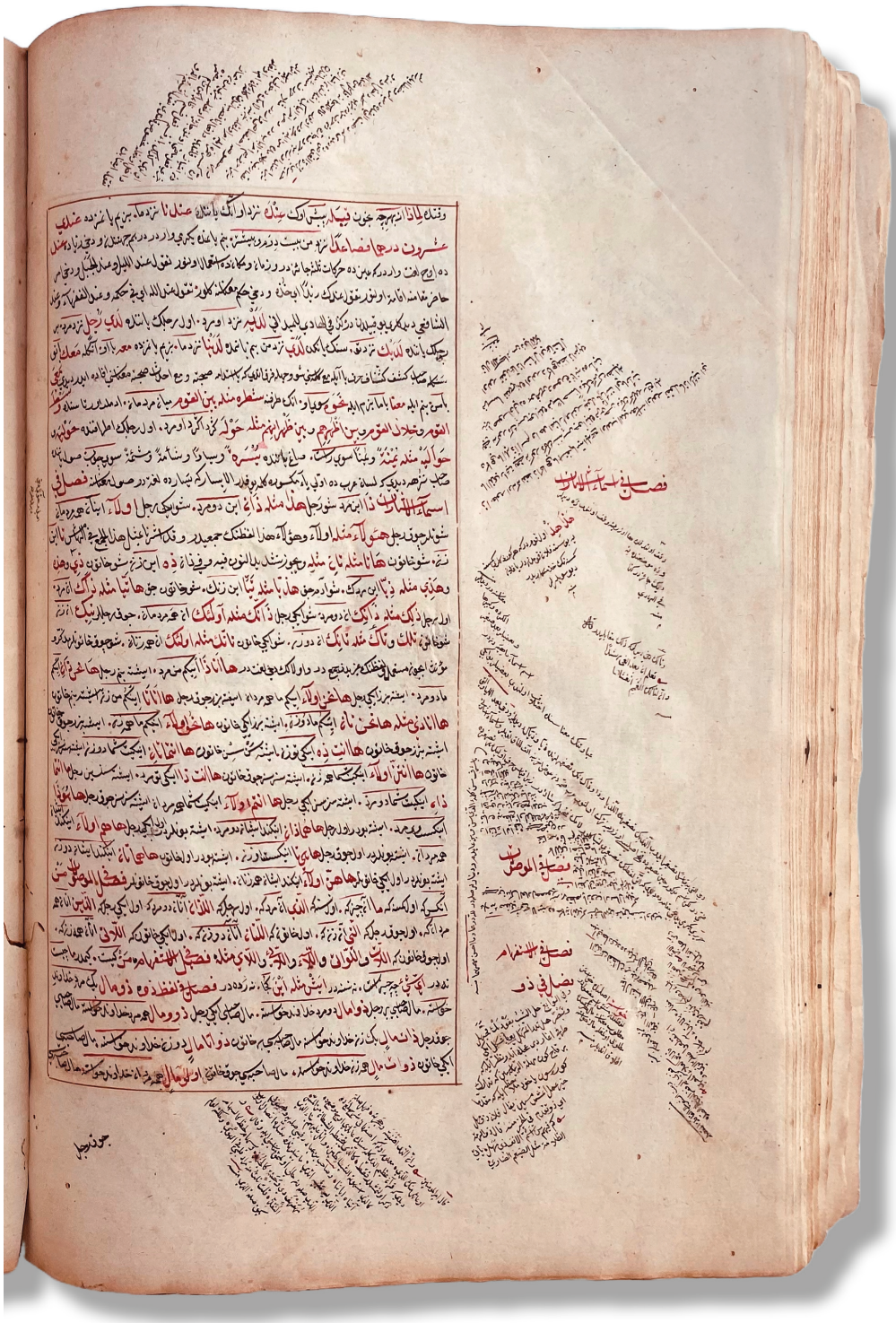
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"As an Ottomanist historian whose academic and social life spans both modern Greece and Turkey, I'm used to encountering the shared traces of our Ottoman past. But even so, I was recently struck by something truly unexpected—one more living legacy from the centuries of our intertwined history, quietly continuing its work: the foundation of Hafiz Ahmet Ağa, still operating across borders, with deep roots in both Istanbul and the island of Rhodes.

To my astonishment, this Ottoman-era vakıf (pious foundation) not only survives but continues to function in the present day, bridging two countries and cultures that once formed a single imperial landscape. And to my delight, I discovered through a dear friend, Cengiz Aktar, that someone who became also a dear friend, Tarık Tüten, is now at the helm of this remarkable institution, guiding it through its modern incarnation.

It's rare enough to study the Ottoman Empire as an academic subject—but rarer still to witness it in motion today, not as an abstract object of research, but as a living mechanism of dialogue and mutual care. What a privilege to see the broader Ottoman heritage, the very subject of my scholarly work, reappear not in a museum or a 'difficult heritage' case but as a platform for conversation, cooperation, and friendship between colleagues, a true 'safe space' across national lines.

History is not always behind us. Sometimes, it walks beside us."

Elias Kolovos

From an Ottoman Imperial-Era to a Contemporary Transnational Mediterranean Foundation

The Foundation of Hafız Ahmet Ağa in Rhodes between 1898 and 1908

A *transnational* historical identity may be defined as one that "cuts across national boundaries".[1] The Foundation of Hafız Ahmet Ağa on the Greek island of Rhodes represents a notable case of a *transnational Islamic foundation* (Ar. *waqf*, Turk. *vakıf*, Gr. *vakoufi*),[2] sustained through the vision and efforts of our dear friend Tarık Tüten. Its continued operation between present-day Turkey and Greece is particularly remarkable, considering the often complex relationship between these two neighbouring countries across the Aegean.[3] The foundation exemplifies the broader shared heritage of the Ottoman Empire,[4] which encompasses both everyday cultural elements – such as food and beverages like coffee-,[5] and other "difficult" legacies, including Ottoman monuments in Greece, or Christian monuments in Turkey.[6]

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1 Iriye, Akira. Review of Transnational History, by John Boli, George M. Thomas, Matthew Evangelista, Helen Laville, Sanjeev Khagram, James V. Riker, Kathryn Sikkink, Gabriele Metzler, Sarah E. Mendelson, and John K. Glenn. *Contemporary European History* 13, no. 2 (2004): 211–22. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20081208

2 For the Islamic foundations in general, see the excellent study by John Robert Barnes, *An Introduction to Religious Foundations in the Ottoman Empire*, Leiden: Brill, 1987, a contributor to this volume as well.

3 For the relations between Greece and Turkey, see the inspired contribution to this volume by Cengiz Aktar. For the legal status of the Islamic foundations in Rhodes and Kos in Greece, see Konstantinos Tsitselikis, *Old and New Islam in Greece: From Historical Minorities to Immigrant Newcomers*, Leiden, Boston, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2012, p. 352-356.

4 For a broad perspective of this shared heritage, starting from late medieval times, see Cemal Kafadar, "A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum," *Muqarnas: An Annual on the Visual Culture of the Islamic World*, XXIV (2007), 7-25. For the Ottoman Greek Aegean world, see Elias Kolovos, *Across the Aegean: Islands, Monasteries and Rural Societies in the Ottoman Greek Lands*, The Isis Press, Istanbul 2018. For the Ottoman conquest of Rhodes, see Nicolas Vatin, *L'ordre de Saint-Jean-de-Jérusalem, l'empire ottoman et la Mediterranée orientale entre les deux sièges de Rhodes (1480-1522)*, Louvain – Paris 1996; Elias Kolovos, "The Fortress and the Town of Rhodes According to the Ottoman Survey After the Siege of 1522", in: Simon David Phillips (ed.), *The 1522 Siege of Rhodes: Causes, Course and Consequences*, The Military Religious Orders: History, Sources, and Memory, Abingdon, Oxon.; New York: Routledge 2022, pp. 131-146.

5 See Cemal Kafadar "How Dark is the History of the Night, How Black the Story of Coffee, How Bitter the Tale of Love: The Changing Measure of Leisure and Pleasure in Early Modern Istanbul" in *Medieval and Early Modern Performance in the Eastern Mediterranean*, eds. Arzu Öztürkmen and Evelyn Birge Vitz, Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2014, 243-269; İlay Romain Örs, Culinary Complexities in Turkey and Greece: On Food, Nation, and Identity in the Aegean", *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 42/2 (2024), pp. 225-256.

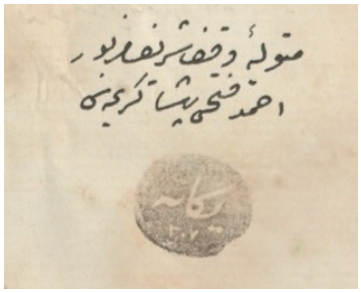
6 For the Ottoman monuments in Greece, see Elias Kolovos, G. Pallis and Panagiotis C. Poulos (eds), *Οθωμανικά μνημεία στην Ελλάδα: κληρονομιές υπό διαπραγμάτευση* [Ottoman Monuments in Greece: Heritages under Negotiation], Athens, 2023; Elias Kolovos and Panagiotis C. Poulos, Introduction, *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique moderne et contemporain* [online] 4 (2021) [=Histories, Spaces and Heritages at the Transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Greek State], URL: http://journals.openedition.org/bchmc/859 For the Christian monuments in Turkey, see now Emily Neumeier and Benjamin Anderson (eds), *Hagia Sophia in the Long Nineteenth Century*, Edinburgh Studies on the Ottoman Empire, 2024.

Islamic foundations such as the Foundation of Hafız Ahmet Ağa were "omnipresent in all levels of Ottoman society, urban and rural, both in the form of individual functioning units and as separate parts of a basic single institutional system." Their defining features included "widespread vertical and horizontal use throughout all socio-economic strata of society; their capacity to adapt to individual, group and state needs within Islamic as well as within Ottoman Christian and Jewish communities; and, finally, their longevity –not only of the institution itself but also of the abundant individual waḳfs (although, of course, many also disappeared) ..."[7] In the case of the Foundation of Hafız Ahmet Ağa in Rhodes, this *longevity* extends beyond the Ottoman period, as the foundation continues to operate today on the island of Rhodes.

In this paper, I examine the functioning of the Foundation of Hafız Ahmet Ağa during the final years of the Ottoman Empire, just prior to the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese (1912–1943). This study contributes to the field of comparative Mediterranean history, an approach that demands working across multiple languages, scales, disciplines, and sources. It requires the blending of micro- and macro-historical methods—being, as it has been aptly put, both "a fox and a hedgehog, a parachutist and a truffle hunter."[8]

More particularly, this study examines two income and expense registers from the foundation of Hafız Ahmet Ağa of Rhodes, dated 1903 and 1908, respectively, in Ottoman Turkish.

The first source is an income and expense register (*varidat ve masarifat defteri*) covering the five-year period from March 1898 to February 1903 CE (corresponding to Muharrem 1316 to Zilhicce 1320 in the Hijri calendar, and to March 1314 to February 1318 in the Rumi, the Ottoman fiscal calendar).[9] The register was submitted to the Ministry of the Foundations of the Holy Cities (*Haremeyn-i Muhteremeyn Nezareti*) by Yegâne, the granddaughter of Ahmed Fethi Paşa and administrator (*mütevelliye*) of the foundation, who sealed the document on the first folio on 14 August 1903 CE (19 Cemaziyelevvel 1321 Hijri, equivalent to 1 Ağustos 1319 Rumi).



Signature and seal of Yegâne, issued on the Hijri year (1)307 (corresponding to 1889/1890), when she probably took over the administration of the Foundation.

7 Randi Deguilhem, *The Encyclopedia of Islam, New Edition*, Vol. XI, Leiden, Brill, 2002, p. 88.

8 Hussein Fancy, Provincializing the Mediterranean. In: Paul Thomas Chamberlin, Kaysha Corinealdi, Cindy Ewing, Hussein Fancy, Arunabh Ghosh, Rebecca Herman, Raevin Jimenez, Maria John, Laleh Khalili, Julia Stephens, Erik R. Scott, Quinn Slobodian, On Transnational and International History, *The American Historical Review*, Volume 128, Issue 1, March 2023, Pages 255–332, https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhad138

9 The register, kindly provided to me for study by Tarık Tüten, the administrator of the Foundation and good friend, is located in the Ottoman Archive of the State Archives of the Turkish Presidency of the Republic (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi), with the call number Ev(kaf) D(efteri) 37052. It consists of 12 folios, 26 x 38 cm. The register was not bound.

According to the information I have from the foundation's administrator, Tarık Tüten, Saliha Yegâne Hanım was the sister of Emine Güzide Hanım (1851–1909), daughter of Rodosizade Ahmet Fethi Paşa (1801–1858) and Ayşe Şemsinur Hanım (1810–1881). Ahmet Fethi Paşa was the son of the foundation's founder, Rikâbdar-ı Şehriyari Rodosi Ahmet Ağa (d. 1801), and Saliha Hanım (d. 1855). Ahmed Fethi Paşa became the mütevelli of the Vakıf in 1839. After the death of Ahmed Fethi Paşa in 1858, following a period where a relative named Ali Rıza Paşa had run the foundation, his son Mahmud Celaleddin took over in 1863 and after Mahmud Celaleddin, his sister Saliha Yegâne became the Administrator.[10]

The second source is a register detailing income and expenses for the year 1907 CE (corresponding to March through the end of February 1323 in the Rumi calendar). [11] This register was submitted to Yegâne on 15 March 1324 Rumi (equivalent to 15/28 March 1908 CE) by her representative in Rhodes, Ahmed Eşref Edhem.

According to Yegâne's statement in the 1903 register, the foundation under her administration collected revenues from Constantinople, Rhodes, and Smyrna in order to pay the wages of the prayer leader (*imam*), the *müezzin,* and other personnel serving at the foundation's holy mosque in Üsküdar, located at the Karacaahmed Cemetery, as well as for the maintenance of its fountain, built originally by Hafız Ahmet Ağa, and other dependencies. In the 1907 register, an attached document dated 13/26 June 1908 indicates that the foundation was paying the salaries of the *imam* and preacher (*imam ü hatip*), Şeyh Hafız İsmail, serving at the Hafız Ahmed's Karacaahmed Mosque in Üsküdar, along with those of the *müezzin*, the *duaguy* (prayer reciter), and the official responsible for the water supply (*suyolcu*).

During the five-year period from 1898 to 1902, the foundation's total revenues amounted to 49,196 *kuruş* from properties in Istanbul, Izmir, and Kuşadası, and 67,141 *kuruş* from properties in Rhodes, yielding a combined income of 116,337 *kuruş*. Against this, the foundation paid 59,512 *kuruş* in wages for personnel in Istanbul and 50,541 *kuruş* for personnel in Rhodes, totaling 110,053 *kuruş*. However, there was a deficit of 10,326 *kuruş* in the Istanbul account, which had to be added to the foundation's existing debt of 11,243 *kuruş*. Additionally, in previous years, the foundation had incurred a substantial expenditure of 56,553 *kuruş* for the renovation of ruined shops and workshops in Rhodes, for repairs to the clock tower and its mechanism, and for restoration work on the Karacaahmed mosque and other foundation buildings damaged, possibly, by the 1894 Istanbul earthquake. Altogether, these expenses brought the foundation's total debt to 78,126 *kuruş*. Yegâne proposed to cover this amount from the foundation's available capital (*vakf-ı mezburün vukubulan muaccelatından*).

In 1907, the foundation collected an annual income of 14,587 *kuruş* and 20 *para* from its properties in Rhodes, while its expenditures amounted to 9,540 *kuruş* and 15 *para*. The resulting surplus of 5,042 *kuruş* and 5 *para* was remitted to the administrator in Istanbul.

To give readers a sense of the value of the *kuruş* at the time, we may note that an unskilled construction worker earned approximately 200 *kuruş* per month in 1900, while a skilled worker earned more than twice as much—around 500 *kuruş*. In 1833, an *okka* of bread cost half a *kuruş*; in 1863, an *okka* of olive oil was priced at approximately 8 to 9 *kuruş*; and in 1857, an *okka* of coffee

10 For Ahmet Fethi Paşa and especially for the founder, Hafız Ahmet Ağa, see the studies by Efthimios Machairas and Ibrahim Akkurt in this volume. Saliha Yegâne should not be confused with the daughter of Emine Güzide, also Saliha Yegâne, who died relatively young at the age of 49 (1887-1936).

11 Ev(kaf) D(efteri) 30754, again kindly provided to me for study by Tarık Tüten.

cost between 11 and 12 *kuruş*.[12] A mid- to lower-tier house in Istanbul, according to newspaper advertisements from 1841 to 1866, was valued between 20,000 and 50,000 *kuruş*.[13]

According to the detailed balance sheets attached to the register for the five-year period 1898–1902, submitted to Yegâne by her legal representative Mehmet Nuri—who also served as a teacher at the Foundation's junior high school in Rhodes—the foundation derived income from rents collected on the following properties:

- **Foundation properties in the port area of Rhodes (*İskele*)**, situated in the commercial hub of the town: These six properties constituted the largest source of revenue for the Foundation in Rhodes, yielding a total annual income of 7,740 *kuruş* in 1898–1900, 7,048 *kuruş* in 1901, and 6,065 *kuruş* in 1902. These included:
  - **The Guardhouse of the Gendarmerie (*Jandarma Karavulhanesi*)**, rented for 1,400 *kuruş* annually in 1898, 1,440 *kuruş* from 1899 to 1901, and 1,080 *kuruş* in 1902. This property provided the Foundation with a stable income directly from the Ottoman state budget and, symbolically, linked the Foundation to the security apparatus of the empire in Rhodes.
  - **The Ottoman Post Office (*Osmanlı Postahanesi*)**, which initially occupied two adjacent properties: one larger, rented at 100 *kuruş* per month, and one smaller, at 50 *kuruş* per month, for a total annual income of 1,800 *kuruş* in 1898–1900. In 1901, the Post Office relocated, and the properties were subsequently leased as a *kahvehane* (coffeehouse). By 1902, only the larger of the two shops remained in use as the coffeehouse. It may be assumed that this establishment was one of the centers of social life in the port of Rhodes during the fin-de-siècle years.
  - **The Austrian Agency (*Nemse Acentesi*)**, which generated 1,500 *kuruş* annually in 1898–1900 (monthly rent: 125 *kuruş*) and 1,058 *kuruş* in 1901. In 1902, the building was rented to serve as a branch of the **Ottoman Post Office (*Osmanlı Posta Şubesi*)** for 11 months. It is noteworthy that the Ottoman postal service was also used to transfer surplus income from the Rhodes-based foundation to Yegâne Hanım in Istanbul.
  - **The Old Customs House (*Kadim* or *Eski Gümrük*)**, used during this period as an inn (*han*), brought in a consistent annual income of 2,400 *kuruş* (monthly rent: 200 *kuruş*). It was leased to İbrahim Ağa of Crete in 1898–1899 and to Mehmet Ağa from 1900 to 1902. Based on the records, which mention glass vitrines (*camlar*), it may be inferred that this was one of the main accommodations for visitors in the port.[14]
  - **The Old Port Authority Building (*Eski Liman Dairesi*)**, a smaller structure used as the Police Headquarters (*Polis İdaresi*) during these years, was rented for 50 *kuruş* per month. As in the case of the Gendarmerie building, this association once again linked the Foundation to the Ottoman state's security presence in Rhodes.

These properties were architectural landmarks in the port area of Rhodes and would have made the Foundation of Hafız Ahmet Ağa highly visible to all visitors arriving in this major Eastern Mediterranean port.[15]

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12 For these specific examples, and for prices and wages in general, see in detail Şevket Pamuk, *Istanbul ve Diger Kentlerde 500 Yıllık Fiyatlar ve Ücretler, 1469-1914*, Ankara, 2000.

13 Dürnev Atılgan Yağan – Göksun Akyürek, "Housing and Real Estate Market in Mid-Nineteenth Century Istanbul through newspaper advertisements", in Hacer Kılınçarslan, Ömer Faruk Can, Burhan Çağlar (eds), *Living in the Ottoman lands: Identities, administration and warfare*, Istanbul 2021, pp. 173-186.

14 The Custom House is shown in the Port of Rhodes, outside the Gate of St Katherine, in the map of 1881 by Billioti and Cottret (I have consulted the map on www.oldmapsonline.org). See also the study by Katerina Manousou-Ntella in this volume.

15 See Cihan Özgün, "Society and Economy on the Island of Rhodes in Western Travel Journals in the 19th

By 1907–08, however, only five buildings are mentioned in the register, all described as being "in the vicinity of the Old Customs House" (*Eski Gümrük Dairesiyle ittisalında*), generating a total of 6,794 *kuruş* and 10 *para* in annual income for the Foundation.

- **Foundation properties located below or opposite the Imperial Barracks (*Kışla-ı Hümâyun*)**: This group comprised six properties, which generated an annual income of 3,280 *kuruş* from 1898 to 1901, and 3,040 *kuruş* in 1902.
  - o The first property listed in the register was leased to the Municipality of Rhodes (*Rodos Belediye Dairesi*) in 1898 for a monthly rent of 40 *kuruş*. From 1899 to 1901, it was rented as a shop to the merchant Panagis. In 1902, Panagis retained the shop for only six months.
  - o The second property was leased to Zenbilli Hacı Mehmet Ağa as a shop, with a stable annual rent of 500 *kuruş* throughout the period 1898–1902.
  - o Two other properties were rented as shops to an individual named Balyoz—possibly a rendering of the Greek surname *Palios*—and his associate, yielding 1,000 *kuruş* annually between 1898 and 1902.
  - o Another shop was rented to the master carpenter Vasileios (*Dülger Vasıl Usta*) during the same period, with an annual rent of 500 *kuruş*.
  - o Finally, one property was rented to the merchant Thomas and his associate from 1899 to 1902, at an annual rate of 800 *kuruş*.

In the 1907–08 register, these six properties are described as being "down from the Barracks of the Imperial Troops" (*Asâkir-i Şâhâne Kışlası altında*), and they brought in a combined income of 3,132 *kuruş*.

Taken together, this evidence strongly suggests that the Foundation held a strategically advantageous position within the commercial center of Rhodes, deriving steady revenue from local merchants operating in the heart of the town's market district.[16]

Foundation shops located in the Bastion of Saint George (*Subya Tabyası*): In 1898, five properties in this area, near the Hafız Ahmet Ağa Library, generated an annual income of 1,633 *kuruş* for the Foundation, followed by 1,500 *kuruş* in 1899–1900, 1,740 *kuruş* in 1901, and 1,980 *kuruş* in 1902.

- o Three of these properties were rented to the Municipality of Rhodes, consistently providing 1,500 *kuruş* annually from 1898 to 1902.
- o One property was rented in 1898 for four months to the merchant Sor Yani, generating 133 *kuruş*. It remained vacant during 1899–1900 but was rented again in 1901 for six months to the merchant Ömer Efendi at a monthly rate of 40 *kuruş*, and for the entire year in 1902.
- o Two shops remained vacant throughout the entire period from 1898 to 1902.

The strategic leasing of half of these properties to the Municipality of Rhodes reflects the Foundation's effort to ensure a stable and institutional source of income.

In the 1907–08 register, six properties are recorded in the Bastion of Saint George (*Subya Tabyasına*), of which five were leased (one remaining vacant), yielding a total income of 2,544 *kuruş* and 20 *para*.

Century", *Tarih İncemeleri Dergisi* 3/1 (2019) 197-227.

16 For the trade of Rhodes during this exact period, see Elif Yeneroğlu Kutbay, "Economic and Commercial Conditions of the Island of Rhodes at the Beginning of 20th century according to the Reports of Sir Alfred Biliotti", *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi/Journal of Modern Turkish History Stidues* 14/29 (2024) 39-56.

- **The Foundation's newly built two-story shops in front of the Old Slaughterhouse (*Atık Kassaphane*) of Rhodes**: Comprising four shops in total, these properties were marked as newly constructed in the first three balance sheets (1898–1900), though this designation was omitted from subsequent registers after 1901. They generated a fluctuating annual income: 810 *kuruş* in 1898, 1,675 in 1899, 1,220 in 1900, 575 in 1901, and 1,155 in 1902.
  - The first two-story shop was rented in 1898 for five months to Kâmil Efendi, son of Mahmut Efendi, at a monthly rate (şehriye) of 50 *kuruş*. Kâmil continued to rent the shop for the full years 1899 and 1900. In 1901, he rented it for only four and a half months; the remaining eight months of that year saw the property stand vacant. In 1902, a new tenant, Mustafa Efendi, appeared.
  - The second shop had both floors leased separately at a rate of 30 *kuruş* per floor. In 1900, the lower floor was rented for three months to a Jewish tenant named Çakar (possibly Zachary), presumably from the Jewish community of Rhodes, while the upper floor was rented for four months to Konstantinos, likely identical with the cook mentioned below. It is unclear whether these two rentals overlapped in time.
  - The third shop was initially rented in 1898 to Anastasios the carpenter (*Dülger Anastas*), though the rent was never collected for reasons not specified in the records. In 1900, both floors were rented to Konstantinos the Cook (*Aşçı Konstantin*), with the lower and upper floors leased for three and four months, respectively. In 1901, Konstantinos paid 80 *kuruş* in rent for two months (including the basement of the fourth shop), but defaulted on the remaining ten months. A court ruling was issued in favor of the Foundation. In 1902, he paid for five months but again failed to pay for the remaining seven months.
  - The fourth shop was rented in 1898 for four months to "the Jews from Smyrna" (*İzmirli Yahudiler*), at a monthly rate of 50 *kuruş*, and for the full year in 1899. These tenants were likely merchants temporarily residing in Rhodes for trade. In 1900, the shop was leased to Konstantinos the Cook, who rented the basement and upper floor for four months each. It is tempting to assume that Konstantinos was operating a restaurant in these premises, which were conveniently located in front of the Old Slaughterhouse.

These newly constructed two-story shops reflect the Foundation's commitment to investing in urban infrastructure in Rhodes. According to annotations in the register, the shops were equipped with display windows (*camekân*), further indicating their intended commercial use.

In the 1907–08 register, these four shops appear to have been consolidated with a plot belonging to the "Old Slaughterhouse" (*Kassaplık arsası*), generating a total annual rent of 2,127 *kuruş* and 20 *para*.

Today (2025), according to information provided by Tarik Tüten, the Foundation has five shops in Old Town of Rhodes, on Apellou Street, seven shops in Kapodistriou Street, and five shops adjacent to the library, on the corner of Orfeos Street. The latter might be identified probably with the aforementioned five shops located "in the Bastion of St George".

Salaries and Institutional Expenditures of the Foundation in Rhodes (1898–1908)

Between 1898 and 1902, the Foundation paid regular salaries to several key personnel in Rhodes. Foremost among them was the *first in order teacher* (*müallim-i evvel*) at the Foundation's Junior High School (*Rüşdiye Mektebi*), established in 1853 by Fethi Ahmet Paşa. In 1898, this position was held by Mehmet Nuri Efendi, who received a monthly salary of 500 *kuruş* (totaling 6,000 *kuruş* annually). The position of the *second in order teacher* remained vacant during this period. In addition to his teaching duties, Mehmet Nuri Efendi served as the Foundation's legal representative in Rhodes, and it was in this capacity that he signed and sealed the financial records.

Other salaried employees in Rhodes included:

- **Ali Nureddin**, custodian of the Timekeeper's House (*Muvakkıthane*) and the Great Clock Tower (*Kebir Saat Kulesi*), who received an annual wage of 1,440 *kuruş*.
- **Şeyh Abdullah Efendi**, librarian of the Hafız Ahmet Library (*hafız-ı kütüp*), earning 780 *kuruş* annually.

By 1908, as recorded in the register dated 15/28 March 1908, there had been changes in personnel. The accounts were now signed and sealed by the new representative of the administrator Yegâne Hanım, **Ahmet Eşref Edhem**, and the following officials:

- **Şeyh Abdullah Efendi**, now designated as the *first librarian* (*hafız-ı kütüp-i evvel*) of the Library, though with a reduced annual income of 540 *kuruş*.
- **Abdullah Efendi**, appointed as *second librarian* (*hafız-ı kütüp-i sani*) and *teacher* (*müderris*), most likely at the Junior High School, with a salary of 240 *kuruş*.
- **Ali Nureddin**, who continued in his role at the Timekeeper's House and Clock Tower, still earning 1,440 *kuruş* annually.
- **Şerif Mehmet Efendi**, the Foundation's guardian and doorkeeper (*bekçi ve kapıcı*), receiving 360 *kuruş* annually.

In addition to these salaries, the Foundation regularly funded maintenance and repair works for its educational and cultural institutions—including the school, the library, the clock tower and its mechanism—as well as its commercial real estate holdings (see details below, in the transliterated registers). For instance, in 1899, the Clock Tower suffered damage from a lightning strike (*saika*), prompting repairs that cost 411 *kuruş*.

The Foundation was also responsible for paying property taxes, which amounted to between 615 and 651 *kuruş* annually from 1898 to 1903, and 414 *kuruş* 30 *para* in 1907–1908. Moreover, in accordance with the founder Hafız Ahmet Ağa's wishes, the Foundation sponsored the ritual slaughter of two sheep (*kurban*) in the Library during the Feast of Sacrifice (*'İd-i Adha*) each year. In 1901, a special order issued by the Administrator Yegâne Hanım authorized a payment of 200 *kuruş* from the Foundation's income as alms (*sadaka*) to the poor and blind Hâfız Osman Efendi.

In conclusion, between 1898 and 1908, the Foundation of Hafız Ahmet Ağa, operating under the capable administration of Saliha Yegâne Hanım, played a vital cultural and philanthropic role in both Istanbul and Rhodes. In particular, the Foundation's activities on the island of Rhodes proved to be a significant source of supplementary income, which was redirected to support its commitments in Istanbul.

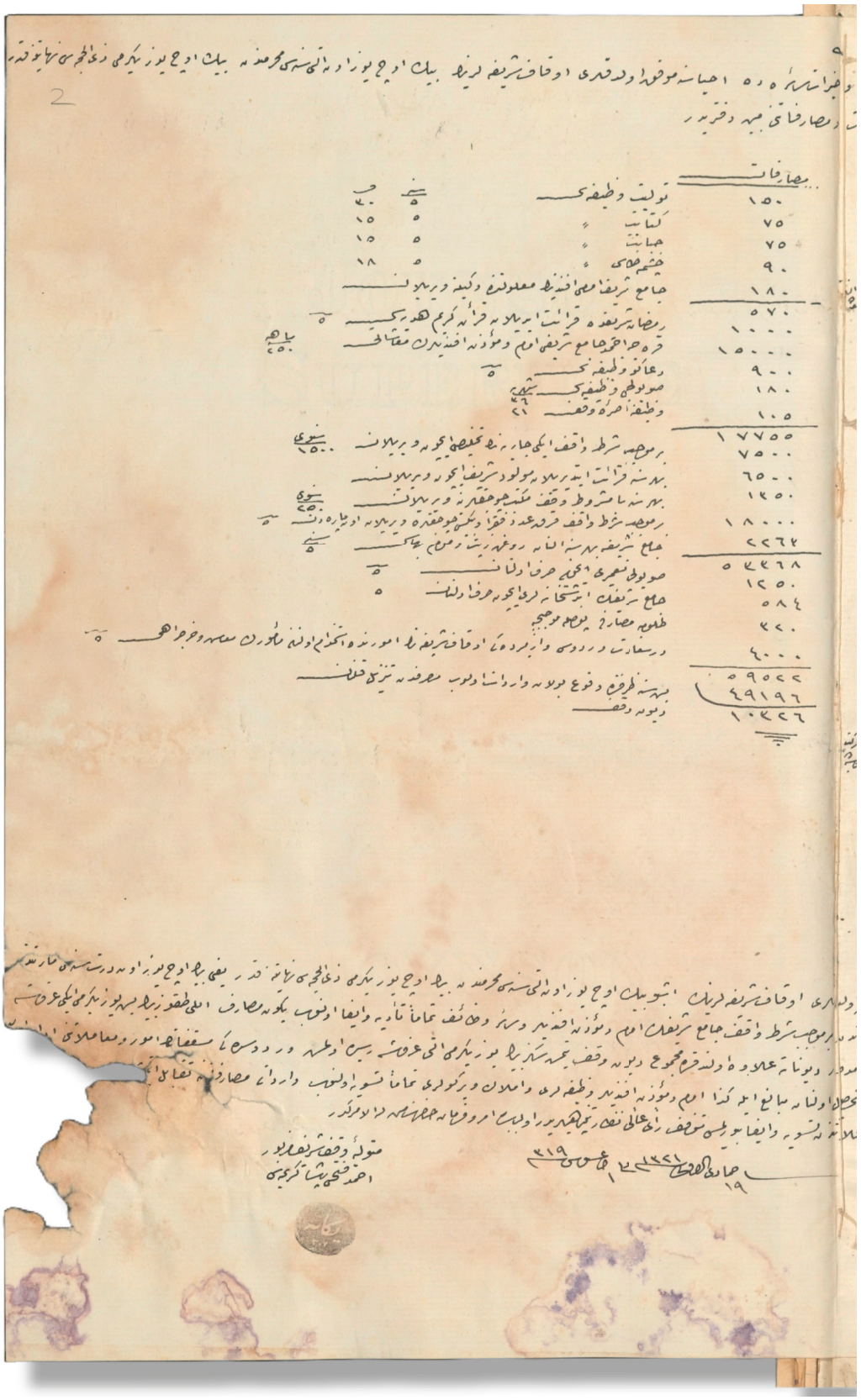
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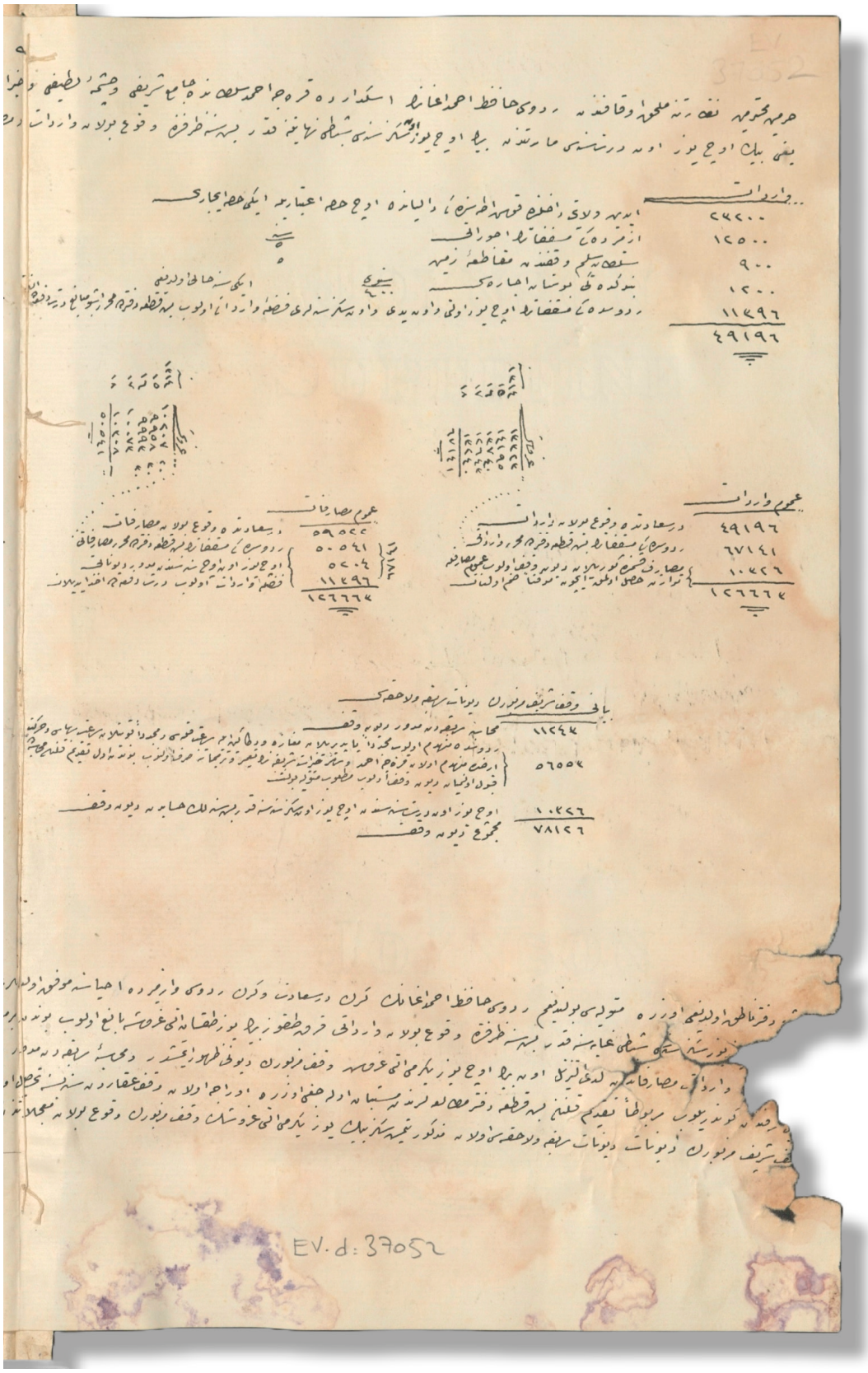
Exhibits in the following pages are:

The income and expense register covering March 1898 to February 1903, Ottoman Archive of the State Archives of the Turkish Presidency of the Republic, Evkaf Defteri 37052.

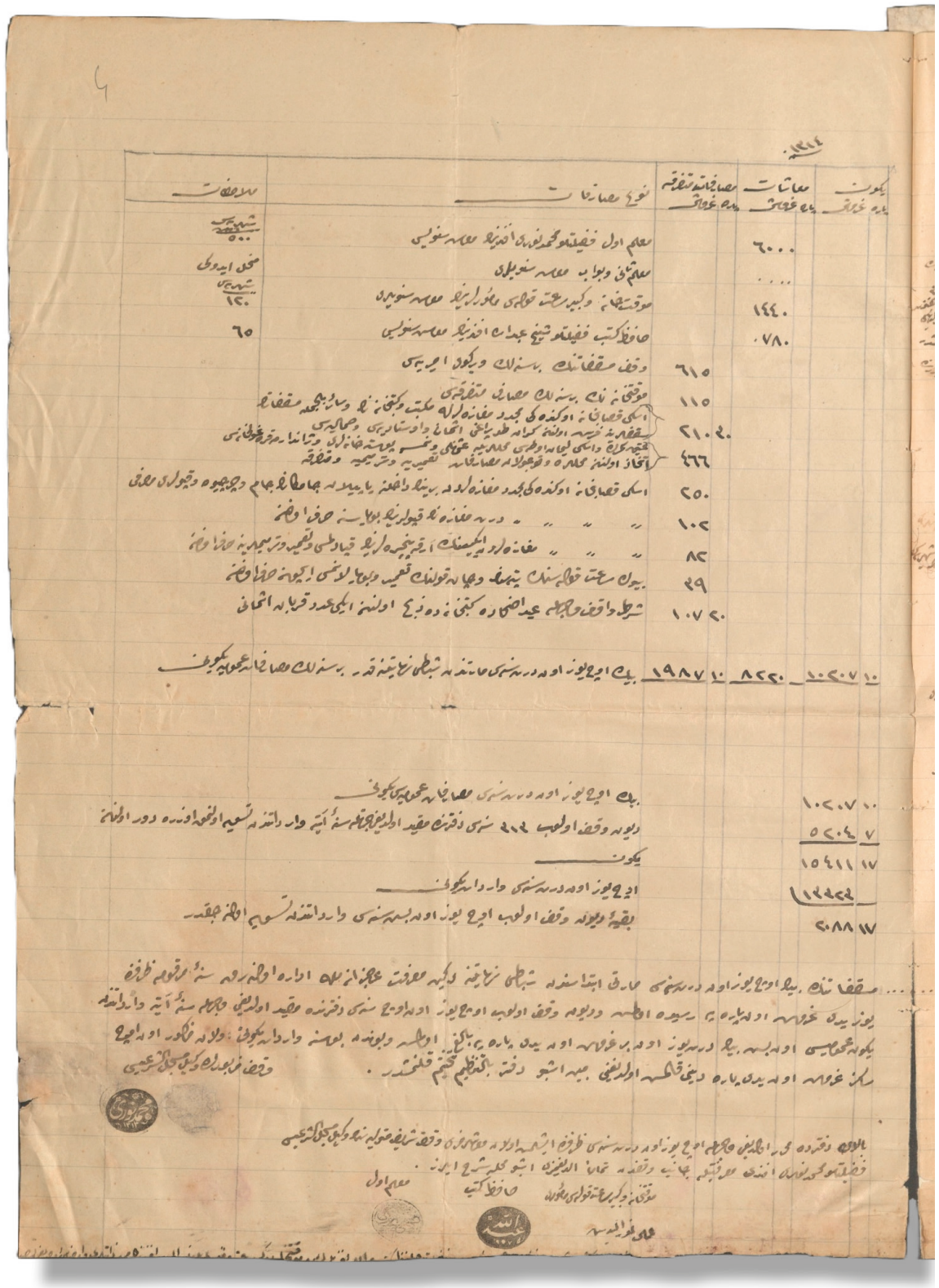
The income and expense register covering March 1907 to February 1908, Ottoman Archive of the State Archives of the Turkish Presidency of the Republic, Evkaf Defteri 30754.

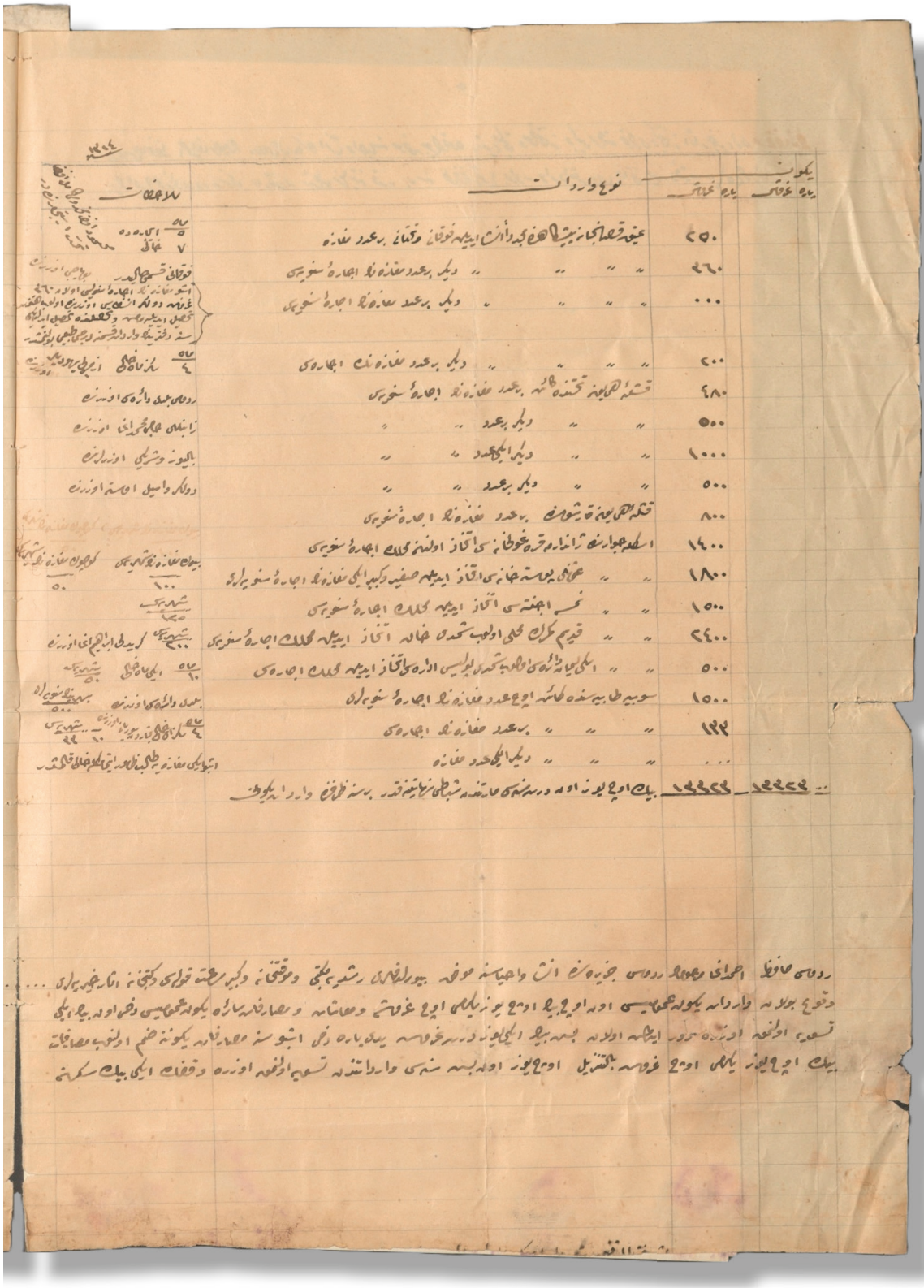
The transliterations of Defter 37052 and Defter 30754 into Turkish by Dr. Elias Kolovos.



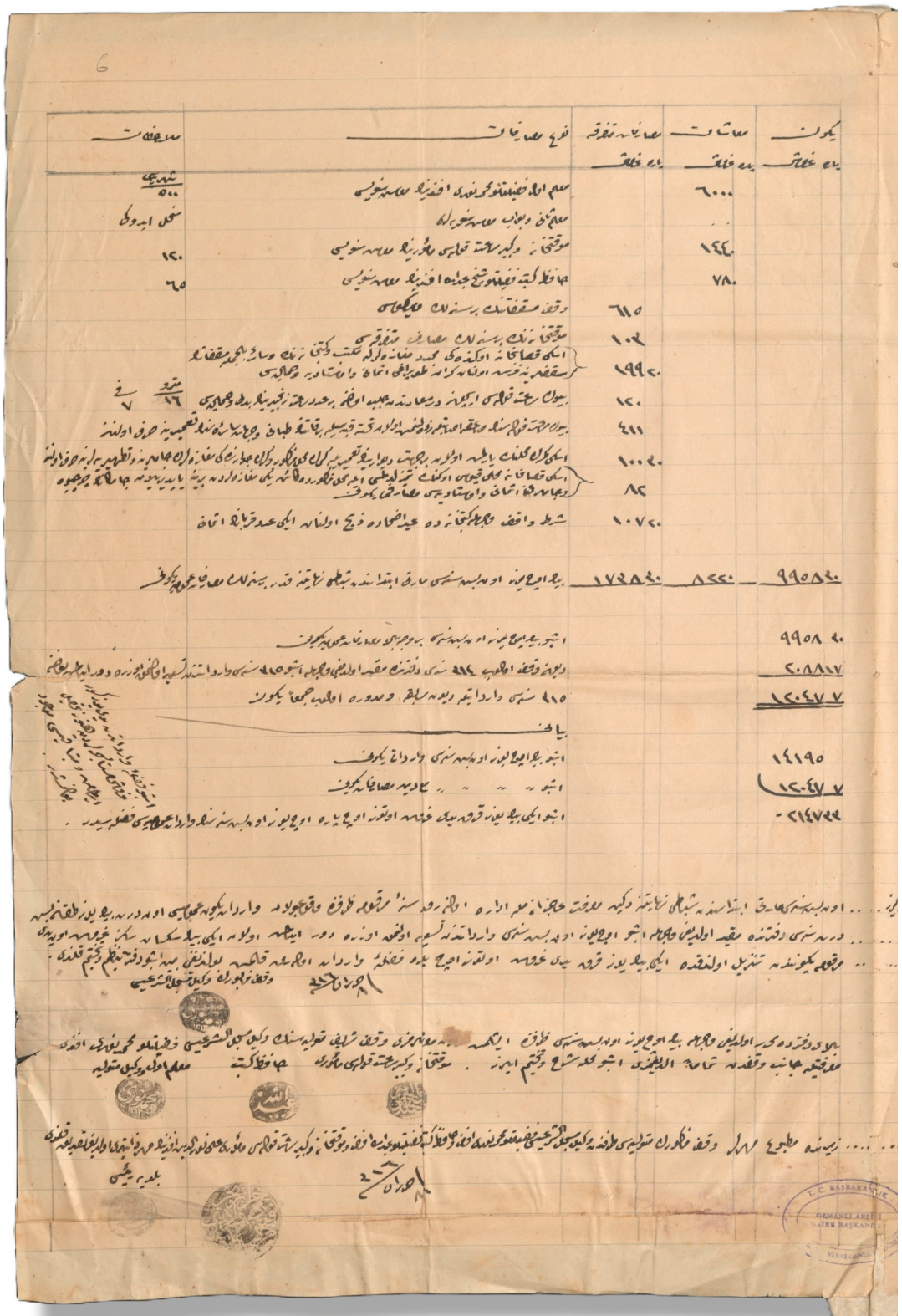


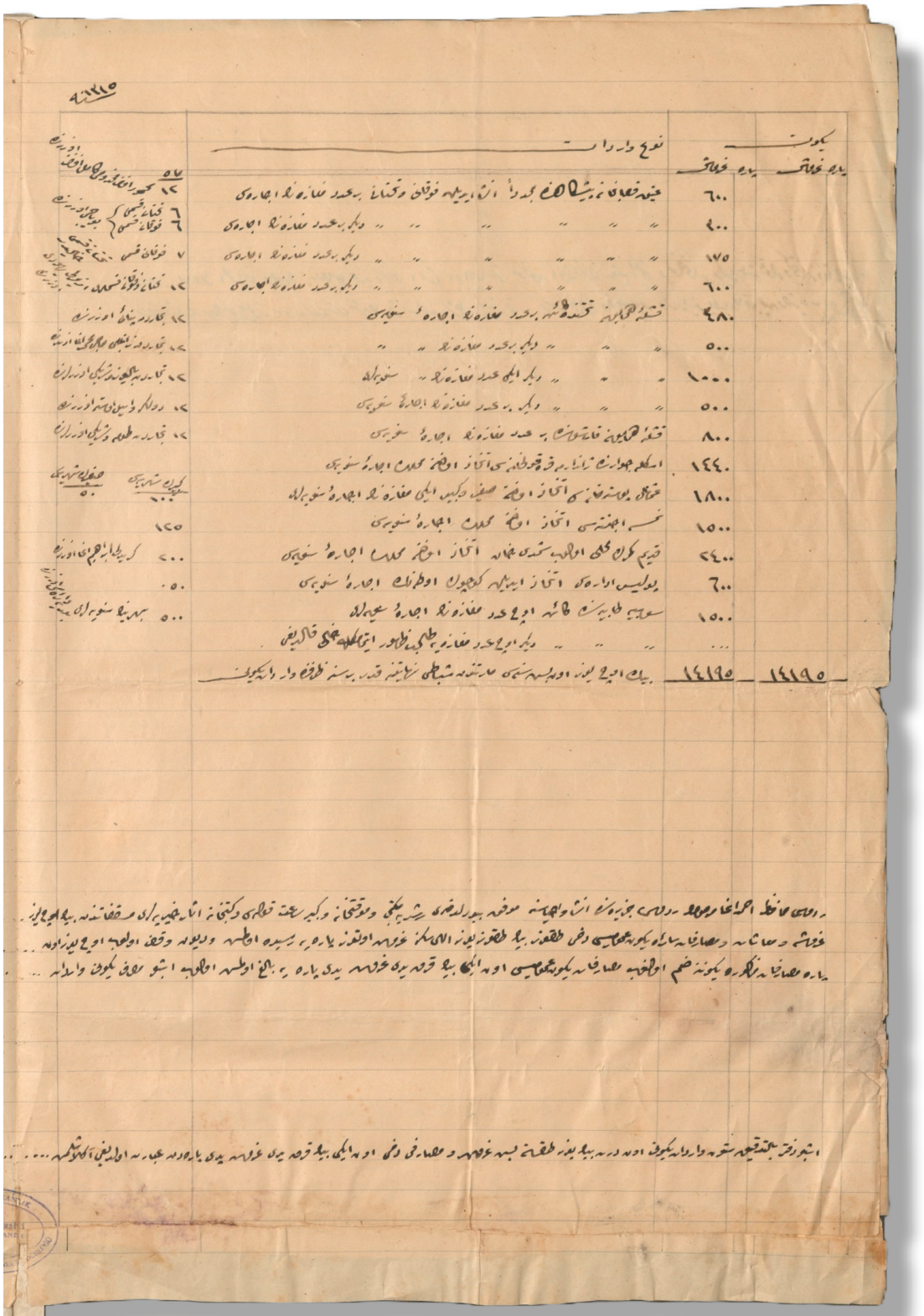
Defter 37052
Folio 2



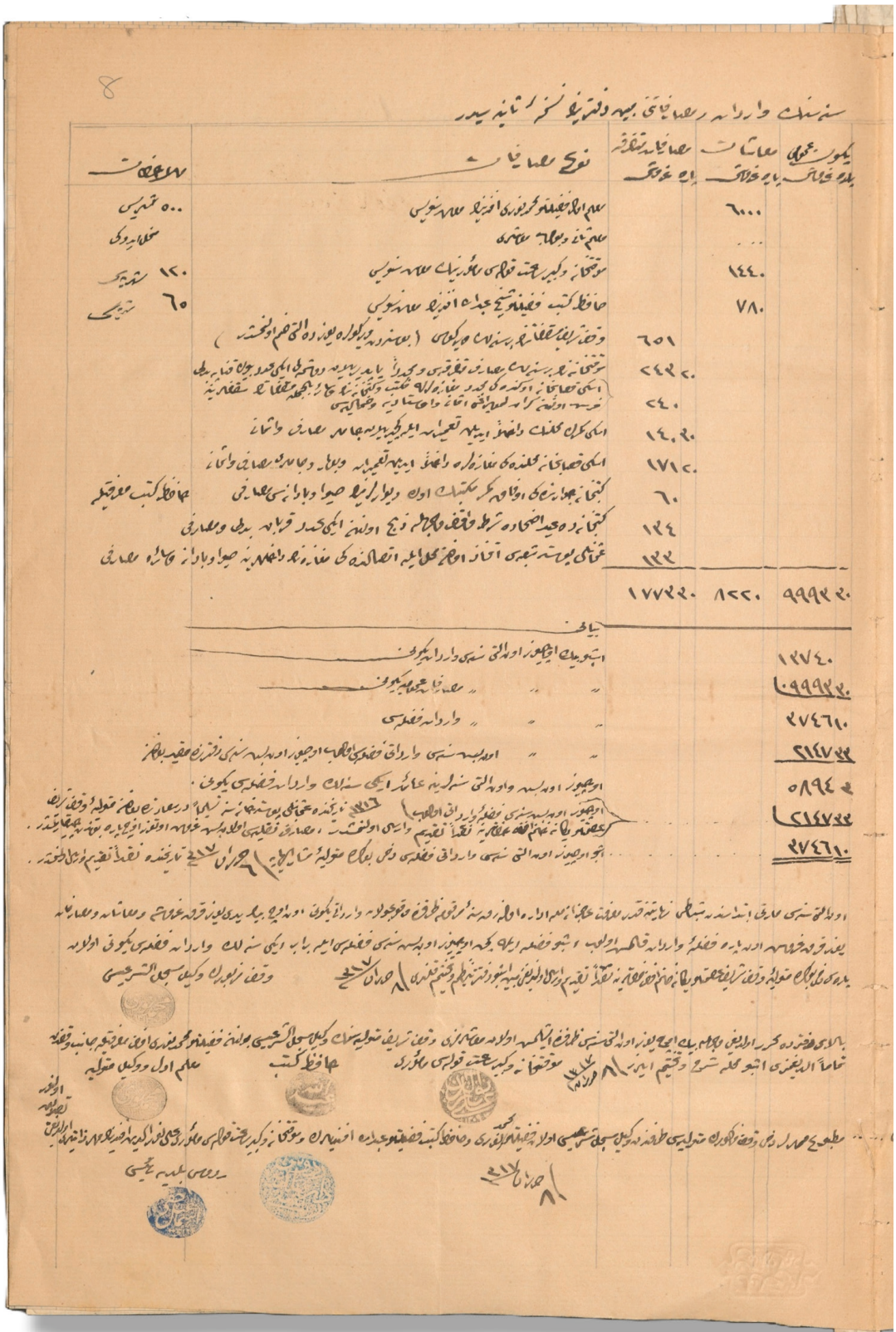


Folio 4

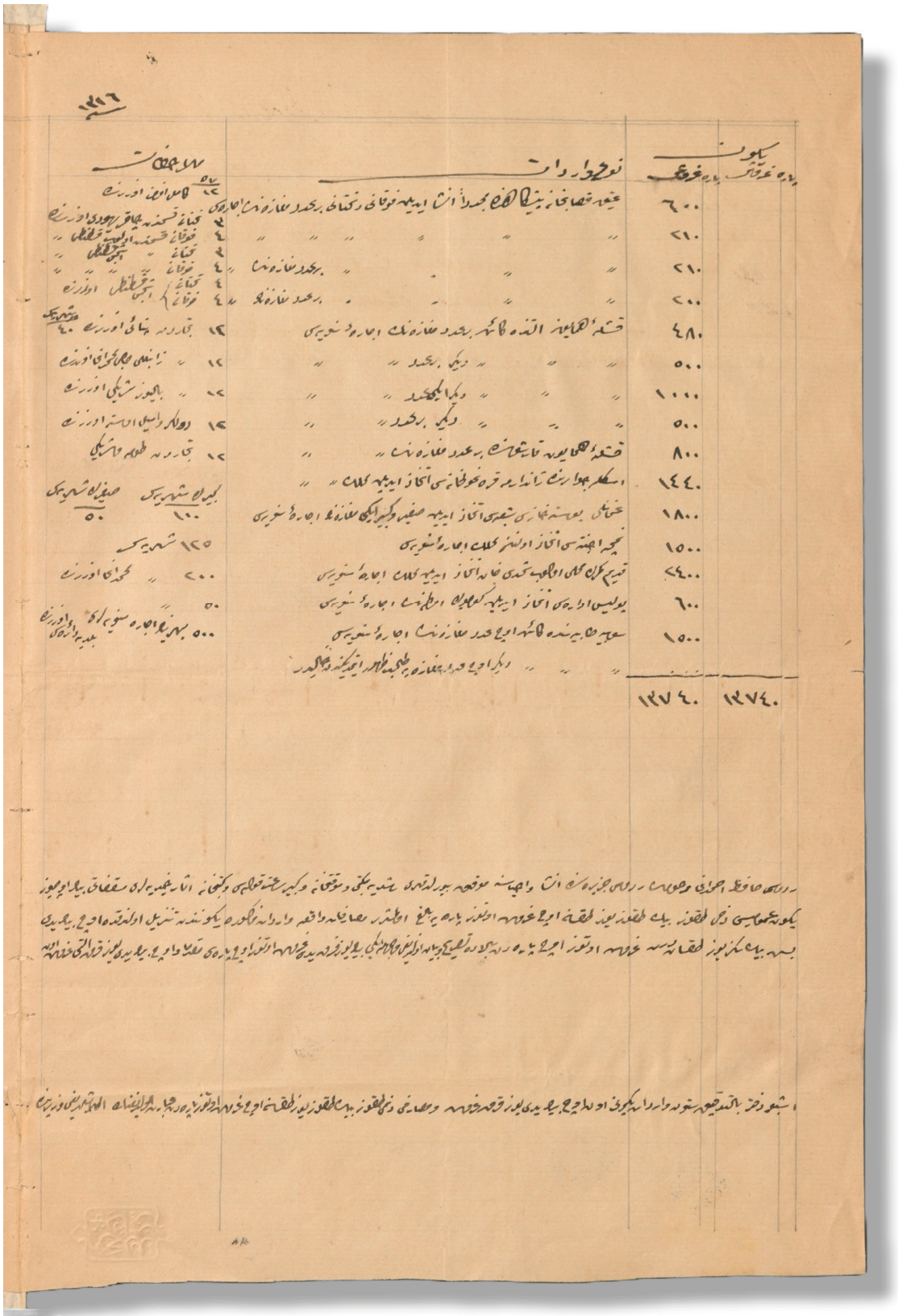




Folio 6

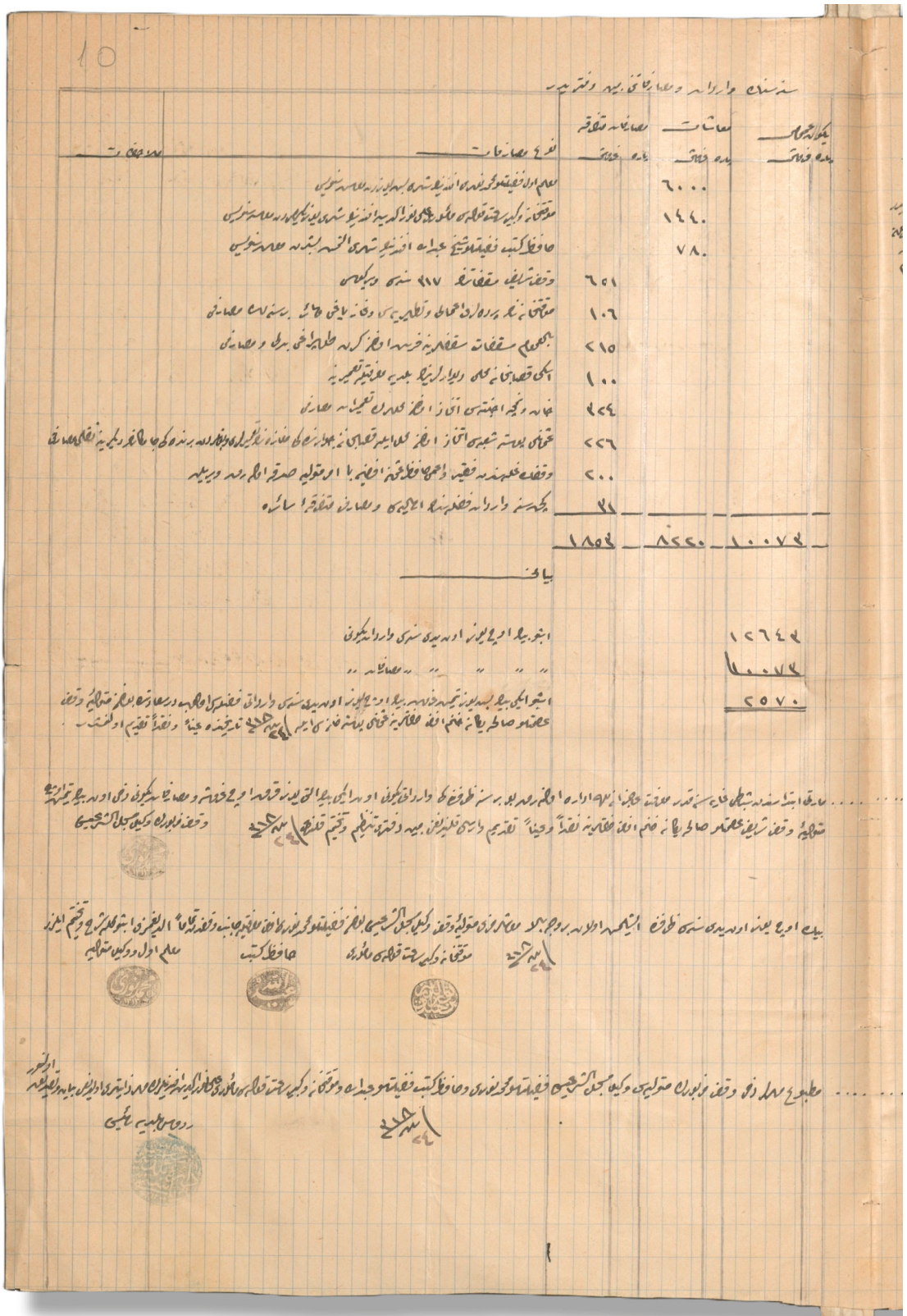


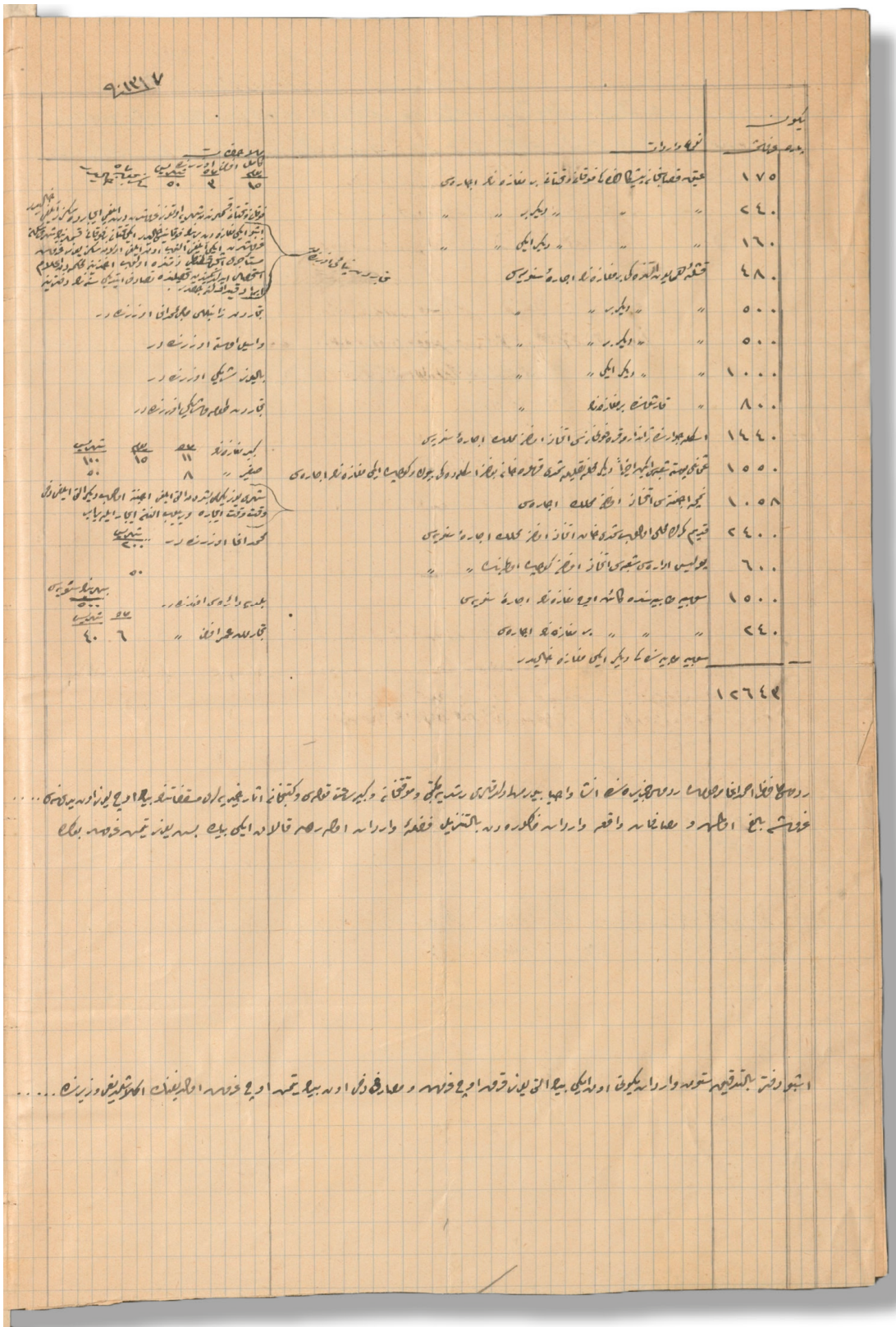
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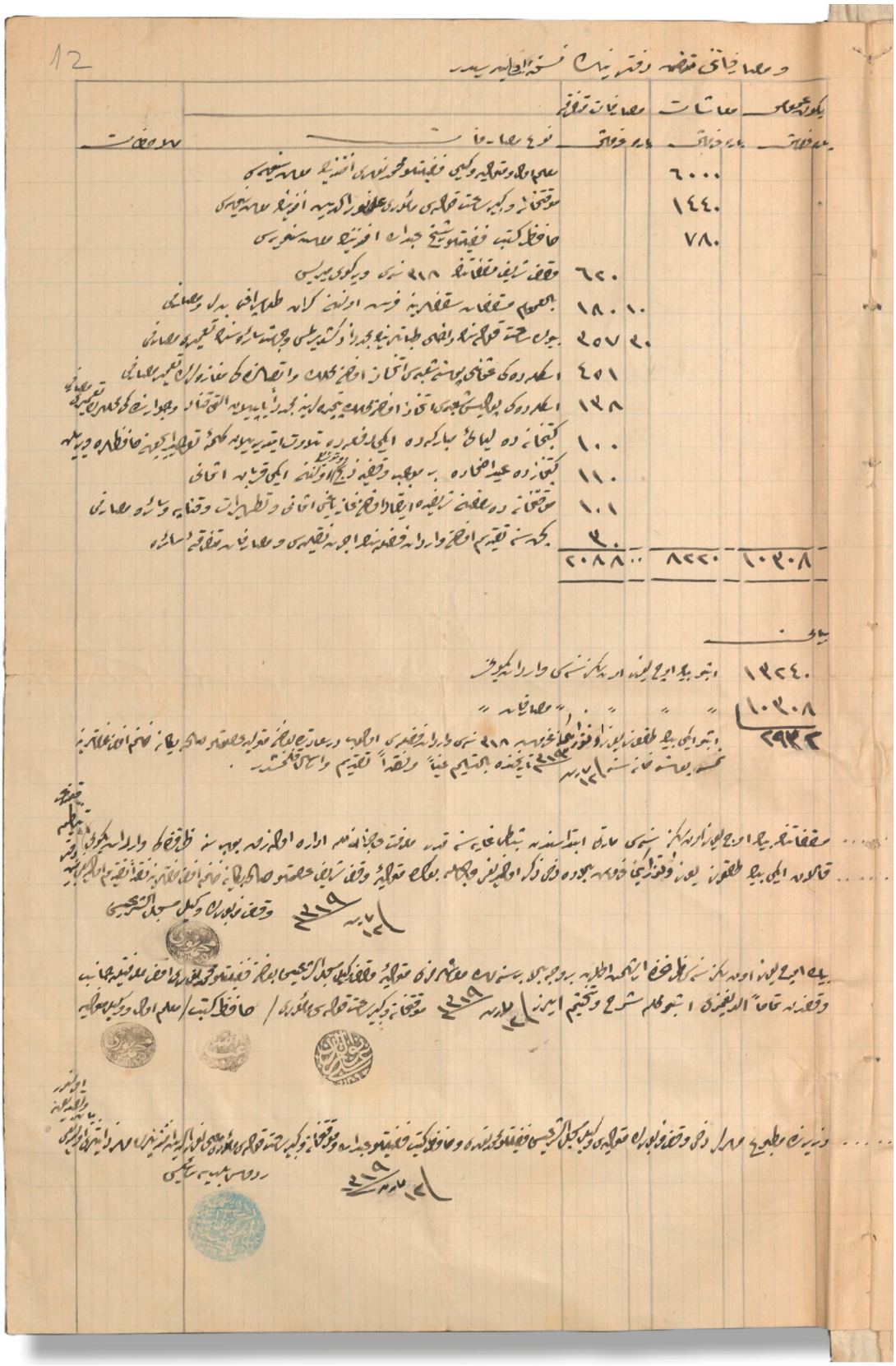
Folio 8

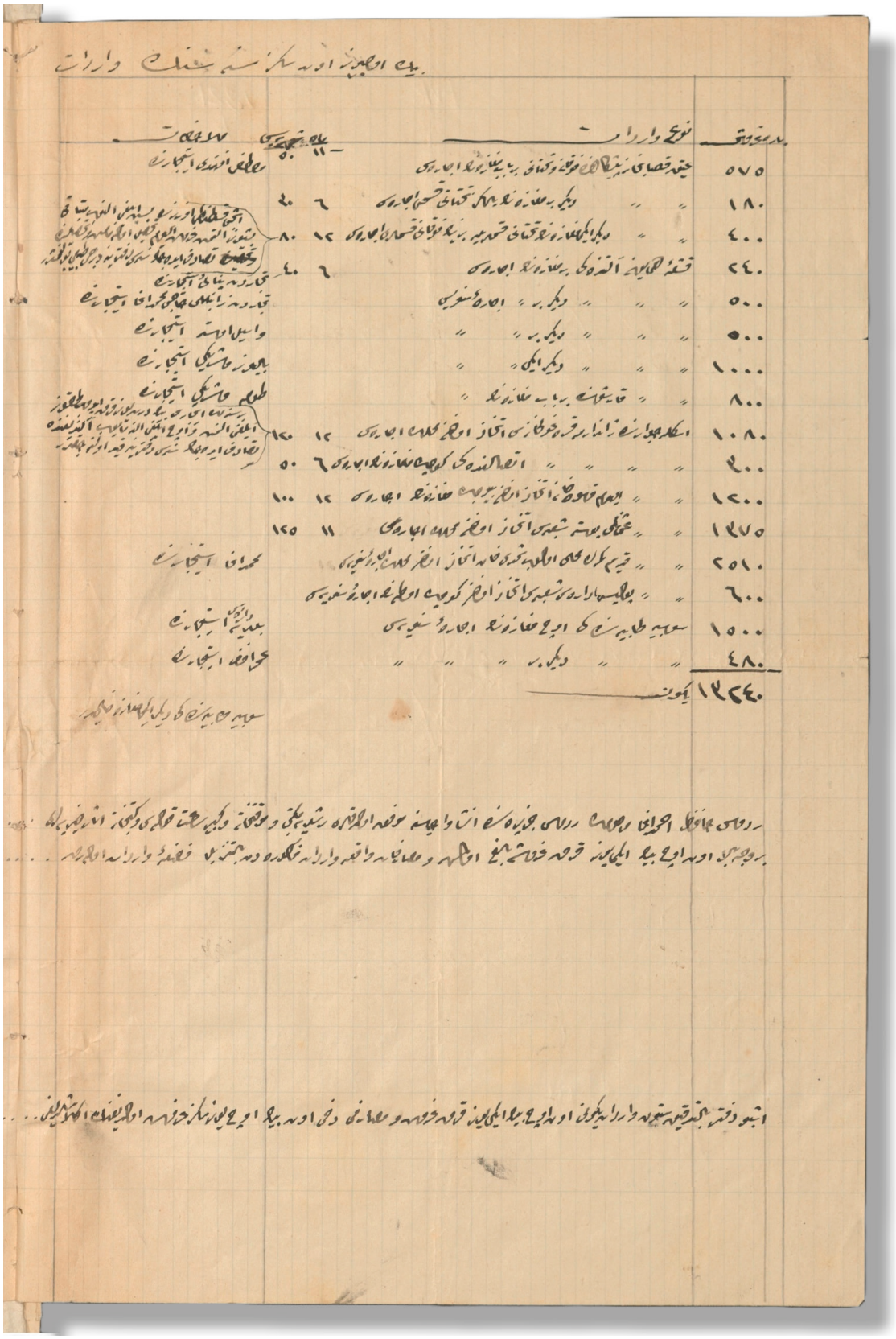
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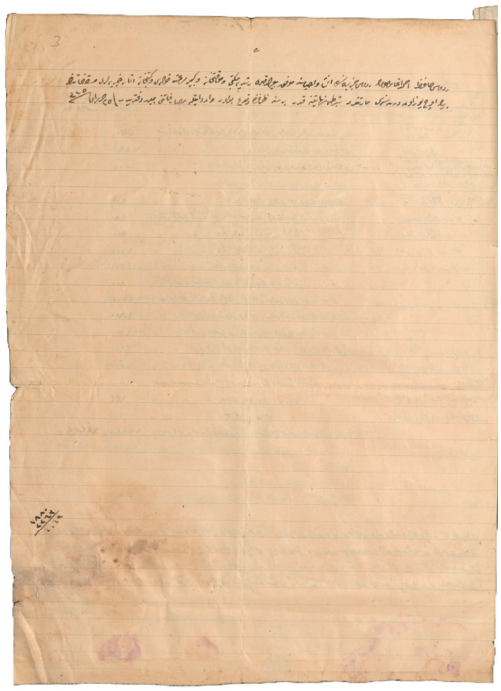


Folio 10

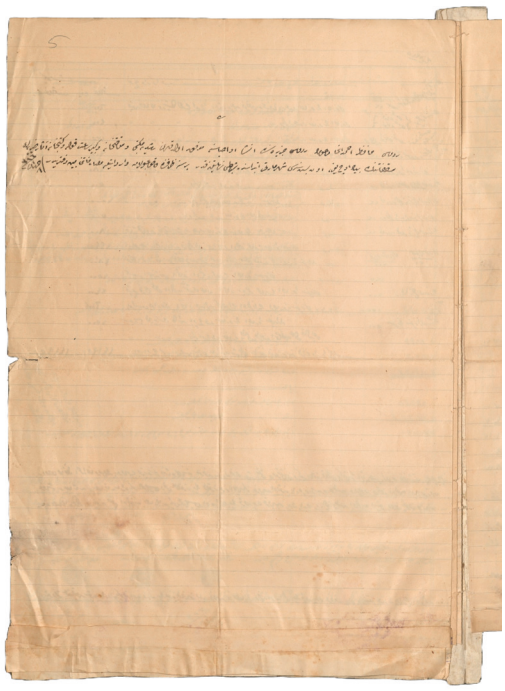




Folio 12



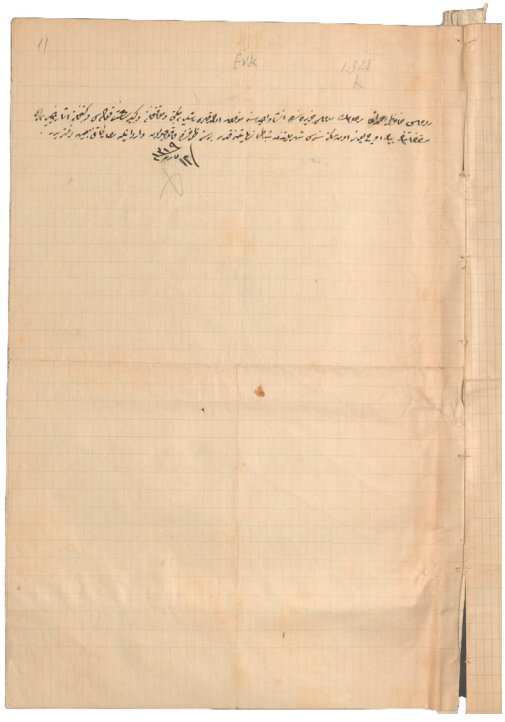
Folio 3



Folio 5



Folio 9



Folio 11

Transliteration into Modern Turkish

Evkaf Defteri 37052

12 Folios (starts with Folio 2, Folio 7 is non-existent)

[Folio 2] *Haremeyn-i Muhteremeyn Nezaretine mulhak evkafından Rodosi Hafız Ahmet Ağa'nın Üsküdar'da Karaca Ahmed Sultan'da Cami-i Şerifi ve çeşme-i latifi ve hayrat-i sairede ihyasına muvafık oldukları şerifelerinin bin üç yüz on altı senesi Muharreminden bin üç yüz yiğirmi Zilhiccesi nihayetine kadar ya'ni bin üç yüz on dört senesi Martından bin üç yüz on sekiz senesi Şubat nihayetine kadar beş sene zarfında vukubulan varidat ve masarifatını mübeyyin defteridir.*

Varidat	
24.200	*Aydın Vilayeti dahilinde Kuşadası'ndaki dalyanda üç hisse itibarıyla iki hisse icarı*
12.500	*İzmir'deki musakkafatının ucuratı (sene: 5)*
900	*Sultan Selim vakfından mukataa-ı zemin (sene: 5)*
1.200	*Pendik'teki bostan icaresi (senevi: 400; iki sene hali olduğu)*
11.496	*Rodos'taki musakkafatının üç yüz on altı ve on yedi ve on sekiz seneleri fazla-ı varidatı olup beş kıt'a defterde muharrer işbu mebaliğ dört defada [...]*
49.196	

Umum-i varidat	
49.196	*Dersaadet'te vukubulan varidat*
67.141	*Rodos'taki musakkafatın beş kıt'a defterde muharrer varidatı**
10.326	*Masarif kısmında görülen duyun-i vakf olup umum-i masarifla tevazun hasıl olmak için marifeten zamm olunan*
126.663	

***Kuruş**	***Sene***
13.323	*1314*
14.195	*(13)15*
13.740	*(13)16*
12.643	*(13)17*
13.240	*(13)18*
67.141	

Umum-i masarif	
59.522	*Dersaadet'te vukubulan masarifat*
50.541	*Rodos'taki musakkafatın beş kıt'a defterde muharrer masarifatı**
5.204	*Üç yüz on üç senesinden mürur duyunatı*
11.396	*Fazla varidat olup dört defada ahz edilen*
126.663	

***Kuruş**	***Sene***

10.207 para 20	*1314*
9.958 para 30	*(13)15*
8.883 para 30	*(13)16*
10.073	*(13)17*
10.208	*(13)18*
50.541	

Beyanı: vakf-ı şerif-i mezburün duyunat-ı şerife ve lahıkası	
11.243	*Muhasebe-i şerifeden mürur duyun-ı vakf*
56.553	*Rodos'ta münhedim olup müceddeden yaptırılan mağaza ve dekâkin ile saatkulesi ve müceddeden konulan saat pahası ve hareket-i arzta münhedim olan Karaca Ahmet ve sair hayrat-ı şerifenin tamir ve termimatına sarf olunup bundan evvel kadim kılınan muhasebede kabul olunmayan duyun-ı vakf olup matlub-ı mütevelliye bulunup*
10.326	*Üç yüz on dört senesinden üç yüz on sekiz senesine kadar beş senelik hesaptan duyun-i vakf*
78.126	*Mecmu-yı duyun-ı vakf*

[...] defter-i natıka olduğu üzere mütevelliyesi bulunduğum Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa'nın gerek Dersaadet ve gerek Rodos ve İzmir'de ihyasına muvafık olanları evkaf-ı şerifelerinin işbu bin üç yüz on altı senesi Muharreminden bin üç yüz yirmi Zilhiccesi nihayetine kadar ya'ni bin üç yüz on dört senesi Martından [bin üç] yüz sekiz senesi Şubatı gayesine kadar beş sene zarfında vukubulan varidatı kırk dokuz bin yüz doksan altı kuruşa baliğ olup bundan ber muceb-i şer-i vâkif Cami-i Şerif'in imam ve müezzin efendiler ve sair vezaif tamamen tediye ve ifa olunup yekûn-i masarif elli dokuz bin beş yüz yirmi iki kuruşa [...] varidat-ı masarifattan ledettenzil on bin üç yüz yirmi altı kuruşunu vakf-ı mezburün duyunu zuhur etmiştir ve muhasebe-i şerifeden mürur duyunata ilave olundukta mecmu-yı duyun-ı vakf yetmiş sekiz bin yüz yirmi altı kuruşa reside olmuş ve Rodos'taki musakkafatın umur ve muamellatını [...] gönderilen merbutan takdim kılınan beş kıt'a defter mutalaalarından müsteban olacağı üzere idraca olan vakf-ı akardan sene besene tahsil olunan mebaliğ ile keza imam ve müezzin efendiler vazifeleri ve emlâk vergileri tamamen tesviye olunup varidatı masarifinden tekabül [...] [vak]f-ı şerif-i mezburün duyunat-ı {duyunat} şerife ve lahıkası olan mezkur yetmiş sekiz bin yüz yirmi altı kuruşun vakf-ı mezburün vukubulan muaccelatından tesviye ve ifa buyurulması tevaffuk-ı ray-ı âli-i nazaretpenahileridir ol bapta emr ü ferman hazret-i minlehülemrindir. Fi 19 Cemaziyülevvel sene 1321 ve fi 1 Ağustos sene (1)319 [=14.8.1903].

Mütevelliye-i vakf-ı şerif-i mezbur

Ahmet Fethi Paşa kerimesi

(mühür:) Yegâne (1)307 [=1889/90]

[Folio 3] *Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumun Rodos ceziresinde inşa ve ihyasına muvafık buyuruldukları Rüşdiye Mektebi ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi ve Kütüphane asar-ı hayriyeleri musakkafatının bin üç yüz on dört senesi Martından Şubatı nihayetine kadar bir sene zarfında vukubulan varidatıyla masarifatını mübeyyin defteridir; fi 25 Haziran sene (1)315 [=7.7.1899]*

[Folio 4] *1314 [=1898]*

Nev-i varidat	*Mülahazat*	*Kuruş*	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında müceddeden inşa edilen fevkani ve tahtani bir aded mağaza	*mah: 5 icarede; 7 hali* *Mahmud Efendi mahdumu Kâmil Efendi taht-ı isticarındadır*	*250*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında müceddeden inşa edilen diğer bir aded mağaza icare-i seneviyesi	*fevkani kısmı halidir*	*360*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında müceddeden inşa edilen diğer bir mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*işbu mağazanın icare-i senevisi olan 360 kuruş Dülger Anastas üzerinde olup henüz tahsil edilememiş ve tahsilinde tahsil edildiği sene defterinin varidat kısmına derci tebi'i bulunmuştur*	*---*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında müceddeden inşa edilen diğer bir aded mağazanın icaresi	*mah: 4; sekiz mah hali* *İzmirli Yahudiler üzerinde*	*200*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Rodos Beledi Dairesi üzerinde*	*480*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin diğer bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Zenbilli Hacı Mehmet Ağa üzerinde*	*500*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin diğer iki aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Balyoz ve şeriki üzerlerinde*	*1.000*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin diğer bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Dülger Vasıl Usta üzerinde*	*500*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun karşısında bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi		*800*			
İskele civarında Jandarma Karavulhanesi ittihaz olunan mahallin icare-i seneviyesi		*1.400*			
İskele civarında Osmanlı Postahanesi ittihaz edilen sagir ve kebir iki mağazanın icare-i seneviyeleri	*büyük mağazanın şehriyesi: 100; küçük mağazanın şehriyesi: 50*	*1.800*			
İskele civarında Nemse Acentesi ittihaz edilen mahalin icare-i seneviyesi	*şehriyesi: 125*	*1.500*			
İskele civarında Kadim Gümrük mahalli olup şimdi Han ittihaz edilen mahallin icare-i seneviyesi	*şehriyesi: 200; Giritli İbrahim Ağa üzerinde*	*2.400*			
İskele civarında Eski Liman Dairesi olup şimdi Polis İdaresi ittihaz edilen mahallin icaresi	*mah: 10; iki mah hali; şehriyesi: 50*	*500*			
Subya Tabyasında kâin üç aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyeleri	*Beledi Dairesi üzerinde; şehriyenin seneviyeleri: 500*	*1.500*			
Subya Tabyasında kâin bir aded mağazanın icaresi	*mah: 4 sekiz ay hali; tüccardan Sor Yani üzerinde*	*133*			
Subya Tabyasında kâin diğer iki aded mağaza	*İşbu iki mağazaya talip zuhur etmemekle hali kalmıştır*	*---*			
Bin üç yüz on dört senesi Martından Şubatı nihayetine kadar bir sene zarfında varidat yekûnu		*13.323*		*13.323*	

1314 [=1898]

Nev-i masarifat	*Mülahazat*	*Masarifat-ı müteferrika*		*Maaşat*		*Yekûn*	
		Kuruş	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*
Müallim-i evvel faziletli Mehmet Nuri Efendi'nin maaş-ı senevisi	*şehriyesi: 500*			*6.000*			
Müallim-i sani ve bevvab maaş-ı seneviyeleri	*muhallâ idiği*			*---*			
Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi memurlarının maaş-ı senevileri	*şehriyesi: 120*			*1.440*			
Hafız-ı Kütüp faziletli Şeyh Abdullah Efendinin maaş-ı senevisi	*65*			*780*			
Vakf musakkafatının bir senelik vergiler ecriyesi		*615*					
Muvakkıthanenin bir senelik masarif-i müteferrikası		*115*					
Eski Kassaphane önündeki mücedded mağazalarla Mektep ve Kütüphanenin ve sair ve bilcümle musakkafatının sakıflarına ferş olunan giran toprağı esmanı ve üstadiyesi ve hamaliyesi		*210*	*30*				
Atık Gümrük ve Eski Liman Odası mahalleriyle Osmanlı ve Nemse Postahaneleri ve Jandarma Karavulhanesi ittihaz olunan mahallere vukubulan masarifat-i tamiriye ve termimiye ve muteferrika		*466*					
Eski Kassaphane önündeki mücedded mağazalardan birinin dahiline yapılan camekânın cam ve çerçeve ve kapıları dahı		*250*					
Eski Kassaphane önündeki mücedded dört mağazanın kapılarının boyasına sarf olunan		*102*					
Eski Kassaphane önündeki mağazalardan ikisinin arka pencerelerinin kapatılması ve tamir ve termimlerine sarf olunan		*82*					
Büyük Saat Kulesinin tepesinin ve Çan Kulenin tamir ve boyalanması için sarf olunan		*39*					
şart-ı vâkif vechiyle îd-i adhada Kütüphanede zebh olunan iki aded kurban esmanı		*107*	*20*				

Bin üç yüz on dört senesi Martından Şubatı nihayetine kadar bir senelik mesarifat-ı umumiye yekûnu		*1.987*	*10*	*8.220*		*10.207*	*10*
Bin üç yüz on dört senesi masarif-i umumiyesi yekûnu						*10.207*	*10*
Duyun-i vakf olup (1)313 senesi defterinde mukayyed olduğu cihetle sene-i atiye varidatından tesviye olunmak üzere devr olunan						*5.204*	*7*
Yekûn						*15.411*	*17*
Üç yüz on dört senesi varidat yekûnu						*13.323*	
Bakiye-i duyun-ı vakf olup üç yüz on beş senesi varidatından tesviye olunacaktır						*2.088*	*17*

Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumün Rodos ceziresinde inşa ve ihyasına muvafık buyuruldukları Rüşdiye Mektebi ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi ve Kütüphane asar-ı hayriyeleri musakkafatının bin üç yüz on dört senesi Martı iptidasından Şubatı nihayetine değin marifet-i acizanemle idare olunarak sene-i merkume zarfında vukubulan varidat yekûn-i umumisi on üç bin üç yüz yirmi kuruşa ve maaşat ve masarifat-i saire yekûn-i umumisi dahi on bin iki yüz yedi kuruş on paraya reside olmuş ve duyun-i vakf olup üç yüz on üç senesi defterinde mukayyed olduğu vechle sene-i atiye varidatından tesviye olunmak üzere devr edilmiş olan beş bin iki yüz dört kuruş yedi para dahi işbu sene masarifat yekûnuna zamm olunup masarifat yekûn-i umumisi on beş bin dört yüz on bir kuruş on yedi paraya baliğ olmuş ve bundan bu sene varidat yekûnu olan mezkur on üç bin üç yüz yirmi üç kuruş bittenzil üç yüz on beş senesi varidatından tesviye olunmak üzere vakıfın iki bin seksen sekiz kuruş on yedi para deyni kalmış olduğunu mübeyyin işbu defter bittanzim tahtim kılınmıştır.

Vakf-ı mezburlere vekil-i müseccelüşşer'isi (mühür:) Mehmed Nuri

Balada defterde muharrer olduğu vechle üç yüz on dört senesi zarfında işlemiş olan maaşlarımızı vakf-ı şerif mütevelliyesinin vekil-i müseccelüşşer'isi faziletli Mehmed Nuri Efendi marifetiyle canib-i vakftan tamamen aldığımızı işbu mahale şerh eyleriz

Muallim-i Evvel (mühür:) Mehmed Nuri

Hafız-ı Kütüb (mühür:) Abdullah

Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi Memuru: Ali Nureddin

[Folio 5] *Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumun Rodos ceziresinde inşa ve ihyasına muvafık buyuruldukları Rüşdiye Mektebi ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi ve Kütüphane asar-ı hayriyeleri musakkafatının bin üç yüz on dört senesi Martından Şubatı nihayetine kadar bir sene zarfında vukubulan varidatıyla masarifatını mübeyyin defteridir; fi 8 Haziran sene (1)316 [=21.5.1900]*

[Folio 6] 1315 [=1899]

Nev-i varidat	*Mülahazat*	*Kuruş*	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında mücedde-den inşa edilen fevkani ve tahtani bir aded mağazanın icaresi	*mah: 12; Mahmut Efendi mahdumu Kâmil Efendi üzerinde*	*600*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında mücedde-den inşa edilen inşa edilen fevkani ve tahtani diğer bir aded mağazanın icaresi	*tahtani kısmı: 6 (mah)* *fevkani kısmı: 6 (mah)* *bu dahi üzerinde*	*300*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında mücedde-den inşa edilen fevkani ve tahtani diğer bir mağazanın icaresi	*fevkani kısmı: 7 (mah)* *tahtani kısmı: halidir*	*175*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında mücedde-den inşa edilen fevkani ve tahtani diğer bir aded mağazanın icaresi	*tahtani ve fevkani kısmıdır: 12 (mah);* *İzmirli Yahudi üzerinde*	*600*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*12 (mah); tüccardan Panayi üzerinde*	*480*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin diğer bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*12 (mah): tüccardan Zenbilli Hacı Mehmet Ağa üzerinde*	*500*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin diğer iki aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*12 (mah): tüccardan Balyoz ve şeriki üzerle-rinde*	*1.000*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin diğer bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*12 (mah): Dülger Vasıl Usta üzerinde*	*500*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun karşısında bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*12 (mah): tüccardan Toma ve şeriki üzer-lerinde*	*800*			
İskele civarında Jandarma Karavulhanesi ittihaz olunan mahallin icare-i seneviyesi		*1.440*			
Osmanlı Postahanesi ittihaz olunan sagir ve kebir iki mağazanın icare-i seneviyeleri	*kebirin şehriyesi: 100;* *sagirin şehriyesi: 50*	*1.800*			
Nemse Acentesi ittihaz olunan mahalin icare-i seneviyesi	*[şehriyesi:] 125*	*1.500*			
Kadim Gümrük mahalli olup şimdi Han ittihaz olunan mahallin icare-i seneviyesi	*[şehriyesi:] 200; Giritli İbrahim Ağa üzerinde*	*2.400*			
Polis İdaresi ittihaz edilen küçük oda-nın icare-i seneviyesi	*[şehriyesi:] 50*	*600*			
Subya Tabyasında kâin üç aded mağa-zanın icare-i seneviyeleri	*500; şehriyenin seneviyeleri; Belediye Dairesi üzerinde*	*1.500*			
Subya Tabyasında kâin diğer üç aded mağazanın talip zuhur etmemekle hali kaldığı		---			
		14.195		***14.195***	

1315 [=1899]

Nev-i masarifat	*Mülahazat*	*Masarifat-ı müteferrika*		*Maaşat*		*Yekûn*	
		Kuruş	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*
Müallim-i evvel faziletli Mehmet Nuri Efendi'nin maaş-ı senevisi	*şehriyesi: 500*			*6.000*			
Müallim-i sani ve bevvab maaş-ı seneviyeleri	*muhallâ idiği*			*---*			
Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi memurlarının maaş-ı senevisi	*[şehriyesi:] 120*			*1.440*			
Hafız-ı Kütüp faziletli Şeyh Abdullah Efendinin maaş-ı senevisi	*65*			*780*			
Vakf musakkafatının bir senelik vergisi		*615*					
Muvakkıthanenin bir senelik masarif-i müteferrikası		*103*					
Eski Kassaphane önündeki mücedded mağazalarla Mektep ve Kütüphanenin ve sair ve bilcümle musakkafatının sakıflarına yine ferş olunan giran toprağı esmanı ve üstadiyesi ve hamaliyesi		*199*	*20*				
Büyük Saat Kulesi için Dersaadet'ten celb olunan bir aded saat zincirinin bedeli ve hammaliyesi	*metro: 16 fi 7*	*120*					
Büyük Saat Kulesinin saika isabetten zedelenmiş olan tahta kubbesiyle bir katının tabanı ve cihat-ı sairesinin tamirine sarf olunan		*411*					
Eski Gümrük mahallinde yapılmış olan bir cihet duvarının tamiriyle Gümrük mahall-i mezkur ve Gümrük civarındaki mağazaların camlarına ve tathiriyelerine sarf olunan		*100*	*30*				
Eski Kassaphane mahall-i kapısı önünün temizlemeli ile mahall-i mezkurde kâin yeni mağazalardan birine yaptırılan camekân çerçeve		*82*					
şart-ı vâkif vechiyle Kütüphanede îd-i adhada zebh olunan iki aded kurban esmanı		*107*	*20*				
Bin üç yüz on beş senesi Martından Şubatı nihayetine kadar bir senelik mesarifat-ı umumiye yekûnu		***1.738***	***30***	***8.220***		***9.958***	***30***

İşbu bin üç yüz on beş senesi masarif-i umumiyesi yekûnu						*9.958*	*30*
Duyun-i vakf olup (1)314 senesi defterinde mukayyed olduğu cihetle işbu 1315 senesi varidatından tesviye olunmak üzere devr olunan						*2.088*	*17*
(1)315 senesi varıdatıyla duyun-i sabıka ve müdevvere olup cem'an yekûn						*12.047*	*7*
Beyanı:							
İşbu bin üç yüz on beş senesi varidatı yekûnu						*13.195*	
İşbu bin üç yüz on beş senesi maa deyn-i masarifat yekûnu						*12.047*	*7*
İşbu iki bin yüz kırk yedi kuruş otuz üç para üç yüz on beş senesinin varidat-i umumiyesi fazlasıdır	*İşbu fazla-ı varidattan yedi yüz küsur kuruş müstecirlerden henüz tahsıl edelmemiş be mütebakisi mevcut bulunmuştur*					*2.147*	*33*

Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumün Rodos ceziresinde inşa ve ihyasına muvafık buyuruldukları Rüşdiye Mektebi ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi ve Kütüphane asar-ı hayriyeleri musakkafatının bin üç yüz on beş senesi Martı iptidasından Şubatı nihayetine değin marifet-i acizanemle idare olunarak sene-i merkume zarfında vukubulan varidat yekûn-i umumisi on dört bin yüz doksan beş kuruşa ve maaşat ve masarifat-i saire yekûn-i umumisi dahi dokuz yüz elli sekiz kuruş otuz paraya reside olmuş ve duyun-i vakf olup üç yüz on dört senesi defterinde mukayyed olduğu vechle işbu üç yüz on beş senesi varidatından tesviye olunmak üzere devr edilmiş olan iki bin seksen sekiz kuruş on yedi para dahi işbu sene masarifat yekûnuna zamm olunup masarifat yekûn-i umumisi on iki bin kırk yedi kuruş yedi paraya baliğ olmuş olup işbu masarif yekûnu varidat-ı merkum yekûnundan tenzil olundukta iki bin yüz kırk yedi kuruş otuz üç yedi fazla-ı varidat olaraka kalmış bulunduğu mübeyyin işbu defter bittanzim tahtim kılındı.

Vakf-ı mezburlere vekil-i müseccelüşşer'isi (mühür:) Mehmed Nuri

Balada defterde muharrer olduğu vechle üç yüz on dört senesi zarfında işlemiş olan maaşlarımızı vakf-ı şerif mütevelliyesinin vekil-i müseccelüşşer'isi faziletli Mehmed Nuri Efendi marifetiyle canib-i vakftan tamamen aldığımızı işbu mahale şerh eyleriz

Muallim-i Evvel ve vekil-i mütevelliye (mühür:) Mehmed Nuri

Hafız-ı Kütüb (mühür:) Abdullah

Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi Memuru: Ali Nureddin

İşbu defter bittetkik sütun-i varidat yekûnu on dört bin yüz doksan beş kuruş ve masarifi on iki bin kırk yedi kuruş yedi paradan ibaret olduğu anlaşılmış zirinde matbu mühürler vakf-ı mezkurün mütevelliyesi tarafından vekil-i müseccelüşşerisi faziletli Mehmet Nuri Efendi ve hafız-ı kütüb faziletli Abdullah Efendi ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi memuru Ali Nureddin Efendinin mühr-i zatileri olduğu tasdık kılındı; fi 8 Haziran sene (1)316 [=21.6.1900]

Belediye Reisi (mühür:) İsmail Hakkı (mühür) Rodos Daire-i Belediye

[Folio 8] *1316 [=1900] senesinin varidat ve masarifatını mübeyyin defterinin nüsha-ı saniyesidir*

Nev-i varidat	*Mülahazat*	*Kuruş*	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında müceddeden inşa edilen fevkani ve tahtani bir aded mağazanın icaresi	*mah: 12; Kâmil Efendi üzerinde*	*600*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında müceddeden inşa edilen fevkani ve tahtani bir aded mağazanın icaresi	*3 (mah): tahtani kısmından Çakar Yahudi üzerinde;* *4 (mah): fevkani kısmından olup Kostandın üzerinde*	*210*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında müceddeden inşa edilen fevkani ve tahtani bir aded mağazanın icaresi	*3 (mah): tahtani kısmından Aşçı Kostantın üzerinde;* *4 (mah): fevkani kısmı Aşçı Kostantın üzerinde*	*210*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında müceddeden inşa edilen fevkani ve tahtani bir aded mağazanın icaresi	*4 (mah) tahtani; 4 (mah) fevkani: Aşçı Kostantın üzerlerinde*	*200*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*12 (mah); tüccardan Panayi üzerinde (şehriyesi: 40)*	*480*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin diğer bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*12 (mah): tüccardan Zenbilli Hacı Mehmed Ağa üzerinde*	*500*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin diğer iki aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*12 (mah): tüccardan Balyoz [ve] şeriki üzerinde*	*1.000*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun tahtında kâin diğer bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*12 (mah): Dülger Vasıl Usta üzerinde*	*500*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun karşısında bir aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*12 (mah): tüccardan Toma ve şeriki üzerlerinde*	*800*			
İskele civarında Jandarma Karavulhanesi ittihaz edilen mahallin icare-i seneviyesi		*1.440*			
Osmanlı Postahanesi ittihaz edilen sagir ve kebir iki mağazanın icare-i seneviyeleri	*kebirin şehriyesi: 100;* *sagirin şehriyesi: 50*	*1.800*			
Nemçe Acentesi ittihaz olunan mahalin icare-i seneviyesi	*[şehriyesi:] 125*	*1.500*			
Kadim Gümrük mahalli olup şimdi Han ittihaz edilen mahallin icare-i seneviyesi	*[şehriyesi:] 200; Mehmet Ağa üzerinde*	*2.400*			
Polis İdaresi ittihaz edilen küçük odanın icare-i seneviyesi	*[şehriyesi:] 50*	*600*			
Subya Tabyasında kâin üç aded mağazanın icare-i seneviyeleri	*500; şehriyenin seneviyeleri; Belediye Dairesi üzerinde*	*1.500*			
Subya Tabyasında kâin diğer üç aded mağazanın talip zuhur etmediğinden halidir		---			
Bin üç yüz on beş senesi Martından Şubatı nihayetine kadar bir sene zarfında varidat yekûnu		*13.740*		*13.740*	

Nev-i masarifat	*Mülahazat*	*Masarifat-ı müteferrika*		*Maaşat*		*Yekûn*	
		Kuruş	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*
Müallim-i evvel faziletli Mehmet Nuri Efendi'nin maaş-ı senevisi	*şehriyesi: 500*			*6.000*			
Müallim-i sani ve bevvab maaş-ı seneviyeleri	*muhallâ idiği*			*---*			
Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi memurlarının maaş-ı senevisi	*[şehriyesi:] 120*			*1.440*			
Hafız-ı Kütüp faziletli Şeyh Abdullah Efendinin maaş-ı senevisi	*65*			*780*			
Vakf musakkafatının bir senelik vergisi		*651*					
Muvakkıthanenin bir senelik masarif-i müteferrikası ve müceddeden yaptırılan döşemeli iki adet büyük kanape bedeli		*243*	*20*				
Eski Kassaphane önündeki mücedded mağazalarla Mektep ve Kütüphanenin ve sair ve bilcümle musakkafatının sakıflarına yine ferş olunan giran toprağı esmanı ve üstadiyesi ve hamaliyesi		*240*					
Eski Gümrük mahallinin dahilen edilen tamirat ile geçirilen camlar masarif ve esmanı		*140*	*30*				
Eski Kassaphane mahallindeki mağazalara dahilen edilen tamirat duvar ve camları masarif ve esmanı		*171*	*20*				
Kütüphane civarındaki evkafın Mektebin ön duvarlarının sıva ve badana masarifi	*Hafız-ı kütüb marifetiyle*	*60*					
Kütüphanede îd-ı adhada şart-ı vâkif vechle zebh olunan iki aded kurban bedeli ve masarifi		*124*					
Osmanlı Posta Şubesi ittihaz olunan mehal ile ittısalındaki mağazanın dahillerine sıva ve badana masarifi		*133*					
		1.773	***30***	***8.220***		***9.993***	***30***
Beyanı:							
İşbu bin üç yüz on altı senesi varidat yekûnu						*13.740*	
İşbu bin üç yüz on altı senesi masarifat-ı umumiyesi yekûnu						*9.993*	*30*
İşbu bin üç yüz on altı senesi varidat fazlası						*3.746*	*10*

İşbu bin üç yüz on beş senesi varıdatı fazlası olup üç yüz on beş senesi defterinde mukayyed bulunan						*2.147*	*33*
İşbu bin üç yüz on beş ve on also senelerine aid iki senelik varidat fazlası yekûnu						*5.894*	*3*
Üç yüz on beş senesi fazla-ı varidatı olup sene 1316 tarihinde Osmanlı Postahanesine teslimen Dersaadeti'te bulunan mütevelliye-i vakf-ı şerif ısmetli Yegâne Hanım Efendi hazretlerine nakden takdim ve irsal olunmuştur; masarif-i fazlası olan beş kuruş otuz üç para bundan çıkarılmıştır						*2.147*	*33*
İşbu üç yüz on altı senesi varidatı fazlası dahi bu kere mütevelliye-i müşarünileyhe fi 6 Haziran sene (1)317 ***[=19.6.1901]*** *tarihinde nakden takdim ve irsal olunmuştur*						*2.746*	*10*

Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumün Rodos ceziresinde inşa ve ihyasına muvafık buyuruldukları Rüşdiye Mektebi ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi ve Kütüphane asar-ı hayriyeleri musakkafatının bin üç yüz on altı senesi Martı iptidasından Şubatı nihayetine değin marifet-i acizanemle idare olunarak sene-i merkume zarfında vukubulan varidat yekûn-i umumisi on üç bin yedi yüz kırk kuruşa ve maaşat ve masarifat-i saire yekûn-i umumisi dahi dokuz bin dokuz yüz doksan üç kuruş otuz paraya baliğ olmuştur, masarifat-i vakia varidat-ı mezkure yekûnundan tenzil olundukta üç bin yüz kırk kuruş on para fazla-ı varidat kalmış olup işbu fazla ile geçen üz yüz on beş senesi fazlası ile beraber iki senelik varidat fazlası yekûnu olan beş bin sekiz yüz dört kuruş otuz üç paradan balada tasrih ve beyan olduğı vechle iki bin yüz kırk yedi kuruş otuz üç parası mukaddema ve üç bin yedi yüz kırk altı kuruş on parası dahi bu kere mütevelliye-i vakf-ı şerif ısmetli Yegâne Hanım Efendi hazretlerine nakden takdim ve irsal olunduğu mübeyyin işbu defter tanzim ve tahtim kılındı; fi 8 Haziran sene 1317 ***[=21.6.1901]***

Vakf-ı mezburün vekil-i müseccelüşşer'isi (mühür:) Mehmed Nuri

Balada defterde muharrer olduğu vechle bin üç yüz on altı senesi zarfında işlemiş olan maaşlarımızı vakf-ı şerif mütevelliyesinin vekil-i müseccelüşşer'isi bulunan faziletli Mehmed Nuri Efendi marifetiyle canib-i vakftan tamamen aldığımızı işbu mahale şerh ü tahtim eyleriz; fi 8 Haziran sene 1317 ***[=21.6.1901]***

Muallim-i Evvel ve vekil-i mütevelliye (mühür:) Mehmed Nuri

Hafız-ı Kütüb (mühür:) Abdullah

Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi Memuru: Ali Nureddin

İşbu defter bittetkik sütun-i varidat yekûnu on üç bin yedi yüz kırk kuruş ve masarifi dahi dokuz bin dokuz yüz doksan üç kuruş otuz paradan ibaret olduğunun anlaşıldığı ve zirinde matbu mühürler dahi vakf-ı mezkurün mütevelliyesi tarafından vekil-i müseccelüşşerisi faziletli Mehmet Nuri Efendi ve hafız-ı kütüb faziletli Abdullah Efendilerin ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi memuru Ali Nureddin Efendinin mühr-i zatileri olduğu tasdık olunur; fi 8 Haziran sene (1)317 [=21.6.1901]

Rodos Belediye Reisi (mühür:) İsmail Hakkı (mühür) Rodos Daire-i Belediye

[Folio 9] *Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumun Rodos ceziresinde inşa ve ihyasına muvafık buyuruldukları Rüşdiye Mektebi ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi ve Kütüphane asar-ı hayriyeleri musakkafatının bin üç yüz on yedi senesi şehr-i Martından Şubatı nihayetine kadar bir sene zarfında vukubulan varidatıyla masarifatını mübeyyin defteridir; fi 24 Mayıs sene (1)318 [=6.6.1902]*

[Folio 10**]** ***sene 1317 [=1901] senesinin varidat ve masarifatını mübeyyin defteridir***

Nev-i varidat	*Mülahazat*	*Kuruş*	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhındaki fevkani ve tahtani bir mağazanın icaresi	*Kâmil Efendi üzerinde mah: 4; yevm: 15 şehriye: 50 sekiz buçuk mah hâlidir*	*175*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında fevkani ve tahtani diğer bir mağazanın icaresi	*fevkani ve tahtani kısmından şehriye otuz kuruştur dört aylığı icare sekiz aylığı hâlidir*	*240*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında fevkani ve tahtani diğer iki mağazanın icaresi	*işbu iki mağazadan birinin fevkanisi hâlidir iki tahtani bir fevkani kısımlarının şehri seksen kuruştan iki aylığı alınıp on aylığı olan sekiz yüz kuruş müsteciri Aşçı Kostantın zimmetinde olup ahzına mahkemeden ilâm istihsal edildiğinden tahsilinde tasadduf ettiği senenin defterine ayrı kayd olunacaktı*	*160*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun altındaki bir mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*tüccardan Panayi üzerindedir*	*480*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun altındaki diğer bir mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*tüccardan Zenbilli Hacı Mehmed Ağa üzerindedir*	*500*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun altındaki diğer bir mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Vasıl Usta üzerindedir*	*500*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun altındaki diğer iki mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Balyoz şeriki üzerindedir*	*1.000*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun karşısında bir mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*tüccardan Toma ve şeriki üzerindedir*	*800*			
İskele civarında Jandarma Karavulhanesi ittihaz edilen mahallin icare-i seneviyesi		*1.440*			
Osmanlı Posta Şubesi iken eczaen diğer mahale naklıyla şimdi kahvehane olup iskeledeki büyük ve küçük iki mağazanın icaresi	*kebir mağazanın mah: 11; yevm: 15; şehriyesi: 100* *sagir mağazanın mah: 8; şehriyesi: 50*	*1.550*			
Nemçe Acentesi ittihaz olunan mahalin icaresi	*Şimdi yüz yirmi beşten altı aylığı Acente olup diğer altı aylığı dahi vakt-i vakt-i icare verilip alınan icar ile beraber*	*1.058*			
Kadim Gümrük mahalli olup şimdi Han ittihaz olunan mahallin icare-i seneviyesi	*Mehmet Ağa üzerinde; şehriyesi: 200*	*2.400*			
Polis İdaresi Şubesi ittihaz olunan küçük odanın icare-i seneviyesi	*[şehriyesi:] 50*	*600*			
Subya Tabyasında kâin üç mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Belediye Dairesi üzerindedir; şehriyenin seneviyeleri: 500*	*1.500*			
Subya Tabyasında kâin bir mağazanın icaresi	*Tüccardan Ömer Efendi; mah: 6; şehriyesi: 40*	*240*			
Subya Tabyasındaki diğer iki mağaza hâlidir		*---*			
Bin üç yüz on beş senesi Martından Şubatı nihayetine kadar bir sene zarfında varidat yekûnu		*12.643*			

Nev-i masarifat	*Mülahazat*	*Masarifat-ı müteferrika*		*Maaşat*		*Yekûn*	
		Kuruş	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*
Müallim-i evvel faziletli Mehmet Nuri Efendi'nin maaş-ı senevisi				*6.000*			
Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi memurlarının maaş-ı senevisi				*1.440*			
Hafız-ı Kütüp faziletli Şeyh Abdullah Efendinin maaş-ı senevisi				*780*			
Vakf musakkafatının (1)317 vergisi		*651*					
Muvakkıthanenin perdeleri imalı ve tathiriyesi ve ... yağı ve sair bir senelik masarifi		*106*					
Bilumum musakkafat sakıflarına ferş olunan giran toprağı bedeli ve masarifi		*215*					
Eski Kassaphane mahalli duvarlarının Belediye marifetiyle tamirine		*100*					
Han ve Nemçe Acentesi ittihaz olunan mahallerin tamirat masarifi		*324*					
Osmanlı Posta Şubesi ittihaz olunan mahal ile Kassaphane civarındaki mağazanın tamirleri ve bunlardan birindeki camekânın diğerine nakli masarifi		*226*					
Vakfın gallesinden fakir ve âmâ Hâfız Osman Efendiye ba emr-i mütevelliye sadaka olarak verilen		*200*					
Geçen sene varidat fazlasının ... ve masarif-i müteferrika-i saire		***31***					
		1.853		***8.220***		***10.073***	
Beyanı:							
İşbu bin üç yüz on yedi senesi varidat yekûnu						*12.643*	
İşbu bin üç yüz on yedi senesi masarifat yekûnu						*10.073*	
*İşbu iki bin beş yüz yetmiş kuruş bin üç yüz on yedi senesi varidatı fazlası olup Dersaadet'te bulunan mütevelliye-i vakf ismetli Salıha Yegâne Hanım Efendi hazretlerine Osmanlı Postahanesi ile fi 24 Mayıs sene (1)318 **[=6.6.1902]** tarihinde aynen ve nakden takdim olunmuştur*						*2.570*	

Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumün Rodos ceziresinde inşa ve ihyasına muvafık buyuruldukları Rüşdiye Mektebi ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi ve Kütüphane asar-ı hayriyeleri musakkafatının bin üç yüz on yedi senesi Martı iptidasından Şubatı nihayetine değin marifet-i acizanemle idare olunarak bir sene zarfındaki varidatı yekûnu on iki bin altı yüz kırk üç kuruşa ve masarifat yekûnu dahi on bin yetmiş üç kuruşa baliğ olmuştur ve masarifat-i vakia varidat-ı mezkureden bittenzil fazla-ı varidat olarak kalan iki bin beş yüz yetmiş kuruş bu kere mütevelliye-i vakf-ı şerif ısmetli Saliha Yegâne Hanım Efendi hazretlerine nakden ve aynen takdim ve irsal kılındığı mübeyyin defteri tanzim ve tahtim kılındı; fi 24 Mayıs sene 1318 [=6.6.1902]

Vakf-ı mezburün vekil-i müseccelüşşer'isi (mühür:) Mehmed Nuri

Bin üç yüz on yedi senesi zarfında işlemiş olan ber vech-i bala maaşlarımızı mütevelliye-i vakf vekil-i müseccelüşşer'isi bulunan faziletli Mehmed Nuri Efendi marifetiyle canib-i vakftan tamamen aldığımızı işbu mahale şerh ü tahtim eyleriz; fi 24 Mayıs sene 1318 [=6.6.1902]

Muallim-i Evvel ve vekil-i mütevelliye (mühür:) Mehmed Nuri

Hafız-ı Kütüb (mühür:) Abdullah

Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi Memuru: Ali Nureddin

İşbu defter bittetkik sütun-i varidat yekûnu on iki bin altı yüz kırk üç kuruş ve masarifi on bin yetmiş üç kuruş olduğunun anlaşıldığı ve zirinde matbu mühürler dahi vakf-ı mezkurün mütevelliyesi vekil-i müseccelüşşerisi faziletli Mehmet Nuri ve hafız-ı kütüb faziletli Abdullah ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi memuru Ali Nureddin Efendilerin mühr-i zatileri olduğu beyan u tasdık olunur; fi 24 Mayıs sene (1)318 [=6.6.1902]

Rodos Belediye Reisi (mühür) Rodos Daire-i Belediye

[Folio 11] *Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumun Rodos ceziresinde inşa ve ihyasına muvafık oldukları Rüşdiye Mektebi ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi ve Kütüphane asar-ı hayriyeleri musakkafatının bin üç yüz on sekiz senesi şehr-i Martından Şubatı nihayetine kadar bir sene zarfında vukubulan varidatıyla masarifatını mübeyyin defteridir; fi 12 Mart sene (1)319 [=25.3.1903]*

[Folio 12] ***Bin üç yüz on sekiz senesinin [=1902] varidat ve masarifatını mübeyyin defterinin nüsha-ı evveliyesidir***

Nev-i varidat	*Mülahazat*	*Kuruş*	*Para*	*Kuruş*	*Para*
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhındaki fevkani ve tahtani bir bab-ı mağazanın icaresi	*Mustafa Efendi isticarında* *mah: 11; şehriyesi: 50*	*575*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında diğer bir mağazanın yalnız tahtani kısmı icaresi	*mah: 6; şehriyesi: 30*	*180*			
Atık Kassaphane pişgâhında diğer iki mağazanın tahtani kısımlarıyla birinin fevkani kısımları icaresi	*mah: 12; şehriyesi: 80; Aşçı Kostantın üzerinde beş aylığı alınıp mütebaki beş yüz altmış kuruş elyevm tahsil olunamamış tahsiline tasadduk edecek senesi defterine derci tebi'i bulunmuştur*	*400*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun altındaki bir mağazanın icaresi	*mah: 6; şehriyesi: 40; tüccardan Panayi isticarında*	*240*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun altındaki diğer bir mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*tüccardan Zenbilli Hacı Mehmed Ağa isticarında*	*500*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun altındaki diğer bir mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Vasıl Usta isticarında*	*500*			
Kışla-ı Hümayun altındaki diğer iki mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Balyoz ve şeriki isticarında*	*1.000*			

Kışla-ı Hümayun karşısında bir bab-ı mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*tüccardan Toma ve şeriki isticarında*	*800*			
İskele civarında Jandarma Karavulhanesi ittihaz olunan mahallin icare-i seneviyesi	*mah: 12; şehriyesi: 120; bir senelik icarı bin dört yüz kırk edip dokuz aylığı alınmış ve üç aylığı alınamayıp alındığında masarif edecek senesi defterine kayd olunacaktır*	*1.080*			
İskele civarında Jandarma Karavulhanesi ittisalındaki küçük mağazanın icaresi	*mah: 6; şehriyesi: 50*	*300*			
İskele civarında elyevm kahvehane ittihaz olunan büyük mağazanın icaresi	*mah: 12; şehriyesi: 100*	*1.200*			
İskele civarında Osmanlı Posta Şubesi ittihaz olunan mahallin icaresi	*mah: 11; şehriyesi: 125*	*1.375*			
İskele civarında Kadim Gümrük mahalli olup şimdi Han ittihaz olunan mahallin icare-i seneviyesi	*Mehmet Ağa isticarında*	*2.510*			
İskele civarında Polis İdaresi Şubesi ittihaz olunan küçük odanın icare-i seneviyesi		*600*			
Subya Tabyasındaki üç mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Belediye Dairesi isticarında*	*1.500*			
Subya Tabyasındaki diğer bir mağazanın icare-i seneviyesi	*Ömer Efendi isticarında*	*480*			
Subya Tabyasındaki diğer iki mağaza hâlidir					
Yekûn		***13.240***			

Nev-i masarifat	***Mülahazat***	***Masarifat-ı müteferrika***		***Maaşat***		***Yekûn-i umumi***	
		Kuruş	***Para***	***Kuruş***	***Para***	***Kuruş***	***Para***
Müallim-i evvel faziletli Mehmet Nuri Efendi'nin maaş-ı senevisi				*6.000*			
Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi memurlarının maaş-ı senevisi				*1.440*			
Hafız-ı Kütüp faziletli Şeyh Abdullah Efendinin maaş-ı senevisi				*780*			
Vakf musakkafatının (1)318 senesi vergi-i mirisi		*620*					

Bilumum musakkafat sakıflarına ferş olunan giran toprağı bedeli ve masarifi		*180*	*10*				
Büyük Saat Kulesinin dahili tabanlarının müceddeden değiştirilmiş ve cihet-i sairesinin tamiri masarifi		*357*	*30*				
İskeledeki Osmanlı Posta Şubesi ittihaz olunan mahallin ve ittisalındaki mağazaların tamir masarifi		*451*					
İskeledeki Polis Şubesi ittihaz olunan mahallin pencerelerine müceddeden yapılan altı kanat ve civarındaki mahallelere tamiri masarifi		*138*					
Kütüphanede leyali-i mübarekede iki defada tilavet ettirilen kelime-i tevlid için hâfızlara verilen		*100*					
Kütüphanede îd-i adhada ber muceb-i vakfiye zebh ve tevzi olunan iki kurban esmanı		*110*					
Muvakkithanede Ramazan-ı şerifte ikad olunan ... yağı esmanı ve tathirat ve kanape ve saire masarifi		*101*					
Geçen sene takdim olunan varidat fazlasının ücret-i nakliyesi ve masarif-i müteferrika-i saire		***30***					
		2.088		***8.220***		***10.308***	
Beyanı:							
İşbu bin üç yüz on sekiz senesi varidat yekûnu						*13.240*	
İşbu bin üç yüz on sekiz senesi masarifat yekûnu						*10.308*	
İşbu iki bin dokuz yüz otuz iki kuruş (1)318 senesi varidatı fazlası olup Dersaadet'te bulunan mütevelliye ismetli Salıha Yegâne Hanım Efendi hazretlerine Nemse Postahane fi 12 Mart sene (1)319 tarihinde bitteslim aynen ve nakden takdim ve irsal kılınmıştır.						*2.932*	

Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumün Rodos ceziresinde inşa ve ihyasına muvafık oldukları Rüşdiye Mektebi ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi ve Kütüphane asar-ı hayriyeleri musakkafatının bin üç yüz on sekiz senesi Martı iptidasından Şubatı nihayetine değin marifet-i acizanemle idare olunarak bu bir sene zarfındaki varidat yekûnu ber vech-i bala on üç bin iki yüz kırk kuruşa baliğ olmuş ve masarifat-i vakia

varidat-ı mezkureden bittenzil fazla-ı varidat olarak kalan iki bin dokuz otuz iki kuruş balada dahi zikr olunduğu vechle bu kere mütevelliye-i vakf-ı şerif ısmetli Saliha Yegâne Hanım Efendi hazretlerine nakden takdim olunduğu mübeyyin defteri tanzim kılındı; fi 12 Mart sene 1319 [=25.3.1903]

Vakf-ı mezburün vekil-i müseccelüşşer'isi (mühür:) Mehmed Nuri

Bin üç yüz on sekiz senesi zarfında işlemiş olan ber vech-i bala bir senelik maaşlarımızı mütevelliye-i vakf vekil-i müseccelüşşer'isi bulunan faziletli Mehmed Nuri Efendi marifetiyle canib-i vakftan tamamen aldığımızı işbu mahale şerh ü tahtim eyleriz; fi 12 Mart sene 1319 [=25.3.1903]

Muallim-i Evvel ve vekil-i mütevelliye (mühür:) Mehmed Nuri

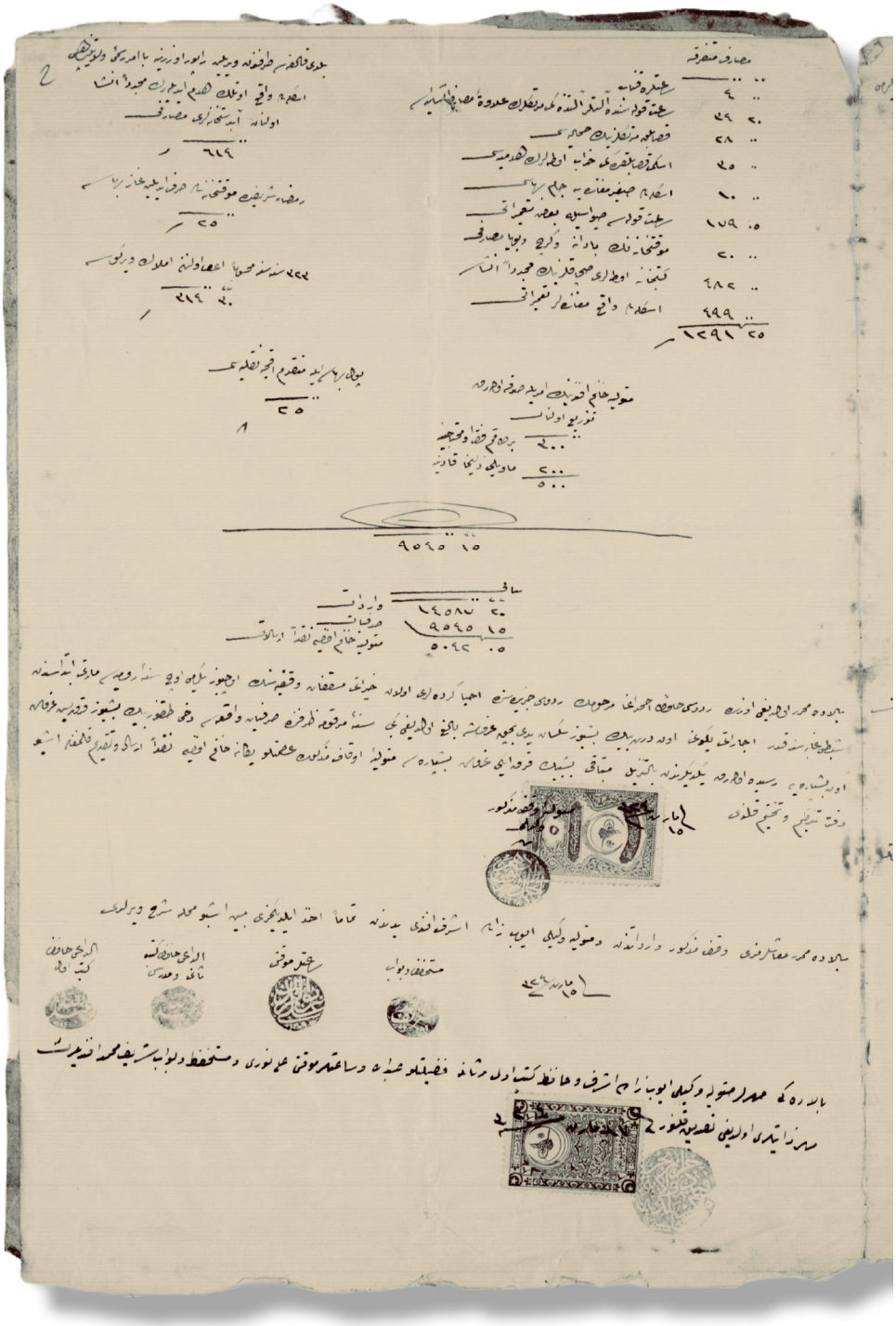
Hafız-ı Kütüb (mühür:) Abdullah

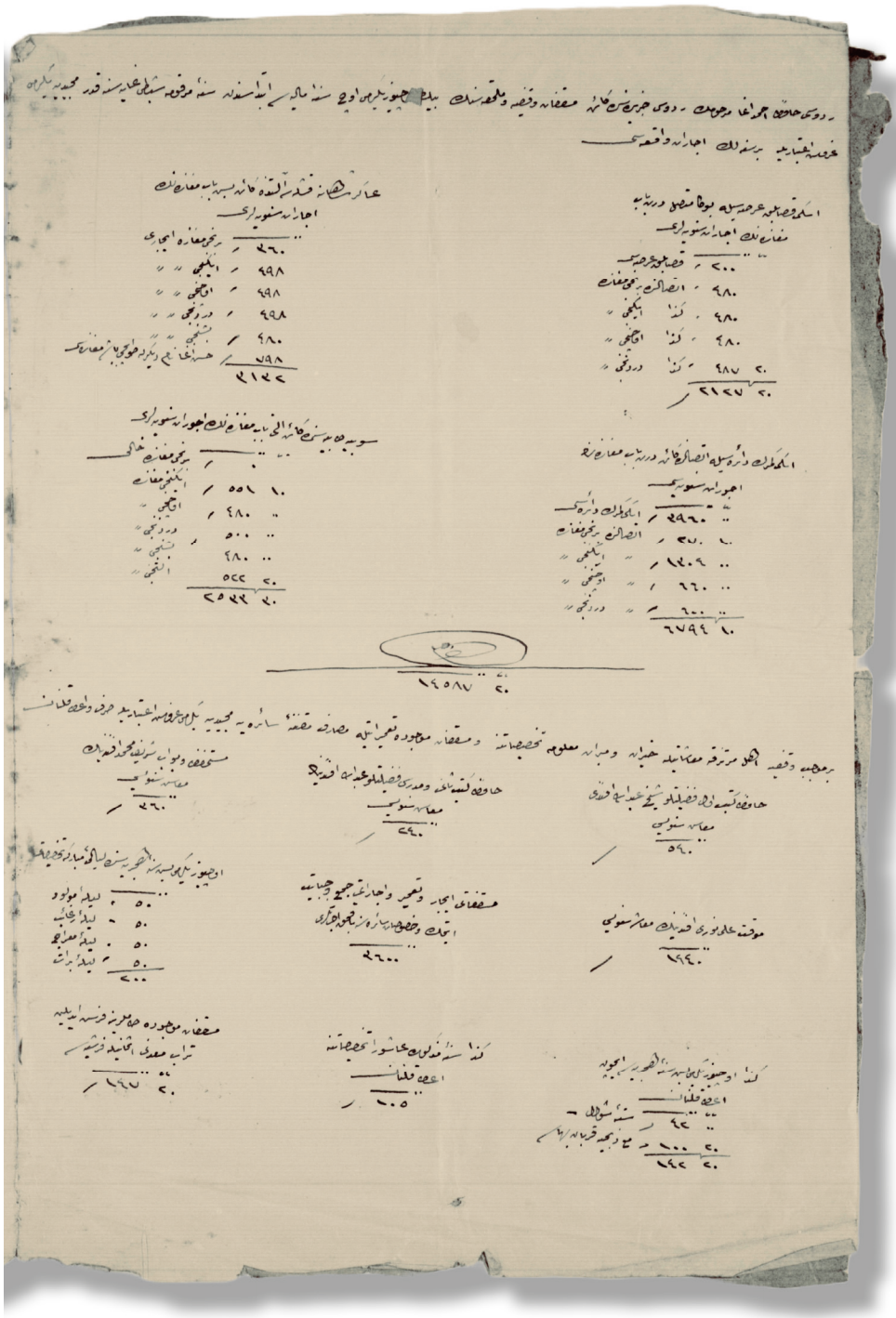
Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi Memuru: Ali Nureddin

İşbu defter bittetkik sütun-i varidat yekûnu on üç bin iki yüz kırk kuruş ve masarifi dahi on bin üç yüz sekiz kuruş olduğunun anlaşıldığı ve zirinde matbu mühürler dahi vakf-ı mezkurün mütevelliyesi vekil-i müseccelüşşerisi faziletli Mehmet Nuri ve hafız-ı kütüb faziletli Abdullah ve Muvakkıthane ve Kebir Saat Kulesi memuru Ali Nureddin Efendilerin mühr-i zatileri olduğu beyan u tasdık olunur; fi 12 Mart sene (1)319 [=25.3.1903]

Rodos Belediye Reisi (mühür) Rodos Daire-i Belediye Reisi







Defter 30754
Folio 2



Folio 3

Transliteration into Modern Turkish

Evkaf Defteri 30754 (Folio 2 and Folio 3)

[Folio 2] *Rodosî Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumün Rodos ceziresinde kâin müsakkafât-i vakfiye ve mulhakasının bin üç yüz yiğirmi üç sene-i maliyesi ibtidasından sene-i merkume Şubatı gayesine kadar* [=1.3.1907-28.2.1908] *mecidiye yiğirmi kuruş itibarıyla bir senelik icarât-ı vakiası*

Eski Kassaplık arsasıyla buna mutassıl dört bab mağazanın icarât-i seneviyeleri	
Kassaplık arsası	*200 kuruş*
ittisalında birinci mağaza	*480 kuruş*
kezâ ikinci (mağaza)	*480 kuruş*
kezâ üçüncü (mağaza)	*480 kuruş*
kezâ dördüncü (mağaza)	*487 kuruş 20 para*
	2127 kuruş 20 para
Asakir-i Şahane Kışlası altında kâin beş bab mağazanın icarât-i seneviyeleri	
birinci mağaza icarı	*360 kuruş*
ikinci (mağaza icarı)	*498 kuruş*
üçüncü (mağaza icarı)	*498 kuruş*
dördüncü (mağaza icarı)	*498 kuruş*
beşinci (mağaza icarı)	*480 kuruş*
Hasan Ağa nam diğerle Topçubaşı mağazası	*798 kuruş*
	3132 kuruş
Eski Gümrük Dairesiyle ittisalında kâin dört bab mağazanıñ ucurât-i seneviyesi	
Eski Gümrük Dâiresi	*3960 kuruş*
ittisalında birinci mağaza	*270 kuruş 10 para*
(ittisalında) ikinci (mağaza)	*1304 kuruş*
(ittisalında) üçüncü (mağaza)	*660 kuruş*
(ittisalında) dördüncü (mağaza)	*600 kuruş*
	6794 kuruş 10 para
Subya Tabyasında kâin altı bab mağazanıñ ucurât-ı seneviyeleri	
birinci mağaza	*hâli*
ikinci mağaza	*551 kuruş 10 para*
üçüncü (mağaza)	*480 kuruş*
dördüncü (mağaza)	*500 kuruş*
beşinci (mağaza)	*480 kuruş*
altıncı (mağaza)	*522 kuruş 20 para*
	2544 kuruş 20 para
Yekûn	***14587 kuruş 20 para***

Ber muceb-i vakfiye ehl-i mürtezika maaşâtıyla hayrat ve miras-ı malûme tahsisâtına ve müsakkafât-ı mevcude tamirâtıyla masarıf-ı mükannene-i saireye mecidiye yiğirmi kuruşuna itibarıyla sarf ve itâ kılınan:

Hâfız-ı kütüb-i evvel faziletlü Şeyh Abdullah Efendi maaş-ı senevisi	*540 kuruş*
Hâfız-ı kütüb-i sani ve müderris faziletlü Abdullah Efendi'nin maaş-ı senevisi	*240 kuruş*
Mustahfız ve bevvab Şerif Mehmet Efendi'nin maaş-i senevisi	*360 kuruş*
Muvakkıt Ali Nuri Efendi'nin maaş-i senevisi	*1440 kuruş*
müsakkafatı icar ve tamir ve icarâtı cem ü cibayet etmek ve hususât-ı sairesine bakmak ücreti	*3600 kuruş*
üç yüz yiğirmi beş sene-i hicriyesinde leyle-i mübâreke tahsisâtı:	
leyle-i mevlud:	*50 kuruş*
leyle-i regaib:	*50 kuruş*
leyle-i mirac:	*50 kuruş*
leyle-i berat:	*50 kuruş*
	200 kuruş
Kezâ üç yüz yiğirmi beş sene-i hicriyesi içün itâ kılınan:	
Şube-i Şevval:	*42 kuruş*
maa zebhiye-i kurban bahası:	*100 kuruş 20 para*
	142 kuruş 20 para
Kezâ sene-i mezbure Aşura tahsisâtına itâ kılınan:	*105 kuruş*
Müsakkafât-i mevcude damlarına ferş edilen türab-i madeni esmanıyla ferşiyesi	*147 kuruş 20 para*
Masarıf-ı müteferrika:	
saatlere kanat	*4 kuruş*
Saat Kulesinde aletler altındaki merteklerin ilâvet masarıfât-ı inşaiyesi	*34 kuruş 20 para*
Kassaplık merteklerinin havalesi	*28 kuruş*
Eski Kassaplık'taki harab odaların hedmiyesi	*35 kuruş*
İskele'de sagir mağazaya cam bahası	*10 kuruş*
Saat Kûlesi sıvasıyla bazı tamirâtı	*179 kuruş 5 para*
Muvakkıthane'niñ badana ve kireç ve boya masarifi	*20 kuruş*
Kütübhane odaları saçaklarının müceddeden inşası	*482 kuruş*
İskele'de vaki mağazalar tamirâtı	*499 kuruş*
	1291 kuruş 25 para
Beledi kalfası tarafından verilen rapor üzerine bâ emr-i resmi-i vilâyet heyeti İskele'de vaki Otel'in hedm edilerek müceddeden inşa olunan abdesthaneleri masarıfı	*614 kuruş*
Ramazan-ı şerifte muvakkıthanede sarf edilen gaz bahası	*25 kuruş*
323 senesine mahsuben itâ olunan emlâk vergisi	*414 kuruş 30 para*

Mütevelliye Hanım Efendi'nin emriyle sadaka olunarak tevzi olunan:	
birtakım fukara ve muhtacına	*300 kuruş*
Mavili Züleyha Kadına	*200 kuruş*
	500 kuruş
Yekûn	***9540 kuruş 15 para***
Varidat	*14587 kuruş 20 para*
Sarfiyat	*9540 kuruş 15 para*
Mütevelliye Hanım Efendi'ye nakden irsalat	*5042 kuruş 5 para*

Balada muharrer olduğu üzere, Rodosî Hâfız Ahmed Ağa merhumün Rodos ceziresinde ihyagerdeleri olan hayrâtı müsakkafât-i vakfiyesinin üç yüz yiğirmi üç sene-i Rumiyesi Martı ibtıdasından Şubatı gayesine kadar icarâtı yekûnü on dört bin beş yüz seksen yedi buçuk kuruşa baliğ olduğu ki sene-i merkume zarfında sarfiyât-ı vakiası dahi dokuz bin beş yüz kırk beş kuruş on beş paraya reside olarak yekdiğerinden bittenzil mütebaki beş biñ kırk iki kuruşunu beş parası mütevelliye-i evkaf-ı mezkure ismetlü Yegâne Hanım Efendi'ye irsal ve takdim kılınmağla işbu defter tanzîm ü tahtîm kılındı.

fî 15 Mart sene (1)324 [=15/28.3.1908]

mütevelliye-i vakf-ı mezkûr vekili (mühür-i) Ahmed Eşref Edhem

Balada muharrer maaşlarımızı vakf-ı mezkur varidatından ve mütevelliye vekili Eyyübzade Eşref Efendi yedinden tamamen ahz eylediğimizi mübeyyin işbu mahale şerh verildi

fî 15 Mart sene (1)324

Eddai hâfız-ı kütüb-i evvel (mühür-i) Abdullah

Eddai hâfız-ı kütüb-i sani ve müderrisi (mühür-i) Abdullah

Saatlar muvakkıtı (mühür-i) Ali Nureddin

Mustahfız ve Bevvab (mühür-i) Şerif Mehmet

Baladaki mühürler mütevelliye vekili Eyyübzade Eşref ve hâfız-ı kütüb-i evvel ve sani faziletlü Abdullah ve saatlar muvakkiti Ali Nuri ve mustahfız ve bevvab Şerif Mehmet Efendilerin mühür-i zatları olduğu tasdık kılınır fi 17 Mart sene (1)324 [=17/30.3.1908]

[Folio 3] *Üsküdar'da Karaca Ahmet kadese serahu ilâ mecid hazretlerinin Türbe-i şerifesi karşısında ashab-ı hayrattan Rodos Elhac Hafız Ahmet Ağa merhumün bina ve ihya eylediği Cami-i şerifin mütevelliyesi iffetli Yegâne Hanım Efendi hazretlerinin üç yüz yiğirmi üç senesi Martı iptidasından Şubatı nihayetine kadar muhassas olan maaşımızı tamamen ahz eylediğimizi mübeyyin işbu senedimiz müşarünileyhe itâ kılındı.*

Fi 13 Haziran sene 1324 [=13/26.6.1908]; Eddai imam ü hatip İsmail (mühür: Şeyh Hafız İsmail)

Fi 27 Cemaziyülevvel sene 1326 [=13/26.6.1908]; Eddai hademe-i vakf ve muezzin-i Cami-i şerif-i mezkur (mühür)

Eddai duaguy-ı Cami-i şerif-i mezkur (mühür)

Su yolcu-ı Cami-i şerif-i mezkur (mühür)





Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1162, 188b-189a. Kutb al-Dīn Muhammad al-Nahrawālī (d. 990/1582), *al-I'lām bi-a'lām Bayt Allāh al-harām*. A history of Mecca presented to Sultan Murad III; copied in 1026/1617.

Barbara Henning is a historian with a focus on Ottoman and Turkish history. In October 2024, she was appointed to the chair for Turkish and Ottoman Studies at Hamburg University, where she is also a member of the Research Cluster of Excellence *Understanding Written Artefacts*. Before joining Hamburg University, she served as Assistant Professor for the History of the Eastern Mediterranean at Mainz University, where she continues to follow her keen interest in entanglements, cultural translation and knowledge transfer in the Eastern Mediterranean as a member of the DFG Research Training Group *Byzantium and the Euro-Mediterranean Cultures of War*. In addition, her research interests include Ottoman-Kurdish history, the history of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire, imperial elites, phenomena of post-imperial transformations, identity and memory politics, self-narratives and biographies, as well as the history of knowledge and education. Her current work explores questions of social difference and status claims in Ottoman and post-Ottoman contexts, focusing on the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. She studied Islamic Studies, Arabic, and Social Anthropology (B.A.), as well as Turkish Studies (M.A.) in Halle, Bamberg, and Paris, with a focus on late-Ottoman and Turkish-Republican history. She was a doctoral fellow at the Graduate School for Near and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Washington in Seattle and received her Ph.D. in 2016 from the University of Bamberg with a dissertation on the history of the Ottoman-Kurdish Bedirhani family. From 2018 to 2020, she was a post-doctoral researcher in the DFG Priority Program *Transottomanica*, conducting a research project on Ottoman conceptualizations of social boundaries.

"I only recently discovered the library's unique collection and rich history, in the context of a conservatory survey prepared under the auspices of Davidson MacLaren, a research associate and dear colleague at the Center for the Study of Manuscript Cultures at Hamburg University. In the spring of 2025, I arrived in Rhodes to work together with a wonderful team of international experts from Italy, Greece, and Turkey. Tasked to assess the material conditions of the collection and map out its current and future needs, we quickly realized that whatever we might have planned, the library itself, as a living repository, had its own agenda for us, and its own stories it wanted to tell. The traces left by others who had browsed the shelves before me and engaged with the collection in centuries and decades past have occupied my thoughts ever since, and I am therefore deeply grateful to be part of this Conversation sparked by the library."

Barbara Henning

* Research for this paper was funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) under Germany's Excellence Strategy - EXC 2176 "Understanding Written Artefacts: Material, Interaction and Transmission in Manuscript Cultures", project no. 390893796. The project was conducted within the scope of the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC) at Universität Hamburg.

Let's Put That Here for Now

The Hafız Ahmed Agha Library as a Transit Space*

In the following, the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library on the island of Rhodes is examined through the lens of *intended* transfers and circulations of various types of written artefacts. Many of the items that are part of the library's holdings – including manuscripts and printed material, calligraphy, and building inscriptions – situate it within broader transregional networks of people, practices, and ideas. By considering what kinds of material entered the library at different points in time, who brought them, from where, and with what intentions, ideas or hopes for future circulation and possible continued trajectories, the library is approached as a living and changing repository. Attention to the collection's multiple layers and overlapping logics of organization opens up avenues for further research beyond the activities of the library's founder. The Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library thus provides a suitable case study for thinking about libraries in general as liminal spaces of "neither-here-nor-there" where objects undergo recontextualizations and former users, owners, or custodians renegotiate their relationship to the written material in question.

Labelled with inventory no. 121, the collection includes a printed book that is a later, 19th century addition to the library's collection but still found its way onto the dark wooden shelves that dominate the center of the storage room, custom-built to house the original late-18th century manuscript holdings. Over the years, these shelves have become increasingly crowded, containing a mix of printed books and manuscripts from different time periods, loosely organized by topic and stacked two, sometimes three rows deep. The volume in question is rather slim and unassuming. Neither its black spine nor its label, which identifies it as a work of *sharḥ al-aḥkām al-sharʿīya* or explanatory commentary in the field of Islamic law, draw any particular attention to it. Everything changes, however, once the book is removed from its shelf and reveals not only a bright red cloth cover but also a handwritten note in bold Arabic script. Nine confident lines in black ink, followed by a signature, stretch across almost the entire front cover (Figure 1). They are clearly meant to be seen, to be noticed by someone like me – a casual browser of the shelves, pulling out this or that book, weighing it in their hands, putting it back without necessarily taking time to consult in detail or even open any particular book. Even the most distracted library visitor, however, could not have missed the message on the book's cover – and neither did I. *Bu kitab*, it read in Ottoman Turkish, *this book* had once belonged to Yahya ibn Muhammad from Yemen, who had been exiled to Rhodes along with a group of companions. His local acquaintance İbrahim Rodosī, the author of the message, had borrowed the book for study purposes. Meanwhile, Yahya had attempted to flee the island by boat, together with one of his compatriots. It does not become entirely clear from the short note what ultimately happened to the two fugitives, but İbrahim now appeals to any future reader: whoever gets his hands on this book should see to its safe return to Yemen, where it should be delivered to the heirs of Yahya.

This is a surprisingly personal encounter, and the short message can be studied both for its historical detail and as a miniature ego-document. Through it, we encounter not only Yahya ibn Muhammad, who was exiled far from home and took matters into his own hands by

attempting an escape, but also his contemporary İbrahim, whose note reveals a strong sense of responsibility for the book he had borrowed. Encountering the volume today on the shelves of the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library in Rhodes, we realize that İbrahim's hopes of ensuring the book's return to its rightful owners in Yemen were, in hindsight, overly optimistic, his strategy fell short. Despite his efforts and the clarity of his message, the book never embarked on its journey home to Yemen. More than a century later, it remained exactly where İbrahim left it, in the care of the library.

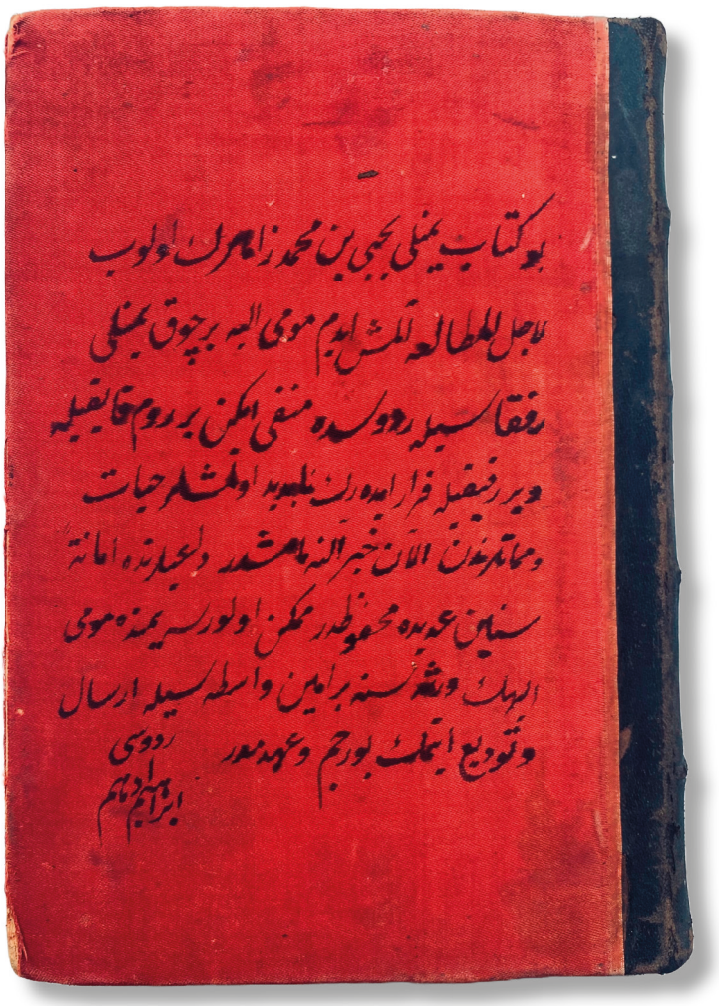


Figure 1: Yahya ibn Muhammad's book with the note of İbrahim Rodosī.
Photo: T. Tuten

Even with the few coordinates this story provides, it is possible to further contextualize İbrahim's message. In the late-19th century, the island of Rhodes served as a place of internal exile for Ottoman intellectuals, officials, and other dissidents who had fallen out of favor with

the sultan. The fact that the island was heavily fortified and difficult to access or leave without anyone noticing made it a convenient site of detention while granting individuals some degree of freedom of movement on the island itself without much risk of escape. Among the most well-known figures exiled to Rhodes in the 19th century were the writer Ahmed Midhat Efendi (1844–1912) and his contemporary, the publisher Ebüzziya Tevfik Bey (1849–1913), both of whom spent time on the island between 1873 and 1876.[1] In the 1890s, fifty-five members of Yemen's tribal elite, who were accused of supporting Imam al-Mansur, a local ruler and opponent of Ottoman centralization politics, were deported to Rhodes on the orders of the Ottoman governor of Yemen. In their petitions to the central government in Istanbul, they complained about their dire living conditions on the island, as no financial support was provided for them.[2] In 1904, some members of this group were permitted to return to the Arabian Peninsula. At least two individuals, Sayyid Ahmad al-Kibsi and his father Yahya, however, are known to have escaped from Rhodes to Egypt, where they found British protection before returning to the Ottoman Empire during the Second Constitutional Period after 1909.[3] While they cannot be identified as İbrahim Rodosī's acquaintances beyond any doubt, the name Yahya and context align with the exiled scholar and book owner described in his note. The politically sensitive nature of their escape into foreign territory and their turn to British protection may explain İbrahim's somewhat cryptic and reluctant description of their fate. His remark that they disappeared (*nā-bedīd olmuşlar*) and nothing good came of their situation (... *hayāt ve memātlarından elān ḫayr alınamamıştır*) is possibly deliberately vague and could be intended to avoid drawing attention to his association with Yahya and shield himself from any suspicion.

In addition to offering insights into the transregional scholarly networks of Ottoman Rhodes in the late-19th century and the intertwined stories of Yahya and İbrahim, the incident also invites further conceptual reflections about the Hafiz Ahmed Agha library as a space. The library's reading room and courtyard served as physical meeting points for readers and scholars from different parts of the Ottoman world, and the library's collection was a hub of texts, ideas, and references. In addition, the library can productively be investigated as an active repository – a space for things to arrive and depart on a regular basis, a place to hold objects in safekeeping for an interim period of time. In the case of Yahya and İbrahim, the intended trajectory of the borrowed book was interrupted. Instead of returning to Yemen, the volume remained stranded in the collection. Yet its presence there – and the message it bears – offer a glimpse into the fragmented, non-linear, and at times unruly practices, deliberations and individual interests that have shaped the different layers of the library collection as we encounter it today.

This subjective layering deserves to be taken seriously, offering an opportunity to learn about the role of the library and its collection in the lives and imaginations of historical actors. From this perspective, the library's cramped and seemingly disorganized shelves are not a nuisance to be corrected by modern-day conservators. Rather, they are an invitation to study the collection as an ongoing process, attentive to previous ideas, conceptualizations

1 Roderic Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton 1963): 299.
2 Caesar E. Farrah, *The Sultan's Yemen: Nineteenth-Century Challenges to Ottoman Rule* (London 2002): 176–177 and 235.
3 Thomas Kuehn, *Empire, Islam and Political Difference* (Leiden 2011): 6, footnote nr. 7.

and practices of dealing with written artefacts. In turn, looking at the library like İbrahim Rodosī did, as a suitable place to leave things behind in the hope that they might find their way forward across space and time, picked up by others or preserved for future usage, further clues are revealed as one strolls through the library compound or browses shelves and opens drawers in the library room: There are the remnants of Ottoman-Islamic building inscription in the library garden,[4] works of calligraphy adorning the walls of the reading room[5] as well as the 19th-century Ottoman archival documents stored in the cupboards of the library's less accessible back room, some still wrapped in their original Ottoman cloth packaging. There are also the records of a local primary school for Turkish-speaking children, including rosters of names and weekly lesson plans from 1946. And, of course, there are plenty of books, printed and hand-written, left behind by different individuals over the past century. Some of them bear witness to previous readers and owners, in the form of penciled reading notes, doodles or ink stamps. From among these fragments, countless stories are waiting to be uncovered alongside the one of İbrahim Rodosī and Yahya from Yemen.

But there is also an overarching argument to be made. In terms of genre, content, and even format, the written artefacts preserved in the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library are vastly different from one another. Yet they share some features that made their previous owners think that the library was the most suitable place for them, perpetually or at least for an interim period of time. Much of the material that accumulated in the garden and the interior of the library has in common that it was deposited in the library as one of the few remaining Muslim-Turkish spaces on the island, at a time when the local community itself was shrinking due to aging and the departure of members of the younger generations from the island.[6] These developments greatly accelerated in the mid-1970s. What unites the diverse written materials entrusted to the library is their perceived relevance to shared communal pasts. They were seen as worthy of continued care, but deemed not personally meaningful enough, or simply too bulky and impractical to be taken along by the people who were departing from the island. This feature of potential relevance to a communal memory and archive conceptually unites Ottoman building inscriptions, bureaucratic paperwork from now-defunct imperial institutions, and collections of books in Ottoman language and Arabic script that younger generations could no longer access or know the concrete meaning or value of. To be on the safe side, until someone comes along to make better sense or use of it again, it seems, community members followed İbrahim Rodosī's strategy and left the items behind in the library. In doing so, they as well treated the library as a repository, as a transitional space where materials were safe, but no longer in one's personal responsibility, put there in the hopes of them being recontextualized and thereby able to continue a meaningful trajectory later on. In this sense, the library is not only a collection of artefacts but also an archive of early- to mid-20th-century attitudes

4 See also Zeki Çelikkol, *Rodos'taki Türk Eserleri ve Tarihçe* (Ankara 1986), who has an appendix with black-and-white photographs of the inscriptions.

5 An inventory from 1341 H (1922/23) lists thirty panels with various calligraphic inscriptions – and contains detailed information on the trajectories and current whereabouts of some of these items, as not all are found in the library at the time of the inventorying, hinting again at the continuous flow of written artifacts in and out of the library. Today, not all of these thirty panels are still accounted for.

6 For example, see Mustafa Kaymakçı & Cihan Özgün, *The Recent History of the Rhodes and Kos Turks* (İzmir 2015): 53–68.

towards archiving, cultural heritage, and communal memory, reflecting community priorities about what should be retained, retrieved, and remembered of Ottoman-Turkish life on Rhodes. Those who left the island could not know whether they or their descendants might be able to return, and thus through their acts of collecting and depositing, they made sure that the library might serve as a first point of contact for future generations interested in historical sources, community archives, and material heritage.

These observations suggest a shift in how libraries are generally conceptualized: Often, a functional perspective is foregrounded, conceiving of library collections as components of educational and scholarly infrastructures, and as repositories of knowledge and written documents. The existing research on the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library has also taken into account the political and cultural activities of the founder and his successors. However, looking closely at the layers and diverse artefacts in collection also illustrates another dimension, pointing to the role of a library as a transit space, where items are temporarily deposited by different actors with the intent of future circulating, reinterpreting and redistributing them across time and space. In this sense, those who engaged with the library and its collection did not necessarily perceive it as a final destination for written material. Rather, they engaged with it as an active, ever-changing repository and a kind of relay station within wider networks of knowledge circulation. For every trace of an interrupted trajectory, such as İbrahim Rodosī's borrowed book destined for Yemen, one may assume that many more artefacts successfully continued their onward journeys without leaving a record behind.

Following Victor Turner, the library may be understood as a liminal space of "neither here nor there", where objects forgo their initial status and meaning and are open to new recontextualizations.[7] Crucially, they also loosen their ties to previous owners, who entrust them to the threshold space of the library and relinquish control but are also freed from any previous responsibility and burdens of custodianship over the item. Both the previous owner and the object thus undergo a transformation as the item enters the library as a transit space: The former owner assumes a new role as a donor, and the item becomes detached from its original context, freed up for new interpretations and potential movement. Yet this moment of transformation also carries a risk: Once uprooted, the item becomes vulnerable, exposed to dangers of being neglected, lost or rendered completely illegible, meaningless or forgotten. In this sense, the library as a liminal space is also a precarious one. The example of suspended or interrupted trajectories of items stranded in the collection also highlight the vulnerability and fragility of previous practices of archiving and knowledge circulation. İbrahim Rodosī uses the term emānet for his course of action as he hopes to return the book he borrowed from Yahya to the latter's heir, an Ottoman-Turkish term derived from the Arabic root for trust, security and also safety or safekeeping, which reflects both the liminal situation of the artefact and the transfer of custodianship.

The same idea – and the identical term – resurface in one of the most recent additions to the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library: a set of four copy books dating from the late-19th and early-20th centuries. Written on delicate, almost translucent paper, these copy books contain duplicates

7 Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process. Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York 1995 [1969]).



Figure 2: Mehmet Nuri Alayalı's donated books with his note.
Photos: T. Tuten

of Ottoman and Greek correspondence from two different individuals and had once been part of the collection of local historian Ahmet Nuri Alayalı. When Alayalı donated these books to the library in February 2009, he included a hand-written note, stating that he was placing the books in the safekeeping (*emanet*) of the library, while also emphasizing that they would forever remain connected to him personally (*benim için daimi makamları da olur*, Figure 2).

These preliminary observations suggest that as research into the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library continues, there is rich potential to unpack further details about life stories, every-day interactions and local archival practices on the island of Rhodes from the late-19th to the mid-20th century and enrich historiographical narratives about the island for both its Ottoman and post-Ottoman context. At the same time, there is a conceptual argument to be made which takes the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library as its starting point and nuances our understanding of historical functions and perceptions of libraries as transit hubs within wider geographies of knowledge circulation and as liminal spaces in which both actors and objects undergo transformations, meaning is suspended, transferred or reassigned, and the precarities of being detached from context need to be navigated.



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The Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library is an exceptional institution that has represented continuity since the 18th century, serving as a bridge between the modern world and the Ottoman past. It is a great honour for me to take part in the preparation of a volume whose aim is to create awareness of this little-known yet unparalleled collection. Tarık Tüten's honorable invitation—which was a tremendous gift for me—arrived at a moment when I happened to be reading The Bosnian Chronicle, the matchless and sweeping novel by the Bosnian author Ivo Andrić, set around the time of the founding of the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library. The opportunity to immerse myself simultaneously in a literary work depicting life in a small Ottoman town and in the manuscript holdings of a bibliophile provincial Ottoman intellectual's library brought the twilight of the Ottoman Empire closer to me, turning it into a more personal and tangible experience. Just like Andrić's protagonists, the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library now connects two worlds in its own way—and perhaps the writer's words are just as fitting for this institution, which recalls the Ottoman past of Rhodes: "No one truly knows what it means to be born and live on the edge of two worlds—to come to know and understand both, yet be powerless to bring them closer or make them explain one another; to love and hate both in equal measure; to waver and hesitate for a lifetime; to live in two countries without belonging to either; to feel at home everywhere, yet remain a stranger forever."

Benedek Péri

The manuscript of Vecdī's Dīvān
in the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library

„Vecdī plants this fresh poem in the rose-garden of poetic ideas."

The literary collection of the Hafiz Ahmad Agha Library founded in Rhodes in 1793 provides valuable insight into the reading preferences of its founder and book collector, Hāfiz Ahmed Agha (d. ca. 1801). Within the library's collection, which comprises more than eight hundred volumes, works on Islamic studies dominate. According to the detailed catalogue describing the manuscripts, the literary texts section consists of only forty-five volumes. Although the canon of Ottoman classical imperial literary tradition, established at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, had grown immensely by the late 18th century—the time of the library's foundation—interestingly, this is not reflected in the library's literary section. Ottoman Turkish literary texts constitute less than a quarter of the collection. Out of the forty-five volumes, nearly half—twenty-two volumes—are Arabic literary texts, which is not particularly surprising given the founder's interest in Islamic studies.

The small collection of Persian texts consisting of fourteen volumes clearly reflects the perspective of an average Ottoman intellectual regarding Persian literature at the end of the 18th century. Among the volumes there are works that served as an introduction to classical Persian literature, important Ottoman commentaries on classic Persian texts, and a selection of the texts themselves.

Beyond the Ottoman commentaries of well-known Persian texts by Sūdī Bosnevī (d. 1599) and Muslih ed-Dīn Muṣṭafā Sürūrī (d. 1562), the Persian literary classics are represented by works such as the *divan*s of Hāfiz (d. 1392) and Hilālī Çağatāyī (d. 1529), as well as Saʿdī's (d. 1292) *Gulistān* and *Būstān*, which were also widely used for learning Persian in the Ottoman Empire. Among the Persian texts, there are also works that were considered trendy within the Ottoman cultural scene at the end of the 18th century, the *divan*s of Sāʾib Tebrīzī (d. 1676), ʿUrfī Şīrāzī (d. 1591), and Şevket Buhārī (d. 1596). These poets were representatives of the "new style" (*ṭarz-i tāze*), often referred to as "Indian style" *sebk-i Hindī* in Turkish literary historiography, that gained immense popularity in the Ottoman literary scene during the 17th century, and the presence of these works in a private collection far from Istanbul indicate that they appealed not only to a professional audience in the main cultural centre of the Empire but also to a broader Ottoman readership interested in Persian poetry.

It is quite surprising that the library's literary section contains only nine volumes of Turkish literary texts, encompassing a total of just eleven works. These volumes and texts are the following: 1. Edebiyat 26: a. Münīf (d. 1543), *Dīvān*, b. Sābit (d. 1712), *Edhem ü Hümā*; 2. Edebiyat 27: Nābī (d. 1712), a. *Hayriye*, b. *Gülşen-i Devlet* ; 3. Edebiyat 35: Muhammed el-Hāc Muslī, *Şerh-i Şefīk-nāme*; Edebiyat 36: Şefīk (d.1715), *Şefīk-nāme*; Edebiyat 37: Hākānī (d. 1606), *Hilye-i Saʿādet* (*Hilye-i Hākānī*); Edebiyat 38: Hibbetullāh b. Ibrāhīm, *Sāʿat-nāme*; Edebiyat 40: Seyyid Vehbī (d. 1736), *Dīvān*; Edebiyat 41: Nābī, a. *Tuhfet el-Harameyn*, b. *Manzūme-i Terceme-i Hadīṣ Erbaʿīn*; Edebiyat 43: a. Hilālī, *Dīvān*, b. Vecdī (d. 1661), *Dīvān*, c. Neşātī (d. 1674), *Dīvān*.

Like the Persian collection, the Turkish literary texts also reflect the prevailing literary tastes of the late 18th century. During this period, the works of Ottoman "fresh speakers" (*tāze-gūyān*), followers of the dominant trend in Persian classical literature, overshadowed those representing the traditional classical style.

Vecdī's collection of poems is included in a collected volume (*mecmūʿa*) containing two further texts, the Persian *divan* of Hilālī and the Turkish divan of Neşāṭī. The volume is bound into a textile binding which appears to be quite new perhaps not older than the second half of the 19th century.

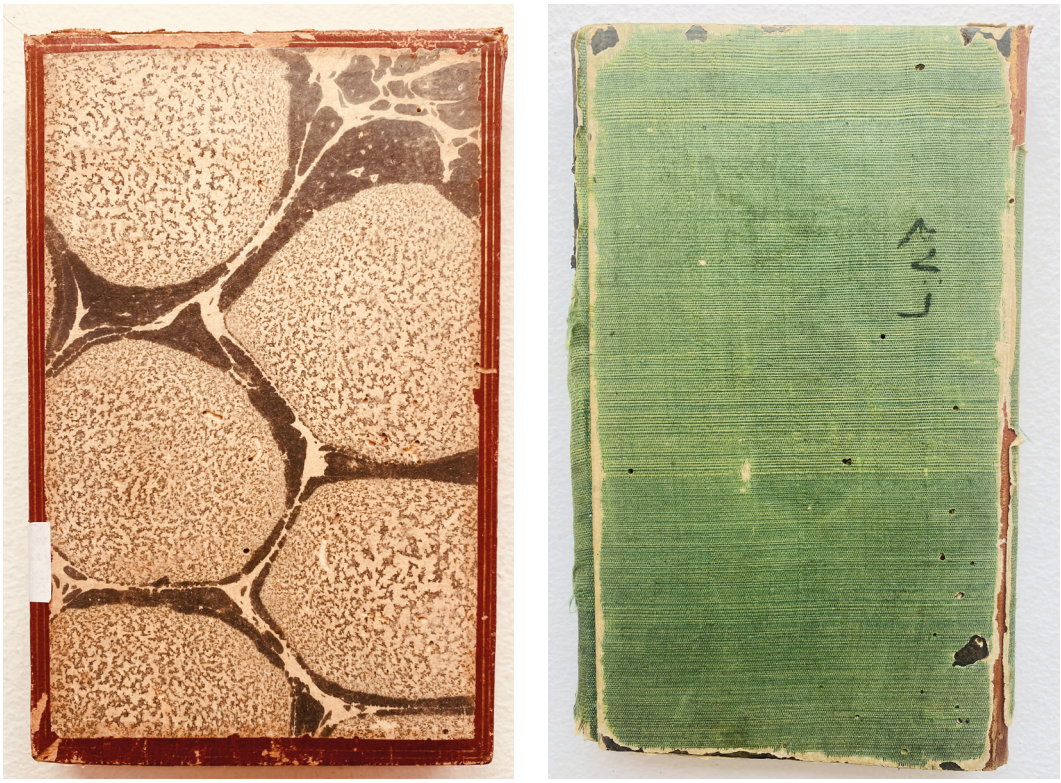


Figure 1: Vecdî, Abdulbâkî bin Mustafa (d. 1661), *Divan*, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, 1094, Rhodes. The manuscript's slipcase in *Çeharkûşe* style covered with marbled paper, *ebru* (left). The manuscript is bound with brown leather, covered with green fabric. Photos: T. Tuten

The first fly-leaf contains the title in Arabict script *Dīvān-i Hilālī ve Vecdī ve Neşātī* written in blue and an old call-number (422). Even to a superficial observer, it is evident that Hilālī's *divan* and the other two poetic collections were not produced at the same time and were most likely compiled into a single volume at a later date, perhaps when the textile binding was prepared. This assumption is further reinforced by the fact that the pages of Hilālī's *divan*, which constitutes the first text of the volume (ff. 1b–35a), were cut to size. Part of the marginal note written by a later hand on folio 6a fell victim to this trimming. The text of Hilālī's *divan* starts with a decorated *ʿunvān*. This part of the manuscript is not dated, the name of the copyist and the place of copying are not known.

Hilālī spent most of his adult life in Herat, considered the last stronghold of Timurid cultural life, where he closely interacted with the leading figures of the literary scene. He was well-acquainted with Mīr ʿAlī-şīr Nevā'ī (d. 1501), the founder of the Chaghatay Turkic classic literary tradition; Hüseyn Baykara (d. 1506), the Timurid prince of the city; and ʿAbd er-Rahmān Cāmī (d. 1492), the last great figure of the classical period of Persian literature. He witnessed the tumultuous events of the 16th century, surviving the city's occupation first by the Shaybanids in 1507 and later by the Safavids in 1510. He lost his life in 1529 when ʿUbeydullāh Khan (d. 1539), the future Shaybanid ruler,

recaptured the city and had the poet executed for some of his satirical verses.[1] Although Hilālī's talent and poetic qualities were acknowledged by his contemporaries, his *divan* was not among the Persian poetic texts widely read or popular in the Ottoman Empire. [2] In this light, the manuscript from the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library is undoubtedly considered rare and valuable.

The seemingly low popularity of Hilālī's *gazel*s makes it all the more intriguing that a copy of the *divan* also appeared, as part of a *mecmūʿa*, in another Ottoman private collection dating back two hundred years earlier. An Ottoman intellectual named ʿAlī Çelebi, who passed away in Ottoman-occupied Buda in the late 1580s, left behind an estate inventory that includes a listing of his books, among which is an item described as the *Dīvān of Ṣāhī, Āsafī, and Hilālī*. It should be mentioned here that compared to his *gazel*s, Hilālī's narrative poem *Ṣāh u Dervīş* gained greater popularity in the Ottoman Empire, as evidenced by the poetic replies it inspired from Ottoman poets.[3]

The other two texts in the volume, Vecdī's (ff. 36b–58a) and Neşātī's (ff. 58b–143b) *divan*s are dated, and the scribe is also known. According to the brief colophon found at the bottom of folio 143b, below the text box, Neşātī's *divan* was completed in A.H. 1094/1683 by a certain Hüseyn el-Iznikī. The characteristics of the handwriting make it unequivocally clear that Vecdī's *divan* is also the work of the same scribe, who most likely copied it in the same year, which would make this copy the oldest copy of Vecdī's *divan* prepared in the same year as the hitherto known oldest copy preserved in the library of the Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi.[4]

It is also entirely certain that the two Ottoman *divan*s were once part of a single, standalone volume. This is evidenced by the short note announcing the titles of the texts found on folio 36a,[5] as well as the undated ownership notes on the same page. The relatively large number of ownership notes and stamps indicate that the volume had a rather eventful history, frequently changing hands during the period between its copying and the time when it entered the collection of the library. One of the ownership stamps dated A.H. 1181/1767 also suggests that the two major parts of the collective volume couldn't have been bound together before this date.

It is entirely common for Vecdī's *divan* to appear in the same volume as the collected works of other, mainly contemporary poets, such as Meẕāḳī (d. 1676), Ismeti (d. 1665), Bahāyī (d. 1654). The majority of the 28 manuscripts detailed in Eşref Yanmaz's MA thesis are found within collective volumes.[6]

1 Michele Bernardini, "Helāli Astarabādi Jagatā'i," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica* online edition https://iranicaonline.org/articles/helali-astarabadi-jagatai-mawlana-badr-al-din accessed on 10. 01. 2025

2 The database of the Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı lists only four manuscripts. To this small number four more copies should be added. Two of them are preserved in the Nadir Eserler collection of the library of Istanbul University (https://katalog.istanbul.edu.tr/client/tr_TR/default_tr/search/results?qu=Hilali+divan&te=&lm=IUNEK; accessed on 10. 01. 2025) and two is preserved in the Topkapı Library. Fehmi Edhem Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Farsça Yazmalar Kataloğu* (Istanbul: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, 1961), 267

3 Sevim Birici, Türk Edebiyatında Şâh u Dervîş (Şâh u Gedâ)'ler ve Hilâlî Çağatâyî'den Yapılan Şâh u Dervîş Çevirilerinin Incelenmesi, PhD thesis, Fırat Üniversitesi, Elazığ, 2004, 6–9.

4 Ahmet Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî ve Dîvânçesi* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı 2002), 52, 56.

5 *Külliyāt-i Dīvān-i Vecdī ve külliyāt-i Dīvān-i Neşātī. Bu mecmūʿada iki dīvān mevcūddur*.

6 Eşref Yanmaz, Vecdî. Hayatı, Edebî Kişiliği ve Divânı'nın Karşılaştırmalı Metni, MA thesis, Atatürk Üniversitesi, Erzurum, 1995, 26–41. Ahmet Mermer's descriptions of the manuscripts do not specify which other poets' divans appear in the same volume as Vecdī's divan.

The copy of Vecdī's *divan* preserved in the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library begins with a double-page, and the top of each page is adorned with a decorated *unvan*, characterized by the ornate colour palette typical of the second half of the 17th century. The text on each page, some of which is tinted pink, written in fine calligraphic *nestalik* is enclosed within a gold-coloured frame. It is arranged in two columns, but in a manner unusual for *divan* manuscripts. Instead of the typical side-by-side arrangement of hemistiches, the text of the poems is written diagonally, with the hemistiches of each couplet positioned vertically within a single column. Typically, each column contains five couplets, resulting in a total of ten *beyt*s per page.

The first section of the manuscript (ff. 36b–56a) contains 65 *gazel*s and an unfinished poem, arranged alphabetically. On several pages poems are also written in the margin. Each new letter section is introduced by a heading written in red ink. Each *gazel* is preceeded by the words *eyzen* or *lehu* and the *kaside* on ff. 44b–45a is preceeded by the word *kaside* written in red ink as well. The name of the poet is indicated by a short red line above the word Vecdī. The first section ends on f. 56a with the phrase *temmet el-Dīvān el-Vecdī* written in red. The next two sections (f. 56b and 57a–58a) contain six *kita*s, twelve *muamma*s, five *rubai*s and an unfinished *gazel*.Some of the poems are written in the margin. The first sections end with the word *temmet* ('finished') recorded in red ink. Both *kita*s and *rubai*s are preceded by the word *kiṭʿa* written in red ink and the *muamma*s by a red heading *bi-ism-i* ... ("for the name...") giving the solution of the riddle.

The fact that the manuscript consists of multiple sections and includes poems written in the margins suggests that the scribe, after completing the initial copying of the manuscript, compared the completed text with at least one other manuscript. Poems not included in the first copy were then recorded in the margins. A comprehensive comparative analysis encompassing all known manuscripts are necessary to determine the position of the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library's manuscript within the framework of Vecdī's *divan* outlined by Ahmet Mermer.[7]

The relatively high number of manuscripts of Vecdī's *divan*, along with the fact that a copy could even be found in a library like Hāfiz Ahmed Agha's collection, which did not hold particularly rich literary material, suggests that Vecdī was once considered a fairly popular poet among Ottoman readers. His poetry collection was likely a staple in the library of any intellectual who took pride in their collection. But what made Vecdī's poetry so highly regarded, and what kind of poet was he? These are certainly questions worth exploring in relation to the copy of Vecdī's *divan* preserved in the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library.

According to the literary historian Ahmet Mermer, who prepared the critical edition of Vecdī's *divan*, Vecdī should be considered one of the second-tier poets of the Ottoman classical literary tradition. Mermer defines the difference between first- and second-tier poets as follows. He considers those authors in the first tier who were universally recognized as masters, whose art was clearly praised by all, and whose poetry inspired many to compose *nazire*s, poetic replies. In contrast, he places in the second tier those poets who, while displaying high artistic value and popularity, only reflected the literary trends of their own time. [8] The chapter analysing Vecdī's poetry clearly reveals that Mermer evaluates many of Vecdī's poems as *nazire*, inspired by works of other poets, and this is one of the main reasons he considers him a second-tier poet. But is this truly the case?

From the second half of the 16th century onwards, a poetic trend referred to as 'fresh' (*tāze*) or 'new' (*nev*, *cedīd*) in contemporary sources gained increasing popularity in the Persianate cosmopolis.

7 Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 55–58.

8 Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 12.



Figure 2: Vecdî, Abdulbâkî b. Mustafa, Divan-ı Vecdî, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1094, 37a-38b.
Photo: T. Tuten

Although the prominent representatives of this fresh style (*ṭarz-ı tāze, tāze-gūyī, ṭarz-i nev*) were not Indian, Turkish literary historiography continues to refer to this poetic trend as *sebk-i Hindī* (Indian style) going against the increasingly accepted trend in Persian literary historiography. By the early 17th century, this trend began to exert a stronger influence on Ottoman poetry as well as it is well attested in many poetic texts, where the poets clearly refer to the style they use as "fresh", as Mezākī does in his *kaside* dedicated to Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Pasha (d. 1676), the grand vizier, celebrating the capture of Érsekújvár in 1663.

Ol muḥterīʿ-i tarz-i cedīdüm ki kelāmum
Hep tāze-revīş tāze zebān tāze edādür[9]
This is the invention of my new style, because my text,
Is in the fresh mood, [written in the] fresh language, [with] words.

The essence of this "fresh style", which never truly broke away from the traditions of classical poetry, is perfectly summarized by James White in his book about poets who migrated from Arabia and Iran to India. White characterizes this literary movement as a contemporary avant-garde, rooted in classical traditions but striving to use the elements already present in the *mundus significans* (signifying universe) of poetry in new and unconventional ways. "This is a sort of modernism predicated not on a break with the forms of the past, but on the redeployment of known images and techniques in an unfamiliar way."[10]

Although *tāze-gūyī* quickly gained great popularity, it was not able to displace the traditional, classical style from the literary scene. The two styles coexisted, and their followers often debated which one was superior. The two camps were never completely separated; there was crossover between them, and several poets changed their style during their careers, as demonstrated by the following lines from Nāilī (d. 1666), one of the prominent representatives of the Ottoman "fresh style", who as the couplet suggests didn't originally followed this style.

Degüldür tāze-gū yārāna peyrev Nāʾilī ammā
Yine inkār olunmaz şāʿir-i nāzük ṭabīʿatdür[11]
[Though] Nāʾilī does not follow his fresh-speaking friends
[Nonetheless,] it cannot be denied that he was a poet of refined talent.

Although Turkish literary historians find traces of the new style in Vecdī's poetry only sporadically, and thus they don't really consider him a representative of the *tāze-gūyī* movement, it is important to note here that a poet's *divan* often reflects an entire career, collecting verses written in different periods of the poet's life. Particularly in the case of *gazel*s, due to the nature of the genre, it is usually impossible to determine when, or during which phase of the poet's career, they were composed, with only a few exceptions. It is true that Vecdī's *divan* contains a considerable number of *gazels* written in the traditional, classical style. However, several of his poems, such as the following

9 Mezâkî Süleyman Dede Bosnevî, *Mezâkî Dîvânı*, ed. Ahmet Mermer (Ankara: T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2021), 95. Available online at https://ekitap.ktb.gov.tr/TR-364629/mezaki-divani.html [Accessed on 21. 01. 2025].

10 James White, *Persian and Arabic Literary Communities in the Seventeenth Century. Migrant Poets between Arabia, Iran and India* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2023), 102. For a more detailed explanation of the „fresh style" see Walter Feldman, „The Indian Style and the Ottoman Literary Canon," *International Journal of Persian Literature* 3 (2018), 13–14.

11 Nāʾilī-i Ḳadīm, *Dīvān*, ed. Haluk Ipekten (Ankara: T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2019), 355.

lines, make it abundantly clear that the poet considered himself a representative of the "fresh" style during a certain period in his artistic trajectory.

Güşen-i maʿnīde ey Vecdī bu tāze şiʿr-i ter
Ḫāk-ı pāy-ı ehl-i naẓma armağānumdur benüm[12]
Vecdī, in the rose-garden of poetic ideas this fresh poem, which is full of life,
Is a gift [I place] at the feet of the people of poetry.

Var mı cevāb söyler bu nev-zemīne Vecdī
Şiʿründe ehl-i naẓma tāze ḫitāb göster[13]
Is there anyone who can write a poetic reply to this new style, Vecdi?
In your verse, call upon the people of poetry with freshness!

Dīvāneligi ṭarz-i nev-i ḫāṣ ile göster
Mecnūna cünūn şanduġı hep hūş görünsün[14]
Showcase his madness in a unique, new style.
So that for Mecnun, madness may appear as reason.

Moreover, from the final couplet of Vecdi's *gazel* written using the *redif tāze* ('fresh'), it becomes equally clear that Vecdī regarded himself not as an average artist but as one of the most outstanding poets of the "fresh style". He considered his verses comparable to those of Bākī, one of the most acclaimed poets of the classical style, perceiving and presenting the difference between them not as one of quality but as a stylistic distinction.

Bu şiʿr-i tāze berāber degülse Bāḳīye
Budur tefāvüti Vecdī o köhne bu tāze[15]
If this fresh verse does not match Bākī's,
Then, Vecdī, it is because that is old, and this is fresh.

Based on the image that emerges from the contemporary corpus of poetic texts, it appears that Vecdī was regarded by his contemporaries as one of the key figures of the "fresh style". In his elegy composed on the death of Ferīdūn efendi (d. 1659), a scribe of Bosnian origin, who is shown as a good poet in Safāyī's biographical anthology,[16] his compatriot, Āṣim depicts him as leading figure of the *tāze-gūyī* movement in the mid-17th century.

Dem-i cān-baḫş-ı Vecdī vü Naẓīm-i nükte-perverle
Meşām-ı ehl-i naẓm-ı tāzeye nükhet-nisār etdüŋ[17]
With Vecdī's soul-reviving and Nazīm's mind-nourishing breath,
You filled the noses of the followers of the fresh style with fragrance.

12 Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 111.
13 Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 86.
14 Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*,
15 Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 133.
16 Nuran Üzer Altuner, Safâî ve Tezkiresi, PhD diss. Istanbul Üniversitesi, Istanbul, 1989, 625.
17 Bosnalı Âsım, *Bosnalı Âsım Divanı*, ed. Orhan Kurtoğlu (Ankara: T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2018), 143.



Figure 3: A marginal note from the divan containing a ghazal that was added later by the copyist, Vecdî, Divan-ı Vecdî, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1094.
Photo: T. Tuten

Vecdî's near-contemporary, Refdî (d. 1722), who was a representative of the "fresh style", names two poets as his masters in one of his *kasides*: Vecdî and his close friend Mezākī. The position of these two poets within the contemporary poetic discourse is well illustrated by the fact that, for Refdî, they represent the standard to aspire to. He competes with them and seeks to surpass them in the realm of poetic rivalry. By using the word *taklid* ('copying') in the couplet, Refdî seeks to convey that his verses are so inimitable that even the two respected poets—well-versed in the art of composing *nazires*—cannot create even a close copy of them.

Benem ol şā'ir-i ḫoş-lehce ki ḥālā sözüme
Olsa Vecdī vü Mezāḳī edemezler taḳlīd[18]
I am a poet of eloquent words, and of my verses,
Even Vecdī or Mezākī could not craft an exact replica.

18 Refdī, *Dīvān-i Refdī*, ed. Hakan Yalap (Ankara: Bizim Büro Matbaacılık, 2017), 87.

Even later literary critics spoke highly of Vecdī's poetry. In Esrār Dede's (d. 1748) *tezkire* introducing Mevlevi poets, in the section about Vecdī's mentor, Rusūhī Ankaravī, Vecdī is described as an exceptional poet who "surpasses most gazel poets of the land of Rūm" and together with Neşātī he is mentioned as the only two poets being on the same level as the classics.[19]

A voluminous literary anthology,[20] compiled with clear selection and editorial principles, provides a valuable reflection of early 18th-century literary sensibilities and the tastes of poetry-loving readers. It was almost certainly put together by an intellectual in Tekirdağ, a bustling literary centre in the mid-18th century, who appreciated poetry and wrote under the pseudonym Şehrī, possibly Mehmed Efendi (d. 1764) from Tekirdağ.[21] The anthology's recognition is well demonstrated by the fact that prominent figures of the Ottoman public sphere contributed chronograms to the collection's introduction. These figures include among others a certain Seyyid Mehmed Şerīf Efendi, who, according to the ownership stamps on fol. 1a, was one of the previous owners of the volume, Suyolcu-zāde Ahmed Efendi (d. 1769),[22] the head of the Kadiri convent in Tekirdağ, who wrote poetry under the pen-name Nehrī, and Tekirdağlı Ahmed Lutfī Efendi (d. 1764), the author of a biographical anthology containing the biographies of poets active in Tekirdağ.[23] The majority of the collection consists of poems by Bākī (d. 1600) and Şeyhülislam Yahyā (d. 1644), but it also includes *gazel*s by a large number of lesser known 17th-century poets such as Tıflī Ahmed Çelebi (d. 1660), Cevrī (d. 1654), and Kāmī (d. 1724). Among the numerous poets representing 17th-century Ottoman poetry, Vecdī's texts hold a prominent place, with nearly all of his *gazel*s included in the anthology. This underscores the poet's high esteem and recognition even in the mid-18th century.

In the poetic anthology compiled by Hisārcıklızāde Mesūd in the early 19th century, 26 of Vecdī's *gazel*s are included, representing nearly half of his entire corpus. This number surpasses the quantity of poems selected from the works of more renowned contemporaries, such as Neşātī and Nāilī, for the same collection.[24]

It appears that Vecdī's popularity among later readers was not only extensive in terms of time but also geographically widespread. Seyyid Alī Şīrvānī, who spent most of his life in his hometown of Samahi in Azerbaycan, compiled his literary anthology there between 1883 and 1885. In the section of the collection dedicated to the works of Ottoman poets, alongside Nābī (d. 1712), Vecdī stands out as one of the poets represented by a substantial number of poems.[25]

As for his role and position in the Ottoman poetry of his time, Vecdī did not perceive himself merely as a talented and outstanding poet, who is on equal standing with the esteemed authors of the classical style, but as an author worthy of being emulated by his contemporaries.

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19 Esrâr Dede, *Tezkire-i Şu'arâ-yı Mevleviyye*, ed. Ilhan Genç (Ankara: T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2018), 133, 279.

20 *Mecmūʿa-i Dīvān*. Berlin: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. or. oct. 2216.

21 Ahmet Serdar Erkan, "Tekirdağlı Ahmed Lutfî'nin Eserlerine Göre 18. Yüzyılda Tekirdağ'daki Edebî Muhitler," *Akademik Dil ve Edebiyat Dergisi* 7/1 (2023), 59. For the short poem suggesting that Şehrī was the editor of the anthology see *Mecmūʿa-i Dīvān*, f. 2a. For more on the life of the Tekirdağ poets see Ahmet Lutfî Tekfudagî, *Tezkire-i Şu'arâ*, ed. Bilal Alpaydın and Müslüm Yılmaz (Istanbul: DBY Yayınları, 2021).

22 For his life and poetry see Abdülmecit Islamoğlu, "Soyulcu-zâde Nehrî Ahmed'in Türkçe Şiirleri," *Turkish Sudies* 12/27 (2017), 195-253.

23 For his life see Erkan, "Tekirdağlı Ahmed Lutfî'nin Eserlerine Göre," 55–56.

24 Hisarcıklızâde Mes'ûd, *Mecmû'a-i Eş'ār (Inceleme–Metin)*, ed. Gülçiçek Akçay (Çanakkale: Paradigma Akademi, 2020), 23–24.

25 Ömer Bayram, Azerbaycan Sahası Tezkireleri ve Seyyid Azim Şirvânî'nin Tezkiresi, Gazi Üniversitesi, Ankara, 2005, 259269

Revādur etse yārān ṭabʿuma peyrevlik ey Vecdī
Ki vādī-i süḫanda reh-ber-i ferhunde-peydür bu[26]
It is only fitting for your contemporaries to follow your poetry, O Vecdī,
For indeed, in the meadow of words it is a guide with a blessed trail.

According to literary historical sources and poetic texts, Vecdī's leading role in mid-17th-century Ottoman poetry, particularly among the followers of the *tāze-gūyī* movement, was acknowledged by his contemporaries. In the closing couplet (*makta*) of one of his *gazels*, Üsküdarlı Sırrī (d. 1699) portrays Vecdī as a master poet whose opinion would hold decisive significance for him.

Bu naẓm-ı bī-naẓīr u ġıbtā-fermāyı işitdükde
Ḳopar ḳabrinde rūḥ-ı Vecdī-i üstāddan feryād[27]
If it hears this unparalleled and envy-inducing verse,
Vecdi's spirit will cry out from the grave.

Kadrī (d. 1671), who, like Vecdī, was a state-employed scribe,[28] also regarded Vecdī as a "master poet". He expressed his high esteem for Vecdī's poetic accomplishments in a poem that served as a poetic reply to one of Vecdī's gazels.

Ṣaḳın küstāḫ-reftār etme Ḳadrī ḫāme-i şiʿrüŋ
Ḥaẕer ḳıl bu zemīne Vecdī-i üstād ayaḳ basmış[29]
Take heed, wield not the pen of your poetry recklessly, O Kadrī,
Be cautious, for on this field, the master Vecdi treads.

It is undoubtedly no coincidence that Kadrī's critical judgment appears in a *gazel* that was explicitly written as a poetic resply to a model text by Vecdī. In the 17th and 18th centuries, a *naẓīre* network comprising more than fifteen poetic replies emerged,[30] of which Kadrī's poem forms an integral part. All the poems use the same poetic framework consisiting of the metre *hezec-i müsemmen-i sālim* (. - - - | . - - - | . - - - | . - - -), the rhyme *-ād* and the *redīf ayaḳ baṣmış* (she/he/it put her/his/its foot). The cadre of authors within the imitation network includes both renowned and lesser-known poets, such as Vecdī, Nāilī (d. 1666),[31] Gafūrī (d. 1668),[32] Meylī (d. 1676),[33] Mezākī (d. 1676),[34]

26 Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 125.

27 Şevkiye Kazan, Üsküdarlı Sırri Hayatı, Eserleri, Edebî Kişiliği, Divanı (Tenkitli Metin - Inceleme) ve Şehu Medhi'n-Nebî, PhD. diss, Gazi Üniversitesi, Ankara, 2003, 273.

28 Altuner, Safâî ve Tezkiresi, 708; Şeyhî Mehmed Efendi, *Vekâyi'ul'-Fuzalâ. Şeyhî'nin Şakâik Zeyli*, ed. Derya Örs (Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2018), 1674

29 Şeyhî Mehmed Efendi, *Vekâyi'ul'-Fuzalâ*, 1675.

30 For a detailed description of the theory of imitation (*naẓīre*) networks see Benedek Péri, "«...*beklerüz*». An Ottoman Paraphrase (*naẓīre*) Network from the 16th Century," in *An Iridescent Device: Premodern Ottoman Poetry*, eds. Christiane Czygan and Stephan Conermann (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2018), 147–180.

31 Nā'ilī-i Ḳadīm, *Dīvān*, 408.

32 Şeyhî Mehmed Efendi, *Vekâyi'ul'-Fuzalâ*, 1370; Ismail Beliğ, *Nuhbetü'l-Āsār li-Zeyli Zubdeti'l Eş'ār*, ed. Abdulkerim Abdulkadiroğlu (Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi, 1985), 366.

33 Şeyhî Mehmed Efendi, *Vekâyi'ul'-Fuzalâ*, 1725.

34 Mezâkî, *Mezâkî Dîvânı*, 319.

Fevzī (d. 1679),[35] Sābir Pārsā (d. 1680),[36] Kelīm (d. 1687),[37] Gınāyī (d. 1694),[38] Gavsī (d. 1698) Nazmī (d. 1701),[39] Bosnalı Āsım (d. 1710),[40] Kubūrī-zāde Hevāyī (d. 1715?),[41] Vahyī (d. 1718),[42] Subhī-zāde Feyzī (d. 1740),[43],[44] Ömer Nüzhet (d. 1778),[45] and Şeyh Gālib (d. 1799)[46].

It appears highly likely that the earliest poems of the *nazire* network were composed sometime in the mid-17th century. However, identifying the poet who invented and first used the poetic framework characterized by this metre, rhyme and *redīf* combination, and thus authored the base poem of the network is exceedingly difficult.

In the preface to his edition of Vecdī's divan, Ahmet Mermer writes about a circle of poets that emerged in Istanbul during the mid-17th century. This group of friends included poets such as Vecdī, Mezākī, Cevrī, and Neşātī. Mermer mentions that within this circle, it was customary to compose poetic responses in honour of each other's works. He cites a couplet from Nāilī and another from Mezākī, both of which are from *nazire*s inspired by the same *gazel* composed by Vecdī.[47] Later, Mermer cites several more couplets, which he attributes either to poetic replies other poets wrote to Vecdī's poems or *nazire*s Vecdī composed for the *gazels* of his friends. The main issue with these claims is that, while textual parallels can indeed be observed in the cited verses, Mermer does not clarify the criteria by which he determines which text serves as the model and which is the poetic response.

Moreover, the perspective he represents necessarily assumes a linear relationship between poems that appear to be *nazire*s. However, an entirely different model is also conceivable. Theoretically, it is possible that *gazels* relying on the same poetic framework emerged as the result of a poetic exercise, where participants were tasked with composing poems using a specific meter, rhyme, and *redif*. This type of poetic exercise is entirely plausible within a circle of friends like the one formed by Vecdī, Mezākī, and their close associates, which primarily consisted of scribes and members connected to the Mevlevi community. Thorough comparative analyses reveal that Vecdī's and Mezākī's *divan*s contain at least thirty *gazels* that employ the same formal framework, which quite clearly cannot be the work of mere coincidence.

However, relatively few of these can be definitively identified as poetic replies inspired by the other poet's *gazel*. One exception is Mezākī's couplet cited also by Ahmet Mermer, which explicitly names Vecdī as the author of the model text.

35 Fevzî, *Fevzî Dîvânı*, ed. Yunus Kaplan (Ankara: T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2012), 264.

36 Şeyhî Mehmed Efendi, *Vekâyi'ul'-Fuzalâ*, 1179.

37 Şeyhî Mehmed Efendi, *Vekâyi'ul'-Fuzalâ*, 1693.

38 Şeyhî Mehmed Efendi, *Vekâyi'ul'-Fuzalâ*, 2039.

39 Halime Bektaş, Şeyh Mehmed Nazmī Dīvānī, MA thesis, Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi, Sivas, 2005, 705.

40 Bosnalı Âsım, *Bosnalı Âsım Divanı*, ed. Osman Kurtoğlu (Ankara: T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2018), 255–256.

41 Sinan Yıldırım, Divan Edebiyatında Nazirecilik Geleneği ve Hevâyî'nin Nazirelerden Oluşan Divanı, MA thesis, Fırat Üniversitesi, Elazığ, 2004, 72.

42 Vahyî, *Vahyî Dîvanı*, ed. Hakan Taş (Ankara: T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2017), 168–169.

43 Erol Gündüz, Subhī-zāde Feyzī Dīvānı. Karşılaştırmalı Metin, MA thesis, Inönü Üniversitesi, Malatya, 1997, 81.

44 Mehmet Altunmeral, "Gavsî Ahmed Dede ve Şiirleri," *Bartin Üniversitesi Islami Ilimler Fakültesi Dergisi* 6/12 (2017), 132.

45 Mahmut Karakaş, *Bir Mutasavvıf Şair, Ömer Nüzhet ve Eserleri* (Şanlıurfa: Şanlıurfa Valiliği, 2012), 173.

46 M. Muhsin Kalkışım, Şeyh Gâlib Dîvânı, PhD diss, Istanbul Üniversitesi, Istanbul, 1992, 412.

47 Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 16.

Olsam nola āmāde-i ṣad feyż Mezāḳī
Vecdī'ye naẓīre demeğe bir ġazel aldum[48]
What if Mezākī is ready to receive a hundred blessings?
I took up a gazel to write a poetic response to Vecdī.

In one of his panegyric poems, Mezākī portrays Vecdī as a creative author with tangible accomplishments, to whom he would showcase his own artistry. This suggests that the relationship between the two poets was one of mentor and mentee.

Mānend-i Mezāḳī yüri ʿarz-ı hüner eyle
Vecdī gibi bir sāḥibü'l-īcādı görürseŋ[49]
Just like Mezākī, showcase your art/skills,
If you see a poet with creative accomplishments like Vecdī.

The fact that the following couplet appears in a *gazel* by Mezākī, whose poetic framework was also employed by Vecdī, suggests that the *üstād* ('master') mentioned in the couplet was none other than Vecdī for Mezākī.

Āferīn ṭabʿ-ı Mezāḳī -i ḫayāl-āmūza
Böyle şākirde ol üstād-ı müsellem ne disün[50]
Bravo to the poetic talent of Mezākī learning poetic art!
What [else] could such an esteemed master possibly say about a student like this?

Although the poem in question fits into the Ottoman category of *nazire*, it aligns more closely with the concept of emulation rather than imitation, given the lack of close, text-level correspondence between the verses. Still, in light of what has been discussed regarding the relationship between Vecdī and Mezākī, the reference to the "master" still appears to point to Vecdī. It is worth noting that among his contemporaries, Nālī, the Istanbul-based poet Vahīd (d. 1663), the highly positioned Ismetī (d. 1665),[51] and the Niğde born Nāmī (d. 1673) also composed poems using the above meter, rhyme, and *redif* combination.[52] However, these poems do not show textual correspondence with any of the others, indicating that this poetic framework was well-known and employed in the mid-17th-century literary circles.

Returning to the problem of identifying the author of the first poem in the "*ayaḳ basmış*" *nazire* network, it is impossible to provide a definitive answer. The reason for this lies in the lack of textual connections among several presumably contemporary poems, which could otherwise clarify the nature of their interrelationship. Nāilī's *gazel* consists of eight couplets, while Vecdī's has seven, which means the poets use a set of nine and eight rhyming words respectively. However, apart from three exceptions, the two poems do not share any common rhyming words. This could suggest that the two poets merely employed the same poetic framework, but it could also indicate that one poem was composed as a creative imitation in response to the other using only very vague hints to

48 Mezâkî, *Mezâkî Dîvânı*, 301.
49 Mezâkî, *Mezâkî Dîvânı*, 166.
50 Mezâkî, *Mezâkî Dîvânı*, 400.
51 Elif Günaydın, Ismetî Divanı (Inceleme–Metin–Dizin), MA thesis, Uludağ Üniversitesi, Bursa, 2020, 156–157.
52 Nā'ilī-i Ḳadīm, *Dīvān*, 483–484; Altuner, Safâî ve Tezkiresi, 1001–1002..

allude to the model text. It is certainly worth noting here that the compiler of an 18th-century *nazire* anthology did not take into account the connections between the two poems and presented Mezākī's gazel as a *nazire* inspired by Nā'ilī's poem.[53]

Between the text of the *gazel*s of Vecdī and Mezākī, however, several parallels can be observed. Both gazels consist of seven couplets, and all eight rhyming words are shared between them, only their order is different. However, in the opening and closing couplets, both poets use the same rhyming words (*nā-şād* 'unhappy', *Ferhād*; *üstād* 'master'), which clearly indicates a close connection between the two poems. Based on what has been said so far about the relationship between Vecdī and Mezākī, it is entirely reasonable to assume that Vecdī's *gazel* served as the model, and Mezākī's poem was a *nazire* written in response to it.

Vecdī's *makta* deserves special attention, primarily because the message of the couplet goes beyond the usual poetic boasting. The poet claims nothing less than being a pioneer, characterized by his ability to explore the possibilities offered by the poetic space created by the "new style (*zemīn-i nev*)", a space that no one else has ventured into and of which he is the master.

> *Tekāpū-yı zemīn-i nev saŋa maḫṣūṣdur ey Vecdī*
> *Bu vādīyi ne bulmış var ne bir üstād ayaḳ başmış*
> Mapping out new lands is characteristic of you, O Vecdī,
> This field has not yet been discovered by anyone, nor has any master wandered there.

What makes the couplet truly interesting is that the stylistic features characteristic of *tāze-gūyī* are not particularly noticeable within the *gazel* itself. This might suggest that this poem marks the turning point when Vecdī began experimenting in earnest with the possibilities offered by the "fresh style".

The relationship between Vecdī's poem and other poems within the *nazire* network is less direct compared to the close connection between Vecdī's and Mezākī 's *gazel*s. While Vecdī's text appears to have influenced multiple imitation poems, the connections are more loosely defined, showing that Vecdī's style and themes resonated with other poets, but not with the same intensity or specificity as with Mezākī.

In the gazels of Fevzī, Sābir, and Feyzī, the first and last couplets contain the same rhyming words as in Vecdī's poem, which presumably indicates Vecdī's influence. These poets have other imitation poems beyond this *nazire* that show textual parallels with Vecdī's poems, and it can be suspected that some of them are, if not entirely, at least partially inspired by specific *gazel*s of Vecdī. Since *nazires* are often poetic patchworks that draw from the elements of the *mundus significans* characteristic of the *nazire* network, it often requires considerable boldness to assert, without close textual parallels, which poet or specific poem inspired a given couplet in a *gazel*. In some fortunate cases, however, the textual parallels are so strong that there can be no doubt about which model text served as the basis for the given couplet.

This is the case, for example, with Feyzī's following couplet found in his poem written in *muzari-i müsemmen-i mahbun-i mahzuf*, employing the *-est* rhyme and the *olup kalmış redif*. This *beyt* appears to have a close textual connection with a couplet by Vecdī available in a *gazel*, which uses the same poetic framework.

53 Nebi Coşkun, 18. yüzyıla ait divan tertibinde bir Nazire mecmuası (İnceleme-metin), MA thesis, Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, Istanbul, 2019, 273–274.

Feyżī II.

Ruḫunda ḫāl-i siyeh ṣanma şimdi Hindū
Diyār-ı Rūm'da āteş-perest olup kalmış[54]
Do not think of the mole on his/her face as a Hindu,
Who remained in the land of Rum as a fire-worshipper.

Vecdī IV.

Ḫayāl-ı rūyı ile zülfi içre dil gūyā
Diyār-i Hind'de āteş-perest olup ḳalmış[55]
You could say that the heart, thinking of her face and braided hair,
Became a fire-worshipper in the land of the Hindus.

Both couplets are built upon traditional elements present in the *mundus significans* of classical poetry, with their foundation rooted in two colours: red, represented by the beloved's face (*ruḫ*, *rūy*), and black, symbolized by the beloved's braided hair (*zülf*) in Vecdī's poem and the beloved's beauty mark in Feyzī's *nazire*. In classical poetry, the association of 'black' with the concept of 'Hindu', a person with dark complexion and 'red' with the concept of the 'face' is also a conventional stylistic device. As demonstrated by the following hemistich by Hayālī (d. 1556), an acknowledged and popular master poet of the 16th century, Vecdī's couplet is composed of traditional elements even at the lexical level.

Ḫayālī

Rūy-ı gülgūnuŋda ḫālüŋ hindū-yı āteş-perest[56]
Your mole on your rose-like face is a Hindu fire-worshipper

It is evident that Vecdī employs these conventional motifs within a new poetic context. Here the poet's heart takes on the role of the fire-worshipper, yet the object of worship is not directly the face as a metaphor for fire, but rather its recollected image. The fire itself burns at the centre of the black cascade of hair, which frames the red-coloured face. This hair, likened to the land of the Hindus, turns Vecdī's thoughts toward India, which in the context of the *tāze-gūyī* movement, is perhaps also symbolical.

It needs to be mention here that Neşātī's *olup kalmış* gazel also contains a very similar couplet, which, according to Erol Gündüz, served as a model for Feyzī's *beyt*.

Neşātī II.

Çıkar mı fikret-i ḫālüŋ derūn-ı ʿāşıḳdan
Miṣāl-i Hindū-yı āteş-nişest olup kalmış[57]
Does the image of the beauty mark depart from the lover's heart?
Like the Hindu sitting by the fire, it remains in place.

54 Gündüz, Subhī-zāde Feyzī Dīvānı, 65.
55 Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 101.
56 Ali Nihat Tarlan, *Hayâlî Bey Dîvânı* (Istanbul: Istanbul Üniversitesi, 1945), 113.
57 Neşâtî Ahmed Dede, *Neşâtî Dîvânı*, ed. Mahmut Kaplan (T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2019), 164.

In Neşātī's couplet, the complex rhetorical construction observed in Vecdī's couplet is only present in traces. While Neşātī also employs the connection between the concepts of 'Hindu' and 'beauty mark', the notion of fire can be linked solely to the 'lover's thoughts'. Although the lover's thoughts can indeed be fiery, this connection appears somewhat forced in the present context. Vecdī's couplet appears to make the most effective use of the rhetorical potential offered by traditional elements included in the couplet. In comparison, the couplets of Neşātī and Feyzī seem to be poetic solutions that emerged in relation to a preceding text, reinforcing the suspicion that Neşātī's couplet similarly to Feyzī's, is also an imitation text inspired by Vecdī's *beyt*.

A more extensive and in-depth comparative study would be needed to map the network of poets and poems influenced by Vecdī's poetic texts. However, it is already apparent that Vecdī's poems not only won the approval of Ottoman literary critics and poetry-loving audiences but also continuously served as a source of inspiration for those actively engaged with poetry, as both his contemporaries and later poets frequently seem to have been inspired by his *gazel* poetry.

The question of whether Vecdī was truly a good poet has yet to be definitively answered. While classical literary criticism assessed poets and poetry based on relatively objective criteria, this evaluation remains, to some extent and within certain boundaries, subjective. Moreover, no poet's work is entirely consistent—everyone has both outstanding and less successful lines or poems. This is no different in VecdI's case. However, the following couplets confirm that Vecdī was highly esteemed by his contemporaries for good reason. Each of these verses stands as clear evidence of his talent, creativity, and mastery of the art of poetry. The following couplet is remarkable for the unique sensory experience created by the interplay of *s* and *ş* sounds in the first hemistich, as well as for its intricate network of metaphors that weave together a rich poetic imagery.

Mürġ-i āteş-nefsiz seyr-i gülistān etsek
Gül-i ümmidimizi aḫker-i sūzān buluruz[58]
We are fire-breathing birds as we wander through the rose garden
We find the rose of our hope as a glowing ember.

Vecdī is able to further enhance this type of musicality. In the following couplet, the initial *d* sounds in the first *misra,* along with the relatively frequent occurrence of long *a* sounds throughout the line, and the *s, ş* and *i* sounds in the second hemistich, lend the *beyt* a distinctive musical quality.

Dil-i dīvāne dīvān-ḫāne-i ʿuşşāḳdur tā kim
Şehen-şāh-ı serīr-i sīne-i bī-kīnemüz sensin[59]
The mad heart is the banquet hall of lovers until,
On the throne of our chest free from malice, you are the king of kings.

In the following couplet, Vecdī employs traditional elements found in the *mundus significans* of classical poetry in a highly inventive and creative manner. In the classical poetic tradition, it is a common topos to compare the hoofprint of the beloved's horse to a curved object due to its formal resemblance. For instance, Bāḳī employs this motif in one of his gazels, likening the horseshoe to a human ear.[60]

58 Mermer, *XVII.Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 97.
59 Mermer, *XVII.Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 119.
60 Bâḳî, *Bâḳî Dîvânı*, ed. Sabahattin Küçük (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 1994), 132, Gazel 53/III.

In the following couplet, Vecdī compares the imprint of the horseshoe on the ground, on one hand, to the curved crescent of the new moon, and on the other hand, to the bent posture of a person bowing deeply in reverence before the object of his admiration.

Nişān-ı sūm-ı semendi degül meh-i nevdür
Ki pāy-būsı ümidiyle pest olup ḳalmış[61]
It is not the imprint of his/her horse's horseshoe, but the new moon,
Which, hoping to kiss [the beloved's] feet, humbled itself.

In the following couplet, which takes the reader into the world of Ottoman archery, the concept of 'curved' occupies the centre stage once again. Vecdī creatively compares the poet-lover's body, bent in two from the desire caused by the beloved's bow-like, arched eyebrows, to a crooked arrow that is deemed useless by the archer, who keeps it in his hands also holding the curved bow.

Ey ḳadd-ı du tā geçmedüŋ ebrū hevesinden
Kec-tīr gibi dest-i kemān-dārda kalduŋ[62]
Oh, you bent in two, unable to overcome the desire caused by the beloved's eyebrows,
Just like the crooked arrow that remained in the hand holding the bow.

In conclusion, it can be said that, despite his short life preventing him from creating an extensive body of work, Vecdī was regarded as one of the defining and significant poets of the mid-17th century, both by his contemporaries and later generations. His creativity and mastery of classical poetry are clearly reflected in his poems, particularly in his *gazel*s. These poetic qualities contributed to Vecdī's popularity, which is also indicated by the relatively large number of manuscripts. The manuscript of Vecdī's *divan* in the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library collection is noteworthy for several reasons. First, it provides important insight into the reception of the poet's works, as it illustrates how Vecdī's poetry was regarded in the century following his death. Second, it is significant because it represents an early, dated manuscript that has not yet been used in the research on Vecdī.

61 Mermer, *XVII Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 100.
62 Mermer, *XVII.Yüzyıl Dîvân Şâiri Vecdî*, 106.



Figure 4: Vecdî, *Divan-ı Vecdî*, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1094.
The last page of the volume containing the colophon at the bottom and the library seal.
Photo: T. Tuten

Naciye Detseli completed her BA in the Department of Traditional Turkish Arts at the Faculty of Fine Arts at Selçuk University (2015) and her MA in the Institute of Social Sciences at the same university (2018) with a thesis focusing on Seljuk ornamentation on wooden materials. She received her PhD in 2024 at the Department of Turkish Islamic Arts at the Institute of Social Sciences at Necmettin Erbakan University with her thesis on Ilkhanate period illumination style. Dr. Detseli has been working as a lecturer at the Faculty of Fine Arts at Selçuk University since 2019. She has published articles and book chapters on book arts and architectural ornaments, with an emphasis on ornamentation, in various journals. The artist, who has participated in many national and international group exhibitions, has awards in the fields of marbling/*ebru*, and hand-drawn art. She continues her work in the fields of illumination, miniature, hand-drawn art and marbling/*ebru*.

"At times like these, poetry is a virtue I wish I possessed—so I could convey the depth and beauty of what I feel. To put it as best as I can: when I was contacted about this project, I was going through one of the more difficult periods of my life. I agreed to be involved, despite that challenging time, thanks to the kindness in the approach and the dedication to his work of Tarık Tüten—a person whose character I deeply respect. During the time I spent immersed in this subject, I journeyed through time, driven by the age-old human desire "to know." I met Hafız Ahmed Ağa and his son Fethi Paşa. The Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library became a place I felt emotionally connected to—a place I've never seen in person, yet could vividly imagine myself peacefully leafing through books in, just from the photographs. I thank Tarık Tüten for making this journey possible and congratulate him on his successful project."

Naciye Detseli

Ottoman Heritage in Rhodes

A Qur'ān Manuscript Signed by Maksûd et-Tebrîzî

in the Collection of the Hafız Ahmet Ağa Library

Abstract

The Hafız Ahmet Ağa Library, located on the island of Rhodes, remains one of the cultural legacies of the Ottoman Empire and stands as a testament to the era's artistic and scholarly endeavors. Established in 1207/1793 by Hafız Ahmet Ağa, an official of the Ottoman court, the library houses a significant collection of rare manuscripts of great artistic value. During the tenure of his son, Fethi Pasha, the collection expanded significantly. Among the rich manuscript collection, certain works stand out due to their ornamental qualities. One such example, and the focus of this study, is a Qur'ān manuscript signed by Maksûd et-Tebrîzî, which is highly esteemed for its calligraphy and illumination. The manuscript includes frontpiece pages, opening pages, chapter title areas, rectangular ornamentation areas, and roundels. Remarkably, it has survived to the present day in a complete and well-preserved state. As part of this study, the manuscript's illuminations have been meticulously analyzed through photographs and illustrations, documenting its current condition. Comparative analysis suggests that the manuscript reflects characteristics of Safavid-era illumination.

Introduction

The Hafız Ahmet Ağa Library (1207/1793), one of the Ottoman cultural legacies in Rhodes, was founded during the reign of Sultan Selim III (1203/1789–1221/1807). This library, established by Hafız Ahmet Ağa, who rose to the rank of "*Rikapdâr-ı Şehriyârî"* during Selim III's reign, became enriched with additional books brought from Istanbul by his son, Tophane Müşiri Fethi Pasha, following Hafız Ahmet Ağa's passing. Currently, the library houses over 2,000 volumes, including 1,265[1] manuscripts, which encompass both handwritten and printed works. With contributions from TİKA and the Turkish Consulate General in Rhodes, the manuscripts have been restored and digitized[2] by a team comprising personnel from the Konya Regional Manuscripts Library and the Süleymaniye Manuscripts Library[3]. The collection includes Qur'ānic manuscripts, as well as works on exegesis, hadith, jurisprudence, literature, and various other subjects.

Among the Qur'ānic manuscripts, examples such as the manuscript inscribed by Muhammed bin Ahmed bin Yusuf al-Cüşşi (No. 04, Egypt, 831 AH) representing the Mamluk period, the manuscript signed by Ahmed bin Abdullah Hicâzî (No. 06, 859/1455) associated with the Fatih period[4], a manuscript linked to the Seljuk period (No. 05), and another reflecting Safavid influences

1 https://www.fethipasavakfi.com/hafiz-ahmed-aga-kutuphanesi.php; https://www.hafizahmedaga.com/.

2 In the introduction of the catalogue prepared by Bekir Şahin, Faruk Ağartan and Selahattin Uygur, it is stated that there are 1288 volumes.

3 Bekir Şahin, Faruk Ağartan, Selahattin Uygur *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafız Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi Yazma Eserler Kataloğu* (İstanbul, 2013), XIII.

4 Naciye Detseli, Ali Fuat Baysal, "Rodos'ta 1455 Tarihli Bir Mushafın Tezhipleri ve Bulut Motifi", *Sanat Tarihi Dergisi* 28/2 (2019), 440.

(No. 09) [5] are particularly noteworthy. These illuminated manuscripts, each possessing research-worthy characteristics, contribute to the identification of stylistic trends of their respective periods.

The focus of this study is a Qur'ān manuscript registered as No. 01 in the library's collection, recognized as one of its most valuable works. This manuscript, inscribed by Maksûd et-Tebrîzî in 963/1555, consists of 228 folios, with external dimensions of 488x360 mm and a text area of 328x215 mm. The text area is organized into three large lines of thuluth script at the top, middle, and bottom, interspersed with six lines of naskh script. The thuluth lines are inscribed in gold, while the naskh lines are written in black ink.

The manuscript's burgundy binding features interlinear panels with gilded and inscribed *zencerek* designs, a central *şemse* medallion connected to *salbek* pendants, and cornerpieces positioned in the four corners of the rectangular central area. The *şemse*, cornerpieces, and gilded border panels are filled with applied gold. The binding exclusively features motifs from the *hatayi* group. The binding incorporates freeform designs for the medallions and cornerpieces, while the border panels exhibit a 1/2 reversed symmetrical design. Although the cover, spine (*sertap*), and fore-edge flap (*mıklep*) are detached, the original craftsmanship is well-documented (Figure 1).

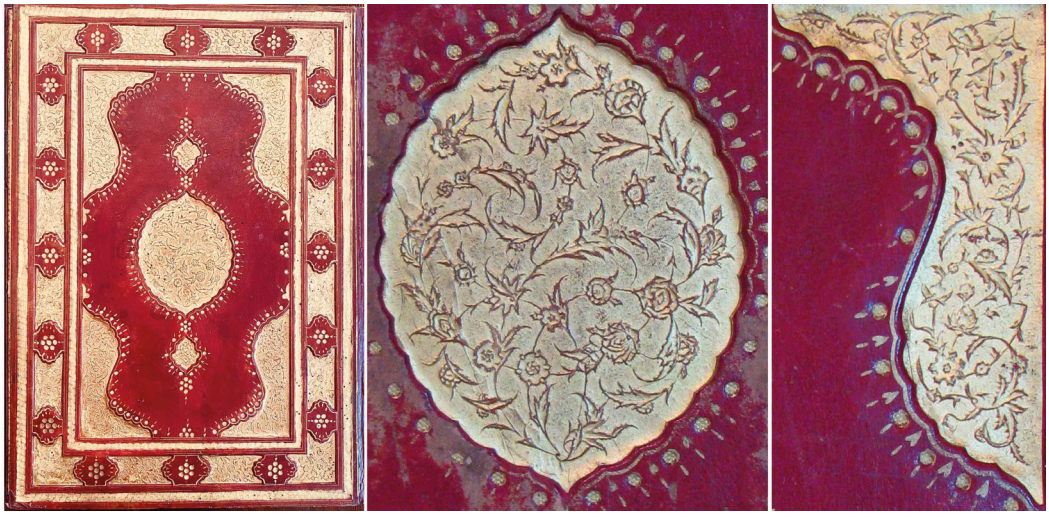


Figure 1: Binding of the Qur'ān Manuscript Signed by Maksûd et-Tebrîzî [6]

The exact origin of the manuscript's production is unknown, but given its transport to Rhodes from Istanbul, it is plausible that it was created in the Ottoman court's atelier (*nakıshane*). It might have arrived at the library either as war loot or as part of an exchange of gifts. The illuminated sections of the Qur'ān include the double-page frontpiece (*zahriye*) arranged as paired pages, ink-formed opening pages (*serlevha*), chapter headings, roundels (*güller*), rectangular ornamentation areas (*koltuklar*), and stop marks (*duraklar*).

5 Bekir Şahin, Faruk Ağartan, Selahattin Uygur, *Rodos Fethi Paşa Vakfı Hafız Ahmed Ağa Kütüphanesi Yazma Eserler Kataloğu,* 4, 5, 6, 7.

6 I would like to express my gratitude to Tarık Tüten, the deputy *Mütevelli* of the Hafiz Ahmet Ağa Library, for re-photographing the work for this article.

Illumination Features of the Qur'ān Manuscript Signed by Maksûd et-Tebrîzî

This Qur'ān manuscript is exceptionally rich in terms of illumination art. It features a fully illuminated frontpiece designed as a double-page spread, as well as an illuminated opening page, also arranged as a double-page composition. Interestingly, the *zahriye* page is located at the end rather than at the beginning, as is common in many examples.

While all chapter headings are illuminated, they do not feature unique designs for each chapter. Instead, a few base designs were employed with slight variations in colors and motifs. All the roundels in the manuscript share the same design, with some pages featuring multiple roundels. They do not include inscriptions such as *cüz*, *hizip*, or *secde*. However, the roundels are thought to serve as *aşer* (one for every ten verses) and *hamse* (one for every five verses) markers. The *aşer* roundels are circular and lack *tığ* (ornamental extensions), while the *hamse* roundels are adorned with *tığ* on the top and bottom, giving them elongated forms.

This stylistic distinction—circular forms for *aşer* and elongated drop or spindle-like forms for *hamse*—can be seen as a continuation of Ilkhanid illumination styles carried into the Safavid period. The same design is consistently used for the markers (*durak*), with the exception of those in the opening section (*serlevha*), which feature distinct designs. In some chapters, markers were simply filled with gold and left plain.

The designs and motifs in the rectangular ornamentation areas (*koltuk*), frontpiece (*zahriye*), and opening pages (*serlevha*) exhibit a harmonious relationship. When considering the manuscript's illuminations as a whole, it is evident that a consistent stylistic unity is maintained throughout.

The Qur'ān manuscript under examination is believed to reflect the illumination characteristics of the 16th-century Safavid style. A notable feature of Safavid illumination is the preference for enlarging the dimensions of manuscripts, thereby creating more prominent and ornamented areas. This approach was highly favored by artisans of the period. Backgrounds for motifs were painted with gold or vibrant colors, with *hatayi*-style motifs featuring finely detailed patterns, particularly in the crown sections, being a common decorative choice[7]. In this context, the examined manuscript can be confidently associated with Safavid illumination characteristics.

Opening Page Illumination (*Serlevha Tezhibi*)

The *serlevha* illumination consists of the text area, rectangular ornamentation areas (*koltuklar*) on the right and left of the text area, chapter headings at the top and bottom, the foot section (*etek kısmı*), interlinear panels with *zencerek* designs, panels created with *rumi* motifs, border panels composed of *hatayi* group motifs, and an outermost edge with *halkâri* water-pattern designs. The designs of the two facing pages are identical (Figures 2-3, Drawings 1-2). All these areas have been numbered within a schema and explained through these numbers (Drawing 3)[8].

7 Necati Sancaktutan, *Bir Safevi Devri Mushafının Tezyini Yönden Değerlendirilmesi* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi Güzel Sanatlar Enstitüsü, 2010), 12.

8 Naciye Detseli, Ali Fuat Baysal, "Rodos Hafız Ahmet Ağa Kütüphanesinde Bulunan 01 Envanter Numaralı Kur'an-ı Kerim Tezhibi", *Konya Sanat Dergisi* 2 (2019), 33-52.



Figure 2 - Drawing 1: Opening Page (*Serlevha*) of the Qur'ān Manuscript No. 01, Folio 1b.

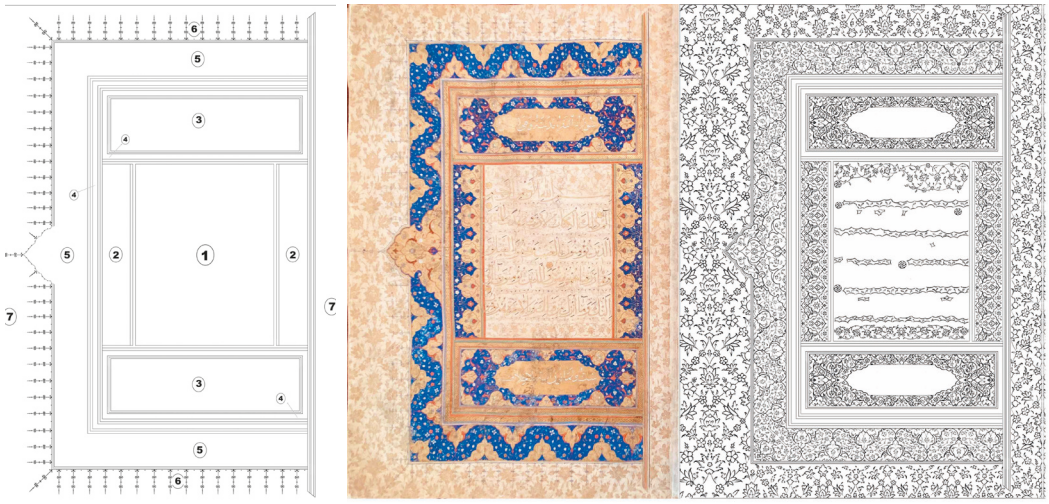


Figure 3 - Drawing 2,3: Opening Page (*Serlevha*) of the Qur'ān Manuscript No. 01, Folio 2a.

In a vertically rectangular area (Area 1), the *Fātiḥa* chapter and the first four verses of the *Baqarah* chapter are written across two facing pages using gold ink. To separate the text from the background, black ink outlines have been applied around the letters. In the spaces between the text lines, interlinear illumination (*beyne's-sütur*) featuring negative technique patterns composed of *hatayi*-style motifs has been added. To prevent the text from fading, the illumination is primarily applied in gold, with small sections featuring navy blue accents. The medallions (*durak*) employ a 1/6 rosette pattern with a *zencerek*-style design executed in black ink on gold leafs (Figure 4-5, Drawings 4-5).

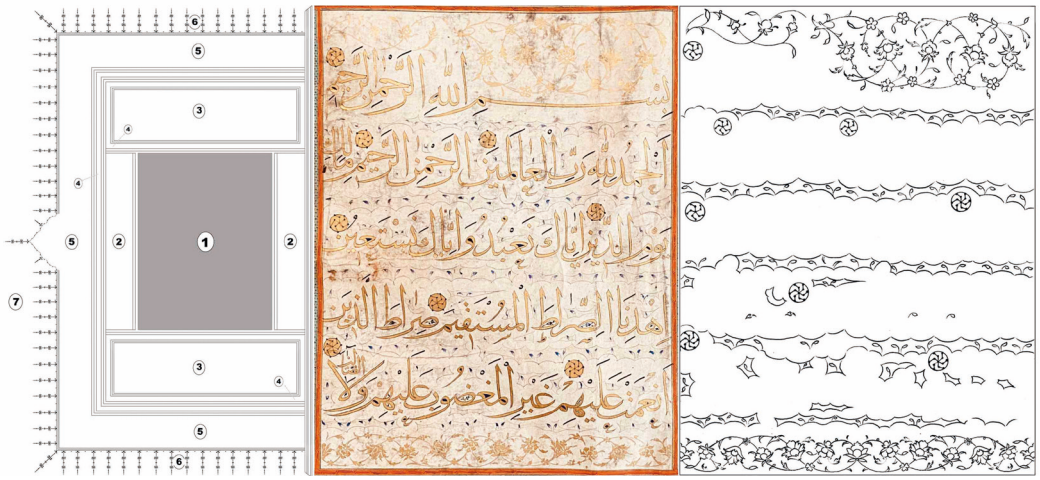


Figure 4 - Drawing 4: Folio 1b - Opening Page Illumination and Details

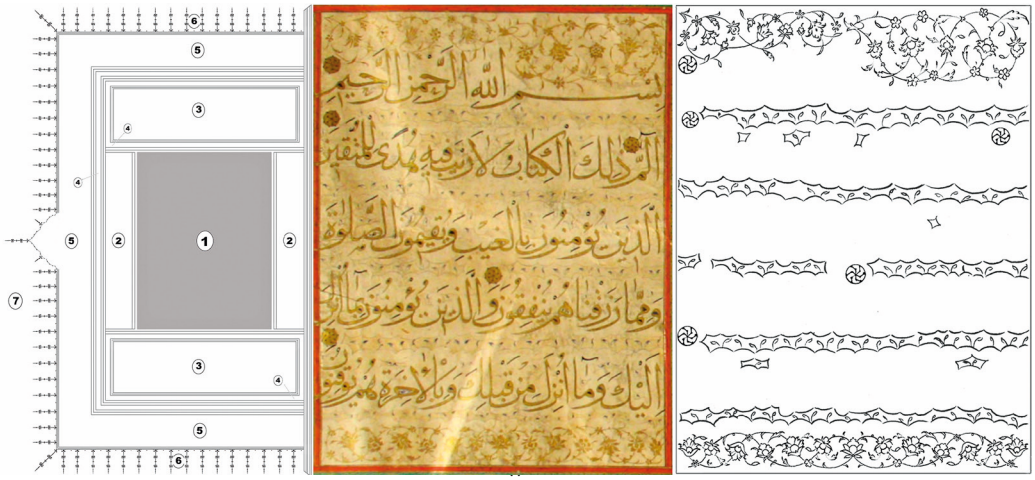


Figure 5 - Drawing 5: Folio 2a - Opening Page Illumination and Details

The rectangular areas on the right and left sides of the text block (Area 2) are designed with repetitive closed forms created from *rumi* motifs. Between these forms, another system of panels with serrated orange-thread designs is interwoven. These areas measure 29 x 175 mm and are separated from the text block by 2 mm of sage green and 3 mm of orange threads. Gold and navy blue is used equally in the background, and classic illumination and *zer-enderzer* techniques are applied with *hatayi* and *rumi*-style motifs. The central *rumi* motif on the gold-filled background of the panels is painted in sage green with its interior filled in orange (Figure 6, Drawing 6).



Figure 6 - Drawing 6: Opening Page Margin Illumination.

Above the opening page, there are two chapter headings (*sūrah*), while below are two areas described as lower segments (*etek*) that feature both text and illumination (Area 3). The design and colors used in all four areas are identical. These regions are bordered with gold backgrounds and black *zencerek* outlines, with additional blue and orange threads. The horizontal rectangular areas measuring 53 x 189 mm are designed symmetrically in a ¼ layout. The central closed forms, bordered with serrations, have gold backgrounds with chapter information written in white/lead ink. The closed forms in orange *rumi* motifs are divided into gold and navy sections, featuring *hatayi* motifs applied using classical illumination and *zer-enderzer* techniques (Figure 7, Drawing 7).



Figure 7 - Drawing 7: Opening Page Chapter Heading Illumination.

In addition to the *zencerek* border surrounding the chapter headings and endings, another inner *zencerek* border separates the central area from the outer border (Area 4), both of which measure 5 mm in width. The *zencerek* patterns in these areas differ, and the design is applied using black ink on gold plaster (Figures 8-9, Drawings 8-9).

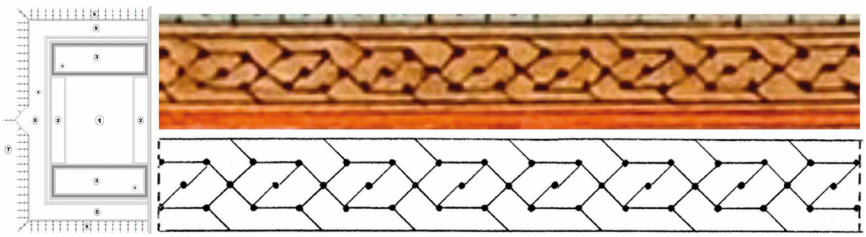


Figure 8 - Drawing 8: *Zencerek* Border Surrounding Chapter Headings.

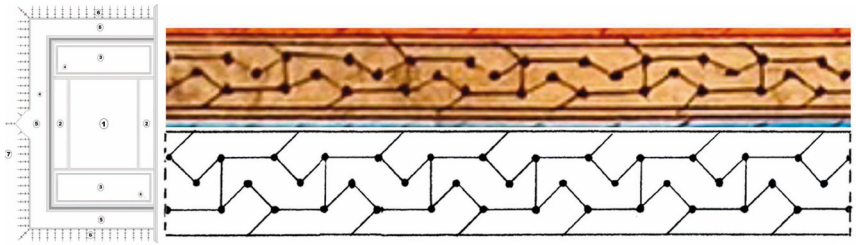


Figure 9 - Drawing 9: Inner *Zencerek* Border Surrounding the Central Area.

The outer border is in the form of a "combined opening page[9]" (*mürekkep serlevha*[10]), designed symmetrically (Area 5). A domed section is created at the vertical axis and separated by orange threads. The border area measures 36 mm in width, increasing to 68 mm in the domed section. The domed section is filled with gold, and the ½ symmetrical *rumi* motif is outlined in black and filled with orange. The remaining area features *hatayi* motifs applied using the *zer-enderzer* technique. The horizontally symmetrical outer border displays gold and orange closed forms of *rumi* motifs, with gold and navy blue alternating in their backgrounds. Classical illumination techniques are evident in this area. The border is decorated with *hatayi*-style motifs arranged in a ½ symmetrical plan (Figure 10, Drawing 10).

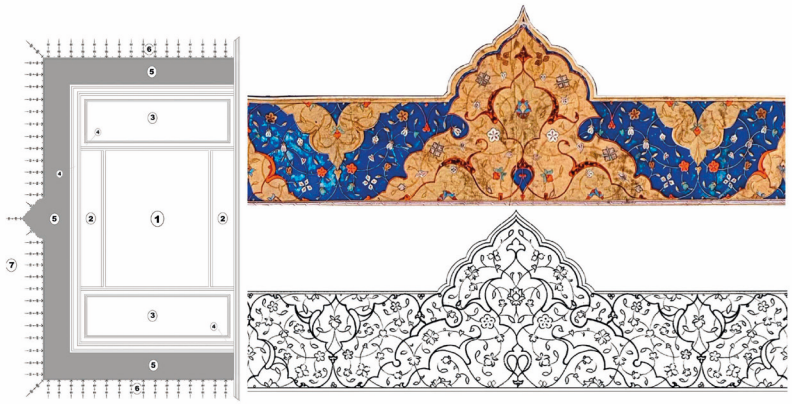


Figure 10 - Drawing 10: Opening Page Outer Border Illumination.

9 *Serlevha* pages are categorised as "rectangular *iklil*", "domed", and "combined", i.e. 'combined *serlevha*', which is a combination of *iklil* and domed (indicating that both are present).

10 Gülnur Duran, "Serlevha", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi* 36 (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 2009), 567-569.

The illuminated area is bordered with straight lines of gold threads and navy-blue edging from the inside outward. These threads are accompanied by adjoining straight lines in the same color, designed as *tığs*, with navy-blue dots placed in the spaces between them (Area 6). The *tığs* measure 26 mm in length, although some sections show signs of fading (Figure 11, Drawing 11).

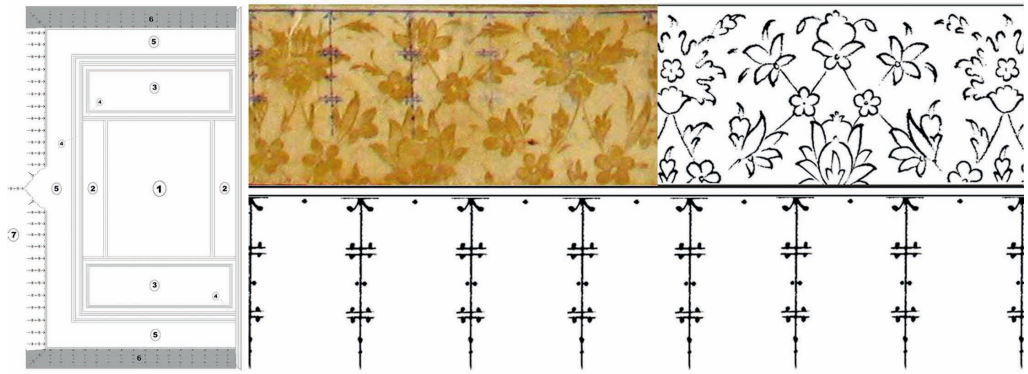


Figure 11 - Drawing 11: *Tığs* of the Opening Page.

On the outermost section of the page, a three-strand *halkâr* pattern consisting of *hatayi*-style motifs is applied in gold and measures 64 mm in width (Area 7). As the design extends into the area of the *tığs*, it often runs beneath them. The contrasting colors of gold and navy blue make the *tığs* and design easily distinguishable. However, to avoid a cluttered appearance in the drawing, the *tığs* have been depicted in a separate illustration (Figure 12, Drawing 12).



Figure 12 - Drawing 12: *Halkâr* Design of the Opening Page.

The *halkâr* border interwoven with the *tığs* resembles the pattern and technique of the *halkâr* design found on folio 10a of the *Şehname-i Firdevsî*, an important Safavid-era illuminated manuscript produced in Shiraz around the late 16th century (c. 1590) (Figure 13).



Figure 13: *Halkâr* Decoration from Folio 10a of the Safavid "*Şahname-i Firdevsî*"[11]

The compound-form opening page (serlevha) of this manuscript shares similar layout and color balance features with the opening pages of the Safavid Qur'ān manuscript registered under number 135 at the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts and the Qur'ān in the Topkapı Palace Library's Koğuşlar Collection (catalog number 01) (Figure 14). Except for minor flaking on the dark blue sections, the gilding on the opening page appears well-preserved with minimal signs of wear.



Figure14: TİEM 135[12], *TSK Koğuşlar* 01[13], *TSK Koğuşlar* 40[14] Opening Pages.

11 Lale Uluç, *Türkmen Valiler, Şirazlı Ustalar, Osmanlı Okurlar, XVI. Yüzyıl Şiraz Elyazmaları* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2006), 282.

12 Zeren Tanındı, "Kur'an-ı Kerim Nüshalarının Ciltleri ve Tezhipleri", *1400. Yılında Kur'an-ı Kerim*, ed. Müjde Unustası, 2010, 294.

13 Ayla Güleç, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesindeki Seçilmiş Klasik Şemse Cilt Kapakları* (İstanbul: Mimar Sinan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2007), 74.

14 Zeren Tanındı, "Kur'ani El Yazmalarda Tezhip ve Tezyini Sanatlar", *Kur'an Sanatı* (Washington DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Smithsonian İnstitution, 2016).

Sûrah/Chapter Title Areas (*Sûre Başı Tezhipleri*)

All chapter titles in this Qur'ān manuscript are adorned with gilding. Excluding the titles on the opening pages (serlevha), there are 112 chapter title gildings throughout the manuscript. These chapter title decorations do not vary in design but differ slightly in color. For instance, a motif painted in orange/sülyen in one chapter may appear in another chapter in the same design but rendered in gold or white. Some of these designs have been examined as examples.

The chapter title decorations are symmetrically designed in ¼ proportions and executed using classical gilding techniques. The compositions skillfully integrate motifs from both the rumi and hatayi design groups. Gold, white, and orange colors are applied over a dark blue background. Occasionally, white and orange are interchanged in the motifs. Inside the closed forms created with gold serrations (dendan), chapter titles are written in thuluth script in gold, outlined in black, with the remaining blank spaces filled with beyne's-sütûr gilding. The rectangular area is bordered from the inside out with gold, sage green, and another layer of gold thread. In some designs, the sage green thread is replaced with orange thread. With minor differences in design and color, the chapter title decorations exhibit consistent characteristics (Figures 15-16-17-18, Drawings 13-14-15-16).



Figure 15 - Drawing 13: Chapter Title Decoration for Surah al-Imrān



Figure 16 - Drawing 14: Chapter Title Decoration for Surah al-Inshirāh

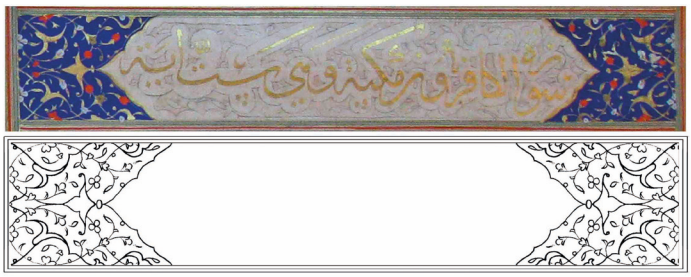


Figure 17 - Drawing 15: Chapter Title Decoration for Surah al-Kāfirūn



Figure 18 - Drawing 16: Chapter Title Decoration for Surah al-Nās

The chapter title decorations of this manuscript resemble those of the Safavid Qur'ān registered under number 503 at the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts and the chapter title gilding on folio 325b of the Qur'ān in the Topkapı Palace Library's Koğuşlar Collection (catalog number 183) (Figures 19-20)



Figure 19: Chapter Title Decoration from TİEM 503, Folio 317a[15]



Figure 20: Chapter Title Decoration from TSK *Koğuşlar* 183, Folio 325b[16]

15 Tanındı, "Kur'an-ı Kerim Nüshalarının Ciltleri ve Tezhipleri", 332.

16 Ayla Güleç, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesindeki Seçilmiş Klasik Şemse Cilt Kapakları*, 6.

Margin Roundels-Medallion/Badge

Almost every page of this Qur'ān manuscript features one or more roundel designs. These roundels appear to have been placed following the aşer (one roundel every ten verses) and hamse (one roundel every five verses) structure. While the designs remain identical in terms of color, pattern, and execution, additional *tığ* (elongated decorative elements) are added above and below the hamse roundels to distinguish their function.

Each roundel consists of three concentric circles, with the central circle housing a symmetrical ½ design crafted using classical gilding and incorporating *rumi* and *hatayi* motifs. The background is dark blue, while the designs are executed in gold, white, and orange. Surrounding the central design is a gold outline, with an outermost dark blue thread that carries the tığ decorations (Figure 21, Drawing 17).



Figure 21 - Drawing 17: A Page Featuring Roundels and a Hamse Roundel Example

The roundels in this manuscript are almost identical in design to those in the Qur'ān registered under catalog number 1 in the Topkapı Palace Library's *Koğuşlar* Collection (Figure 22). Additionally, the roundels closely resemble those in the Qur'ān registered under catalog number 14734 in the Library of the Ankara Ethnography Museum[17].



Figure 22: Roundel from TSK *Koğuşlar* 1, Folio 296a[18]

17 Serpil Aydın Demirağ, *Ankara Etnografya Müzesindeki Beş Kur'ân-ı Kerîm'in Tezhip Süsleme Özellikleri* (Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, 2007), 199.

18 Ayla Güleç, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesindeki Seçilmiş Klasik Şemse Cilt Kapakları*, 75.

Rectangular Decoration Areas (*Koltuk Tezhibi*)

Each page of the manuscript includes four rectangular decoration areas (*koltuk tezhibi*) (Figure 23. While all these areas are gilded on the opening pages, many remain undecorated on subsequent pages, suggesting that the gilding work might have been left incomplete.

The rectangular decoration areas are executed using the negative or "*havalı*" technique, which incorporates a double-outline method. The designs are composed of *hatayi* motifs and applied exclusively in gold (Figure 23).

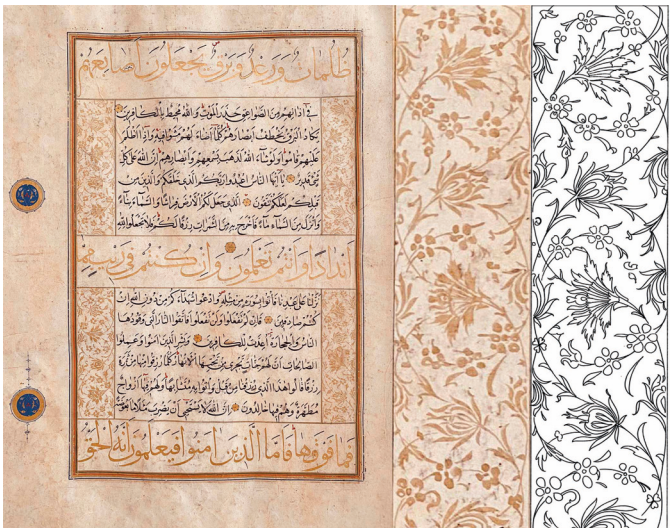


Figure 23: A Page Featuring Rectangular Decoration Areas and an Example of the Design.

These rectangular decorations resemble the technical and ornamental aspects of the gilded areas in the Qur'ān manuscripts registered under numbers 40 and 183 in the Topkapı Palace Library's Koğuşlar Collection. Furthermore, the page layouts, chapter titles in thuluth script written in gold, and body text written in black ink also align closely with the manuscript under study (Figures 24-25).



Figures 24, 25: Topkapı Palace Museum Library, Koğuşlar 183, 325b[19] (left) 40, 26a[20] (right)

19 Ayla Güleç, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesindeki Seçilmiş Klasik Şemse Cilt Kapakları,* Resimler Bölümü 6.

20 Ayla Güleç, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesindeki Seçilmiş Klasik Şemse Cilt Kapakları*, 24.

The Safavid-style ornamentation of the Qur'ān located in the TSK Treasury (Emanet Hazinesi) under inventory number 48 is significant in that it demonstrates similarities in motif forms and the use of negative technique, despite differences in the background color.

Pause Marks

The manuscript contains two distinct pause mark designs. The first appears exclusively on the opening pages (serlevha) and features a unique design distinct from the other pause marks (Figure 26). The second design is present at the end of almost all verses, except for a few chapters (Figure 27). Compared to the pause marks on the opening pages, this design is simpler. The application was executed with black ink over gold. In shorter chapters such as Sūrat al-Kāfirūn and Sūrat al-Nās, the pause marks were left undecorated, with the background merely filled with gold (Figure 28). The designs are not intricate and consist of plain lines.



Figure 26: Pause Mark Design on the Opening Pages.



Figure 27: Pause Mark Design in Sūrat al-Kawthar.



Figure 28: Unadorned Pause Mark in Sūrat al-Kāfirūn.

The pause marks bear similarities to the rectangular illuminated areas (*koltuk tezhibi*) seen in the Qur'āns cataloged as *Koğuşlar* 40 and *Koğuşlar* 183 in the Topkapı Palace Library (see Figure 24-25).

Zahriye Page (Frontpiece Page)

The *zahriye* page is in the form of a full-page, double-spread design, where both pages mirror each other and are symmetrically divided into four quadrants (Figures 30–31; Drawings 21–22). The design employs a harmonious combination of gold and navy blue in a classical style. Within a rectangular frame measuring 260x390 mm, two concentric circular forms were placed in the center. The innermost circle, with a diameter of 90 mm, features the 81st verse of Sūrat al-Isrā: *"Say: Truth has come, and falsehood has vanished. Indeed, falsehood is bound to perish."* The verse is inscribed in white lead ink over gold and is divided between two pages: the first part (*"Say: Truth has come, and falsehood has vanished"*) is on folio 227b, while the second part (*"Indeed, falsehood is bound to perish"*) is on folio 228a. The area filled with gold transitions into the outer circle, which is 198 mm in diameter, through a white thread-like line that separates the navy blue and gold. The outer circle's background is filled with navy blue, adorned symmetrically with four classic-style crenellated cartouches filled with gold. The design surrounding the cartouches is also symmetrically divided into four quadrants, drawn in gold outlines over the navy blue background. Each corner of the rectangular frame features a cartouche filled with motifs from the hatayi and rumi styles, rendered in gold. The remaining space within the frame is designed using hatayi-style motifs, executed in gold with the double-outline (havalı) technique. The rectangular illuminated area is bordered with alternating lines of gold, orange, and black. What makes this zahriye particularly noteworthy is its placement at the end of the manuscript, unlike the typical location at the beginning.

The zahriye page of Qur'ān No. 211 housed in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum (TİEM) differs in form and cartouche design but demonstrates similarities in motif and technique. This highlights its connection with Safavid-style illumination (Figure 29).

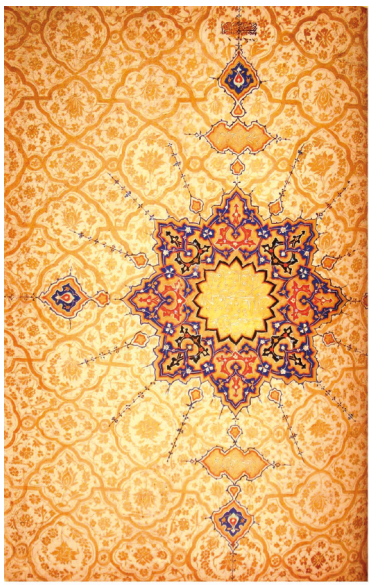


Figure 29: *Zahriye* Page of Qur'ān No. 211, Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum.[21]

21 Tanındı, "Kur'an-ı Kerim Nüshalarının Ciltleri ve Tezhipleri", 308.

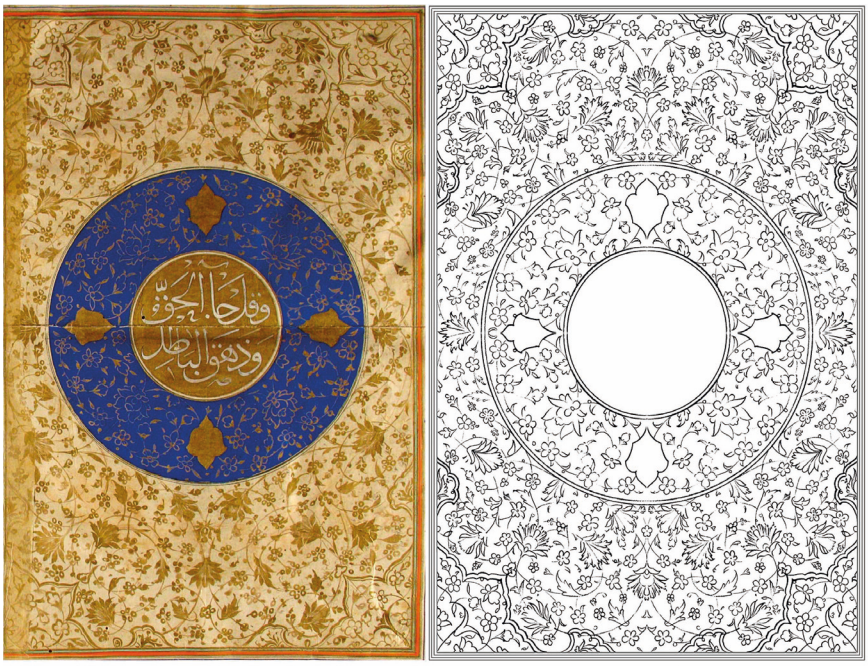


Figure 30 - Drawing 21: *Zahriye* Page of Qur'ān No. 01, Folio 227b.

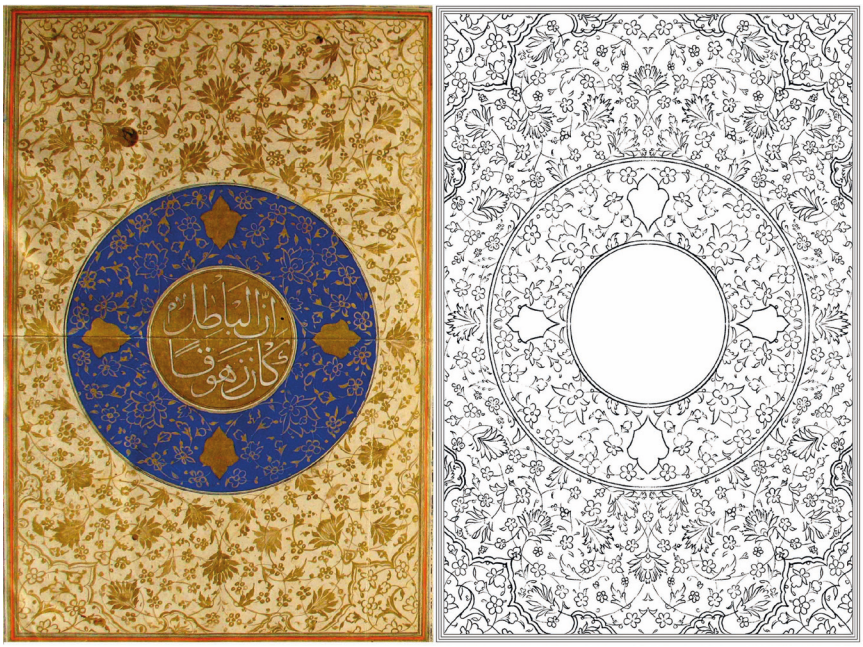


Figure 31 - Drawing 22: *Zahriye* Page of Qur'ān No. 01, Folio 228a.

Conclusion

The colophon page indicates the manuscript's date of completion as 1555/963 AH. The manuscript's illuminations were analyzed by comparing them to other works from the 16th century Ottoman and Safavid periods. Given the political, cultural, and artistic interactions between the two states, certain similarities arising from the blending of the two styles are apparent. However, Ottoman illuminations of the 16th century, known as the classical period, exhibit a simpler design approach compared to the more intricate Safavid illuminations.

The similarity of the motifs to those in Safavid illuminations and the techniques employed suggest that the manuscript's illuminations may have been produced during the Safavid period. It is well known that illuminated sections such as zahriye, opening pages, roundels, chapter titles, and rectangular panels enhance the value of any manuscript or Qur'ān. Since all these illuminated sections are present in this manuscript, it holds significant importance in the art of illumination. In addition to this, the craftsmanship and materials appear to be of exceptional quality.

The manuscript reflects the characteristics of Safavid-style illuminations through its motifs, color schemes, composition, and meticulous workmanship. Particularly noteworthy are the shaded "halkar"designs executed in gold using the halkâr technique and the negative technique used in the hatayi-style designs in the rectangular panels.

Our examination revealed that the illuminations predominantly feature gold and navy blue, with an extensive use of vermilion/orange. Additionally, white, pale green, blue, pink, and black are among the other colors used in the designs. The composition incorporates motifs from the rumi and hatayi groups, with some sections featuring chains (zencerek). Interestingly, the cloud motif, commonly found in Safavid-style illuminations, was not employed in this manuscript. Technically, zerenderzer, classical illumination, halkâr, and negative techniques were utilized.

The colophon bears the signature *"Ketebehû Maksûd et-Tebrîzî"*, clearly identifying the calligrapher as an artisan from Tabriz. In light of this, it is plausible that the manuscript's illuminations were also created by illuminators from Tabriz. The fact that this Qur'ān was transported to Rhodes from Istanbul, coupled with the meticulous workmanship of its high-quality illuminations, raises the possibility that these illuminations were executed in the royal workshop (nakkaşhane) in Istanbul. It is a well-documented fact that talented artists from other regions were often brought to Ottoman court workshops, where they were sometimes appointed to high-ranking positions such as chief illuminator (*sernakkaş*). The movement of itinerant artists facilitated interregional communication and mutual artistic influences[22]. The manuscript's date of completion recorded in the colophon points to the 16th century, making it likely that its illuminations were also created during the same period. The abundance of illuminated sections, the quality of materials and craftsmanship, and the motifs and techniques used in this manuscript serve as strong indicators that it belongs to the Safavid-style illuminations of the 16th century.

In conclusion, the Qur'ān bearing the signature of *"Maksûd et-Tebrîzî"* in the Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library in Rhodes was thoroughly examined in terms of its craftsmanship, color schemes, motifs, and compositional structure, and its designs were analyzed in detail. While the manuscript does not include specific information about the illuminators or the date of illumination, the calligrapher's signature and the completion date recorded in the colophon strongly suggest that this richly decorated Qur'ān belongs to the 16th-century Safavid illumination style.

22 Tanındı, "Kur'an-ı Kerim Nüshalarının Ciltleri ve Tezhipleri".

The Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library in Rhodes, which houses this illuminated Qur'ān, contains numerous other valuable manuscripts. Despite limited resources for its maintenance, it is our hope that this and similar libraries will receive greater support to ensure the careful preservation of their invaluable collections. Additionally, documenting and recording such works through articles, theses, and similar academic studies remains a critical endeavor.

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https://www.fethipasavakfi.com

https://www.hafizahmedaga.com



Qur'ān manuscript inscribed by Maksûd et-Tebrîzî in 963/1555,
Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, reading room, Rhodes.
Photo: T. Tuten





Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 5, 151b-152a. A Mamluk-style Qur'ān of unknown date, featuring the use of naskh (*nesih*), thuluth (*sülüs*), and kufic (*kûfi*) scripts together.
Photo: T. Tuten



Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 2, 12b-13a. Qur'ān with an interlinear Turkish translation, accompanied by a translation of Abū al-Layth's tafsīr. The Qur'ān and its translation were copied in 1077/1666, while the marginal commentary was copied in 1088/1677. Photo: T. Tuten



Nil Baydar is the founding head of the Conservation and Archive Department at the Manuscripts Institution of Türkiye, where she has led the national conservation strategy for Islamic manuscripts since 2012. She established Türkiye's largest manuscript conservation center, widely known as the "Book Hospital" or *Şifahane*, which serves 18 manuscript libraries across the country and houses over half a million items, including 250,000 manuscripts and 300,000 rare printed books. She has trained more than 70 conservators and led numerous international conservation and training initiatives in regions such as Egypt, Algeria, Mauritania, Mali, and Pakistan, many in collaboration with institutions such as TİKA (Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency) and TIMA (The Islamic Manuscript Association, UK). Dr. Baydar holds degrees in Restoration and Conservation, Art History, and completed her PhD at Gazi University in 2023 with a dissertation on the codicological features of 15th-century Ottoman manuscripts, with a special focus on bindings. She coordinated a TÜBİTAK-funded national research project on Islamic paper materials and has presented her work at international conferences, including in Copenhagen, Granada, and Almaty. She lectures on paper conservation and Islamic manuscript studies at four universities in Türkiye, covering topics such as codicology, conservation ethics, preventive care, binding structures, and the materiality of manuscripts. Her teaching integrates theory and hands-on conservation techniques, and she frequently supervises both undergraduate and post graduate research. In addition to her institutional leadership, she is actively engaged in academic publishing, exhibition curation, and international manuscript heritage advocacy.

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"As a third-generation descendant of a Turkish family that was originally from Thessaloniki on my mother's side and Cretan on my father's side, I was incredibly excited by the idea of working with manuscripts at the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library in Rhodes. This opportunity, which would bring together the presence of colleagues with whom I would work, the unique atmosphere of Rhodes, and the work I enjoy most in my life, came along at a time when orange and lemon blossoms were mind-blowing. We spent a wonderful week hosted with great warmth by Tarık Tüten and Aydın Bostancı. I am deeply honored and grateful to have been part of this project, initiated under the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC) at the University of Hamburg, in the peaceful setting of the Library. I sincerely hope that our efforts will help ensure the preservation of these precious manuscripts and rare printed books for many generations to come."

Nil Baydar

Manuscript Enclosures
in the Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library in Rhodes: Early Examples of Preventive Conservation

When Hafız Ahmed Agha of Rhodes who also held the title *Rikâbdar-ı Şehriyârî* during the reign of Sultan Selim III (1789–1807) established the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library in Rhodes on 26 February 1792 (3 Rajab 1206), the transportation of the books to the island was likely a matter of great concern. The library, which officially opened about a year later in 1793, was founded with an "original collection" of 828 manuscript volumes that had been selected, commissioned, or acquired prior to the outset of the library's activity.

Preparations for the transfer of these manuscripts must have started well ahead of time. Every possible measure was taken to ensure their safe arrival, preventing potential damage during transport or early storage.

In a manuscript—typically—the text block is primarily protected by its binding. When the binding itself needs protection, it is sometimes covered with paper or cloth. For safeguarding the entire book, whether for storage or transportation, various types of enclosures such as boxes, slipcases (*mahfaza*), pouches, satchels, dust jackets or secondary covers have been used in different manuscript cultures, sometimes becoming characteristic features of particular bookbinding traditions.[1] In the case of the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, each manuscript was individually protected by a custom-made slipcase[2] prepared specifically for its journey (Figure 1).

Preventive conservation efforts in the library were not limited to the packaging of the books. Measures were also taken within the storage space where the books would await their readers. The glazed cabinets made of cherry wood were placed in the central area of the domed hall, raised from the floor and positioned away from the walls to facilitate the necessary air circulation and prevent dampness from reaching the cabinets and the books (Figure 2). These cabinets share several features with those found in other independent Ottoman libraries of the 18th century, such as Hagia Sophia, Ragip Pasha, Hekimoglu Ali Pasha, and Tire Necip Pasha Libraries, demonstrating their wide-spread use and effectiveness.[3]

Designed to be well-ventilated, easily accessible, and spacious enough to prevent overcrowding, these unvarnished wooden cabinets—with their internal compartments—can create microclimatic zones, especially when cleaned and maintained regularly. This attention seems to suggest that the construction of the library storage room was planned with awareness, thinking ahead about the potential effects of a coast climate characterized by frequent hygrothermal fluctuations. The fact that the wooden panels have not deformed significantly over centuries suggests that they were made from well-seasoned, dry timber even at the time of their manufacture. These qualities align remarkably well with the standards emphasized by contemporary preventive conservation practices.

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1 See Colini *et al.* 2025, paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6, pp. 19-22. For further reading see Plummer et al. 2023 and Scheper, K. 2023.w

2 The *Ligatus Language of Bindings* describes slipcases as "*rectangular enclosures that are open on one edge for the insertion of a book. The open edge may either be at the top (top-loading slip cases) or on one side (side-loading slip cases)*". (concept uri: /w3id.org/lob/concept/4466)

3 For a comparable case study including monitoring of indoor climate see Sahin *et al* 2017 and Coşkun *et al.* 2018.



Figure 1: Manuscripts with green cloth-covered bindings reinforced with paper, and their marbled slipcases.
Photos: T. Tuten



Figure 2: Original wooden cabinets of the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library.
Photo: N. Baydar.

The concept of preventive conservation encompasses all efforts undertaken to preserve heritage items over time by controlling environmental factors and minimizing risks, without directly intervening on the object. In contrast to interventive conservation, which addresses already-damaged items, preventive conservation aims to safeguard the item before deterioration occurs. This is especially a concern in the case of collections stored within historic buildings, withstanding the vital connection between the objects and their spatial and contextual relationships.[4] Both the cabinets and the slipcases in the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library demonstrate an attempt to provide care for the collection that adhere to the principles of preventive conservation remarkably well.

The slipcases are made of paper pasteboard, covered on the front and back with marbled paper and edged with leather, and open along the short side. On their inside, a ribbon is included to facilitate the removal of the manuscript (Figure 3). In addition to marbled slipcases, fully leather-covered examples have also been identified. Most of the marbled slipcases are decorated with papers attributed to Hatip Mehmed Efendi (d. 1773) or one or two of his students dating to the last quarter of the 18th century[5]. The interior of the envelope and head flaps are also covered with matching marbled paper. The burgundy leather used along the spine and side edges of the slipcases is of the same type and texture as the leather found in the fully leather-covered examples, which suggests they were made by the same workshop. On the marbled slipcases, the leather borders are adorned with double gold fillets, while the leather slipcases feature both gold fillets and decorative tooling made with S-shaped finishing tools (Figure 4).

4 See Pickwoad & Velios 2006, pp. 293-295, Sahin *et al.* 2017 pp. 67-68; On the more general topic of paper-based objects collections in historic buildings see Bülow 2002.

5 See Babaoğlu, 2024, pp.129-130. Marbling artist Mr. Babaoğlu stated that the marblings used in the cases here were prepared by Hatip Mehmed Efendi and/or his students. Also, for detailed information on marble paper and Hatip Mehmed Efendi, see Babaoğlu 2017; Babaoğlu 2020; Benson 2005; Benson 2006; Radunsky 2012.

The outer surfaces of the slipcases also feature delicate tooling executed with small handheld tools and gold highlights. The S-shaped motif is used prominently on the head flap. In the marbled slipcases, the ribbon tip affixed to the lid, used for removing the manuscript is cleverly concealed beneath a piece of shaped marbled paper (Figure 5).

Studying not only the content of the manuscripts but also their material and technical aspects of their bookbindings and their enclosures provides critical insight into how the collection of the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library was formed, transported, preserved and accessed. The widespread use of marbled paper produced by Hatip Mehmed Efendi and his school, both on the outer surfaces and on the envelope and head flaps, highlights a coordinated decorative program which indicates connections with the preparations for this collection (Figure 6).

The consistent use of other materials on these slipcases also suggest that they were produced as part of a carefully planned program. The uniformity in the dyed goatskins, paste boards, marbled papers, and ribbons, the techniques by which they have been put together as well as the consistent format of the enclosures point towards the operation of a specialized binding workshop supported by a professional team.



Figure 3: Leather slipcase with S-shaped motif, gold fillets, and blue ribbon, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 339.
Photo: N. Sarris, G. Marotta



Figure 4: Marbled slipcase, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 429 (left); leather slipcase, 339 (right).
Photos: T. Tuten and N. Baydar



Figure 5: Ribbon end concealed beneath shaped marbled paper in marbled slipcase, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 724.
Photo: T. Tuten



Figure 6: Marbled front panel and interior flap, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 627 (top left); marbled back panel and decorated leather head flap (top right); slipcase and interior of front board, Hafız Ahmed Agha 950 (below)

Photos: T. Tuten and N. Sarris, G. Marotta

Toward Future Studies

Future research should focus on identifying structural similarities in the bindings and repairs of the manuscripts—particularly those hidden beneath the green cloth coverings. For example, a manuscript recorded under number 950, which lacks the green cloth covering, displays strips of sanded Hatip-style marbled paper inside its cover, presumably added during previous repair. These strips closely resemble the marbled paper used on its own slipcase (Figure 7). Such findings may shed light on the manuscripts' repair histories and the logistics of their shipment to Rhodes.



Figure 7: The same marbled paper used on the envelop flap and the slipcase of the manuscript, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 924.
Photos: N. Sarris, G. Marotta

Another valuable observation is that the endbands of many manuscripts appear to have survived in their original state without restoration (Figure 8). The consistent use of thread types and sewing techniques suggests that the books may have been rebound collectively or were commissioned and bound as a group specifically for the library . The use of slipcases during transport likely helped prevent structural damage, allowing the bindings, endbands, and text-blocks to remain intact to this day.

The protective strategies employed by Hafız Ahmed Agha reflect a highly developed awareness of preservation practices for his time, and seem to be driven by awareness and understanding of the collection needs. The slipcases not only safeguarded the physical objects but also preserved the story of the manuscripts' production and journey. Today, they provide us with the opportunity to understand these narratives through their own materials and techniques. Our responsibility is to uncover this hidden knowledge—by evaluating manuscripts not only for their textual content but also for their materiality as complete historical artifacts.



Figure 8: Endbands preserved in their original state.
Photo: N. Baydar

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Ottoman
Foundations and Libraries

Custodians of *Muhabbet* and Knowledge through Time



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"I am honoured to participate in the ***Muhabbet****. For a Greek historian, the study of Ottoman history offers a 'bird's eye view' of the past, which helps to overcome or reconsider certainties and delve into historical issues with sobriety.* ***Muhabbet*** *contributes to it greatly."*

Sophia Laiou

The Transition from Islamic to Christian Vakıf:

An Overview and Some Considerations

In 1550 an Ottoman official stated at the court of Trikala (central Greece) that he transferred the right of possession of land to "the mütevelli (administrator) of the vakıf of the church of Varlaam".[1] Similarly, in 1624 the abbot of a monastery in the island of Andros resembled the monastery with a Muslim tekke, that is an Islamic charitable foundation, stating that, as the latter, it offered hospitality to passers-by and visitors and also in times of famine Ottoman subjects could get a profit from it.[2] These examples show the association of the institution of the Islamic vakıf with the Orthodox monasteries and churches in the Ottoman period. The purpose of this paper is to offer an overview of how the Ottoman Christians used the vakıf institution.

The foundation of a vakıf derives from the significance of voluntary charity (sadaka), as is stated in the Koran and the Hadiths[3]. In this framework, an individual could withhold[4] an object, which would be henceforth considered extra commercium and inalienable, and offer the income from its use for the construction of a charitable foundation (for example, mosque, zaviye, library, medrese, imaret, bridge, fountain, bath, commercial buldings etc.), while the beneficiaries would be natural persons such as the poor, the inhabitants of a quarter, or, more generally, the individuals. The founder should be adult, mentally healthy, a free person (not a slave) and owner of the object. The latter could be immobile (private land, houses, shops) or mobile property (for instance, books and animals), while the Ottomans accepted the cash endowments too.[5] The vakıf comprised of the endowed property and the charitable foundation itself, which would be economically sustained by the former. Although theoretically inalienable, the endowed property could be increased, exchanged with an equal one but not decreased.[6] The founder could establish the endowment in the Ottoman court and ask for the issuance of the foundation document (vakfiye). In the latter the founder designated the endowed property, the charitable purpose, the beneficiaries, the administrator (mütevelli) and supervisor (nazır) of the endowment as well as other pesonnel (for instance, the income collector, cabi) and their reimbursement.

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1 Σ. Λαΐου, *Τα οθωμανικά έγγραφα της μονής Βαρλαάμ Μετεώρων, 16ος-19ος αι.*, Αθήνα 2011, σ. 96.

2 E. Kolovos, "Christian vakıfs of monasteries in the Ottoman Greek lands from the Fourteenth to Eighteenth Centuries", in S.M.Saliba, ed., *Les fondations pieuses waqfs chez les Chrétiens et les Juifs*, Paris 2016, p. 115

3 Notably, the vakıf is not mentioned in the Koran but in Hadiths. What is stated in the Koran is the significance of charity. In the Islamic world there was the distinction between the voluntary charity (sadaka) and the compulsory one (zakat), which had the form of tax. A. Singer, *Charity in Islamic Societies*, Cambridge 2008, p.34-35, 68, 95.

4 The initial meaning of the word vakıf is 'to cause one to stop, to stand still', see *New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary*, 12th ed., Istanbul 1991, p. 1216.

5 The cash vakıfs were legalized by the şeyhülislam Ebussuud (1547-1574) and widely used in the Ottoman empire despite the legal objections on behalf of various scholars, see R. Deguilhem, "Waqf in the Ottoman Empire", *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., v.11, Leiden 2002, p. 89; J. Mandaville, "Usurious Piety: The Cash Waqf Controversy in the Ottoman Empire", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (1979) 10/3 289-308.

6 Deguilhem, "Waqf in the Ottoman Empire", p.88.

All the schools of Islamic law acknowledged the vakıf institution, however with some different approaches regarding the beneficiaries, the act of founding, the irrevocability and exchange (istibdal) of the endowed property and the possibility of extinction of the vakıf or not.[7] The Hanefi school, which was applied in the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire and most of the Anatolian ones, was based on the more flexible interpretation of Abu Yusuf (d.798, disciple of Abu Hanifa), which considerably facilitated the foundation of the vakıfs. More specifically, Abu Yusuf: a) underlined the irrevocability and perpetual character of the vakıf, b) he accepted the possibility the founder and his/her heirs be the beneficiaries until the extinction of the line, at which time the beneficiaries would be the poor, c) he permitted the endowment of the whole property and not of a specific percentage, which the Islamic law imposed in the case of the testaments.[8] The legal doctrine of Abu Yusuf opened the way for the establishment of the family vakıf (vakf-i ahli) and its variant, the semi familial one. Notably, the latter became so popular that ccomprised the 75% of the vakıfs in the 18th century Ottoman empire.[9]

In the Ottoman Empire the philanthropic activities, the town-planning and the construction of infrastructures in the urban centres and the provinces were predicated on the vakıf instution. Both aspects -charitable-social and urban-economic- covered substantial state needs, considering that the Ottoman empire developed a bureaucratized welfare policy and a state policy for the construction of public infrastructure in the second half of the 19th century.[10] The motivation for the establishment of Islamic endowments was first and foremost religious, although political, social and economic considerations were equally important. [11] Among them the need to protect the property played a decisive role in the establishment of vakıfs, since in the Ottoman empire until the middle of the 19th century there were no acknowledged property rights. Indeed, many founders turned their landed property into a vakıf, counting on the inalienability of the latter. Nonetheless, twice the Ottoman state confiscated vakıf property before the beginning of the Tanzimat: in the 15th century when the sultan Mehmed II targeted the freehold and vakıf estates,[12] and, as will be explained below, under Selim II, when the state confiscated the monastic endowments. Moreover, during the 18th and beginning of the 19th century, as the confiscations of officials' properties increased, they occasionally included their endowments too.[13]

7 R.Peters, "Waqf", *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., v. 11, Leiden 2002, p.60-63.

8 J. Barnes, *An Introduction to Religious Foundations in the Ottoman Empire*, Leiden-New York 1987, p. 11-12, 15.

9 In the semi familial type of vakıf the founder and members of his/her family hold specific posts such as the office of mütevelli, see B. Yediyıldız, *Institution du vaqf au XVIIIe siecle en Turquie,* Ankara 1990, p. 23; Barnes, *An Introduction*, p. 42-43;. Notably, from a legal point of view the distinction between family (vakf-i ahli) or semi familial and a charitable vakıf (vakf-i hayri) is not founded, since in all cases the beneficiaries were or would be the poor, see Singer, *Charity in Islamic Societies*, p. 107.

10 Singer, *Charity in Islamic Societies,* p. 183-184.

11 Op.cit, p. 100-113.

12 O. Özel, «Limits of the Almighty. Mehmed II's Land Reform Revisited», *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient* (1999), 226-246. Mehmed II' s policy was reversed by his successor, the sultan Bayezid II.

13 Indicatively, see S.Laiou, "Between Pious Generosity and Faithful Service to the Ottoman State: The Vakıf of Nikolaos Mavrogenis, End of the Eighteenth Century", *Turkish Historical Review* 6 (2015), 151-174; K. Barbir, "One marker of Ottomanism: confiscation of Ottoman officials' estates", in B.Tezcan and K. Barbir (eds.), I*dentity and Identity Formation in the Ottoman World. A Volume of Essays in Honor of Norman Itzkowitz*, Madison, Wisconsin 2007, p 144.

The establishment of a charitable foundation as a God-pleasing act with a social impact is not found only in Islam. A similar practice in the Byzantine period was the establishment of charitable foundations (piae causae) by individuals and the donation of property for their sustainment. The piae causae included monasteries, hospitals, orphanages, poorhouses etc. In their cases too, the endowed property was inalienable, the endower could donate the entire estate, and could also appoint himself/herself and/or the descendants as the beneficiaries.[14] The similarities with the Abu Yusuf's interpretations are striking, and based upon them scholars argued that the Islamic vakıf was strongly influenced by the piae causae.[15] The foundation of monasteries -together or not with charitable foundation- was a widespread practice in the Byzantine era. These monasteries had tax immunities and were endowed with land property by laymen and emperors. Some of them developed an aggressive economic policy aiming at the expansion of their properties via purchases and donations; the latter were called 'αφιέρωση' or 'προσήλωση'.[16] Under the new political and economic conditions that the Ottoman conquest established, the monasteries had to secure their privileges and properties and in addition to adapt the donation practice to the Islamic vakıf. In the same vein, when the Ottomans came across the endowed estates of the monasteries, they had either to incorporate them into the legal and administrative structure of the empire or dismiss them entirely.

The term 'βακούφια' in relation to monastic property is first included in the Greek translation of the non-surviving Ottoman document, in which the land estates and the 'βακούφια' of the monastery of Timios Prodromos in Serres were acknowledged by Murat I in late December 1372-beginning of January 1373.[17] During this formative period, the sultans also acknowledged the vakıfs of the Athonite monasteries, as stated in the order issued by Murad II in 1430, which was based, on the order of his father Mehmet I (1413-1421).[18]

Was the above-mentioned acknowledgement of the vakıf status a precedent upon which the Ottoman policy was henceforward based regarding the Christian vakıfs or the development of the empire's institutions and the legal thought affected the Christian endowments? Were they conceived like the Islamic vakıfs, that is as charitable endowments of inalienable character? Molla Husrev (d.1480), a legal scholar of the Mehmet II reign who served as Istanbul's kadı and later as şeyhülislam, acknowledged the Christian endowments as vakıfs with the provision that they could

14 P.W., Duff, *Personality in Roman private Law*, 2nd ed., New York 1971, p.173, 179-185. See also M. Kaplan, "The economy of the Byzantine monasteries", in M. Kaplan-M.Webb, eds., *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, v. 1, Cambridge 2020, p. 349-350, where it is stated that the Byzantine scholar Mihail Attaliates (11th c.) founded a monastery in Constantinople and he stipulated that the 2/3 of the income's surplus would be given to his son and his descendants.

15 Barnes, *An Introduction*, p.13-16. For argumentation against this view see Peters, "Waqf", p. 60. For a brief overview of the various opinions regarding the origin of the Islamic vakıf see also Yediyıldız, *Institution du vaqf*, p. 31-34; the author argues that it is possible that the Islamic vakıf incorporated elements of other culutres such as the pre-Islamic Arabic, Byzantine, even Buddhist. Op.cit, p. 33-34.

16 Peter Charanis, "The monastic properties and the state in the Byzantine empire", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 4 (1948), 98.

17 E. Zachariadou, "Early Ottoman Documents of the Prodromos Monastery", *Romania and the Turks (c.1300-c.1500)*, London 1985, p. 2-3, 8-11; E. Balta, *Les vakıfs de Serrès et de sa région (Xve et XVIe s.)*, Athens 1995, p. 187-195.

18 E. Kolovos, "The monks and the Sultan outside the Newly Conquered Ottoman Salonica in 1430", *Journal of Turkish Studies -Defterology. Festschrift in Honor of Heath Lowry* 40 (Dec.2013), 271-279.

not be inherited. As Kermeli showed, Molla Husrev followed Abu Hanifa, who resembled Christian endowments with Islamic vakıfs; since the latter, according to Abu Hanifa, could not be inherited, the same was true for the Christian endowments.[19] Indeed, in a fetva dated in the 15th century and located in the Ottoman archive of the monastery of Megalo Meteoro, it is stated that the heirs of a deceased monk could lay claim to a part of the monastic property. Moreover, in the same fetva the monastery is characterized as "vakıf according to their vain rites" (ayin-i batılaları üzere evkafı).[20]

The problem was not only the denial of the inalienability of the monastic properties by the legal scholars but also their legal status. As mentioned above, a prerequisite for the establishment of a vakıf was the founder to own the property to be endowed. In this respect the legal status of the monastic arable lands acquired in the pre-ottoman period through endowments was precarious, since the Ottoman conquest brought the arable lands under the full ownership of the state,[21] acknowledging as freehold (mülk) only what was upon them (trees, buildings). In 1478 Mehmed II ordered a re-examination of the titles of all the mülk and vakıf titles; as a result some of them were confiscated by the state because they did not fulfil the requirement of ownership.[22] The policy of Mehmed II affected not only Muslim but Christian vakıfs too such as those in the area of Trebizond.[23] Meanwhile, the monks of the above-mentioned Timios Prodromos monastery were also deprived of the ownership of certain villages and held them as timariots, enjoying only the income.[24]

Despite the restrictions in the establishment of monastic endowments in this early period, in 1471 the stepmother of Mehmed II, Mara Branković, founded in front of the Ottoman judge in Serres a Christian vakıf for which a vakfiye (foundation document) was issued. This is the first known vakfiye of a Christian vakıf in the Ottoman Balkans. According to the document, Mara endowed to the monastery of Hagios Pavlos (on the Holy Mountain) a land estate which she had bought at auction on the same day. In the document, published by Kotzageorgis, it is stated that the founder owned the estate. According to the author, it is very doubtful that Mara Branković was the real owner, more so that a century later when the vakıfs of the monastery were confiscated because they were considered illegal, the specific estate was included among them.[25] In addition, comparing the vakfiye itself with those issued for other vakıfs, the former was more general and vague in content.[26] Based on the above, Kotzageorgis stressed the 'looseness' in the use of the term vakıf, even by the

19 Ε. Κερμελή, "Το νομικό καθεστώς της αγιορείτικης μοναστηριακής περιουσίας το 15ο και το 16ο αιώνα", *Το Άγιον Όρος το 15ο και 16ο αιώνα. Πρακτικά συνεδρίου*, Thessaloniki 2012, p. 97-98.

20 Φ. Κοτζαγεώργης, «Η μονή Μεγάλου Μετεώρου κατά το 15ο αιώνα με βάση το οθωμανικό αρχείο της», *Ανάλεκτα Σταγών και Μετεώρων* 2 (2024), 61-62.

21 H. Inalcik, "Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300-1600", in H. Inalcik-D. Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History of the Orient, 1300-1914*, Cambridge 1994, p.104-105.

22 Mehmed II's policy targeted to the mülk and vakıf estates, which were established on the basis of previous land grants, that is temliks, Özel, "Limits of the Almighty", 242-243.

23 H. Lowry, "Privilege and Property in Ottoman Maçuka in the Opening Decades of the Tourkokratia: 1461-1553", in A. Bryer-H. Lowry, eds., *Continuity and Change in Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Society*, Birmingham-Washington 1986, p. 119-123; N. Beldiceanu, "Biens monastiques d'après un registre ottoman de Trébizonde (1487). Monastères de la Chrysoképhalos et du Pharos", *Revue des études Byzantines* 35 (1977) 182-183.

24 N. Beldiceanu, "Marġarid : un timar monastique", *Revue des Études Byzantines* 33 (1975) 233-235.

25 Ph.Kotzageorgis, "Two vakfiyyes of Mara Branković", *Hiladarski Zbornik* 11 (2004) 312.

26 Op.cit., 309.

Ottoman kadıs, in this early period in which the pre-ottoman conditions played a role.[27] I would add that the identity of the founder and her relation with the sultan must have influenced the kadı who issued the document. Moreover, it is not coincidental that the specific deed was issued a few years before the reexamination of all the mülk and vakıf titles by Mehmed II. In any case, this kind of early Christian vakıfs, which did not strictly comply with the Islamic law and combined pre-Ottoman and Ottoman realities are characterized by Kolovos as 'hybrid'.[28] It is noteworthy that Mara Branković founded in 1487 another vakıf, comprising of freehold property in Istanbul (the monastery of Chora with its property: a house, a vineyard, a mill and a bakery) in favour of the Vatopedi monastery (in the Holy Mountain). The founder would be the administrator (mütevelli) of the endowment for life and she would enjoy part of the income. This time the vakfiye followed all the stipulations imposed by the Islamic law. [29] Although Mara Branković established the specific endowment after the death of her step-son and the reversal of the policy towards the Islamic vakıfs, the founder avoided the infringement of the Islamic law with the endowment of state property.

It will take almost a century for the Ottoman state to establish a well-defined legal status for the Christian vakıf. I refer to the well-known confiscation crisis of the monastic vakıfs in 1567/8, which was the result of a general state policy to undeline the state character of the arable lands. A new land survey defined the monastic vakıfs that did not conform to Islamic law, which were confiscated and the monks were obliged to repurchase them as state lands (with the tapu title). The two parameters that made the monastic vakıfs unlawful were: a) the previous state (miri) status of the endowed lands and b) the declaration of the monastery as the beneficiary of the endowment, since the former was not recognized as a legal person.[30] In this regard, the monastery as the beneficiary contradicted the rule of kurba, that each endowment should be a God (Allah)-pleasing deed.[31] The problem of kurba in relation to the Christian endowments preoccupied scholars centuries back. In a fetva of the judge Al-Hassaf (d.874), a Christian vakıf was acknowledged as valid, if the designated beneficiaries were members of the founder's family and after their extinction, the poor. This means that a family vakıf was valid, but not a vakıf in favor of a church or monastery, because it lacked the kurba.[32]

The monks overcame the crisis with difficulty since they were burdened with debts to be able to repurchase the confiscated estates.[33] However, they acquired the right of the automatic succession

27 Op.cit, 311

28 Kolovos, "Christian vakıfs", p. 110.

29 Kotzageorgis, "Two vakfiyyes", p. 308-309, 319-321 ; E. Kolovos, "Appendice XI. Actes Ottomans", in J.Lefort et al, eds., Actes de Vatopedi, t. III, Paris 2019, p. 439-440.

30 A. Fotić, "The official explanation for the confiscation and sale of monasteries (churches) and their estates at the time of Selim II", *Turcica* 26 (1994) 33-54; J.C. Alexander, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, Athos and the confiscation affair of 1568-1569", in *Mount Athos in the 14th -16th Centuries*, Athens 1997, p. 149-200; E. Kermeli, "The confiscation and repossession of monastic properties in Mount Athos and Patmos Monasteries, 1568-1570", *Bulgarian Historical Review* 28/3-4 (2000), 39-53; N.Vatin-E.Zachariadou, "L' application à Patmos de la loi de confiscations des 'biens monastiques' (kenise vakfı), Avril-Mai 1570", *Turcica* 48 (2017) 65-111.

31 E. Kermeli, "Ebu's Su'ud's definition of church vakfs: theory and practice in Ottoman law", in R.Gleave - E.Kermeli, eds., *Islamic Law. Theory and Practice*, London 2011, p. 142, 148.

32 J. Pahlitzch, "Christian waqf in the early and classical Islamic period", in S. M. Saliba, ed., *Les fondations pieuses waqfs chez les Chrétiens et les Juifs*, Paris 2016, p. 33-35, 36.

33 S. Laiou, "Diverging realities of a Christian vakıf, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries", *Turkish Historical Review* 3 (2012) 12.

of the monastic estates of the deceased monks by the other members of the brethren. The specific right was granted to them on the basis of the şeyhülislam Ebussuud's (d.1574) interpretation of the Christian vakıfs. Specifically, he regarded them as family vakıfs and in this way Ebussuud agreed to the right of the automatic succession considering the remaining monks as the sons of the deceased one.[34] From now on all the monastic endowments should be comprised of previously owned estates and the beneficiaries should be individuas, that is the monks, and not the monastery itslef.

Thus, in the 1570s the regulations for the establishment of the Christian vakıfs were set. The questions that arise are: a) to what extent were these regulations followed and b) were there other ways besides the issuance of a vakfiye to establish Christian vakıfs? Regarding the first question: based on the monastic Ottoman archives to which I have access,[35] it appears that after the confiscation of their illegal vakıf estates, the vakfiyes issued following the above-mentioned stipulations are really few. In the archive of the Great Meteoron there is only one judicial decision (hüccet)-and not vakfiye- of 1588 in which a house was endowed.[36] On the other hand, in the archive of the monastery of Varlaam there is one vakfiye of 1548 according to which houses, gardens, mills and the yields of arable fields were endowed.[37] In a firman of 1580 it is stated that the same property was confiscated, and the monks repurchased and endowed it in favour of the visitors of the monastery.[38] Also in a hüccet of 1610 it is stated that a house was endowed to the Varlaam monastery.[39] Thus, the only vakfiye was that of 1548. In the case of Leimon monastery, two years after the confiscation, in 1569, a vakfiye was issued by the kadı of Molova concerning the endowment of freehold property (houses, mills, vineyards and olive orchards) by a monk. The vakfiye followed all the stipulations set by the sharia and the vakıf itself was a combination of charitable and a family one (according to the interpretation of the monastic vakıfs by Ebussuud).[40] Also, thirty years later, a copy of a vakfiye was issued according to which a nun endowed freehold property (cash and several objects) to the monastery of Myrsiniotissa.[41] In this case, although the definition of the beneficiaries contradicted the stipulations of Islamic law, the endowment of private property was probably deemed more important. No other vakfiye or hüccet referring to an endowment is found in the Ottoman archives of the above-mentioned monasteries. The picture is grosso modo the same for the other monasteries in the Greek lands.[42]

The absence of vakfiyes does not mean that no monastic endowments were founded in the following centuries. Instead, the Orthodox monks developed various strategies to establish Christian

34 Kermeli, "Church vakfs", p. 151-153.

35 These are the following: the Ottoman archives of the monasteries of Varlaam and Great Meteoron (Meteora complex, central Greece), Leimon monastery in Lesvos island (16th -17th centuries), and of the monasteries of Samos island.

36 Ottoman Archive of the Great Meteoros, no. 600.

37 Λαΐου, *Τα οθωμανικά έγγραφα*, p. 91-92.

38 Op.cit, p. 135-136.

39 Op.cit, p. 170-171.

40 Laiou, "Diverging Realities", 10.

41 Leimon Ottoman Archive, folder L, film 1, hüccet / Rebiyülahır 1008 (October-November 1599). The monastery of Myrsioniotissa depended on the Leimon monastery.

42 According to Kolovos, after the confiscation of 1567/8, no endowment records were found in the Xeropotamou and Hagiou Pavlou monasteries (both on the Holy Mountain), Kolovos, "Christian vakıfs", p.116.

vakıfs or render their land property into vakıf. For instance, they endowed private property along with a state one, having for the latter the permission of the designated recipient of the income;[43] they registered in the kadı register endowments that were already established with a Greek document, and in this way they officialized the deed;[44] they received as endowments the yields but not the land itself, which still was illegal; in this case it can be assumed that the monks perceived the land as a vakıf too.[45] Finally, a broader meaning of the term vakıf was also used according to which the monastery was perceived as a religious foundation with a philanthropic character, similar to a Muslim vakıf.[46] In this framework, the transfer of state land "to the vakıf of the monastery" or the purchase of state land with the "money of the vakıf" (vakıf akçesiyle), could be used in the future as arguments for the vakıf status of an initially state land.[47]

The above-mentioned strategies infringed the law and required the collaboration of the local Ottoman authorities, that is the judges and the tax recipients of the state lands. To what extent they would collaborate depended not only on them, but also on the local circumstances, that is the existence or not of Muslim population and state officials in the area, the position of the monastery in the local socio-economic hierarchy, and its relationship with the Ottoman officials and the Muslim and non-Muslim inhabitants. In this respect, the monasteries on Samos island represent a unique case. The island itself belonged to the vakıf of the chief admiral (kapudan paşa) Kılıç Ali Paşa[48] and, thus, the land endowments to another vakıf (monastic or not) were illegal. In addition, in Samos there was no permanent Muslim population except of a few Ottoman officials. In this framework, it is not a surprise that there was an unofficial level of transactions registered in Greek documents and not verified by the Ottoman judges, which ran parallel with the official one. Among them, there were many donations of land and other property (in total, 172) to the local monasteries. Therefore, if the monks of Samos could not achieve their aims through the official way (recourse to the local kadı and obtainment if not of a vakfiye, at least of a hüccet), they did it by registering the endowment in a Greek document. These unofficial transactions would be disputed only if the relevant parties resorted to the kadı's justice. The 172 Greek donation documents in comparison to the 32 Ottoman ones reveal the scale of the unofficial transactions.

However, in the Dodecanese islands, the situation was different. Again, the income of these islands belonged to the vakıf which the sultan Süleyman established in Rhodes after its conquest,[49] making the land endowments unlawful. In the beginning of the 17th century, the administrators (mütevelli) of the sultanic vakıf repeatedly accused the inhabitants of the islands of Leros and Kalymnos that

43 Ιω. Αλεξανδρόπουλος, "Χριστιανικές προσηλώσεις και ισλαμικά αφιερώματα. Οι γκρίζες ζώνες της ορθόδοξης μοναστηριακής ιδιοκτησίας", Η.Κολοβός, εκδ., *Μοναστήρια, Οικονομία και Πολιτική, Ηράκλειο 2011*, σ. 229-230, 232, Σ. Λαΐου, *Η Σάμος κατά την οθωμανική περίοδο*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2002, σ.151

44 Λαΐου, *Η Σάμος*, σ. 153.

45 Λαΐου, *Η Σάμος*, σ. 151.

46 Fotić, "The official explanation", p. 42-44.

47 Laiou, "Diverging realities", 15. For a similar case see Kolovos, "Christian vakıfs", p. 113. See also the tezkere no. 1468 of the Ottoman archive of the Great Meteoron monastery according to which in 1633 a woman transferred the right of possession to the monastery with the permission of the 'sahib-i arz' 'to be attached to the vakıf' ('vakfa ilhak içün'). I thank my colleague Prof. Ph. Kotzageorgis, who brought this document to my attention.

48 Λαΐου, *Η Σάμος*, σ. 45.

49 M. Kiel, "Rodos", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, v. 35, p. 156.

endowed to the monastery of Saint John in Patmos -an already- vakıf property and refused to pay the tithes. They also demanded that they should transfer under tapu the vakıf land on these islands, when their possessor died childless.[50] Also the administrators stated that these endowments were not officially validated or did not have their consent, which means that most probably were registered in a Greek document.[51] On the other hand, the monks of the monastery of Patmos complained at the Ottoman court against the administrators of the vakıf for illegal demands. The monks argued that when their endowments were confiscated by the fisc in 1569-1570, they repurchased them and attached them to the monastic vakıf. These endowments - comprising of vineyards, gardens, fields, trees and mills - were scattered on various islands and especially for those on Leros sand Kalymnos islands they were paying a lump sum (3,000 aspers) to the vakıf of Süleyman instead of a tithe.[52] Judging from the published summaries of the documents, it seems that when confronted with these contrary testimonies, the Porte issued orders either in favour of the administrators or the monks, depending on who had asked for them. For instance, the firman of 1631 responded to a report of the kadı of Cos, which referred to the complaints of the monks. The firman ordered the kadı to investigate if the testimonies were true, and in this case to protect the monks.[53] On the contrary, the firman of 1636, addressed to the kadıs of Rodos and Cos, was issued at the request of the administrator of the vakıf; it ordered the examination of the case and if the complaints were substantiated, to cancel the vakıfs of the monastery on Leros and Kalymnos islands.[54]

Another case of Orthodox monasteries acting in a vakıf environment concerns those located close to Xanthi, a town with a predominantly Christian population at least until the end of the 17th century, which from the late 15th century belonged to the vakıf of Bayezid II in Edirne.[55] The published Ottoman documents reveal that the monasteries paid a lump sum tax (maktu) to the latter, acquired arable land under tapu[56] and hold as vakıfs trees, vineyards, and buildings.[57] Therefore, based on the surviving Ottoman documents it appears that the monasteries of Xanthi followed the sharia rules of the establishment of monastic vakıfs. However, we do not have the whole picture of their economic activity, since we lack the Greek documents, and we do not know how many transactions the monks made without official verification. One such transaction must have been the 'transfer' by the local metropolitan to the monastery of Kalamou of an area, which included trees, an olive grove, a vineyard "and other". We learn for the transaction when the representative of the sultanic vakıf referred to it, asking for an increase of the tax amount that the monastery paid to the vakıf due to the increase of the monastic property.[58] Doubtless, there were other transactions too, registered in Greek documents.

50 N. Vatin-G.Veinstein-E.Zachariadou, eds., *Catalogue du fonds ottoman des archives du monastère de Saint-Jean à Patmos*, Athènes 2011, p. 254-255, 290-291, 295-296.

51 Op.cit, p. 290-291.

52 Op.cit., p. 292-293, 298.

53 Op.cit, p. 292-293.

54 Op.cit, p. 295-296.

55 Φ.Κοτζαγεώργης, *Μικρές πόλεις της ελληνικής χερσονήσου κατά την πρώμη νεότερη εποχή: η περίπτωση της Ξάνθης (15ος-17ος αι.)*, Ξάνθη 2008, p.138, 165-166.

56 Op. cit, p. 272-274, 278-281

57 Op.cit, p. 269, 283-284

58 Op.cit, p. 225-226, 271.

Comparing the strategies of the monks of Samos, Patmos and Xanthi, the following remarks can be made: a) the land monastic endowments were illegal since the land belonged already to another vakıf; b) the inhabitants often donated the land unofficially, a practice that was easier in Samos than in Dodecanese. The difference is due to the existence of the sultanic vakıf in Rhodes whose economic interests on the other islands resulted in intense supervision of the land transactions and tax collection. On the other hand, Samos lacked a permanent Muslim population and the vakıf itself was 'serbest', that is free from interventions on behalf of the Ottoman officials.[59] The case of Samos, however, was the exception and not the rule. Finally, it would not be farfetched to presume that the supervision of the land transfers in the Xanhti area on behalf of the sultanic vakıf in Edirne must have been continuous and -to a large extent- the monastic endowments did not comprise vakıf or state property.

The above-mentioned examples show the 'diverging realities' of the monastic vakıfs established upon a vakıf land. If we search for other cases too, the complexity of the Christian vakıf will be also demonstrated. The local conditions and the degree of the exercise of state control affected greatly its implementation. After the confiscation crisis and the imposition of certain rules on the establishment of a Christian vakıf, the Orthodox monasteries continued their strategy to accumulate real property, which they possessed under various legal terms. In the long run, whenever they could, they established vakıfs, which most often were registered on a simple hüccet. The monasteries retained their property or the rights on it, either on a legal or semi-legal basis or considering it as "their own",[60] a strong perception based on the longevity of their possessions, some of which were acquired through unofficial transactions. They also negotiated constantly with the Ottoman state to defend their tax status, which in some cases facilitated their 'independence' from the local communities and the state representatives (see maktu payment). Finally, both unofficial transactions and the tax status explain how certain monasteries (such as the monastery of Patmos island and those on Holy Mountain and Meteora complex) managed to control extensive land property.



59 Λαΐου, *Η Σάμος*, σ. 45, 184.

60 Αλεξανδρόπουλος, "Χριστιανικές προσηλώσεις και ισλαμικά αφιερώματα", p. 233.

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[*] Some of the contents of this article were published originally as "*The Waqf: Where Religion Meets Urbanity*," in Religion and Urbanity Online (De Gruyter), 2024. Reproduced with permission.

The Hafız Ahmed Agha Vakfı

Religion, Learning, and Ottoman Sociability*

Historians have long studied the institution of pious endowments (Turkish: *vakıf* Arabic: *waqf*), an impactful instrument of Islamic urban development. In the case of the Ottoman Empire, it is estimated that more than 35,000 endowments were established in the imperial capitol (Isin 2011, 222-223). More pious endowments by persons of means were registered locally in provincial *shari'a* courts and can offer small glimpses into everyday philanthropic practices. Together these grand and diminutive land and property bequests maintained and sustained urban life but, importantly, extended to develop rural and provincial communities throughout the Ottoman Empire. The Hafız Ahmed Agha Library *vakıf* in Rhodes, established in Istanbul on February 26, 1792, is an enduring example of the vast public works facilitated through private family endowments.

Recognizing that pious endowments varied across the Islamic World, the *vakıf*, in its most basic definition, is a registered piece of income-generating property donated to a religious foundation, a charitable cause, or to one's heirs in perpetuity. Historian Pascale Ghazaleh has persuasively argued that pious endowments were essential to the economic, social, and religious life in the city and could benefit either individuals or collectivities within or across religious lines (Ghazaleh 2011). Such endowments did not only structure relations in the city but organized relations between city and countryside—agricultural land and waterworks were also endowed in perpetuity by donors. The institution of *vakıf* should, therefore, be understood as both an expression of piety and a form of social contract that, at times, transcended religious bounds.

The original deeds (*vakıfıyya*) preserved in former Ottoman lands provide the contours of these property contracts in the early modern period. Normatively, regardless of the social status of the donor, there were two principal kinds of *vakıf* institutions; the charitable endowment (Arabic: *waqf khayri*), whose proceeds were absorbed back into the social work conducted by foundation, and the family endowment (Arabic: *waqf ahli*) which worked as a family trust. In a family *vakıf*, instead subdividing property according to Islamic law, the property could be registered and the income generated from it could be directed in perpetuity to the heirs designated by the donor (Raymond, 17-18). Historian Randi Deguilhem has found in her study of Damascus that public and private endowments could be combined so that family and charitable foundation would share the income generated in what is called in Arabic a *waqf mushtarak* (Deguilhem 2006, 205). There was yet a third kind of foundation found primarily in Turkish-speaking Ottoman lands beginning in the fourteenth century called the cash endowment (*waqf al-nuqud*) that allowed individuals to borrow money at a designated interest (Zarinebaf 2006, 90, Mandaville 1979, 308).

Many scholars have shown how the institution had particular advantages for women who were able to protect their rights to property and designate how they wanted their property to be used after death (Deguilhem 2006, Zarinebaf 2006, Sonbol 2003, Fay 1997). Abraham Marcus has found in his study of eighteenth-century Aleppo that 36% of family *evkaf* were established by women donors (Marcus 1989, 304). Furthermore, Mary Ann Fay has shown for Mamluk Egypt, women's property rights are enshrined in Islamic Law, but when it came to endowing those properties, women could

convert those properties into trusts without interference from male relatives. Alternatively, an endowment could completely excise female heirs from their half share of inheritance in Islamic law—men by law were granted a full share (Fay 1997).

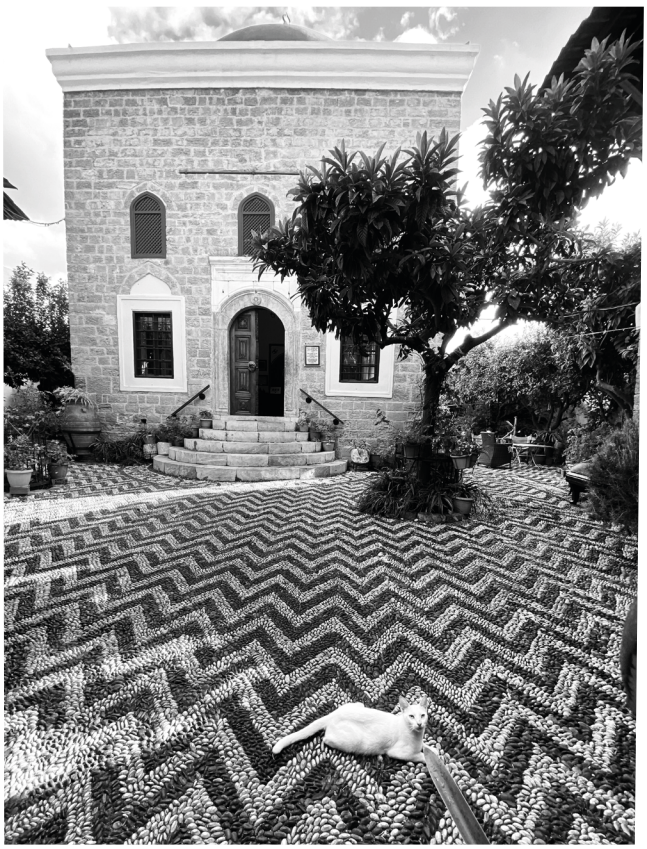
In her examination of Ottoman imperial architecture in Aleppo, Heghnar Watenpaugh has observed two models of *vakıf* patronage: imperial architecture endowed by Ottoman elites based in Istanbul and those structures endowed by local nobility (Watenpaugh, 2004, 44). Imperial philanthropy was informed by a "decorum of patronage" embedded in both imperial and religious ethics. In the case of Muslim rulers, this involved the moral responsibility to give back the spoils of war as a gift to his subjects (Necipoğlu 2005). Yet, *evkaf* were not only the purview of imperial elites, but gifts to the community by people of means regardless of religious denomination (Watenpaugh 2004, 10). The gifting of properties and revenue reflected the notion that elites were obliged to provide for the least well off. They had great incentive to do so because blessings and prayers were heaped upon the patron for his or her good deeds (*khayrat*) in this life and the next. In the case for wealthy, charitable giving was embedded in the concept of *zakat*, the obligation of every Muslim to redistribute wealth by gifting a portion of their overall assets annually. Engin F. Isin has argued that *evkaf* served the public good, often employing scores of people and providing crucial services which should be understood as a social contract or even citizenship if we focus on citizenship as a social practice rather than political status bestowed by the state (Isin, 2011). As a result, the *vakıf* institution resulted in a remarkable network of social services for communities under Ottoman rule and, as Amy Singer has documented, aspects of this tradition, while diminished by the modern state, continue to resonate in various ways in the Islamic World (Singer 2008).

Imperial endowments resulted in monumental architecture that continues to define cityscapes of the Middle East, North Africa, and parts of the Mediterranean World. Larger *evkaf*, such as the imperial kind or those donated by wealthy Ottoman notables, can include a wide range of structures that housed, fed, and employed the community. Such deeds included mosques, schools, dervish lodges, public libraries, and guest houses (*khan/caravanserai*). Some of the larger, grander *evkaf* would occupy entire city blocks and include shops, workshops, kiosks, bathhouses, orchards, soup kitchens, hospitals and asylums for the poor and indigent (including poor scholars), cemeteries, and parks (Faroqhi 2000, 131-132, Singer 2008). Many of these investments clearly overlap with both religious and public works as they serviced orphans, the poor, the indigent, and the sick. Infrastructure such as bridges, waterways, canals and reservoirs in both city and countryside were yet another aspect of pious endowments that provided vital urban and rural infrastructure (Mikhail 2011, 44-45). In the early modern period, half of Aleppo's *vakıf* endowments contributed to providing residents with access to water in the scorching summer with many fountain inscriptions heaping blessings on the donors (Marcus, 305).

Vakıf properties were either registered in the Imperial Porte in Constantinople or locally with judges (*qadi*) in the *shari'a* courts. One impressive Aleppo endowment preserved in the Ottoman capitol was the Bahram Pasha *Vakıf* (1583), was an impressive imperial endowment bestowed upon Aleppo in the name of a grand vizier of the Ottoman Empire, Sokollu Mehmed Pasha, assassinated by his political enemies in 1579 (Behram Paşa Vakıf Ev.Vkf 11 991 Z 29, 1583). Extensively documented by both Jean-Claude David and Heghnar Watenpaugh, the portion of the endowment dedicated to the central market included a fountain for passersby and a large Ottoman style mosque with a prominent dome supported by a unique five-sided apse (David 1982, Watenpaugh 2004). But

central Aleppo was not the endowment's only location. The *vakıf* extended to another location in the emerging Christian quarter of Judayda to support non-Muslim residents of the city and support an emerging secondary market in the city with the Bahram Pasha bathhouse (*hammam*). Impressively, portions of the Bahram Pasha *vakıf* supported facilities far beyond Aleppo, including regional cities of Antioch, Aintab, and Diyarbakir, but extended as far as Ottoman Palestine and the Hijaz, Mecca and Medina, mapping the boundaries of the empire in West Asia (Sauvaget, 1941, 263-265).

The official *vakıf* register designated how endowment revenue, which was not subjected to taxation, was to be distributed. The patron could name any party, individuals, descendants, or institutions. The dynamic institution of endowments was not only used by Muslim donors, but non-Muslims, merchants, and any persons of means. These more modest endowments could include homes earmarked for the poor and valuable or useful objects donated places of worship. For example, wealthy Christian men and women endowed homes for poverty relief in the city specifying the poor within their own community as the recipients. However, this form of charity was not that common because larger endowments such as fountains and religious spaces offered far more prestige to donors. There is also evidence that Christian community endowments often channeled revenue back into the community to defray the cost of the poll tax for the poorest members (Marcus, 216).



Hafız Ahmed Agha Library
with Bianca in front
Photo: T. Tuten.

Historian Yaron Ayalon has similarly found that Aleppo's Jewish community frequently used the *vakıf* system to offer public and private forms of charity. Such giving offered prestige to wealthy families and could work to preserve inherited properties within the community and guard against debt collection (Ayalon, 2014, 79-81).

The Hafız Ahmed Agha Library fits the charitable traditions of *vakfiyya* found in Ottoman lands. As a complex, its main function is educational centering on a library. In the same courtyard, a two-story stone building served as a classroom and a second stone building provided housing for the librarian (*hafız-ı kütüb*). The main building contained a reading room and an adjoining library. The original endowment lists 828 texts that bear the founder's original seal. Overtime, his descendants expanded the collection to include 459 manuscripts. The manuscripts were categorized into 20 different branches

of knowledge including Islamic science, history, medicine, literature and astronomy. The founder of this *vakıf*, Hafız Ahmed Agha, clearly focused his pious giving on producing a repository of knowledge that could be accessed by literate elites who were predominately clerics, who could, from there disseminate the knowledge to school children and the general population through their preaching.

As with other waqfs, the Hafız Ahmed Agha was a multiuse space for charitable activities inextricably linked to religious holidays and obligatory charitable giving that included fooddistribution. These activities included clothing distribution and hot meals during the month of Ramadan. The caretakers of the *vakıf* have continued this tradition to the present and extended it to Orthodox Christian neighbors even in the wake of the Greek financial crisis (2007-2008). Even the library has served multiple fuctions. The reading room and adjacent courtyard is a space for scholarship and a space of sociability where the community socializes and creates friendships.

Imperial and local endowments can provide illuminating insights into urban planning in the Ottoman Empire. An array of donors from different gender and religious backgrounds co-constituted spatial relations in the early modern Ottoman cities. Often forgotten is how this system of endowments also shaped the countryside as farm land and water works were developed through the charitable endowment system entangling city and with countryside. The *vakıf*, therefore, is arguably a space where religion and urbanity meet and the Hafız Ahmed Agha is a remarkable example.

Endnotes

[1] The original copy of the endowment can be found at Vakfîye-i Rodosî Ahmed Ağa, 743/37/11, Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi (VGMA) (Archive of the General Directorate of Foundations), Ankara, February 26, 1792 (1206H). The following year, the library was inaugurated by a *zeyl vakfiye* (amendment) located at 743/79/26, VGMA, November 18, 1793.

[2] A few sample early modern Christian awqaf for the poor were registered in the shari'a court in Aleppo and include: (Armenian) SMH 45: 201:495 and SMH 55:136:432 and (Assyrian) SMH 45:201:495.

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Guy Burak is the Librarian for Middle Eastern, Islamic, Jewish and African Studies at NYU's Elmer Holmes Bobst Library. He is the author of *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Hanafi School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2015) and of several articles dealing with the intellectual, legal and artistic histories of the Islamic world in the post-Mongol period. He is also the co-editor of *The Library of Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar: Book Culture in Late Ottoman Palestine* (Brill, 2025). He is currently completing a monograph on the history of *kanun* in the Ottoman and post-Ottoman Middle East.

"I have read the catalog of Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's library several years ago, long before I was asked to contribute to this volume. At the time, my interest in Ottoman libraries was the practical interest of a librarian looking for manuscripts for users. More recently, I got interested in the work of Ottoman-era librarians and book collectors as colleagues or fellow practitioners. Elsewhere, I described this interest as an act of "comparing notes" across geographies and centuries. I have come to appreciate the sense of humility this act of comparison generates."

Guy Burak

Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's Library

and Ottoman (Mostly Provincial) Libraries

In the fall of 1793, two years or so after he had endowed his first endowment (*vakıf*), the retired sultanic stirrup-holder (*rikabdar*) Rodosi Hafiz Ahmed Ağa sat down in the neighborhood of Yahya Efendi, slightly north of Galata, to write a second endowment deed (*vakfiye*).[1] The second deed was primarily devoted to the library Hafiz Ahmed Ağa wanted to establish in Rhodes, his island of origin. In the endowment deed, the *rikabdar* stipulated the administration of the library and listed the books he had managed to amass through lawful purchase (as required for making an endowment) and were now intended to populate the library's shelves. The list was quite extensive and may have been the product of years of collecting, suggesting that Hafiz Ahmed Ağa had aspired to found a library in Rhodes for quite some time.

It is unclear what sparked Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's interest in establishing a library in Rhodes. It may have been the library endowed by Sultan Ahmed III (d. 1730) in the enderun (the inner court) of the Topkapı Palace, where he spent years as a page and as a member of the closest entourage of three sultans, the libraries founded by Mahmud I (d. 1754) or Abdülhamid I (d. 1789), or the libraries founded over the course of the long eighteenth century in the Ottoman capital and across the empire's provinces by viziers, ulema and other dignitaries. Many of the founders of libraries came from the upper echelons of the imperial administrative elites, but lower-rank dignitaries engaged in establishing libraries as well. Libraries had been founded throughout the Muslim lands and even the Ottoman realms for centuries prior to the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the sheer number of libraries established over the course of the long eighteenth century justifies treating that century as a distinctive chapter in the history of Ottoman book culture.

In his chapter in this volume, İsmail Erünsal refers to the newly founded libraries in terms of a "library system." "System", however, may be too rigid a term, suggesting strict planning and organization that may not have existed in the Ottoman case. Rather, a shared library culture, shaped by founders of libraries, librarians, endowment inspectors and, to a lesser extent, perhaps, readers emerged. There are clear similarities across libraries, but there are substantial differences as well. Moreover, until quite recently, the study of eighteenth-century Ottoman libraries has focused on those in the imperial center (and in Istanbul in particular). In the recent decades, however, several studies have been devoted to libraries established in the different provinces. Broadening the scope has revealed the multiple sites in which the empire's library culture evolved and casted light on the exchanges between those venues through networks of practitioners and imperial administrators.

At the same time, one needs to be careful when applying adjectives to describe libraries, such as "Ottoman" or "Islamic". These adjectives may illuminate certain aspects of the collections and institutions that housed them, but they may also be too reductive and fail to account for the particularities of specific libraries. In other words, it is worth asking what makes a library "Ottoman"

1 VGMA.VKFY.d 743/79/26.

or "Islamic". This question is especially pertinent given the variation among libraries across the Ottoman Empire. Certainly, as we shall see, shared practices and principles may distinguish the library culture that emerged in the Ottoman lands from those prevalent in other parts of the Islamic world and in earlier centuries. However, as the body of works devoted to specific libraries expands, it becomes increasingly evident that libraries were also quite different in terms of the composition of their collections, which may have reflected the interests and goals of the founders.

Another set of questions relates to the institutional setting in which the library functioned and to the narrative one may impose on a collection of books. Studies of libraries tend to ascribe a great deal of intentionality to the founders of libraries, assuming their libraries were intended to serve political ambitions or a designated goal (serving the students of a *medrese,* for instance). In some cases, such readings of a collection are plausible or even likely. At the same time, it is worth keeping in mind that libraries are to varying degrees a product of serendipity. Put differently, differences among libraries and their founders, even those established in close geographical proximity, defy generalizations and invite us to pay closer attention to the particular histories and forces, both local and imperial, that shaped specific libraries.

This chapter supplements other chapters in this volume by situating Rodosi Hafiz Ahmed Ağa in the broader library culture of the empire with special attention to the libraries in the empire's provinces. The expansion of the scope from the capital to the provinces provides a new context for examining Rodosi Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's library in Rhodes.

By the 1790s, recently-established libraries dotted the Ottoman domains. Senior ulema (such as Feyzullah Efendi (d. 1703)), viziers (such as Ragıb Paşa (d. 1763)) and provincial governors (such as Muhammad Abu al-Dhahab (d. 1775) in Cairo, Asʿad Paşa (d. 1758) and Muḥammad Paşa (d. 1783) al-ʿAzm in Damascus, Cezzar Ahmed Paşa (d. 1804) in Acre and Halil Hamid Paşa (d. 1785) in Burdur), bureaucrats (such as ʿUthman Paşa al-Duriki (d. 1747) in Aleppo) and sultans (Ahmed III, Mahmud I and Abdülhamid I) founded libraries throughout the empire. Many of these founders intended their libraries to serve a fairly broad reading public, hence they are occasionally referred to as "public libraries" or libraries established for the public benefit or good (*nefʿ-i amim*). Indeed, the proliferation of libraries was a response to but also enabled a new class of readers and, according to Khaled El Rouayheb, the interest in a seemingly new philosophy of reading, *mutalaʿa,* which he glosses as deep reading (though, as others have pointed out, references to *mutalaʿa* appear in earlier centuries as well). Some of the endowment deeds specifically mention copying manuscripts as one of the central activities in their libraries, thus making the libraries hubs for the proliferation of texts and manuscript copies (see Figure 1).

The rise of the libraries in the eighteenth century was also accompanied by the rise of a professional group of librarians. These librarians, many of whom came from the circles of the ulema and literati, developed distinctive bibliographic practices, which were inspired, at least in part, by the requirements imposed by administrators who managed and supervised the endowments. It is for this reason that many of the library inventories, including Rodosi Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's, use the imperial register (*defter*) layout (I shall return to this point below).

As his endowment deed and the register of the inventory of the endowed books reveal, Hafiz Ahmed Ağa was familiar with the library culture that had emerged over the past century. While Rodosi Hafiz Ahmed Ağa did not explicitly say in his second endowment deed that the library will

be used by "the public", he stipulated that readers and copyists (*mutali'in ve müstensihin*) should be granted access to the library's collection from sunrise to dusk. Much like other founders of libraries, he banned the circulation of books and stipulated that books should be consulted within the premises of the library.



Figure 1: The library founded by Sultan Abdülhamid I. Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson, Tableau général de l'Empire othoman (Paris 1787), plate from volume 1 (Library of Congress).

Moreover, Rodosi Hafiz Ahmed Ağa stipulated in the *vakfiye* two positions for full-time librarians. Since the library was intended to be a school (*dershane*), the librarians were supposed to hold classes at the library every day of the week, with the exception of Tuesday and Friday. According to the endowment deed, there was a hierarchy among the librarian-teachers: the chief librarian (or "the first librarian"), whose salary was 100 akçe (60 for his duties as librarian and 40 for his professorship), was assisted by the "second librarian", whose salary was 80 akçe (50 for his librarianship and 30 for his teaching). The "second librarian" was to inherit the position of the "first librarian" upon the latter's death. The pedagogical duties of the librarians suggest that they were intended to be recruited from the ranks of the ulema. Indeed, the endowment deed refers to the librarians with the title "efendiler", a title that was commonly reserved to members of the ulema. This was not an unusual expectation, as librarianship was a common employment career for many scholars and jurists. This was the case, for instance, in the library founded by Cezzar Ahmed Paşa in Acre.

Their pedagogical duties aside, the librarians were expected to maintain and preserve the library's collection in an orderly manner and make sure books did not leave the library (as stipulated). Hafiz Ahmed Ağa specifically required that the island's ulema, notables, dignitaries and the wealthy should convene at the library in the beginning of the month of Muharrem (the first month of the Hijri year) of every year and examine all the books in the library's collection one by one, according to the "signed and sealed" register. They should examine the books for missing pages and inform the librarians of missing books.

Despite the dignitaries' stipulated involvement in the management of the library, it is clear that its management relied on the professional expertise of librarians. The endowment deed, which includes a detailed list of the titles Hafiz Ahmed Ağa decided to endow to the library, suggest that the retired Ağa was assisted by librarians or mastered bibliographic descriptive principles. Each entry in the endowment deeds includes a detailed bibliographic description: the title, the binding, the calligraphic script, the number of lines and the number of pages. These entries match the entries in the late eighteenth-century register (for a detailed study of the content of the register see Elif Sezer Aydınlı's chapter in this volume). This is not an uncommon bibliographic description in Ottoman libraries, though including detailed entries in the endowment deed is somewhat unusual. In any event, it is clear that the register, the bibliographic description and the seal he had made for the library were informed by deep familiarity with bibliographic practices.

These practices were employed by librarians in Istanbul (in the eighteenth-century inventory of the Ayasofya, for instance) (see Figure 2) and throughout the empire (in Acre, for example). This was not a fully standardized set of practices and some variations are discernable among libraries. Some libraries, for example, do not mention the number of written lines and there are significant variations in the description of the calligraphic hands employed in copying the manuscript. As opposed to the compilers of inventories of the libraries of Ragıp Paşa and Cezzar Ahmed Paşa, who employed a broad gallery of scripts in their entries, the librarians who compiled the Rhodes inventory mentioned three scripts (*nesih, Arap* and *ta'lik,* in addition to mentioning printed books). These variations, while significant for scholars of bibliographic practices, are fairly minor. The elongated register, the seal (and sealing) and the marking of the extant manuscripts with the Arabic letter *mim* (abbreviation for *mevcut*) would have been recognizable to many librarians across the empire.

Examining the composition of the library's collection is another way to consider Hafiz Ahmed Ağa's intentions and goals, although, once again, one has to be careful to allow some room for serendipity. Clearly, the Ağa aspired to build a collection that would cover the Islamic sciences as commonly understood in the empire's scholarly circles. Fellow founders would have surely appreciated his encyclopedic collection. Moreover, the library's collection included titles in Arabic, Turkish and Persian, the main three Islamic scholarly languages in the Ottoman lands. As opposed to libraries from the Arabic-speaking provinces, however, there is no designated section for books in Persian and Turkish, probably because many readers in Rhodes were Turkish readers.

That said, the classification of the sciences and the classification of titles between the sections of the library varies to some extent from the classification in other libraries. For example, the library contained a section devoted to astronomy. Such a section does not appear in every library inventory from the Ottoman lands. In some sections, such as the section devoted to history (*tarih*) books, it is clear that Hafiz Ahmed Ağa was especially interested in histories written by Rumi authors, that is,

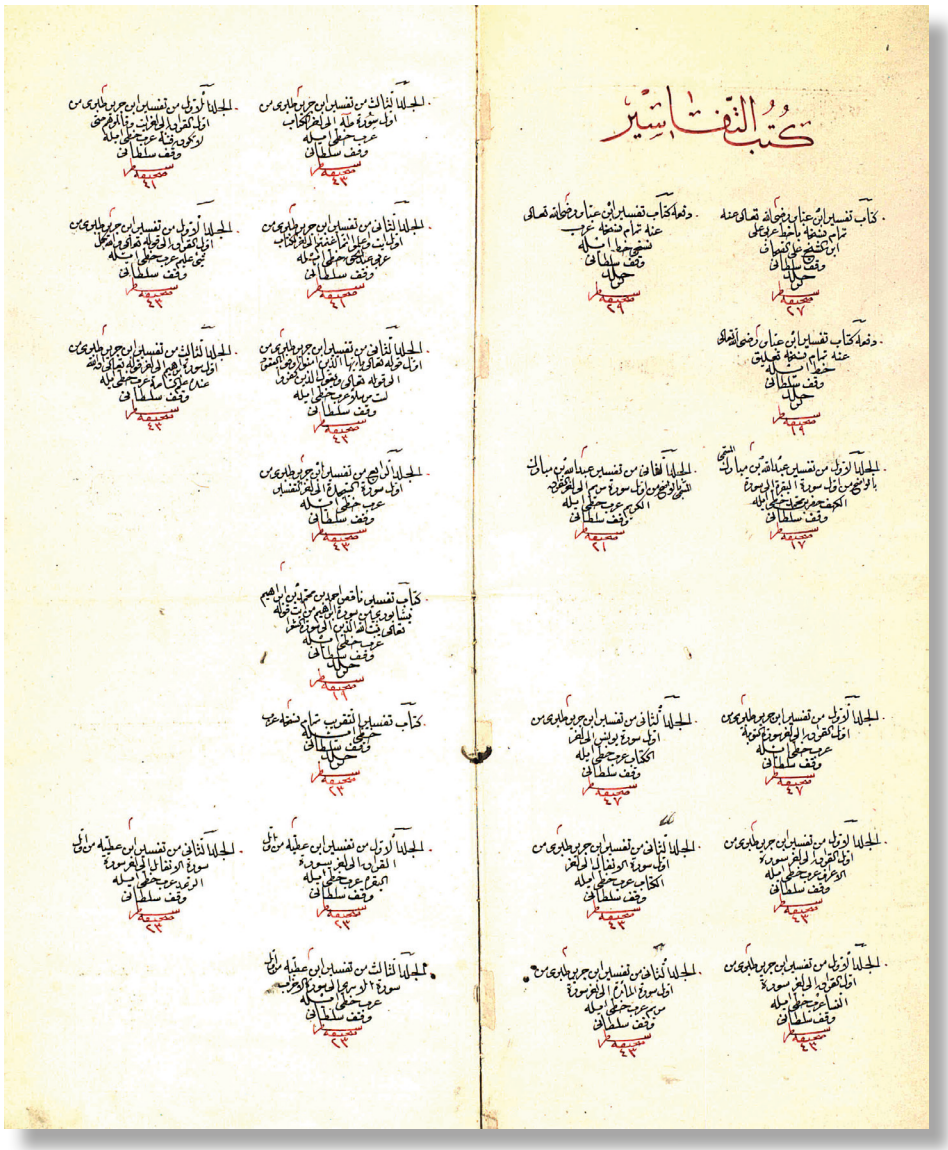


Figure 2: The *tafsir* section from the eighteenth-century inventory of the Ayasofya Library, established by Sultan Mahmud I.

authors from the central, Turkish-speaking lands of the empire. Other library collections included titles written by local and pre-Ottoman historians (this was the case, for example, in the library of Cezzar Ahmed Paşa). Similarly, the section on jurisprudence (*fiqh/fıkıh*) is predominantly Hanafi, the school of law adopted by the Ottoman dynasty, as opposed to libraries from the Arabic-speaking lands (and, to a lesser extent, other libraries in Anatolia) that included books by authors affiliated with other schools of law. The composition of the library raises questions about the intended users. As we have seen, Hafiz Ahmed Ağa wanted the library to function as a school, though it is unclear if the collection was intended to serve first and foremost pedagogical purposes.

Founders of libraries in the Ottoman lands and elsewhere did so for a variety of reasons, from bibliophilia to promoting learning and scholarship to promoting their political ambitions. It is unclear what precisely spurred the retired *rikabdar* to endow a library. Be it as it may, it is clear that he aspired to have his library project legible to other eighteenth-century founders of libraries, patrons and readers from various parts of the Ottoman Empire. Seen in the context of other libraries from Cairo and Baghdad to the Balkans, the library of Hafiz Ahmed Ağa and its significant collection attests to the scope of this remarkable moment in Ottoman book culture and bibliophilia well beyond the imperial capital.

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Figure 3: Reading room of the Ayasofya Library, established by Sultan Mahmud I.
Photo: T.Tuten

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***A History of Ottoman Libraries**
By Ismail Erünsal, Boston, Mass.: Academic Studies Press
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The Expansion and Reorganization of the Ottoman Library System (1730–1839)*

Mahmud I's reign began ominously. His father had been deposed and his father's grand vizier Damad İbrahim Pasha had been killed in a brutal riot in the Ottoman capital. Furthermore, his reign saw defeats on the Austrian, Russian, and Iranian fronts. But despite all the turmoil, there is one area in which cultural activities reached their apogee during this time: the development of the library system. Of all the sultans, Mahmud I truly deserves the epithet of bibliophile. We can observe his keen interest in books in a decree concerning the organization of libraries of Kastamonu, the capital city of one of the central Anatolian provinces, which he sent to its judge:

> Whereas the order and basis of the World and Religion is given currency by the means of knowledge and science and associated with the acquisition of skill and virtue, and all depends on the collecting of books and making them available for the students ... and for this reason ... libraries were established.[1]

Thus did Mahmud I express his view that the basis of Ottoman civilization, noless, was the library. In the following pages, we will see how he set out to make his philosophy a reality. Mahmud I first opened a paper factory at Yalova, conveniently situated on theopposite shore of the Marmara sea from Istanbul, ensuring a steady supply of paper for the printing press in Istanbul, which he had reopened.[2] In the capital, he founded large libraries, including the Fatih, Galata Palace, and Ayasofya Libraries, setting an example for his statesmen to follow.

Of all the libraries founded by Mahmud I, Ayasofya is the most interesting in terms of its furnishings,[3] staffing,[4] and the collection itself.[5] This is quite appropriate when we consider the special position that the Ayasofya Mosque and the Medrese had acquired in Ottoman religious and cultural life. The name Ayasofya is the Turkish version of the Greek Hagia Sophia, the (Church of the) Holy Wisdom. As the largest building in Istanbul when it was taken, Mehmed II turned it into a mosque-medrese. In successive reigns, it was extensively repaired, as well as endowed with four minarets and a host of buildings including a medrese in the surrounding area. The Ayasofya Mosque acquired a particular status, so that while there is no concept of a "cathedral mosque" in Islam, the Ayasofya Mosque came close to fulfilling that role, and was not only the largest mosque, but remained the "senior" and most respected of all the mosques in the Ottoman world. Its position as the mosque closest to the imperial palace also reinforced its close connection with the ruling dynasty. The medrese at Ayasofya also played a significant role in the educational system. The teachers at this school had a particularly high status, on a level with the teachers at the Mehmed II's medrese and the Süleymaniye medrese. It is no surprise then that it is to this mosque that Sultan Mahmud I devoted much of his energy.

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1 BOA, Mühimme, No. 152, 136

2 It is recorded in the diary of the sultan (ruzname) that he discussed the quality of the paper being produced at Yalova with the pioneer of the Ottoman printing press, Ibrahim Müteferrika. The sultan was particularly interested in the technological innovations behind the production of this paper, was pleased with the "new paper," and demonstrated his pleasure with a gift of a purse of gold. It is recorded that Ibrahim Muteferrika was pleased with the gift but more in the fact that he had found favor with the sultan. Özcan Özcan, "Kadı Ömer Efendi, Mahmud I Hakkında 1157, No. 1744–1160, No. 1747 Arası Ruzname" (BA Thesis, Istanbul University, 1965), 41–42.

3 Azade Akar, "Ayasofya'da Bulunan Türk Eserleri ve Süslemelerine Dair Bir Araştırma," *VD* 8(1969): 284–286.

4 VGMA, Defter No. 87, 1–2 and 28; TSA, E. 1767.

5 According to the historian Subhi, there were four thousand works housed in the library andthe several catalogues prepared in this period verify this figure.

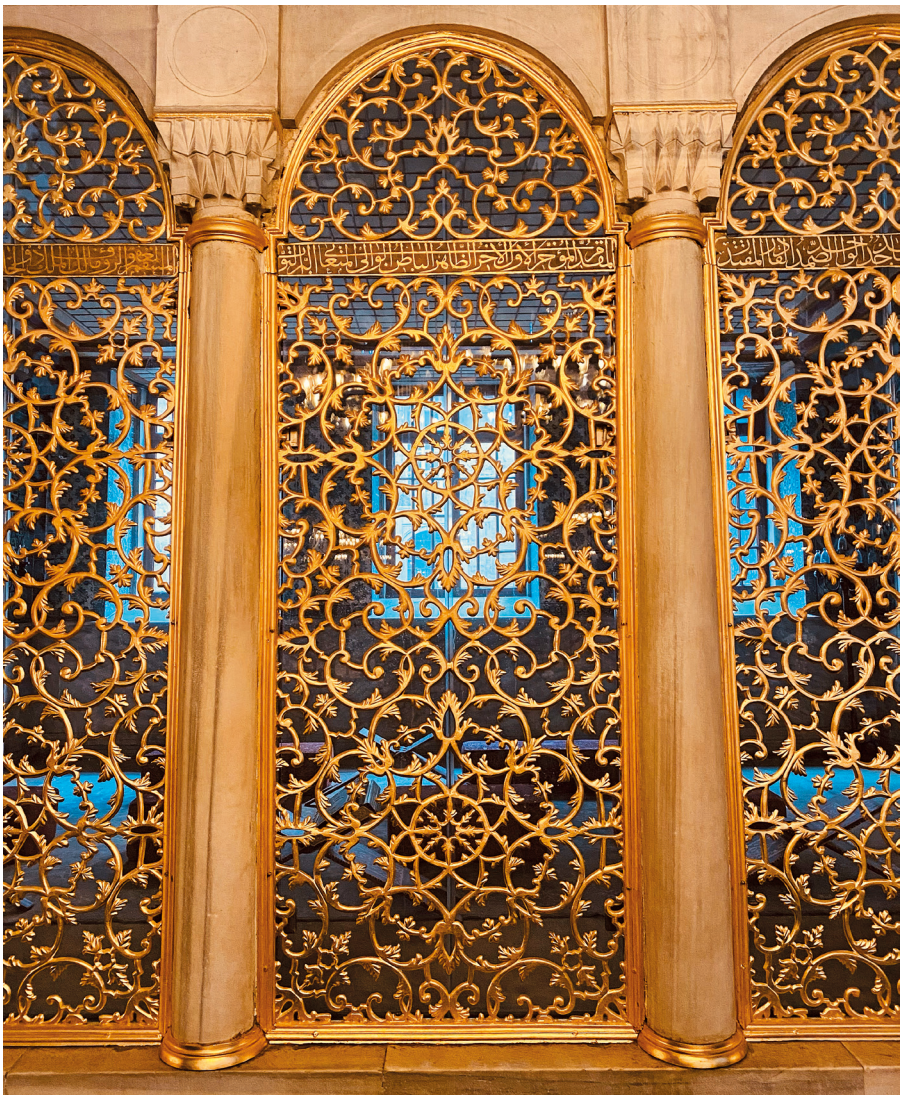


Figure 1: Section in cast brass tombak of the lattice divider in Ottoman Baroque style with floral motifs separating the Ayasofya Library reading room.
Photo: T. Tuten

In January 1740, a foundation deed was drawn up and many of books were endowed in that year.[6] Two months later, the library was officially opened in a ceremony attended by the sultan himself and all the high officials of the state. The ceremony opened with a silent reading of Buharî's collection of the Prophet Muhammed's sayings.[7] This was achieved by allocating a section of the work to each of the many attendant scholars. Each read their section silently and upon finishing recited a prayer. Each of the teachers appointed to the library - for this was to be a teaching library - gave an inaugural lesson, and the

6 VGMA, Kasa No. 47; TSA, D. 1067.
7 Subhi, *Tarih* (İstanbul: Raşid Mehmed Efendi Matbaası, 1198H), 174b–175a.

preacher of the mosque gave a sermon and concluded the ceremony with a prayer. After the lessons, the sultan distributed largess, in the form of gold coins, to the staff of the library. Many of the state officials attending the ceremony presented the sultan with books, which he in turn presented to the library.[8] The opening of the library has found a reflection in folklore. In a particular genre of versification, which is recited in coffee houses and in streets during the month of Ramadan, reference is made to the decoration of the library:

The glory of the Ottoman line
All other states to it supine
From every corner comes great praise
For the library's design
Its decor famed in every clime
Praiseworthy be it through all time
In the Mosque of Ayasofya
The Sultan's made something sublime
Its success ensured by the Almighty
Let it be worthy of the Almighty
And all who viewed this library
Uttered praise to the Almighty[9]

On several occasions, the sultan visited the library and distributed bounties, again in the form of gold coins, to the staff.[10]

At the beginning, the staff of the library consisted of four librarians, one assistant librarian, several teachers, two doormen, three cleaning staff, one binder, and two repairmen for the upkeep of the library building.[11] Within a year of its opening, it was realized that even this large staff would not suffice and we see that the number of librarians was increased from four to six and that their stipend was also raised.[12] In a clause appended to the foundation deed, dated August 1741, provision is made for the post of *buhurî*, that is, a thurifer, who would take burning incense around the library so that it would smell pleasant. An allowance of five aspers per day was made for the purchase of incense.[13]

In the foundation deed dated January 1740, provision was made for classes to be taught in the library, but in a better organized and on a more regular basis than was carried out in other libraries. The foundation deed specifies which books would be taught at what time, on what days, and allowances were to be given to all students who attended the classes.[14]

After inaugurating Ayasofya Library, Mahmud I's energy was focused on the establishment of a new library adjacent to Mehmed II's mosque. He first ordered a building to be constructed at the southeastern end of the mosque, a decision explained in one of the original catalogues of the library: "the noble mosque of Mehmed

8 The names of these donors can be found in the list prepared by Süheyl Ünver. See Süheyl Ünver Archive in the Süleymaniye library, Ayasofya File.

9 Muhtar Yahya Dağlı, *İstanbul Mahalle Bekçilerinin Destan ve Mani Katarları* (İst., Türk Neşriyat Yurdu, 1948), 59–60.

10 TSA, D. 1067, 8a, 16a, and 19a.

11 VGMA, Kasa No. 47.

12 VGMA, No. 639, 62.

13 VGMA, No. 638, 7.

14 VGMA, Defter 87, 2–3; VGMA, No. 638, 7.

Han being the gathering place of the most eminent of scholars and a source of the religious sciences."[15] The opening ceremony was held in May 1742, *muezzin*s recited prayers and professors held inaugural classes. İzzî, the imperial chronicler, was at the scene and recorded that the scholars in attendance were each given a robe of honor and money was distributed to the poor. He adds that the opening of the library was a cause of rejoicing and inspiration to the students of the district.[16]

When this library was first opened, its collection was not large, some two thousand books in all.[17] But throughout his reign, Mahmud I regularly endowed books to the library in order to build up its collection.[18] Furthermore, he ordered that all the books in the mosque should be transferred to the new library building and he also had the books from the nearby Şehzade Mosque join the new collection.[19] It is not known how many books were in the library by the time Mahmud I died (1754), but some eighty years later a survey of this library recorded that there were more than 5,500 works in the collection.[20]

The staffing of Fatih Library was markedly different from that of Ayasofya. Fatih already had a large staff of teachers in its well-established school, so there was little need to appoint teaching staff. The staff of Fatih Library consisted of six librarians, one assistant librarian, one cleaner, and one doorman.[21]



Figure 2: Süleymaniye Library courtyard.
Photo: T. Tuten

15 Süleymaniye Library, Yazma Bağışlar, No. 242, 1b.
16 İzzi, Tarih (İstanbul: Mehmed Raşid ve Ahmed Vasıf [Matbaası], 1199 H), 219b–220a.
17 Süleymaniye Library, Yazma Bağışlar, No. 243, 63b.
18 Süleymaniye Library, Yazma Bağışlar, No. 242.
19 Süleymaniye Library, Yazma Bağışlar, No. 242, 75b and 135a.
20 Süleymaniye Library, Yazma Bağışlar, No. 252; TSA, D. 3310.
21 TSA, E. 1767; VGMA, Defter 87, 5–6. An American lady who visited this library at the end of nineteenth century describes its inner decoration as: "The library that seemed to me the most beautiful of all belonged to the mosque of the Conqueror. There was a wonderful carpet on the floor, in pale blue and old rose, that had been sent as a gift to Sultan Mahmud II from the Shah of Persia. A very curious and interesting brass ornament hung from the dome. There was an illuminated scroll suspended on the wall, beginning, 'O Ye Eternal Being,' the golden letters of which shone in the dim light. The books were old manuscripts of great value, some of them containing rare specimens of Arabic and Persian illumination" (Mary Mills Patrick, *Under Five Sultans* [London: Williams and Norgate, 1930]), 96.

Having made provision for the Ayasofya and Fatih Libraries, Mahmud I then focused his attention on Süleymaniye Library together with Grand Vizier Köse Mustafa Bahir Pasha.[22] There are very few records of what Mahmud I did in terms of organizing Süleymaniye Library. It appears that he moved all the books from various cabinets in which they were stored and created a central storage space, created by putting large iron gratings between the pillars at the southeast corner of the mosque. All the books were brought here.[23] From a later record, we see that the library had fixed opening times from sunrise to the afternoon prayer, five days a week. Five librarians had also been appointed. Books were not to be lent out, but presumably read in the mosque itself.[24] With the organization of the Süleymaniye, Istanbul was now endowed with three large well-staffed and well-organized libraries, one of which (Ayasofya) was at the southeast point of the city next to the palace, and the other (Fatih) geographically at the center of the city. Given that much of the city was uninhabited between the land walls and the Fatih Mosque, it was in fact located at the opposite end of the populated area from Ayasofya. The third mosque, the Süleymaniye, lies in the middle forming a triangle of three centers of learning, and acting as a core for all the other smaller institutions of higher education in Istanbul.[25]

These three libraries housed collections that specialized in the school curricula, and can essentially be viewed as the library system for Ottoman higher education in Istanbul. For the training of palace officials and future generations of statesmen, a different type of collection was necessary, as the medrese libraries did not generally house the types of books necessary for government training. Galata palace had been, for over two centuries prior to Mahmud I's rule, the school for palace personnel, traditionally including the people who would become provincial governors, army officers and viziers. We must presume that, from an early stage, books were available for students to read; the historian Ata notes that many books had been donated to the palace by successive sultans.[26] Apart from this brief note, we have no information about the early stages of this collection.

It was Mahmud I who organized the books into a proper library. He also endowed more books, established a staff, and made provision for its functioning in an endowment deed. He first built a separate library building to which he appointed three librarians and three teachers, who were to give lessons in thelibrary.[27] A catalogue drawn up in 1753 describes a rather rich collection of about two thousand works; but it is the subject matter of these works which is most remarkable. Although the collection contains some works one would expect to find on the school syllabus, the main emphasis is on grammar, literature, and history.[28] This school was not there for the study of religious subjects, but to educate students in Ottoman culture, as they would be the next generation of Ottoman officers and statesmen.

22 Hüseyin Ayvansarayi, *Hadikatü'l-Cevami'*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1281H), 18; HalitDener, *Süleymaniye Umumi Kütüphanesi* (İstanbul: İstanbul Maarif Basımevi, 1957), 35.

23 N. Bayraktar, "İstanbul'daki Vakıf Kütüphaneler ve Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi," *TKDB.* 15, no. 3 (1966): 134–135; Müjgan Cunbur, "Kanuni Devrinde Kitap Sanatı, Kütüphaneleri veSüleymaniye Kütüphanesi," *TKDB* 17, no. 3 (1968): 139.

24 BOA, Müteferrik Section No. 89, 114a–115b.

25 In an interesting book on the topography of Ottoman Buildings, Maurice Cerasi demonstrates that many of the medreses, mosques and libraries tended to cluster in a ridge in the center ofIstanbul, stretching from the palace walls to the walls of the city. Ayasofya is at one end of this cluster, the Fatih Library in the middle and the Süleymaniye set slightly aside from the maincluster: *The Istanbul Divanyolu* (Würzburg: Ergon-Verlag in Kommission, 2004), 80–82.

26 Fethi İsfendiyaroğlu, *Galatasaray Tarihi* (İstanbul: n.p., 1952), 60–61, 114, 267.

27 VGMA, Defter No. 87, 9–10.

28 Süleymaniye Library, Ayasofya Section, Fihrist, No. 5.

Apart from these four libraries in Istanbul, Mahmud I also set up libraries in Cairo,[29] Belgrade,[30] and Vidin,[31] where he not only sent books, but also provided for librarians to look after them. He also provided books for establishments built by others. When the ruler of Crimea, Selamet Giray Han, built a mosque near to his palace it was Mahmud I who provided books for the library,[32] and whenthe mother of Ahmed III built a mosque on the island of Chios the books for the library were again provided by the sultan.[33] In 1746, he sent a decree to thejudge of Kastamonu ordering him to make a survey of the city's libraries and to catalogue the collections and to send these catalogues to the palace. This was all with a view to uniting all libraries in this city into a single collection which couldbe better maintained.[34]

Throughout his reign Mahmud I actively acquired books at every opportunity. This was done in three ways: he received many books as gifts,[35] he enlarged the palace library by confiscating the book collections of officials who died or fellout of favor and thirdly, and, perhaps most conventionally, he purchased books on the open market from booksellers through palace officials.[36]

For Mahmud I's officials, collecting books and subsequently founding libraries became an important charitable act during this period. Thus we see Hekimoğlu Ali Pasha, the grand vizier, founding a library in 1738 next to his mosque, which he had built in 1734 in the Davud Pasha district of Istanbul.[37] Although we have no information as to how many books the library contained, it had a relatively large staff of three librarians and other personnel, and teachers to give lessons in the library.[38] In 1740, Şeyh Mehmed Rıza Efendi donated his large collection of books to this library, and provided for extra staff to look after the expanded collection.[39]

Of all of Mahmud I's officials, the most active in the field of creating charitable foundations seems to have been the chief eunuch of the palace, Hacı Beşir Ağa. As a recipient of a relatively large income, Beşir Ağa seems to have spent mostof it on building mosques, fountains, schools, and not least of all libraries. Like his patron, he was also a bibliophile and built up large collections of books, which he then endowed to his libraries. In the Eyüp district of Istanbul, he founded a school, to which he donated a collection of books and providedthat the library should be staffed by three librarians and an assistant librarian. According to the foundation deed, the senior librarian should be from outside the school, but the other librarians and assistant librarian should be chosen from the best of the students. His library was to be a teaching library and he provided for one teacher and also for a specialist to teach prophetic tradition (*hadis*). Students who attended the lectures were also to receive five aspers scholarship per day. It was determined that the library should be open every day, the librarians taking turns to be on duty.[40] The library was further enlarged

29 According to the Cairo foundation deed, which is dated 1754 (VGMA, 639, 29), provision was made for the building of a school, public fountain, and a library, which was to be housed in this institution, for which a librarian and a binder were to be appointed. I am grateful to Mathilde Pinon for providing me with the reference to this foundation deed.

30 VGMA, No. 638, 190; Mihaila Stajnova, "Ottoman Libraries in Vidin," *Etudes Balkaniques*, no. 2 (1979): 57.

31 BOA, Cevdet-Maarif 7730; İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* 4a (Ankara: TTK Basımevi, 1978): 328.

32 Zafer Karatay, "Bahçesaray," *DİA 4* (1991): 482.

33 VGMA, 639, 57.

34 BOA, Mühimme, No. 152, 136.

35 Examples of these gifts are: a former vizier, Abdullah Pasha presented, in 1750, 186 books,the governor of Sayda, Mehmed Pasha, eleven books. Another official, Hüseyin Bey presented thirty-eight books. The governor of Tripoli, İsmail Pasha, presented 312 books in 1753 andHacı Ahmed Pasha fifty-eight books. A presentation of 3,252 books was made sometime inMahmud I's reign. (Günay Kut, "Sultan I. Mahmud Kütüphanesi (Ayasofya Kütüphanesi,"in *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Bilim Kültür ve Kütüphaneler*, ed. Özlem Bayram (Ankara: Türk Kütüphaneciler Derneği, 1999), 99–12. This enormous collection was presented by the chief eunuch, but it is not indicated. There were two famous collectors of books who rose to this position, and both were called Beşir Ağa. This collection certainly belonged to one ofthem.

36 For several examples, see *TKT*, 99.

37 Hüseyin Ayvansarayî, *Hadikatü'l-Cevami'*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: n.p., 1281H), 81–82.

38 VGMA, No. 736, 67–70. Millet Library, Feyzullah Efendi Section No. 2197.

39 VGMA, No. 629, 37–41.

40 VGMA, No. 736, 4.

by a donation of books made by a certain woman named Rabia Hatun. This collection had originally been donated to Ayasofya, but when it was realized that the books would be more useful at Eyüp they were transferred there in 1743.[41]

Very close to Ayasofya and the Topkapı Palace, in the district of Cağaloğlu, Hacı Beşir Ağa founded a complex consisting of a mosque, a medrese, a dervish convent, a primary school, and a library. The library consisted of a room adjoining the mosque. The foundation deed, dated 1745, provided for four librarians, of which the third librarian also had the duty of doorman. The deed forbade lending books.[42] However, it seems that despite the prohibition, later librarians acceded to the plea of scholars to be allowed to take the books out of library for a limited period of five days. An inspection of the collection revealed that, likely due to the librarians' lenience, thirty-eight of the 714 books had gone missing. It was therefore decided to close the library and prepare a new catalogue. When the library reopened in 1784, instructions once more prohibited the practice of lending in the strongest terms possible.[43]

In Medina, Beşir Ağa built a medrese with a library attached to it.[44] We do not know how many books he donated to the library, but he evidently expanded the collection throughout his life. An example of this process is recorded in a document which notes that he dispatched seventy-two books to the library in September of 1739.[45] A hundred years later, the judge of Medina, Işkî Mustafa Efendi wrote a history of this city, in which he noted that bookbinders were sent by the sultan to repair the books in all the libraries of Medina. In Beşir Ağa's library the binder repaired 961 books.[46] This gives us some indication of the extent of the collection. When the orientalist Richard Burton wrote his account of his travels to the city in the mid-1800s, he noted that Beşir Ağa Library was known for its large collection.[47]

In the Balkan town of Sistova (Svishtov), Beşir Ağa built a school and library in response to a request for books on the religious sciences to be available for both students and the people at large. As Sistova was a relatively small town, the collection consisted of a mere ninety-eight books.[48]

Beşir Ağa collected and donated books throughout his life. Already existing libraries received quantities of books from time to time. It is recorded, for example in a document dated 1734, that Beşir Ağa donated a quantity of books to a library attached to the mausoleum of the Imam A'zam Abu Hanifa, the founder of the Hanefi school of law, in Baghdad.[49] He also allocated to the librarian in al-Azhar school, in Cairo, an amount of money in one of his foundation deeds.[50] The sultan also received books as a gift from Beşir Ağa. We may presume that these were particularly fine copies or rare books.[51] However, some of the finest and rarest he kept for himself. On his death (1746) in one of his several residences 150 valuable and rare books were found including the autograph copy of the *Cihannüma,* a renowned Ottoman geographical work.[52]

41 VGMA, No. 638, 187–188.

42 Süleymaniye Library, Hacı Beşir Ağa Section No. 682, 105b–118a.

43 VGMA, No. 639, 128–150.

44 VGMA, No. 638, 141–142.

45 Istanbul Court Registers, Evkaf-ı Hümayun Müfettişliği, No. 130, 267.

46 Işkî Mustafa b. Ömer Kilisî, *Ta'tirü Ercai'd-Devleti'l-mecdiyye*, Istanbul University ManuscriptLibrary, T. Y. 1490, 176b.

47 Richard F. Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to el-Medinah and Meccah*, vol. 2 (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans and Roberts, 1855), 289.

48 VGMA, No. 638, 141–142.

49 VGMA, No. 735, 169.

50 Hamza Abd al-Aziz Badr - Daniel Crecelius, "The Awqaf of al-Hajj Bashir Agha in Cairo,"*Annales Islamologiques* 27 (1993): 294. When Volney visited Al-Azhar, he noted that there were many old volumes of which a considerable number were still being issued to thestudents. However, as a Christian, he himself was forbidden to handle the books. *Travels through Syria and Egypt, in the Years 1783, 1784 and 1785*, vol. 2 (London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1788), 449.

51 Zeren Tanındı, "Bibliophile Aghas (Eunuchs) at Topkapı Sarayı," *Muqarnas* 21 (2004): 339.

52 TSA, D. 23, 36a–b, 37a. The *Cihannüma* had a number of maps and was so highly esteemed that it was one of the first books to be set in print.

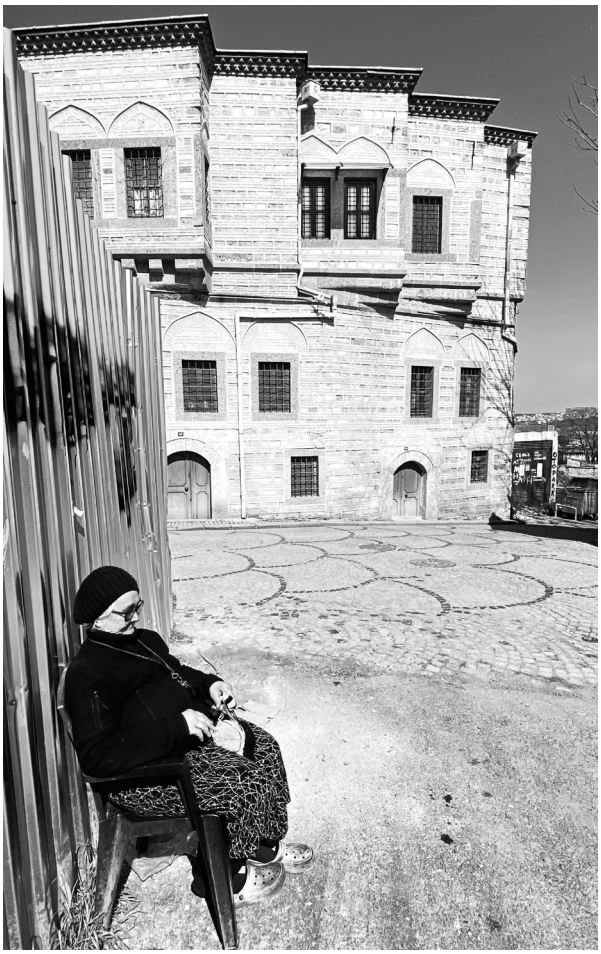


Figure 3: Atıf Efendi Library built in 1740 in Vefa, Istanbul. Born and reaised opposite the library, Nilgün Hanım tells the visitor where the bell is for the guard to open the door. Photo: T. Tuten.

Another of Sultan Mahmud I's statesmen, Atıf Mustafa Efendi, who was *defterdar*, a post corresponding to minister of finance, also emulated his sovereign by founding a library in the Vefa district of Istanbul. This libraryis a good example of an independent library not attached to a mosque or a medrese. It seems that Ayasofya served as a model for the organization and activities of Atıf Mustafa's library. As it was established with several foundation deeds, we have a rare insight into how a library was established in this period. The first three of these deeds provide for the future income of the library.[53] Another deed from May 1741 makes provision for the books to be donated,[54] a further deed from September 1741 provides for the building,[55] and the last deed, later that same month, provides for the organization of the library.[56] As the collection consisted of more than two thousand books, many of which were rare and valuable, such as autographs or books copied by famous scholars and calligraphers, Atıf Efendi was keen to see that they were properly cared for. To this end he made provision for three librarians, the senior to receive eighty aspers per day, the others seventy aspers each. The stipends were generous enough to allow him to make it conditional that they should not take up other employment and that they should reside in the accommodation provided for them next to the library. When Toderini visited the library some forty years later, he noted that the library had three resident librarians.[57] As in Ayasofya, Atıf Efendi envisaged that teaching would be carried out in the library and provided for a teacher with a daily stipend of fifteen aspers togive lessons. As the library was independent, it was not attached to a mosque,so that prayers would have to be performed in the library itself. He therefore provided that the head librarian would lead prayers in the reading room andthat

53 Atıf Efendi Library, No. 2858, 1b–26b.

54 Fuad Sezgin, "Atıf Efendi Vakfiyesi," İ. Ü. *Edebiyat Fakültesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi* 6(1955): 136.

55 Atıf Efendi Library, No. 2858, 27b–02b, 103a–104b. For the architectural characteristics ofthe library building see: Özden Çetinalp, "Atıf Efendi Library in Vefa," *Rölöve* 1 (1968): 31.

56 Atıf Efendi Library, No. 2858, 104b–109a.

57 G. Toderini, *De la litterature des Turcs, traduit de l'Italien en Français par l'Abbe de Cournand*,vol. 2 (Paris: Chez Poinçot, 1789), 86.

the second librarian would act as *müezzin*. During his lifetime and after his death, Atıf Efendi's family made additional bequests to the library and provided additional income.[58]



Figure 4: Atıf Efendi Library.
Photo: T. Tuten

Another of Mahmud I's statesmen, Mustafa Efendi, the director of the Imperial Chancery, founded an independent library in Istanbul. He had originally demanded that his books should be divided between a school he had built in Kastamonu and a mosque he had built in Belgrade.[59] However, he later made another will (dated 1747) in which he donated all his books to a library to be founded in Istanbul and provided for two librarians and three teachers to work in the Valide and Mahmud Pasha Mosques until the library building was completed,[60] but he died before the building was completed. His son Aşir Efendi completed the construction of the building (1800) which consisted of a reading room and a classroom. We can see from the disposition of the staff that the teaching function was given more importance in this library. Beside reading and teaching, certain religious activities, such as reciting the *Mevlid*, a Turkish poem about the birth and life of the Prophet, and reading passages of the Koran for the soul of the founder were to be carried out there.[61]

Quite apart from the larger independent libraries in Istanbul and the larger towns, and mosques continued to receive books by way of bequests. Almost every medrese could boast a library no matter

58 Atıf Efendi Library, No. 2858, 109b–134b.

59 VGMA, No. 736, 205–206.

60 VGMA, No. 738, 142.

61 Süleymaniye Library, Aşir Efendi Section No. 473, 7a–b; Süleymaniye Library, Yazma Bağışlar, No. 2783; VGMA, No. 738, 142; Virginia Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi 1700–1783* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 25–27.

how humble. Many mosques too had libraries, so that it could be said that the Ottoman library system had spread throughout the empire to all the cities and indeed to many small towns.[62]

However well the Ottoman library system may have been developed by the latter half of the eighteenth century, it is clear that some Ottomans were far from complacent. In 1769, a bureaucrat by the name of Penah Efendi was highly critical of donors who either founded libraries in Istanbul or bequeathed their books to existing institutions therein. According to him, the capital already had enough books and if bequests were to be directed to provincial libraries, science and knowledge would be more evenly spread throughout all the provinces. Furthermore, he argued, concentrating all the schools and libraries in Istanbul would create a tendency for students to study in these institutions, rather than at their local school and this would be one of the causes of overpopulation in the city.[63]

The reign of Mahmud I (1730–1754) established the independent library as the norm. The reigns of his five successors, Osman III (1754–1757), Mustafa III (1757–1774), Abdülhamid I (1774–1789), Selim III (1789–1807), and Mahmud II 1808–1839) were to see the spread of independent libraries not only in Istanbul, but also in the provinces as well. Apart from the libraries he established, Mahmud I had also begun to build his mosque complex in the well-established tradition of imperial endowments. He chose a site to the south of the Covered Bazaar (Kapalıçarşı) which was close to many of the existing schools. The mosque is quite unusual for its rococo style and shows definite European influences. But it is most notable for the prominence of the library building, which, though part of the complex, was in effect designed to act as an independent library. Many books from the palace and other sources were designated for this library, and the imperial seal and endowment record of Mahmud I was applied to the flyleaf, indicating that the books had been endowed to the library. Unfortunately, Mahmud I did not live to see the completion of his complex or to give his name to the library which was to surpass all other libraries he had established. When he died in 1754, his brother, Osman III, completed the complex and gave his own name to it. Both the mosque and the library are known as the Nuruosmaniye, "the light of Osman."[64] Osman III sent the books which his late brother had chosen together with other books he himself selected to the library. Mahmud I's seal and endowment record were pasted over with paper and Osman III's own seal was placed on the books.[65] Osman III did not seem to have shared his brother's passion for library administration. In the endowment deed, in the section where we would normally expect to find the regulation for running the library, we find a short statement to the effect that the regulations applicable were to be the same as those which his brother had stipulated for the Ayasofya and Fatih Libraries.[66]

Nuruosmaniye Library was opened in December of 1755 with the usual ceremonies attended by the sultan, scholars, and high state officials.[67] At this point, the library had a collection of 5,031 books, making it the largest collection in Istanbul, the library of Ahmed III being a close runner-up with a collection approaching five thousand books.[68] The library was to have one general supervisor, six librarians, three doormen, one cleaning person, and one binder. Curiously, a further six member of staff whose actual duties were not defined[69] were also appointed. Their title *mustahfiz* suggests that they were guardians and probably acted as security staff.

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62 For a list of bequests made to libraries in this period, see *TKT*, 96–98.

63 Aziz Berker, "Mora İhtilali Tarihçesi veya Penah Efendi Mecmuası," *Tarih Vesikaları* 2, no. 12(1943): 479.

64 Şemdanîzade *Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Tarihi, Mür'i't-Tevarih*, vol. 2, no. A, ed. M. MünirAktepe (İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Matbaası, 1978), 4–6.

65 For some examples see: Nuruosmaniye Library, nos. 622, 1134, 2697, 3873.

66 VGMA, Dolap 49, 22.

67 *Mür'i't-Tevarih*, vol. 2, no. A, 5–6.

68 It should be noted that Toderini, usually a reliable informant on the subject of Istanbullibraries, has mistakenly given the number of books in this library as 1,693. G. Toderini, *De la litterature des Turcs, traduit de l'Italien en Français par l'Abbe de Cournand*, vol. 2 (Paris: ChezPoinçot, 1789), 97.

69 VGMA, No. 98, 10–12; TSA, D. 3311, 5b.

State officials also accumulated rich collections and established various libraries in this period. The grand vizier to Osman III and Mustafa III, Ragıb Pasha, was an ardent collector of books in addition to being a poet and writer. Having built up a large private collection, he made provision for an independent library to be built in the center of Istanbul. Before he endowed his collection, Ragıb Pasha employed a librarian to look after his books. However, this member of his household staff was not called *hafız-ı kütüb*, which means "keeper of books," but was referred to as a *kitabçı*, a "book specialist."[70] This nuance reflects a different role. The primary role of a keeper of books was precisely to preserve the collection with the secondary duty of facilitating public access to it. The book specialist was a private servant whose duties covered everything to do with books, including not only classification, cataloguing, and general maintenance, but also buying them, and so forth. Ragıb Pasha completed his library in 1763.[71] The historian Vasıf Efendi noted:

Ragıb Pasha, having for many years, collected, selected, searched, and had copies made of many books, and to preserve them from harm and loss and to make them available for the use of the people, furthermore, endowed a library in which he placed these books.[72]

Although these books were inalienably endowed to the library, Ragıb Pasha had reserved to himself the right to borrow books for his own personal use. On his death, twenty-eight of these books were found in his house and were dispatched to the library to rejoin the collection.[73] There were apparently more books belonging to Ragıb Pasha, which were in the house belonging to his senior wife. In the Topkapı Palace Archives, there is a letter from Sultan Mustafa III to his grand vizier in which the Sultan gives orders for a certain book to be found and dispatched to him. The style is informal:

> My Vizier,
>
> Summon Hatib-zade [presumably one of Ragıb Pasha's retainers] and his bookman Zihni Efendi and find out why the books on astrology have failed to appear among his books. There are apparently some books in the house of his senior wife. I have no interest in the household furnishings or the other books in the house, but there is a book on astrology from Persia which the late Ragıb Pasha had praised and promised to me. Ask that all the books in the house be taken away and we will search for the book on astrology and return the remainder of the books.[74]

As we would expect of a bibliophile statesman, Ragıb Pasha had definite ideas as to how a library was to be run. His first requirement was that the librarians should be full-time workers, and he allowed them an adequate stipend to ensure this. He also created a post of "*hafız-ı kütüb yamağı*," an aide to the librarian, whose duties appear to have been retrieving books from and replacing them on the shelves. He required that the librarians should live in residences near the library, which had been built for this purpose, and even provided for the librarians to take turns staying overnight in the library. While other libraries were open five days a week at the most, Ragıb Pasha set down that his library should be open six days a week.[75]

Osman III's reign (1754–1757) was too short to allow him to do more than complete and open his brother's library. Mustafa III, on the other hand, reigned from 1757 to 1774, and this allowed him to see the completion of two important libraries. The first of these was the library that he endowed to the school

70 TSA, D. 6090.

71 *Mür'i't-Tevarih*, vol. 2, no. A, 54.

72 *Vasıf Tarihi*, vol. 1, 129.

73 TSA, D. 6090.

74 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, "Osmanlı Tarihinde Gizli Kalmış veya Şüphe ile Örtülü Bazı Olaylarve Bu Hususa Dair Vesikalar," *Belleten* 41, no. 163 (1977): 531.

75 Istanbul Court Registers, Evkaf-ı Hümayun Müfettişliği, No. 171, 1b–6b; Ahmed İhsan Türek, "Ragıb Paşa Kütüphanesi Vakfiyesi," *Edebiyat Fakültesi Araştırma Dergisi* 1, no. 1 (1970):65–78.

situated in the complex of the Laleli Mosque.[76] Mustafa III also built a library in a section of Topkapı Palace, which is referred to as Bostancılar Ocağı Library.[77] This library was established for the benefit of the palace staff. It was not permitted to take books out of the library, so it essentially served as a reference library in which classes were given in certain subjects. Three part-time librarians were appointed to the library, and their comparatively low salaries reflects the part-time nature of their employment.[78]

We have additional information about this library from a rather unexpected source. In the retinue of the British ambassador, there arrived a certain Professor Carlyle in Istanbul in 1800. He had come in search of Byzantine manuscripts. Believing that palace library may have held some of these, Carlyle bribed a palace official to show him around the palace library. He described the library as cruciform in shape and stated that the building had been erected in 1767, but the library was no longer operating and was closed by 1800. He was, however, able to see the books on the shelves, but found no Byzantine manuscripts.[79]

He describes the library in a letter to the Bishop of Lincoln:

> After waiting some time for intelligence respecting the Bostangeebashi (*Bostancıbaşı*), his deputy arrived, read the letters we had brought, and his principal was engaged in the Seraglio, took upon himself to send for the keeper of the library, and direct him to conduct us thither; we accordingly accompanied him and three other Moulahs to a mosque at a little distance, through which the entrance to the library lies. ... We passed through the mosque as we were directed, without speaking, and upon tiptoe; and at a length on the other side of it, arrived at the outward door of the library, which was locked, and a seal fixed upon the lock; above it is a short Arabic inscription, containing the name and titles of Sultan Mustapha, the present Emperor's father, who founded both the mosque and the library in the year 1767. The library is built in the form of a Greek cross, as in the margin; one of the arms of the cross serves as an anti-room, and the three remaining arms, together with the center, constitute the library itself. You proceed through anti-room by a door, over which is written in large Arabic characters, "enter in peace." The library is much smaller than Your Lordship could have any conception of; for from the extremity of one of the arms to the extremity of the opposite one it does not measure twelve yards. Its appearance, however is elegant and cheerful. The central part of the cross is covered with a dome, which is supported by four handsome marble pillars... The bookcases, four of which stand in each of the three recesses are plain but neat. They are furnished with folding wire-work doors, secured with a padlock and the seal of the librarian. The books are laid upon their sides one above another, with their ends outwards, and having their letters written upon the edges of the leaves. Your Lordship may imagine I lost no time in examining the treasures enclosed in this celebrated repository, and the disposition of the books greatly facilitated my inquiries. I am very certain that there was not one volume which I did not separately examine; but I was prevented by the jealousy of the Moulahs who accompanied me from making out a detailed catalogue of the whole. I continued, however, to take an account of all writers on history and general literature, and I hope by means of a present to procure an accurate list of the remainder. The whole number of MSS, in the library amounts to 1294, much the greatest part of which are Arabic, these are however, most of the

76 VGMA, No. 642, 145.

77 P. Ğ. İnciciyan, *XVIII. Asırda İstanbul*, trans. Hrand D. Andreasyan (İstanbul Fethi Derneği, 1956), 23.

78 VGMA, Kasa 187, 350–358; TSA, D. 330

79 Robert Walpole, *Memoirs relating to European and Asiatic Turkey*, Edited from Manuscript Journals by Robert Walpole (London: Longman & Co., 1817), 172.

best Persian and Turkish writers, but alas, not a volume in Greek, Hebrew, or Latin.[80]

Unfortunately, what Carlyle is describing as the palace library is in fact Bostancılar Ocağı Library. The palace library had been built earlier that century and was a rectangular building, which was not closed at that period. Carlyle had been duped into thinking that this now redundant staff library was the library of the sultan. But we are fortunate to get this information. In 1831, Mahmud II ordered that the books in this library be moved to Laleli Library.[81] The palace staff clearly had no great need of a special library for themselves, seeing that they had access to the main palace library. The library was closed after some thirty years of operation and after another thirty years the books were transferred elsewhere.

Another important library was built by Veliyüddin Efendi, twice chief mufti in Mustafa III's reign. He had originally endowed 150 books to Atıf Efendi Library in 1761, and at the same time raised the salaries of the librarians to compensate them for the extra work involved in looking after an enlarged collection.[82] However, this relatively small endowment did not satisfy him and he embarked upon a far more ambitious project; he built a library next to the Beyazıt Mosque and endowed it with 1,690 books, to which were added the 150 books of his original endowment to Atıf Efendi Library.[83] Although not very large when compared to the Fatih and Nuruosmaniye Libraries, the collection drew many scholars. Vasıf Efendi, the historian, noted that there were many rare books in the collection so that this library was busier than others in Istanbul. He also noted that Veliyüddin Efendi's son continued to search for rare books to add to his father's collection.[84] The conditions governing the running of the library were very much the same as those in the Atıf Efendi and Ragıb Pasha Libraries.[85]

Quite apart from the above mentioned large endowments, the foundation of smaller medrese libraries and the endowment of small collections to existing libraries continued during this period.[86] Libraries were either being founded anew, or existing collections were being enlarged throughout the empire.

The periods of Abdülhamid I (1774–1789) and Selim III (1789–1807) were marked by the growing realization that the Ottoman Empire was on the verge of collapse, after the disastrous treaty of Küçük Kaynarca with the Russians in 1774, and that sweeping and radical reforms were necessary to avert the unthinkable. New Western-style institutions were introduced in this period, mainly for the purpose of military training. To establish a new Western-style army and pay for the new expertise, the state became involved in an increasing amount of expenditure. This period is marked by a decrease in imperial endowments, partially compensated by an increase in endowments from prominent statesmen.

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80 Ibid., 171–172. Carlyle is merely one of the numerous foreign visitors determined to have access to ancient works inherited from the Byzantine period. In fact, the "Sultan's Library"acquired mythic proportions in the West. It harbored as yet unknown works of the ancients,and the Ottoman attitude of secrecy and suspicion towards foreigners only gave more credence to the myth. See, for instance, Michel Baudier, *Histoire Generalle du Serrail et de la Cour du Grand Seigneur Empereur des Turcs* (Paris: Chez Claude Caramoisy, 1626), 25; P. Š. İnciciyan, *XVIII. Asırda İstanbul Tarihi*, trans. Hrand D. Andreasyan (İstanbul: İstanbul Fethi Derneği, 1956), 23. There is much evidence that Mehmed II's library contained a substantial number of non-Islamic books, the majority of which were in Greek. However, these books were never been catalogued together with the Islamic works. Succeeding Sultans seem to have taken little interest in these books and most of them gradually disappeared from the palace. (Speros Vryonis, "Byzantine Constantinople and Ottoman Istanbul," in *The Ottoman City and its Parts: Urban Structure and Social Order*, ed. Irene A. Bierman and Rifa'at A. Abou-el-Haj (New York: A.D.Caratzas, 1991), 37–39.

81 VGMA, No. 642, 103–145.

82 Istanbul Court Registers, Evkaf-ı Hümayun Müfettişliği, No. 164, 381b–384b.

83 83 VGMA, No. 745, 79.

84 *Vasıf Tarihi*, vol. 1, 206–207.

85 VGMA, No. 745, 80.

86 For a detailed list of these libraries see: *TKT*, 106–107.

The decrease in imperial largess can be seen in the library built by Abdülhamid I in a small complex he built at Bahçekapı in Istanbul.[87] The library only housed 1,552 books and the staff consisted of only four librarians, one binder, one sweeper, and one doorman.[88] The collection was enlarged by an endowment of 750 books from Lala İsmail Efendi.[89] As for Selim III's endowments, they too are comparatively meager: he endowed thirty books to a library in Medina,[90] reorganized Laleli Library, erected a new building there,[91] and repaired Selimiye Library in Edirne and endowed it with some books.[92]

However, statesmen of this period continued the tradition of either building complete libraries or at least endowing books to existing institutions. While Istanbul benefited from much of the expansion of libraries, there seems to be a growing feeling that the city offered ample access to books with the existing collections, and thus we see a trend towards establishing or enlarging provincial libraries. The statesmen usually chose a provincial town or city that they had some connection with, either their birthplace or somewhere they had been appointed to in the course of their careers. For example Silahdar Seyyit Mehmed Pasha established a library in his birthplace, the village of Arabsun near Nevşehir.[93] Halil Hamid Pasha, grand vizier, established two libraries, one in Isparta,[94] one in Burdur.[95] Ahmed Ağa founded a library in Rhodes, his birthplace, in 1793, and specified that classes were to be given in it five days a week.[96] Mehmed Raşid Efendi, the director of the Imperial Chancery, founded a library with a collection of almost one thousand books in Kayseri in 1797, where he had been posted earlier in his career. This library is particularly interesting in that we see a development in the thinking about the operation through a series of added regulations each presumably there to correct some existing deficiency or abuse.[97] Other libraries were founded in this manner in Antalya by Hacı Mehmed Ağa (1797),[98] in Keban by Yusuf Ziya Pasha (1798),[99] in Akhisar by Zeynelzade Hacı Ali Efendi (1804),[100] in Manisa by Karaosmanoğlu Hacı Hüseyin Ağa (1806),[101] in Prizren by Mehmed Pasha (1805),[102] in Vidin by Pazvantoğlu Osman Pasha,[103] and in İzmir by Hatice Hanım (1806).[104]

Yusuf Ağa, the controller of the mint and holder of several other important positions, founded a library in Konya (1794), neither his birthplace nor a place to which he had been appointed at some time

87 *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 2 (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Osmaniye, 1309H), 46 and 81; Hüseyin Ayvansarayî, *Hadikatü'l-Cevami'*, vol. 2 (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1281H), 179. See also Müjgan Cunbur, "I. Abdülhamid'in Vakfiyesi ve Hamidiye Kütüphanesi," *Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi* 22 (1964): 17–69. See also: Fikret Sarıcaoğlu, *Kendi Kaleminden Bir Padişahın Portresi: Sultan I. Abdülhamid (1774–1789)* (İstanbul: Tatav, Tarih ve Tabiat Vakfı, 2001), 27–29.

88 VGMA, No. 86, 1. Abdülhamid'in Hazine Defteri, 31.

89 VGMA, No. 746, 343–345.

90 TSA, No. E. 2885, No. 19.

91 VGMA, No. 93, 125–127.

92 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, No. 16, 161.

93 VGMA, No. 742, 66.

94 VGMA, No. 628, 547, and 554.

95 M. Z. Oral, "Mevcut Vesikalara Göre Burdur Kütüphaneleri ve Kitap Vakfiyeleri," *Belleten*, 24, no. 94 (1960): 235–236.

96 VGMA, No. 743, 93–94, and 156.

97 VGMA, No. 579, 68.

98 S. Fikri Erten, *Tekelioğulları* (İstanbul: Hüsnütabiat Basımevi, 1955), 17–26.

99 VGMA, No. 579, 50

100 Mehmed Emin Müderrisoğlu, *Akhisarlı Türk Büyükleri ve Eserleri* (İzmir: Piyasa Matbaası, 1956), 85–86.

101 Sadık Karaöz, *Manisa İli Kütüphaneleri* (Ankara: Ayyıldız Matbaası, 1974), 24; İbrahim Gökçen, *Manisa Tarihinde Hayırlar ve Vakıflar* (İstanbul: Marif Basımevi, 1950), 82; İnci Kuyulu, *Kara Osmanoğlu Ailesine Ait Mimarî Eserler* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1992), 100–110.

102 İlhan Polat, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Devrinde Yugoslavya'da Kurulan Türk Kütüphaneleri" (Graduation thesis, University of Ankara, 1969), 40–42.

103 Mihaila Stajnova, "Ottoman Libraries in Vidin," *Etudes Balkaniques*, no. 2 (1979): 67.

104 İzmir Vakıflar Müdürlüğü, archive 2. Vakfiye Defteri, 40–45.

in his career. It seems that hewanted to establish a library in a city that needed one. The library he built was large by provincial standards: it had over one thousand books. The regulations for operating the library were the same as those in the Atıf Efendi, Ragıb Pasha and Hamidiye Libraries, save that the salaries were, for reasons unknown, to be paid six-monthly, and that it was stipulated that the librarian was to be from the city of Konya.[105] This stipulation would seem to be addressing a problem that was bothering the founders of libraries. An issue encountered by Raşid Efendi, among others, was that the librarians left to visit their families in other towns at intervals during the year. Locally based librarians would not require this type of leave. The sultan was so gratified by Yusuf Ağa's endowment that he allocated sources of state revenue to pay for the running of the library.[106]



Figure 5: Koca Ragıb Pasha Library, 1763 Divanyolu.
Photo: T. Tuten

Istanbul also benefited from the expansion of the network of libraries. In 1775, Mehmed Murad Efendi built an independent library in Çarşamba, which was to house his collection of books. They had previously been housed in a Nakşibendi dervish convent in the same district.[107] Unfortunately, we do not have the endowment deed and therefore we do not know the number of books in the collection when the library was opened. However, a later documents shows that it was staffed with five librarians, a number which would suggest a sizable collection.[108]

Another library was founded by Selim Ağa, the controller of the imperial arsenals. He envisaged his independent library as primarily a teaching libraryand made it a requisite that two of the three librarians should be scholars capable of performing the duties of a teacher. The chief mufti was to choose them and ensure that they were well qualified for the task. We can see the influence of the Ragıb Pasha and Atıf Efendi

105 Istanbul Court Registers, Evkaf-ı Hümayun Müfettişliği, No. 261, 53–54.
106 Istanbul Court Registers, Evkaf-ı Hümayun Müfettişliği, No. 261, 57–58.
107 Muzaffer Gökman, *Murat Molla. Hayatı, Kütüphanesi ve Eserleri* (İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Matbaası, 1943), 12.
108 VGMA, dolap 1628.

libraries on the administration of this library. Thelibrarians were expected to teach, to lead prayers and to reside in houses built forthem close to the library.[109]



Figure 6: Hacı Selim Agha Library, 1782 Üsküdar
Photo: T. Tuten

A third library was built by Said Efendi in Istanbul in the district of Saraçhane, in the precincts of the Dülgeroğlu Mosque. The collection consisted of 697 books, and it had a staff of fo through the Rodosî Ha[z Ahmed Agha Manuscripts ur librarians for whom rooms were provided so that they could reside closeby. Unfortunately, the library building no longer existsand we have no record of what happened to the books.[110]

Another sizable library was founded in Istanbul in 1801 by İbrahim Efendi, who endowed 753 books to the medrese of Kılıç Ali Pasha in Tophane. The collection is interesting in that most of the books were on Koranic exegesis, reflecting İbrahim Efendi's profession of teacher and scholar. The foundation deed is unusual in that he appoints four librarians from his family and mentions them by name. He stipulates that on their death other members of his family were to be the librarians and failing this the librarians would be appointed from people residing in the district of Tophane.[111] As a scholar he had insufficient capital to endow a building, so to ensure that his books would be available asa distinct collection he housed them in an existing medrese, and employed his family to act as librarians to ensure that the collection was properly looked after. He also seems to have wanted the librarians to reside close to the library. Thefirst librarian was to be paid 40 aspers, the second and third 20 aspers and the fourth 16 aspers per day. This contrasts with large libraries of the period where the salaries were between 80 and 120 aspers.

One small collection is worthy of note, one endowed by Abdülkadir Bey to a court of law in Istanbul, in 1808. The books were mainly on jurisprudence and were most useful to the officers of the court. The collection was to be administered by the staff working there.[112]

109 VGMA, No. 579, 122.

110 TSA, No. D. 10, 294; VGMA, No. 743, 501.

111 Süleymaniye Library, Kılıç Ali Paşa Section No. 1049 and 1050; Istanbul Court Reg., İstanbul Kadılığı, No. 79, 6b–8b, 85a, 16b–18b.

112 Istanbul Court Registers, Galata Mahkemesi, No. 584, 63b.

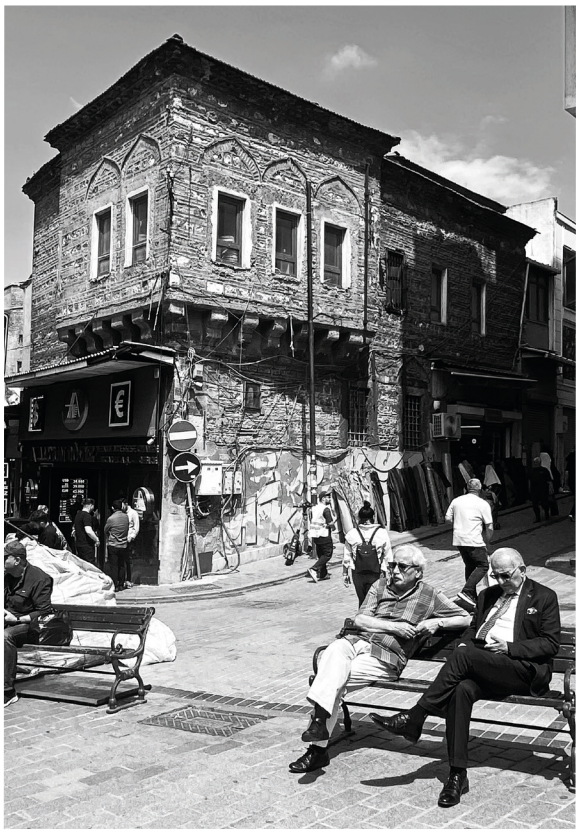


Figure 7: Aşir Efendi Library, 1800 Bahçekapı.
Photo: T. Tuten

Of course, we should not forget that throughout this period the existing library collections were growing larger through endowment made by relatives and descendants of the original founders. The salaries of the librarians were also increasing and sometimes the library staff was enlarged to meet the demands of growing collections. We also have examples of sons building libraries to fulfil the wishes of a deceased parent. As we have already noted, Mustafa Efendi, the director of the Imperial Chancery, in the reign of Mahmud I, had intended to found a library in the Bahçekapı district of Istanbul.[113] Unfortunately, he died before his wishes could be realized, and so when his son, Aşir Efendi, becoming the chief mufti in 1799, built the library in Bahçekapı and endowed to it his father's collection together with his own. In the foundation deed, dated 1800, he kept all the conditions stipulated by his father, but increased the salaries by providing new incomes.[114] The increase in salaries mirrored the changing economic conditions. Aşir Efendi's son, Hafid Efendi, in his turn, added both to the collection and activities of the library. When he became the military judge of Rumelia, he endowed 466 books which were not to be kept as a distinct collection, but were to be dispersed in the main collection, according to their subject classification. He also invested 1,500 kuruş so as to provide an income which was to pay for the recitation of the *Mevlid* poem on special occasions. Sweets and desserts were to be distributed to the congregation on these occasions.[115]

Again in 1805, we find Mehmed Asım Bey, a member of the Köprülü family and also the administrator of Köprülü Library, making provision for the expansion of the collection. He noted in an endowment deed that local students were requesting certain popular textbooks which were unavailable in the library. To rectify the situation, he bought 350 of the books most in demand and provided money for the future purchase of necessary books.[116] The son of Selim Ağa also increased his father's initial collection.[117]

It is in this period we see libraries subjected to inspections and occasionally their activities being suspended for a period of time. The libraries would be closed by the inspector of foundations when he discovered irregularities in their operations. We have, for example, noted elsewhere that Hacı Beşir Ağa Library was closed when inspectors discovered that books were going missing as a result of practices contrary to the terms of the foundation deed.[118]

113 113 VGMA, No. 736, 205–206.
114 Süleymaniye Library, Aşir Efendi Section No. 473, 7a–b.
115 Süleymaniye Library, Hafid Efendi Section No. 486, 7a–9b.
116 VGMA, No. 580, 13–14.
117 Istanbul Court Registers, Üsküdar Mahkemesi, No. 564, 80.
118 VGMA, No. 639, 129–130.

In 1776, when the first librarian of Nuruosmaniye Library died it was discovered that several books in his house belonged to the library. Immediately, the library's operations were suspended, and an inventory was made. In the words of the inspector:

> I, being the inspector of the Nuruosmaniye Library, hereby affirm that Yusuf Efendi, having been head librarian since the foundation of the library, and having died on the 2 Şevval in the year 1190 [14 November 1776], some [library] books were discovered among his belongings and it was further ascertained that he had lent out books, in violation of the conditions of the library and so the books which he had taken home were returned and the books which had been lent were retrieved as much as was possible and the books were checked against the list and a new inventory was prepared.[119]

In the list of missing books, it is noted that Yusuf Ziya Pasha, a former grandvizier, had borrowed and lost a book and that his receipt for borrowing the book was to be found in a certain box. The inventory was to show that nineteen books had gone missing, but none of these were of great value. However, fifteen valuable books bearing the sultan's seal were found to have been uncatalogued and there were also fourteen valuable pieces of calligraphy unrecorded.[120]

In the medrese of Mahmud Pasha, the librarians seemed to have ceased fulfilling their duties and over a period of fifty years had allowed the 342 books belonging to the school to remain in the cabinets unattended and subject to dust and insects. The students complained to the inspector of trusts and he sent some of his staff to investigate. He finally ordered the books to be cleaned, repaired, and catalogued and the librarian was instructed to fulfil his duty by allowing the students access to the books.[121]

This period, as has been mentioned above, saw the state increasingly involved in reforming the central administration, and particularly the military. New libraries were being opened and these contained Western books. That is not to say that the classical libraries were being neglected. In fact, this period sees great energy expended on inspection, control, and reorganization of libraries whenever necessary. The process of increasing central control over the library system became even more significant in the reign of Mahmud II.

In 1807, the reign of Selim III came to an abrupt and bloody end with his deposition and death at the hand of the Janissaries, the Ottoman troops who were set against any reforms which threatened their status and privileges. When Mahmud II came to the throne in 1809, he realized that the reforms would have to be postponed until he was in a position to neutralize the forces of reaction. Thus, the earlier part of his reign was marked by stealthy preparations for carrying out a broad program of reforms, which would include the education of the future elite. This would inevitably make its impression on the library system.

The classical Ottoman system essentially divided the branches of learning according to the traditional Islamic syllabus, which was taught in the medreses created as religious foundations; these, therefore, were not within the realm of the state, and their administration was generally free from direct state interference. In the reign of Selim III, a new type of library was introduced in the School of Engineering, a library which was to contain books in Western languages and translations of Western books mainly on technical subjects. This new direction was to continue in Mahmud II's reign. We see new institutions of learning with new libraries, again not stocked with the classical texts, but rather with Western studies.[122] However, in this period the trend towards Western-style institutions was constrained by the small number of people who were involved in the process of reforms. As the century progressed the intellectual elite were increasingly

119 Nuruosmaniye Library, Fihrist, No. 6, 206a.

120 Nuruosmaniye Library, Fihrist, No. 6, 205b–206a.

121 121 VGMA, No. 741, 336, and 340.

122 For this type of library see: R. Tuba Çavdar, "Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Kadar Osmanlı Kütüphanelerinin Gelişimi" (PhD dissertation, Istanbul University, 1995), 29–53.

to look to the West, not only in the sciences, but also in literature and the social sciences. But at this stage, the overwhelming majority of library books were manuscripts dealing with traditional Islamic sciences, and they were to be found in the traditional Ottoman libraries.



Figure 8: Murad Molla Library, 1775 Çarşamba.
Photo: T. Tuten

In 1826, with the reform of the whole system of government, new ministries, which had not existed before, were introduced. One of these was to be the Ministry of Endowments (Evkaf Nezareti), which was responsible for the supervision of all trusts. Thus, all medreses, mosques, and other trust institutions, including libraries, were to come under the direct supervision of one single centralized authority.

Shortly after the establishment of the Ministry of Endowments, several libraries underwent inspections and new lists of the collections were drawn up. This suggests that there was a policy decision to take stock of what had recently come under their jurisdiction. We have evidence of inspections of several libraries, and reports of these inspections have survived.

The system of foundation libraries had for many years been expanding, andthe trend was to continue throughout the reign of Mahmud II. An anonymous American traveler in Istanbul noticed that in 1833 there were libraries next to or inside almost every mosque and in many dervish convents.[123] The fact

123 *Sketches of Turkey in 1831 and 1832 by an American* (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833), 142.

that Istanbul had become well supplied with libraries meant that the provinces continued to attract foundations, so that almost every city, and indeed many small towns, could boast a library, however small. In this period, the foundation of these libraries is well documented. For example, in 1808 Yılanlıoğlu Şeyh Ali built a library in Eğridir, in the courtyard of his school, and placed 218 of his books in it;[124] in 1811, Vahid Pasha opened a library in Kütahya; Süleyman Pasha built a library in Çay, near Samsun;[125] in 1812, Ahmed Ağa donated hisbooks to the Kurşunlu Mosque in Harput, in eastern Anatolia.[126] Libraries werealso endowed in areas further afield. Mehmed Pasha founded a library in the Grand Mosque of Jerusalem;[127] Hamza Efendi, the mufti of Athens, set aside a room in his house for the purpose of teaching and donated books for the useof students.[128] In 1813, Mehmed Ali Pasha (the future ruler of Egypt), built a library in his home town, Kavala, now in northern Greece,[129] and in 1818 Sırrı Selim Bey built a library in the Seyfullah Mosque and Medrese in Salonica.[130]

Vahid Pasha Library in Kütahya provides us with an insight into how provincial towns attracted libraries. Vahid Pasha was exiled to the city and during his residence there he noted that the students complained of a lack of alibrary.[131] When he had the opportunity, at some later date, in 1811, he donated210 books to the Yıldırım Beyazıt Mosque in Kütahya.[132] The books were at first kept in a cabinet in the mosque, and as he added to the collection, a year later(1812), he had a special room built in the courtyard.[133] Thereafter, he continuedto send books whenever the opportunity arose.[134]

There is also evidence to suggest that provincial libraries were used for other activities besides reading. When Grand Vizier Dervish Mehmed Pasha founded an independent library in the provincial town of Burdur, he stipulated that eachday a portion of Buhari's collection of prophetic traditions was to be read aloud by one of the librarians as a spiritual exercise. On Thursdays and Sundays, after the noon and afternoon prayer, and on holy days, after the evening prayer a dervish ritual, according to the rite of the Nakşibendi dervish order, was to be performed. On the birthday of the Prophet, a *Mevlid* poem was to be recited after the evening prayer. After all these rituals, sweets were to be distributed toall attendees.[135]

Of particular note, in Istanbul is the remarkable number of new libraries donated to dervish convents**.** In the reign of Mahmud II, at least seven new dervish convent libraries were inaugurated.

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124 Fehmi Aksu, "Yazma Kitaplar," Ün 3, no. 28 (1936): 394; Süleyman Sükutî Yiğitbaşı, *Eğridir-Felekâbâd Tarihi* (İstanbul: Çeltüt Matbaacılık, 1972), 132; Yücel Özkaya, "AnadoludakiBüyük Hanedanlıklar," *Belleten* 56, no. 217 (1992): 838.

125 VGMA, No. 733, 44.

126 Süleymaniye library, Harput Section No. 127.

127 Şemim Emsem, "Osmanlı İmp. Devrinde Türkiye Kütüphanelerinin Tarihçesi," *TKDB* 9, no. 1–2 (1960): 35.

128 VGMA, No. 987, 129–132.

129 VGMA, No. 580, 275; Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Avrupa'da Osmanlı Mimari Eserleri: Bulgaristan, Yunanistan, Arnavutluk* (İstanbul: İstanbul Fetih Cemiyeti, 1982), 236–237.

130 VGMA, No. 987, 115–120. These are just some of the libraries opened in this period. We know that following libraries were also opened: Müftü Mosque Library in İzmir (1819); Şeyh Ahmed Gazzi Library in Bursa (1819); Osman Ağa Library in Arapgir (1820); Hayatizade Library in Elbistan (1823); Şeyh Mustafa Efendi Library in Burdur (1824); Halil Ağa Library in Silistra (1823); Necip Paşa Library in Tire (1827); Şakir Efendi Library in Çankırı (1828); Merdiyye and Münire Medrese Libraries in Kastamonu (1828, 1835); Çaşnigir Library in Manisa (1832); Saçlı Mahmud Efendi Library in Amasya (1833); Ragıbiyye Library in Diyarbakır (1833); Ibrahim Paşa Library in Elazığ (1834); Cennetzade Abdullah Efendi Library in Erzurum (1834); Abdullah b. Süleyman Paşa Library in Samsun, and Mustafa Ağa Library in Medina.

131 Uzunçarşılıoğlu İsmail Hakkı, *Kütahya* Şehri (İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1932), 133.

132 132 VGMA, No. 579, 706.

133 Hamza Güner, *Kütahya Camileri* (Kütahya: n.p., 1964), 21. For the detailed list of expenses entailed in the building and furnishing of the library see: BOA, DBŞM, No. 7965.

134 VGMA, No. 579, 627, 680, 684, 688, 695–699.

135 Istanbul Court Registers, İstanbul Kadılığı, No. 122, 37a–38a.

These collections were of course different from medrese library collections, in that they tended to contain works of a mystical and poetic nature. Of these libraries the Galata Mevlevihane and Said Pertev Pasha's library are of particular interest for the extent of their collections. For the Galata Mevlevihane, Halet Efendi, a statesman, poet and Mevlevi dervish, built a library building within the garden of the convent. In 1820, he donated 266 books[136] and two years later he donated a further 547 books.[137] The library reflected the founder's interest in history, literature, and mysticalworks. Being a dervish convent library, he stipulated that it was not the trust administrator who was to appoint the librarian, as would normally be expected, but the spiritual master of the dervish convent. The first librarian should be a bachelor and be resident in the dervish convent, while the imam should act as second librarian.[138] Said Pertev Pasha's dervish convent library was set up in the garden of the Çiçekçi Mosque in Üsküdar, where the Nakşibendi convent was situated. The library building was endowed with a large collection and two full- time librarians were appointed, with appropriately adequate salaries.[139]



Figure 9: Halet Efendi Library, 1820 Galata.
Photo: T. Tuten

136 Süleymaniye Library, Halet Efendi Section No. 837, No. 1, 1b–21b.
137 Süleymaniye Library, Halet Efendi Section No. 837, No. 1, 22b–38a; Istanbul CourtRegisters, Evkaf-ı Hümayun Müfettişliği, No. 375, 1b–7b.
138 Süleymaniye Library, Halet Efendi Section No. 837, No. 1, 8a–b.
139 VGMA, No. Kasa 108, 6–9.

As for Sultan Mahmud II himself, he chose to make his imperial foundation not in Istanbul, but in Medina. He built a school and a library and accommodation for the librarians.[140] Although we do not know how many books were initially donated by Mahmud II, we know that in 1839 he sent a bookbinder from Istanbul to the library and that the binder repaired 646 books.[141] Sixty years later a yearbook for the province noted that there were 4,569 books in the library.[142] A document from 1835 notes that the sultan intended to build a similar library in Mecca:

As there is no independent library in Mecca, books having been donated by worthy benefactors, but with the death of their keepers books having gone missing, it is my intention to build a library in Mecca, just as I did in Medina.[143]

The sultan went on to say that he had ordered that all books in existing collections should be brought together and a list drawn up. He would then make up any deficiency in the collection. We do not know whether his wish was realized or not, but his successor Abdülmecid (1839–1861) would found a library in the city[144] and it is likely that the books which Mahmud II had ordered to be collected became the nucleus of Mecidiye Library, Abdülmecid's own foundation.

Increasingly, library collections were inspected during Mahmud II's reign. Even before the institution of the Ministry of Endowments, noted above, the process of inspecting collections had got underway. With the coming of the ministry, the process gained momentum. As a result of these inspections, new catalogues were frequently prepared, deficiencies in collections made good, and when deemed appropriate the location of the library would be changed. One of the most important functions of the inspection was to establish that the trusts' administrators were carrying out their duties in accordance with the wishes of the founder, as laid down in the endowment deed.[145]

In 1815, Çorlulu Ali Pasha's collection in his Darü'l-Hadis in Istanbul was checked and a new list of books was prepared.[146] In 1816, certain collections which had been endowed to the Fatih Mosque were removed to the independent library at Beyazıd, which had been built some fifty years previously by Veliyüddin Efendi. A new catalogue was prepared for these books.[147] In 1820, both Damad İbrahim Pasha's and the Nuruosmaniye collections, which had been in existence for some one hundred and seventy years, respectively, were inspected "because for a considerable time their condition was unknown," and new catalogues were drawn up.[148] In 1827, the library of the Valide Sultan Mosque in Bahçekapı was inspected and a new catalogue prepared.[149] The books which Chief Mufti Damadzade Ahmed Efendi had endowed to the mosque of Selim I were inspected in May 1828 and transferred to a dervish convent in the same district, and most importantly, a librarian was appointed to look after the books.[150]

In Cyprus, there were several collections which had been endowed over the centuries to the Ayasofya Mosque (not to be confused with the Ayasofya in Istanbul; there were several churches named after the Holy Wisdom which were converted to mosques). In the courtyard of the mosque, Mahmud II erected a building to house these collections, to which he added other collections which had been endowed to other institutions; he

140 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun 26, 913. See also O. Spies, "Die Bibliotheken des Hidschas," *ZDMG* 40 (1936): 96–98 and Hammadî Ali Muhammed et-Tunisî, "el-Mektebatü'l-amme bi'l- Medineti'l-Münevvere, madiha ve haziriha" (MA thesis, King Abdülaziz University, Jiddah, 1981): 1–7.

141 Işkî Mustafa b. Ömer Kilisî, *Ta'tirü Ercai'd-Devleti'l-Mecdiyye*, Istanbul University Library, T.Y. 1490, 166a–b.

142 *Hicaz Vilayeti Salnamesi* (Mekke-i Mükerreme: [Vilayet Matbaası?], 1309H), 307.

143 BOA, Mühimme-i Mısır, No. 13, 82.

144 BOA, Mühimme-i Mısır, No. 13, 168.

145 Nazif Öztürk, *Türk Yenileşme Tarihi* Çerçevesinde *Vakıf Müessesesi* (Ankara: Türkiye DiyanetVakfı, 1995), 393.

146 BOA, Bab-ı Defteri, Baş Muhallefat Halifesi, No. 13 242.

147 Beyazıd Umumi Library, Veliyüddin Section No. 3291, 4b.

148 Nuruosmaniye Library, Fihrist, No. 3, 1b.

149 University Library, İbnülemin Section No. 2485.

150 BOA, Cevdet-Maarif, No. 2821.

also provided for the future running of the library.[151]

In a memorandum written by Mahmud II to his vizier, Mehmed Emin Rauf Pasha, in November 1830, we see the sultan providing for the repair of the library built by his father, Abdülhamid I, in Medina. He ordered the five hundred books, which were scattered in various locations, to be brought together and placed in newly built cabinets in the school.[152] In the following year, it was stipulated that books were not to be lent out, but to be read within the confines of the school.[153]

In January 1831, Mahmud II had a collection of books removed from the palace and placed in Laleli Medrese Library, which had been built by Mustafa III. These books were not from the endowed collection of Ahmed III, but were a collection of books established by Mustafa III and placed in Bostancılar Ocağı Library, which had fallen into disuse. Mahmud II gave the reason for moving the collection: Firstly, he noted that the collection had ceased to be used, especially with the opening of Ahmed III's library at the Topkapı Palace and, consequently, the books were not being cared for and might fall into disrepair. Furthermore, Mustafa III's library at Laleli Medrese had gaps in its collection, which would be made good by the transfer. Finally, he wanted the books to be used by those people who could benefit from them.[154]

Several other collections were inspected at this time: Ayasofya Library in 1831,[155] while in 1833 inspections were carried out at Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha Medrese Library, Veliyüddin Library and Abdülhamid I's library in Medina.[156] In 1837, the Galatasaray Library collection, which had been transferred to Ayasofya Library, was inspected by a commission who drew up a list of the works and split the collection into two, one part going to Fatih Library and the other remaining at Ayasofya,[157] both libraries and the Galata Palace collection having been endowed by Mahmud I.

With the abolition of the Janissary corps in 1826, the Bektashi convents, closely associated with the corps, were also shut down. When they were closed, lists were made of the books in the convents, two of which have survived, that of books at the Elmalı and the Demirci Baba convents.[158]

In 1838, Mahmud II sent binders to Medina to repair and rebind the books in various locations in this city. The judge of Medina at the time noted in his history of Medina that the binders had rebound and repaired 521 books in the Prophet's Mosque, 646 in the Mahmudiye Medrese, 432 in Hamidiye Library, 922 in the Karabaş Medrese, twenty in the Özbek Medrese, and 961 in the Beşir Ağa Medrese.[159]

Mahmud II's reign is characterized by the rationalizing of all trusts and religious foundations under the jurisdiction of one ministry. Whenever the opportunity arose, collections were split up, brought together, or transferred to strengthen existing collections. At the same time as Mahmud II organized and surveyed the classical Ottoman libraries, changes were coming about which would bring with them a new type of library. By Mahmud II's death three institutions had libraries which contained printed books in European languages dealing with medicine, science, and technology. Soon, these works were to be translated into Turkish and printed. These were to become the bases of the new Ottoman library collections. The new libraries were set up by the government to serve the needs of the reforms. While the classical Ottoman libraries would continue to exist until the coming of the Republic in 1920s, the new, European-style libraries eventually made the classical library obsolete in the educational system.

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151 Beria Remzi Özoran, "Kıbrıs'ta Sultan Mahmut Kütüphanesi," *Türk Kültürü* 8, no. 92 (1970): 513–515; Mustafa Haşim Altan, "Die Bibliotheken im türkisch-zypriotischen Bundesstaat," *Biblos* 28 (1979): 306–309.

152 BOA, Mühimme-i Mısır, No. 13, 41–42.

153 BOA, Mühimme-i Mısır, No. 13, 54.

154 VGMA, No. 642, 103–104.

155 Süleymaniye Library, Fihrist, No. 3.

156 Beyazıt Umumi Library, No. 21, 346; Beyazıt Umumi Library, Veliyüddin Efendi Section No. 3290; BOA, Cevdet-Maarif, 8613, Cevdet-Maarif, No. 1870 and İbrahim Ateş, "Mescid-iNebevî'nin Yapıldığı Günden Bu Yana Geçirdiği Genişletme Girişimleri," *VD* 24 (1994): 14, respectively.

157 Süleymaniye Library, Ayasofya, Fihrist, No. 6, 1b–11b.

158 BOA, MAD. 9771, 10, and 56.

159 Işkî Mustafa b. Ömer Kilisî, *Ta'tirü Ercai'd-Devleti'l-Mecdiyye*, Istanbul University Library,T. Y. 1490, 177a.

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The Final Period of the Ottoman Libraries

Tradition and Change towards the Republic

The libraries in the Ottoman period were founded by sultans, sultans' mothers, statesmen, scholars, religious figures, and other benefactors who valued books and libraries. In addition to libraries that were primarily established during the lifetime of their benefactors, there were also those founded through bequests. Libraries were predominantly established in Istanbul, followed by other political centers and other Ottoman territories. The operational framework of the libraries founded through foundations was determined by the waqfiyyas (foundation deed). In the waqfiyyas, with some exceptions, it is specified who established the library, where, when, and under what conditions, as well as the identity of the foundation's trustee or trustees. Additionally, the waqfiyyas often outline the number of library staff, their qualifications, salaries, duties, rules regarding the lending of books, and other conditions of benefit are also specified. Information about the donated books is sometimes provided only as numbers, while in some cases, detailed lists of books are included.

The Ottoman library tradition was initially shaped by educational institutions, but later foundation libraries were established in other institutions and places. These foundation libraries became an important part of the educational and cultural life in the Ottoman Empire. The manuscripts in these libraries have long provided a foundation for intellectual inquiry, stimulating new discussions and raising questions as transmitters and bearers of knowledge, science, and tradition. The motivations behind the writing of manuscripts, whether through copyright, translation, transcription, *sema* (auditory transmission), or other similar methods, and their characteristics differ significantly from those of printed books. All these attributes related to the book constitute a gradually developed, transmitted, and long-practiced methodology, ultimately forming a tradition.

Many foundation libraries, some of which likely contained only a limited number of books, were lost or damaged for various reasons but managed to survive until the Republic period primarily due to the foundation system. Moreover, it was the presence of users who adhered to the conditions outlined in the waqfiyyas (foundation deed) that was crucial for ensuring the continued benefit desired by the endowers. These readers approached the books with 'decency' and 'respect', and refrained from engaging in any form of 'malediction'. The librarians, referred to as '*Hâfız-ı Kütüb*,' had long safeguarded these libraries while simultaneously facilitating access to their resources. They combined the qualities of scholars with their officially appointed roles as 'trustworthy individuals,' as emphasized in their designations.

Library buildings during the Ottoman period included both detached buildings and those that were not in separate structures, existing instead as libraries within various educational institutions. In libraries constructed specifically as libraries, architectural solutions were employed to protect the books from humidity, fire, and theft. Although the sounds of the city may not have been as prominent as they are today, a more isolated and quiet environment for the workers was provided through the use of inner courtyards. These libraries reflected a style in harmony with the architecture of the period, characterized by simplicity yet distinctiveness, without being ostentatious.

Library buildings, particularly detached structures, have also become subjects of study in the fields of architecture and art history.[1] Some of these works include plans and surveys, and, based on the historical characteristics of the buildings, they also offer recommendations for preservation. Only a small number of the libraries from the Ottoman period that have survived to the present day are used for purposes other than their original intent. Some still serve as libraries for rare works and manuscripts.

In the modern era, innovations in the education system and the diversification of the reader profile and demands in large cities brought about significant changes. Additionally, the variation in book production methods played a role. As a result, Ottoman libraries and librarianship began to evolve, incorporating new practices alongside traditional ones. While foundation libraries continued to exist, the emergence of new types of libraries can be explained by this change. Ismail Erunsal writes the following about the recent foundation libraries:

"Except for detached libraries, the use of madrasa libraries, whose collections were primarily formed with the needs of madrasa students in mind, gradually declined as new schools replaced traditional madrasas. The fact that these libraries were foundation institutions prevented them from innovating and adapting to the needs of the period. As a result of this structure, which focused solely on preserving the existing collection, acquiring new works for the library became impossible. Until the Republican period, foundation libraries had become institutions primarily visited by madrasa students, researchers in classical Islamic studies, and a limited number of scholars. The decline in the importance of madrasas within the empire also contributed to the diminishing significance of foundation libraries." [2]

During this period, due to the low wages received by librarians, they were forced to engage in other work, which resulted in distruptions to library services. Both local and foreign users, when they manage to access these rarely opened libraries, often express their admiration for the valuable books. Nonetheless, they also noted the neglected state of the buildings and the dusty condition of the books. These observations were frequently recorded in travel books, memoirs, or articles in periodicals.

Various efforts were made to address these complaints and restore the libraries to a usable condition. Efforts were made to investigate the appropriate course of action for libraries and librarianship by consulting the opinions of invited experts. It is difficult to assert, however, that all of these measures were fully implemented during the Ottoman period.

Ahmet Zeki Bey of Egypt, in his report proposal known as the 'The Report Presented to Grand Vizier Hilmi Pasha in 1909 Regarding the Order and Increase of the Public Libraries of the Capital City,' both demonstrates the condition of these libraries and presents solutions for their improvement. Ahmet Zeki Bey is an important figure due to both his roles in the Egyptian government and his intellectual personality. The question of why someone from Egypt was invited to write a report on

1 Detailed information regarding the buildings and the evaluation of the studies conducted can be accessed through the bibliographic imprints of their Works. Özer Soysal, *Türk kütüphaneciliği*. 6. c. Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Kütüphaneler Genel Müdürlüğü, 1998-1999 ve İsmail E. Erünsal, *Osmanlılarda kütüphaneler ve kütüphanecilik: tarihi gelişimi ve organizasyonu*. 3. bs. İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2020.

2 İsmail E. Erünsal *Osmanlılarda Kütüphaneler ve Kütüphanecilik: Tarihi Gelişimi ve Organizasyonu*. 3. bs. İstanbul: Timaş, 2020. s. 391-392

the libraries of Istanbul during the late Ottoman period could stem from the belief that Egyptian libraries were in a better condition than those of the Ottoman Empire. Yet by that time, Egypt had lost most of its valuable manuscripts, and in fact, Ahmet Zeki was a researcher actively pursuing these works. Additionally, he had established good relationships with Western Orientalists. Between 1892 and 1912, he participated in various international Orientalist congresses. It is highly likely that during these occasions, he visited and benefited from the libraries at these congresses. In the book translated and published in 2023 by Ahmed el-Shamsy, the following information is provided about Ahmet Zeki Bey:

"Desiring to continue his project, Zeki traveled to Istanbul in 1909 to conduct research in its rich manuscript libraries.... The magnificent collections, located at the heart of the Ottoman Empire, were preserved in libraries that had lasted for centuries. Some of these libraries were openly accessible and operated in connection with mosques, madrasas, and dervish lodges. Others, such as the Köprülü and Atıf Efendi Libraries, established in the 17th century, endeavored to maintain their existence independently. Moreover, unlike in countries like Egypt, where manuscript copies of lesser-known works were exceedingly rare, the collections of Istanbul's libraries were still in good condition. These institutions, in addition to containing a considerable number of Arabic manuscripts, also prided themselves on possessing numerous old and rare works that were no longer found in Arab countries. As a top government official in Egypt, Zeki, who was skilled at establishing the necessary connections, had gained the support of the Ministers of Public Education and Charitable Foundations. Additionally, he received the assistance of the Ottoman Grand Vizier, Huseyin Hilmi Pasha. With this support, he was granted the opportunity to conduct research in various libraries in Istanbul."[3]

During his research, he faced numerous challenges, which he detailed in this report. In it, he elaborates on the measures that should be taken the improve the libraries in Istanbul, likely considering the libraries he encountered in the West. His recommendations provide a detailed outline of the necessary steps for enhancing these libraries. [4]

Furthermore, other reports were prepared to assess the condition of the libraries and propose improvements. The proposal to transfer collections from old and dilapidated library buildings to more stable ones, the organization of libraries according to their areas of specialization, the creation of libraries designated for female readers, and changes in the criteria for selecting the librarians are among the various solutions offered. These suggestions reflect the efforts made to preserve the existing collections and enhance the functionality of the libraries. During the Republican era, libraries would be addressed through reports by Western experts, and efforts would be made to transform them and give them a modern identity.

In the 19th century, alongside its efforts to reform existing classical educational institutions, the Ottoman administration made decisions to establish new schools modeled after the West. As a result of these decisions, libraries were established in both military and civilian schools. The libraries

3 Ahmed el-Shamsy, *İslam Klâsiklerini Yeniden Keşfetmek: Editörler ve Matbaa Kültürü Bir Entellektüel Geleneği Nasıl Dönüştürdü.* Çev. Ayşe Mutlu Özgür. İstanbul: Ketebe, 2023. s. 201-203

4 İsmail E. Erünsal, "Ahmed Zeki Bey'in İstanbul Kütüphanelerinin Tanzimine Dair Raporu" *Kütüphanecilikle İlgili Osmanlıca Metinler ve Belgeler I*, İstanbul 1982, 323-352.

included those of the Civil School (Mülkiye Mektebi) established in 1859, the Forestry School (Orman Mektebi) in 1871, the School of Fine Arts (Güzel Sanatlar Mektebi) which opened in 1883, and the Veterinary School (Baytar Mektebi), established in 1894. It is also known that the Naval School (Mekteb-i Bahriye) had a library in 1851, when it was operating in Heybeliada. It can be observed that in these libraries, there was a particular emphasis on French books in addition to Turkish.

The reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II holds a special place in the history of Ottoman libraries and librarianship. The improvements made to the foundation libraries, the preparation of their catalogs, and measures and regulations implemented to ensure their systematic operation all reflect an effort to reform the library system. When these actions were considered alongside the changes made in the educational system, it became possible to see Sultan Abdulhamid II's distinct vision for education and libraries. The library established at Yildiz Palace is a unique collection, both in terms of quantity and content. [5]

The establishment of Dârülfünûn considered an important educational institution in the modernization of the Ottoman Empire, took place in 1845. Education continued, albeit intermittently, between 1853 and 1919. The lack of continuity in education was caused both by political and social instability and by fires. Although libraries consisting of 4,000 to 5,000 volumes were established with each new opening of Dârülfünûn, these libraries were destroyed in the fires of 1865 and 1907. In 1919, a regulation granted Dârülfünûn autonomy. After the declaration of the Republic, it was restructed in 1924, and the libraries of the existing faculties of literature, law, and science were merged into the central library. That same year, by order of Ataturk, the Yıldız Palace Library of Sultan Abdulhamid II was transferred to Dârülfünûn. As a result, the library's collection reached approximately 200,000 volumes.

Among the professional and scientific associations[6] established following the Tanzimat reforms, was the Cemiyet-i Ilmiye-i Osmâniye (Ottoman Society of Science), founded in 1861. This association, with its activities, members, and library, has been studied within disciplines such as history, the history of science, and librarianship. In studies particularly focused on Westernization, *Mecmua-i Fünûn*, the publication of the association, has been analyzed in terms of its content and purpose.[7] The library of the association, in addition to books, regularly provided daily newspapers and periodicals in languages such as Turkish, French, English, Greek, and Arabic. It operated with a membership system and is considered the first example of this new type.

In 1876, the first Ottoman Assembly began its activities and established a library open to its members. It is known that this library was destroyed in a fire. A report from 1917 indicates that the Assembly Library contained a collection of 2,277 volumes. Additionally, it is understood that the library was cataloged according to the principles of modern librarianship. This library holds a special significance as it is considered the first to use a card catalog, according to current findings.

5 Erünsal, lbid., p.337-340.

6 For detailed information on this topic, see: *Osmanlı İlmî ve Meslekî Cemiyetleri*. Yay. Haz. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu. İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi-IRCICA, 1987.

7 For a study that examines the association alongside similar institutions of the period and evaluates it from the perspective of Occidentalism, see: İbrahim Şirin, "Oksidentalizm Alaturka" *Osmanlı'da Siyasal Dilin İnşası*. Ed. İbrahim Şirin. İstanbul: Ketebe, 2023, s.23-97.

The Committee of Ottoman History, *Târîh-i Osmânî Encümeni*, was established in 1909 with the aim of providing a new and modern approach to Ottoman historiography. In 1932, the activities of the Encümen were terminated, and its library, consisting of 3,000 volumes, was transferred to the library of the Turkish Historical Society.

In 1882, the *Kütübhâne-i Umûmî-i Osmânî* (Ottoman Public Library) was established in Istanbul with the support of Sultan Abdulhamid II, aiming to fulfill various purposes. Before the library became operational, a decree was issued in the Ottoman Empire mandating that one copy of each book, whether it was a copyright or a translation, published within the empire be sent to this library free of charge. This decision can be viewed as an attempt to establish a national compilation law, and it is argued that the *Kütübhâne-i Umûmî-i Osmânî* was founded with the intention of becoming a national library. It has been determined that this decree was not fully implemented, and distruptions occurred in the arrival of books to the library in the subsequent years.

Particularly after 1911, with the *Ittihat ve Terakki* (Committee of Union and Progress) becoming the ruling party, and following the expression of nationalist-Turkish views in party programs and congresses, libraries with the word 'national' in their names were established. These libraries are, in fact, public libraries. Examples of these include the Izmir National Library, Bursa National Library, and Eskişehir National Library. Ozer Soysal evaluates the libraries established during this period with the word 'national' in their names as follows:

"It was during this period that the library *institution* was first used for a specific purpose and with a strategic objective by political authority." [8]

"Although the intention and desire for a 'National Library' were expressed by various individuals and institutions at different times, it was during the Republican period that planned efforts were put to practice." [9]

In the period leading up to the Republic, Ismail Erunsal evaluates the period following the Tanzimat as follows:

"Although some efforts were made during the Tanzimat period to improve the physical conditions of foundation libraries, prepare regular catalogs, organize collective catalogs, and enhance the salaries of librarians, it seems that these attempts were not very successful. Despite all these initiatives, the reorganization of foundation libraries and their regular functioning were not effectively achieved. An analysis of documents on this subject reveals that the Balkan Wars and World War I caused severe hardships and shortages within the empire. Despite these adverse conditions, the country's intellectuals proposed ideas to facilitate the reform of foundation libraries. At the same time, the bureaucrats of the period showed remarkable dedication and selflessness in their efforts to enhance the functionality of these libraries." [10]

8 Özer Soysal, "XIX ve XX. Yüzyıllar Osmanlı Siyasal Yaşamı'nın Kütüphane Kurumu'nu Etkileyen İki Olgusu". *Türk Kütüphaneciliği: Bilginin Yazgısı*. 2.bs. Ankara: Türk Kütüphaneciler Derneği, 2007. s. 26.

9 Law No. 5632 on the Establishment of the National Library on March 23, 1950, was repealed. This was done by Decree Law No. 703 on amendments to certain laws and decree laws to ensure compliance with the constitutional amendments. The repeal was published in the 3rd Duplicate Legal Gazette no. 30473 on July 9, 2018.

10 Erünsal, ibid., p. 390.

In the period leading up to the Republic, the wars, occupations, and all political and practical activities undertaken for the 'survival' of the Ottoman Empire had significant impacts. The reforms[11] and decisions made to ensure the solid and unshakable continuity of the Republic undoubtedly affected books and libraries in many ways. Every institution reflects the psychology of the period in which it was established, and its structure is shaped by these conditions. [12] It is most appropriate to evaluate Ottoman-era libraries and librarianship based on this perspective.

It is known that some supervisory officials from the Ottoman period continued their duties in new institutions during the Republican period. A question that arises is whether this was the case for librarians. In a decree prepared on August 6, 1924, signed by Gazi Mustafa Kemal and his deputies, it was stated that foundation libraries were transferred to the Ministry of Education. Following the identification of a distruption in the allocation of salaries for the librarians working there, the necessary funds were allocated. The sum of three thousand lira was designated to address concerns that 'librarians might abandon their duties, which would consequently lead to the valuable works remaining unprotected.' The preservation of the remaining Ottoman-era materials was entrusted to the librarians, at least until new solutions could be found. [13]

Especially after 1924 and 1925, the librarians (*Hâfız-ı Kütüb*) working in the institutions specified by the laws were reassigned to various places and institutions. Some exceptions can be observed, such as the assignment of members from the closed Dervish Lodges and madrasas to libraries, likely to leverage their scholarly value and perhaps to honor them. It is known that, even after surpassing the age limit, they continued their duties in the post-Republic period, drawing upon both their knowledge and experience.

When examining two reports published approximately nine years apart, it is observed that fundamentally the same opinions are expressed about the same libraries. Upon closer inspection, differences in descriptions and characterizations become apparent. The first of these reports, was written by a director of education in 1916. Given that its language might be somewhat heavy for today's readers, it can be summarized by highlighting the key points as follows. The director of education acknowledges the value of the foundation libraries established during the Ottoman period. He even mentions that some books, due to their physical characteristics, are worthy of being placed in museums. He then points out that most of these books are in Arabic and address subjects relevant to madrasa students. He questions how these Arabic books can be of use in public libraries, considering that the official language of the state is Turkish, with the exception of those in madrasas. His focus here is on the content and language of the books. Despite his critical approach, he refrains from using any disparaging terms. [14]

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11 Notably: The Law on Unification of Education (*Tevhîd-i Tedrîsât Kânunu*) (1924). The Law on the Closure of Religious Convents and Dervish Lodges (*Tekke ve Zâviyelerle Türbelerin Seddine ve Türbedarlıklarıyla Bir Takım Ünvânların Men' ve İlgâsına Dâir Kânûn*) (1925), and the Acceptance and Application of Turkish Alphabet (*Yeni Türk Harfleri'nin Kabul ve Tatbiki Hakkındaki Kanun*) (1928).

12 Taşansu Türker, *Cumhuriyet'in Yeni Yüzyılında Yeni Dünya Politikası: Kafiye Çağı*. İstanbul: Kronik Kitap, 2023. s. 32.

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14 Erünsal, ilid., p. 392. "Among the libraries established by foundations and benefactors (ashâb-ı hayr) in the Ottoman Empire, there are some that are very valuable. An deven some of them, due to the becoming antique and hardcover books they contain, are suitable for inclusion in museum collections. Since approximately ninety-five

Nine to ten years later, in 1925, Hamit Zubeyir Kosay's article on libraries addresses the same issues. In fact, the text is remarkably similar. The phrase 'the public heritage (asar-ı umumiye) in libraries bears the mark of Islamic scholasticism from two or three centuries ago' is quite natural, given the circumstances of the time, and it provides a strong foundation for the modernization of libraries. This expression not only reflects the historical context but also offers a solid basis for the efforts to modernize libraries:

"When it comes to the relative value of the content in these libraries, these works possess extraordinarily high, museum-worthy significance. Yet, they do not align with the needs of the present day.

"The public heritage (asar-ı umumiye) in libraries reflects the influence of Islamic scholasticism from two or three centuries ago. Eighty percent of the content consists of works related to tafsir, hadith, the methodology of hadith, Islamic law (fiqh) and theology. These works, written in Arabic, Persian, or Enderun Turkish, can be considered part of a class library, specifically that of the religious-scholarly class with turbans with even their buildings to be considered parts of mosques and dervish lodges. Only theological works, not deemed beneficial to education by the public library (such as Battal Gazi, Castle of Blood (*Kan Kalesi*), Köroğlu, Nasreddin Hodja, Aşık Kerem, Şah Ismail, Tahir and Zühre) have found a place in these libraries."[15]

In official documents and parliamentary records, the same attitude and expressions can be observed in almost all intellectuals who worked tirelessly to defend the Republic. One reason for the state-led efforts regarding the collections of foundation libraries, which began in 1935 and yielded their first results in 1942, could very well be this.

After the Turkish Alphabet reform, the collections of Ottoman libraries, which theoretically gained the status of 'rare books', have long been defined as 'archaeological artifacts' for many years. Even today, they are still categorized as 'Manuscripts and Rare Books that are Part of Our Cultural Heritage'. This may explain why collective catalogues of rare books, manuscripts and books written in Ottoman Turkish, as well as other alphabets and languages, have not yet been completed. These rare manuscripts could provide valuable data for scholars working in various fields, such as the history of science, literary history, historiography, reading culture, and economic history, thus opening up new opportunities for research.[16] Perhaps for this reason, critical editions or investigative research, which had started much earlier in the West and even in the East, started quite late in our country. These studies, however, continue today attracting increasing interest.[17]

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percent of these books were written in Arabic, most of the mentioned libraries were primarily used by students and teachers of madrasahs offering Arabic language courses. Only rarely did these libraries contain books related to natural sciences, such as philosophy. These works, which contradict theories explained by current valid experimental methods, should naturally be considered entirely as old works, except for those related to religious sciences. Although the offical language of the eternal state (Devlet-i Ebed Müddet) was Turkish, nearly all the works preserved in public libraries located in mosques, aside from those found in madrasas, were written in Arabic. This raises a question: does this align with logic and the aim of ensuring the general public's benefit?

15 Hamit Zübeyr "Koşay, Kütüphanelere Daîr (I)", *Türk Kütüphaneciler Derneği Bülteni*, C. 9, S. 1-2 (1960) s. 36.

16 The aforementioned institution, which began its work in 2010 with the Law No. 6093 on the Establishment and Duties of the Turkish Manuscripts Institution, has made significant and promising contributions to librarianship.

17 The works Berat Açıl and the activities of the FSMVÜ should be mentioned. https://yazmaeserler.fsm.edu.tr/

As a result, the Ottoman Empire, particularly through its foundation libraries, passed on to the Republic a collection of printed books in Ottoman Turkish, as well as manuscripts in Turkish and other languages. These collections not only encompass scientific knowledge but also illuminate the reading practices and intellectual culture of their time. Transmitted through various channels, they were recontextualized and rendered open to reinterpretation within evolving historical and cultural frameworks.

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Abdulhamid's Yıldız Library, *Kütübhâne-i Hümâyûn*, established in late 1870s.
Photo courtesy of Istanbul University Rare Books Library Archive

The Realm of Manuscripts

A Universe where Dust Remembers, Ink Becomes Art, and Margins Whisper



J.R. Osborn is a scholar and experimentalist of communication. His work explores media history, semiotics, communication technologies, visual culture, and design aesthetics with a regional focus of the Middle East and Africa. Dr. Osborn is currently an Associate Professor of Communication, Culture & Technology (CCT) and Co-Director of the Technology Design Studio and Iteration Lab at Georgetown University. He has written a number of articles on Arabic typography history, Ottoman printing, and the interactions of Arabic script and technology. His book *Letters of Light: Arabic Script in Calligraphy, Print, and Digital Design* (2017, Harvard University Press) won the British-Kuwait Friendship Society Book Prize and received an Honorable Mention for the Albert Hourani Best Book Award from the Middle East Studies Association (MESA). The book follows the story of Arabic script and technology, from the advent of calligraphic tradition in the tenth century through the implementation of the Unicode computer standard in the twentieth century. Dr. Osborn also co-authored *African Art Reframed: Dialogues and Reflections on Museum Culture* (2020, University of Illinois Press), which analyzes the global circulation of African art through extensive curator interviews, ethnographic site visits, the "unmixing" of artworks, and studies of audience response. His latest project collects and analyzes significant diagrams from manuscripts and early printed works for the *Diagrammatica* archive.

*"Whenever we enter a library, we are in conversation with the past. And like any new setting in which we are strangers, we must listen carefully if we wish to learn from those already present. In the case of libraries, and especially manuscript libraries, we must "listen" to what our teachers wrote as well as how they wrote: which pens did they use, which paper, which styles of script. I was honored by Tarık Tüten's invitation to contribute to the current "**Conversation**," which connects scholars of the past, present, and future. And I hope that my essay extends the visual appreciation of the Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Library collection. Every manuscript speaks in a unique "voice," and styles of script act like dialects: each style "speaks" with a distinct accent and tone. Throughout history, Arabic script has adopted different styles on different media for different audiences. Such diversity invites us to appreciate the communicative role of scribal and visual variety. It inspires a retrofuturology in which the exploration of past techniques suggests future possibilities."*

J.R. Osborn

* **LETTERS OF LIGHT: ARABIC SCRIPT IN CALLIGRAPHY, PRINT, AND DIGITAL DESIGN**
By J. R. Osborn, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press
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Revised by the author for *Conversation in the Library*.

Ottoman Script Design*

Written communication is never simply a transcription of spoken word to paper; it is always the *design* of a message. Like modern designers, Turkish scribes had a toolbox of styles from which to choose. The chosen style aligned with the audience, genre, and intended use of a document. Ottoman textual design began with the notational differences of writing systems. Characters of Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, Armenian, and Latin circulated side by side. Notational differences communicated alongside linguistic content. A courier need not read Arabic or Greek in order to know the destination of a message. Nor did these scripts imply a specific language. Ottoman design was multi-scripted, multilinguistic, and stylistically diverse. Arabic script was the most common, but far from the only, representation of Ottoman Turkish. Turkish was also transcribed using Greek, Hebrew, Armenian, and even Latin letters. In 1851, Vartan Pasha published *Akabi Hikayesi* (Akabi's Story), which stakes a claim as one of the earliest Turkish novels. The novel consists of Ottoman Turkish prose transcribed in Armenian characters.

Today, spoken languages and written scripts typically are paired in hermetic union. This was not the case in Ottoman Turkey. Spoken vernaculars were not tied to a particular script. Arabic script transcribed texts for Ottoman Muslims. Greek and Armenian characters transcribed texts for different Christian communities. And Hebrew characters transcribed texts for Ottoman Jews. Each of these groups was semiautonomous. Ottoman scripts demarcated legal and religious jurisdictions, rather than linguistic divisions. A particular script did not signify a particular language. Hebrew script did not imply Hebrew language, nor did the Greek alphabet indicate that a text was written in Greek. Ottoman Jews who spoke Arabic wrote the Arabic language using Hebrew characters, and immigrant Jews from Spain used Hebrew script for Ladino (Judeo-Spanish). Greek script, which signified an Orthodox Christian audience, often transcribed Greek. But it was also used for Ottoman Turkish and, on rare occasions, Arabic. Greek-speaking Muslims, in contrast, might employ Arabic script, even when writing in Greek. Ottoman languages changed dress according to the circles in which they moved.

The multivalent relationship between script and language worked in both directions. Spoken languages (such as Ottoman Turkish) were transcribed in multiple scripts, and a single script (such as Arabic) transcribed multiple languages. Arabic script served the Ottoman Muslim community. And Muslim texts came in many languages. These included Albanian-, Bosnian-, and Greek-language texts, among others. But the most common by far were Arabic-, Persian-, and Turkish-language writings. Educated audiences expected familiarity with all three languages. Arabic was the language of the Qur'an, religious law, and classical scholarship; Persian recorded epic poetry, histories, and spiritual treatises; and Ottoman Turkish was the official register of the state. *Naskh* varieties of Arabic script transcribed multiple languages. But subtle proportional differences and stylistic variety shaped content for specific audiences and uses. The classical styles of *al-aqlam al-sittah* implied Arabic content as well as general knowledge. The hanging style of *nasta'liq* indicated texts of Persian influence. And the regal uniform of the imperial *diwani* style was exclusive to Ottoman Turkish.

This chapter opens the toolbox of Ottoman stylistic variety. It begins by reframing the term *khatt,* which is often translated as "calligraphy," as a practice of design. It examines two master Ottoman scribes—Şeyh Hamdullah and Hafiz Osman—in light of how and what they designed with *naskh.* Dominant styles are then listed and compared alongside distinguishing features and suggested uses. A final section analyzes the application of theses styles as a practice of scribal

"typography." In Ottoman practice, scribal styles offered technical choices of design. Visual and aesthetic cues demarcated communities of readers and writers. The presence of Arabic, Greek, or Armenian letters encoded useful information regarding textual origin and target audience. Within the particular system of Arabic script, stylistic choices further specified genre and function. Styles such as *thuluth, naskh* proper, *muhaqqaq, nasta'liq,* and *diwani* had distinct uses and implications. Styles of script, like current menus of multiple fonts, offered a plethora of design options. And Ottoman scribes, much like contemporary designers, employed these options in the connection of text and audience.

The Question of Calligraphy

Scribal beauty and clarity travel hand in hand, much as beautiful typography clarifies the printed word. The sweeping designation of scribal practices as "calligraphy" occludes their operational and communicative role. Ottoman scribes certainly created beautiful artistic imagery. But they also designed beautifully functional texts. Stylistic variety played a useful communicative function. Recasting "Arabic calligraphy" as a practice of textual and graphic design downplays qualitative considerations of artistic value. As calligraphic associations of classicism, beauty, and propriety recede, design concepts of utility, arrangement, and effectiveness move to the fore. Design analysis asks how the visual appearance of a text serves its message. How and why was a text designed? How does its appearance and design reflect its role? How do styles of script employ script grammar for communicative effect? Stylistic variety, visual composition, and aesthetic balance shape content. The diverse styles of Arabic script are not simply calligraphic drawings of art for art's sake; they are beautiful and well-designed examples of textual content.

The Arabic word *khatt* (Turkish: *hat*) carries little connection to qualitative judgments of art and classical beauty. Rather, the word indicates the process of tracing a line, marking out, and outlining. The semantic field of *khatt* encompasses ideas of sketching, measurement (as in the lines of a classroom ruler), spaces (as in boundary lines), and precise description (as in delineation). *Khatt* merges linguistic practice, in which speech takes visual form (that is, "writing"), with aesthetic practice, in which the hand traces lines and shapes (that is, "drawing"). The hand-drawn lines of *khatt,* the gestural traces of writing, produce the concrete visual form of Arabic language. *Khatt* organizes the visual, linear, and textual space of writing. Both reading and writing follow a line of *khatt.* Laura Marks usefully describes *khatt* as a regulated vector: "a line of writing and a line of communication, as in airline, telephone line, and railroad line." *Khatt* is not simply the line of written characters; it is also a line of communication and language. Much like railway and telephone lines, *khatt* traces networks of connection, communication, and practice. Vectors of *khatt* draw both words and boundaries.

The lines of *khatt* standardized Arabic writing across time and space. Ibn Muqlah's proportional systems connected the increasingly large territory of Abbasid administration. And the regulated consistency of Ibn al-Bawwab's tenth-century *khatt* remains legible more than a thousand years later. *Al-khatt al-mansub* fuels a powerful and enduring system of scribal design. It formalizes styles in the proportional relation of point, line, and plane—three of the foundational elements of contemporary graphic design. Modern design often begins with the placement of discrete forms in a predetermined space (for example, the arrangement of movable type in a preexisting grid). Points create lines in a plane, and space is filled with written characters and forms. *Khatt,* in contrast, begins with tracing a line. The point *(nuqta)* grows into a line *(alif),* and space emerges via the act of writing. Practices of *khatt* are both aesthetic and linguistic, technical and expressive: "For writers of the past, a feeling or observation would be described in the movement of a gesture and inscribed in the trace it yields. What mattered was not the choice of semantic content of the words themselves but the quality of the line itself." Scribes draw linguistic expression as a visual form. Expression arises from the shapes being drawn and the way in which they are drawn: the style, movement, and appearance of the line. *Khatt* is this way, this line. The regulated vectors of *khatt* outline language, image, and meaning.

The tradition of Ottoman *khatt* begins in Amasya, the shared hometown of Yaqut al-Musta'simi and Şeyh Hamdullah (1436–1520). Yaqut continued to practice his *naskh* even as Abbasid Baghdad fell around him. Two hundred and fifty years later, Yaqut's line of communication was received by a young scribe in his hometown. Hamdullah takes up the pen, refines *naskh,* and outlines the foundation of Ottoman scribal tradition. Amasya provides a geographic linchpin that sutures Ottoman and Abbasid tradition. During his formative years, Sultan Bayezid II studied *khatt* under Şeyh Hamdullah in Amasya. Bayezid so loved his teacher that he would hold the master's inkwell, watching in admiration as Hamdullah traced his lines. One day, the sultan-to-be humbly inquired about the perfection of Yaqut's handwriting. He innocently asked if Yaqut's styles could be improved. Hamdullah responded by secluding himself for forty days. He collected every available sample of Yaqut's work, and he immersed himself in studying their design. Hamdullah pored over the details: the weight of the line, the depth of the curves, the inclination of verticals, the size of the counters, the placement of *nuqta,* the dance of *tashkil,* and the variety of forms. He analyzed letters in isolation and letters in combination. He found the edge of every shape and practiced every possible cursive connection. He drew parts of letters and letters in full. As Hamdullah became familiar with the styles and forms, he began to subtly refine them: a twist of the pen to polish a letter, a horizontal extension to balance a word. Through iterative experimentation and incremental improvement, Hamdullah redesigned the lines of *khatt.* When he emerged from his study, he brought a new harmony to styles of *naskh.*



Figure 1: Şeyh Hamdullah, *Basmala*

The Islamic invocation *basmala* ("In the name of God, whose mercy is comprehensive, whose mercy is specific") drawn in the style of Şeyh Hamdullah (1436-1520). Note how the layers of Arabic script interweave vertically. This is particularly apparent on the left side of the phrase, where the *rasm* (layer 1) of *nūn* in *al-rahman* sweeps below the *tashkil* and *muhmal* (layers 3-5) of the final word *al-rahim.* (Illustration courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)

Figure 1 displays a *basmala* drawn in Hamdullah's style. The tall verticals pitch slightly toward the left, which guides the eye in the direction of reading. Extended horizontals and sweeping bowls emphasize the effect. *Tashkil* markings, which also angle from top right to bottom left, frame the primary line of *rasm.* The austere extension of the opening word *bism* draws the viewer into the text. The letters *bā'* and *sīn* ripple on the far right, flowing like a wave and breaking into a spray of letters on the left. The final *nūn* of *al-rahman* sweeps below the line and cradles the final word *al-rahim.* The *nūn* of *al-rahman* points to the final *mīm* of *al-rahim,* uniting the two adjectives as a visual gestalt. The line does not march along a straight and narrow path; it dances among the layers and shapes of Arabic script, from letter block to *tashkil* and into the next letter block.

Hamdullah's primary refinements addressed the complementary styles of *thuluth* and *naskh* (referring here to a specific proportional style rather than a general category). These proportional styles, which visually balance each other, became the dominant styles of Ottoman practice. The prevalence of *naskh,* in particular, displaced other styles. Balancing legibility and compactness, it became the de facto style for works of science, knowledge, and education, as well as the primary style for copying the Qur'an. *Naskh* operated as the Times New Roman of the Ottoman era. *Naskh*'s sister style, *thuluth,* which is larger and more ornate, provided decoration and display. Titles written in

decorative *thuluth* organize bodies of text written in workmanlike *naskh*. Hamdullah demonstrated this interaction in Qur'anic *masahif*. His example, which pairs *thuluth* headings with *naskh* text, served as a design template for subsequent scribes. Later Ottoman *masahif* copied Hamdullah's scripts, his method of illumination, and even his bindings.

Şeyh Hamdullah's *khatt* was celebrated, feted, and praised. He obtained a level of fame comparable to that of modern celebrities, and he inspired generations of scribes. As his fame rose, Hamdullah's legendary exploits grew larger than life, both on and off the page. He excelled in archery, falconry, and swimming, and he impressively swam the width of the Bosphorus while holding his reed writing pens between his teeth. Hamdullah became known as the *qibla,* or direction, of *khatt*. He provided the model and example to which Ottoman scribes should turn their attention. By the seventeenth century, Hamdullah's influence had all but erased competing schools of *khatt*. Later scribes meticulously studied, emulated, and redrew Hamdullah's examples—much as the master himself had immersed himself in the style of Yaqut. Ottoman scribal tradition therefore re-created both the *khatt* of Hamdullah's practice (the vector of his study) and the *khatt* of his letters (the vector of his visual lines).

Two hundred years later, Hafiz Osman (1642–1698) followed this vector to comparable fame. Osman diligently studied, copied, and recreated Hamdullah's examples. His mastery of *khatt* and his prodigious output eventually earned him the epithet "second Şeyh." Osman celebrated Hamdullah's styles in beautiful compositions, and he penned more than twenty-five complete Qur'ans, most of which replicate Hamdullah's template. If Hamdullah was a master "font" designer who refined the proportions of canonical styles, Osman was a layout artist. He beautifully arranged predesigned styles and raised their application to new heights of design. Near the end of the seventeenth century, Osman designed a layout masterpiece in the form of the Ottoman *hilye* (see Figure 2). The *hilye* template is both a wonderful example of textual design and a beautiful form of calligraphic art. It gracefully juxtaposes a variety of classical scripts to celebrate the moral and spiritual character of the Prophet Muhammad. When asked how he wished to be remembered, Muhammad responded: "Write my *hilye* so the ones who will see it will be as if they saw me after I pass away." Decorative *hilye* answer the call. The proportional layout and beautifully written words convey a calligraphic portrait of the Prophet's qualities.

Figure 2: Hafiz Osman's *Hilye* Template

The *hilye* template beautifully combines multiple styles of script as an aesthetic composition and visual gestalt. The content of *hilye* celebrate the moral and spiritual qualities of the Prophet Muhammad. Hafiz Osman (1642–1698) formalized the template in the seventeenth century. The displayed scripts include *muhaqqaq, thuluth*, and *naskh*. (Image courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)


بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
عن علي رضي الله تعالى عنه
كان اذا وصف النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال
لم يكن بالطويل الممغط ولا بالقصير المتردد كان ربعة
من القوم ولم يكن بالجعد القطط ولا بالسبط كان
جعدا رجلا ولم يكن بالمطهم ولا بالمكلثم وكان في الوجه
تدوير ابيض مشرب ادعج العينين اهدب الاشفار
جليل المشاش والكتد اجرد ذو مسربة شثن الكفين
والقدمين اذا مشى يتقلع كأنما يمشي في صبب
واذا التفت التفت معا
وما ارسلناك الا رحمة للعالمين
بين كتفيه خاتم النبوة وهو خاتم النبيين اجود الناس صدرا واصدقه
لهجة واليهم عريكة واكرمهم عشيرة من رآه بديهة هابه
ومن خالطه معرفة احبه يقول ناعته لم ار قبله ولا بعده مثله صلى الله عليه وسلم
اللهم صل وسلم على نبي الرحمة وشفيع الامة محمد والله وصحبه اجمعين
كتبه محمد زكريا من تلاميذ جسس حلبي غفر الله ذنوبهما وستر عيوبهما

Osman's design organizes a variety of classical styles in harmony, grandeur, and aesthetic balance. The textual content presents Qur'anic passages and *hadith* that describe the Prophet and his mission. Although the writing is meticulously produced and easily legible, the text does not need to be read in order to be appreciated. Viewing a *hilye* provides various successive experiences, "one of which *may* have included the experience of reading." Alongside reading and comprehension, *hilye* inspire aesthetic viewing and spiritual contemplation. The eye navigates visual and textual elements as if they were a chessboard: jumping from text block to text block, comparing shapes, considering their relative movement, finding connections, and, occasionally, capturing words. The character of the Prophet can be read in the text, but it can also be discovered between the lines. The constituent components of the *hilye* template are shown in Figure 3.

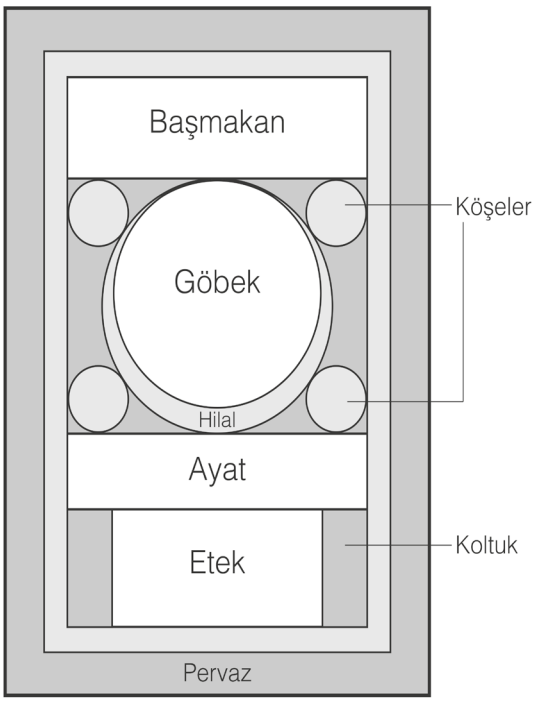


Figure 3: ***Hilye*** **Template Diagram**

The constituent components of Hafiz Osman's *hilye* template (Based on a design by M. Şinasi Acar; see Acar 1999, *Turk Hat Sanatı*, 154).

1. ***Başmakan*** (Prelude): A rectangular block on top of the composition presents the *basmala* in stately *muhaqqaq* style.

2. ***Göbek*** (Navel/belly): A circular block is centered below the *başmakan*. The circle typically holds nine lines written in the dominant style of Ottoman *naskh*. These lines begin the *hadith* that describe the appearance and character of Muhammad.

3. ***Hilal*** (Crescent): An ornamental crescent holds the *göbek*. Often gilded and heavily decorated, the visual symbol of Islam cradles the textual description of the Prophet.

4. ***Köşeler*** (Corners): Four roundels display the large style of *jali-thuluth*. The roundels hold the names of the four righteous caliphs of Ottoman Sunni orthodoxy: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali. They are positioned around the large circular *göbek*.

5. ***Ayat*** (Verse): The rectangular block below the *göbek* contains a single line written in the celebrated style of *thuluth*. The *ayat* presents a Qur'anic verse related to the Prophet and his mission.

6. ***Etek*** (Foot): A rectangular text box containing additional lines of *naskh*, which are identical with the style used for the *göbek*. The text continues the *hadith* of the *göbek* and, sometimes, the *ayat*. The width of the *etek* is slightly narrower than the box of the *ayat*.

7. ***Koltuklar*** (Alleys): Two ornamental rectangles, free of text, bracket the indented *etek*. These boxes, like other non-textual spaces, are filled with floral, geometric, and decorative motifs.

8. ***Pervaz*** (Frame): An illuminated frame borders the entire composition. The design often contains both an inner frame and a larger outer frame.

The result is an aesthetic construction, balanced both visually and textually, with a devotional quality arising through the designed interplay of decoration, wording, and penmanship. The organization and styles of script champion the classical proportions of *al-khatt al-mansub* and metaphorically extend that balance to the ethical, spiritual, and mental poise of the Prophet

Muhammad. Practices of *khatt* demarcate lines of text, as well as the larger meaningful space that the text inhabits. Two lines of *khatt*—one in *muhaqqaq* style and another in *thuluth* style—are balanced by two blocks of *khatt* in the smaller *naskh* style. The roundels display the decorative style of *jali-thuluth,* which further extend the range of stylistic sizes and variations. And the illuminated borders and alleys hold the component texts in colorful and spatial relation. The *hilye* template exemplifies the multiple meanings of *khatt:* the visual expression of language, the linear organization of script, the drawing of forms, and the design of meaningful space. The lines of *khatt* trace textual content, stylistic variety, and spatial arrangement.

Hafiz Osman, like Hamdullah before him, was a master craftsman, master artist, master calligrapher, and master designer. Both scribes beautified the textual content on which they operated. Both practiced *khatt.* When placed side by side, moreover, they illustrate complementary aspects of graphic design. Şeyh Hamdullah parallels a type designer and classical typesetter. He perfected classical fonts and demonstrated their proper use. Today, type designers recover classic metal typefaces and reconstruct their proportions in digital environments. The digital toolbox is filled with fonts that emulate the examples, and hold the names, of past masters: Bodoni, Didot, Baskerville, Garamond, Granjon. Hamdullah similarly "modernized" the classical designs of Yaqut. He redesigned the proportions of *naskh* for a new era. Hafiz Osman, in contrast, applied Hamdullah's "fonts" to design a lasting layout. He created a style sheet, which was repeated, utilized, and performed by a host of subsequent designers. After Osman formalized the template, Ottoman scribes produced a wide variety of *hilye,* from small versions to large wall hangings. The layout and content remain consistent from piece to piece, and beauty arose in the artistic execution of a recognizable form. *Hilye* artists were performers, rather than font or layout creators. Şeyh Hamdullah designed the styles with which they wrote, and Hafiz Osman designed the form. If *al-khatt al-mansub* established musical keys for the composition and enjoyment of harmonious *naskh,* Şeyh Hamdullah perfectly tuned the instruments, and Hafiz Osman composed a musical standard.

The Ottoman System of Scripts

Designers work with a toolbox of instruments, standards, styles, and forms. In modern practices, the toolbox includes a wide variety of fonts as well as predesigned templates and style sheets. Most designers do not construct fonts and letters from scratch; they utilize existing tools to effectively shape written messages. Most Ottoman scribes worked similarly. They rarely designed new styles of script or new templates. They too had a toolbox of styles and templates from which to choose. And they applied styles appropriate to the message at hand. Religious, literary, scientific, and administrative documents are not the same. They request visual difference of style and formal differences of layout. Aesthetic variations—in contemporary and scribal design—are neither idiosyncratic nor simply subjective expressions. They are repeatable "types" (as in the movable type of typography). Ottoman styles of script were visually identifiable and recognizably distinct.

The following entries describe the styles available to Ottoman designers. If Ottoman scribes could access a drop-down menu of "fonts," these are the choices that would appear. The list begins with the classic styles of *al-aqlam al-sittah* (the six pens). These six classical styles of *naskh* were formalized during Yaqut's era and reinvigorated by the school of Şeyh Hamdullah. *Al-aqlam al-sittah* subdivided into three pairs, each of which partnered a larger display script with a smaller body script of complementary proportions (Figure 4). The most popular pairing linked *thuluth,* the predominant Ottoman display style, and *naskh,* the canonical style of general textual copy. The other pairings, *muhaqqaq-rayhan* and *tawqi'-riqa',* were expected of trained scribes (and familiar to learned readers), but less common in practice. Their connotations were more specific and limited. The scribal toolbox was further bolstered by a variety of non-*naskh* styles, such as the Persian-derived

style of *ta'liq* and the Ottoman chancery style of *diwani,* both of which connoted particular types of content. The list ends with notes on the Ottoman *tughra* signature, a typographic form reminiscent of modern logotypes. Ottoman scribal variety was incredibly vast, and the following list is far from exhaustive. It contains only the most common styles, with descriptions of their recognizable features and proper usage. Stylistic differences are demonstrated in figures for visual comparison. The illustrations were written and drawn by master calligrapher Mohamed Zakariya, and they all transcribe the same passage from the Egyptian Sufi ethicist Ibn Ata'Allah As-Sikandari (d. 1309 C.E.): "Thought is the movement of the heart in the arena of all that is other than it."

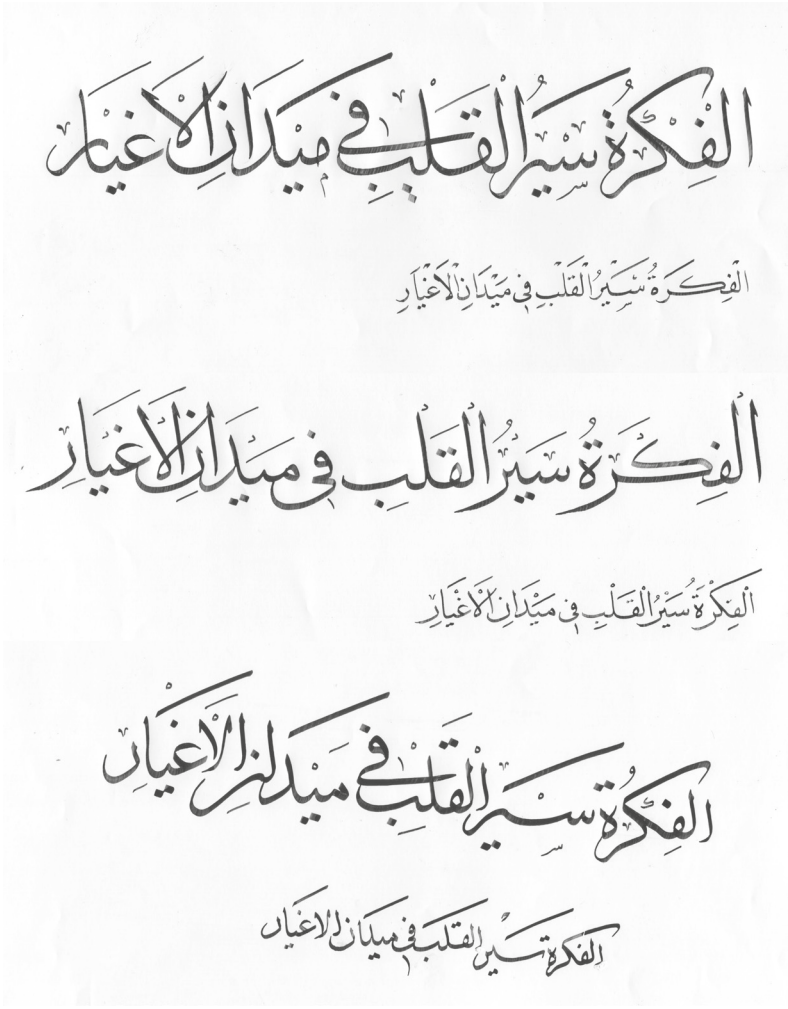


Figure 4: ***Al-aqlam Al-sittah***

This figure shows all six styles of *al-aqlam al-sittah* and their relative proportions. The styles are divided into three pairings of larger and smaller styles. From top: *thuluth* and *naskh*, *muhaqqaq* and *rayhan*, and *tawqi'* and *riqa'*. All the displayed styles transcribe the same line of text. (Illustration courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)

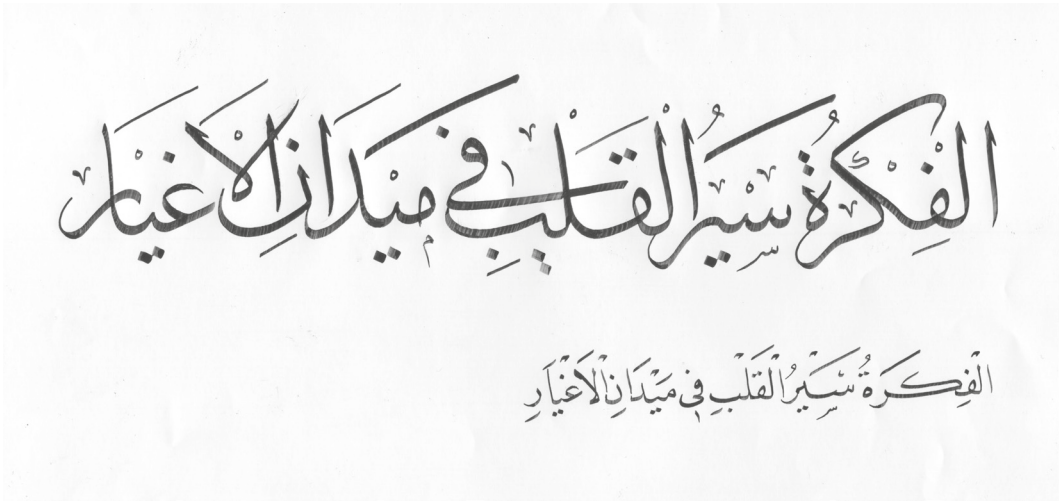


Figure 5: *Thuluth* and *Naskh*

This pairing of styles consists of the larger *thuluth* (Turkish *sülüs*) and the smaller *naskh* (Turkish *nesih*). These are the most common styles of Ottoman practice. All the displayed styles of script transcribe the same line of text. (Illustration courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)

Thuluth (Turkish: *sülüs*), which means "one-third," is the most famous of Ottoman styles. The name derives from its relationship to *tumar,* the grand signature script of the Umayyad. Early versions of *thuluth* measured one-third the height of *tumar.* Ottoman scribes utilized *thuluth* as a display script for heading, titles, and grand statements. It was rarely used for copying the body of text. *Thuluth* is the sister script of *naskh,* and Qur'anic *masahif* in the style of Şeyh Hamdullah pair *thuluth* headings with *naskh* text. Elsewhere, Ottoman artists celebrated *thuluth*'s compositional possibilities in display panels *(levha)* and architectural inscriptions. *Thuluth* inscriptions decorate mosques, monuments, gates, wall hanging, and tombstones. The style's association with decorative headings and display conveys artistic and regal connotations.

Visually, *thuluth* appears highly fluid, with a balance of straight verticals and curved horizontals (see Figure 5). The *alif* measures seven *nuqta* tall. It sports a top serif that points down and toward the right, and its bottom curves slightly to the left. Ottoman scribes described the shape of the *thuluth alif* as "a man looking at his feet." Bowls and final curves display a wide degree of visual bounce, and letter blocks frequently stack above one another. Occasionally, letter terminals sweep up in fine hairlines to touch the bottom of subsequent blocks. These finial connections guide the eye in the direction of reading and bring separate letter blocks into visual harmony. Since *thuluth* is a large display style, *tashkil* markings are drawn with a finer pen. This establishes a formal hierarchy of script layers. *Rasm* and *i'jaam* (layers 1 and 2) are distinguished by bolder strokes, while *tashkil* and higher layers (layers 3–7) appear much lighter. The higher layers assist legibility, fill spatial gaps, and aesthetically balance the composition. This contrasts with *naskh,* in which all layers are drawn with the same-sized pen.

Naskh (Turkish: *nesih*) is the preferred bookhand for running text and the most common of all the Ottoman styles. It emphasizes legibility and operates as the Times New Roman of Ottoman practice. *Naskh* transcribes a wide range of educational, scientific, legal, popular, devotional, and literary content. Şeyh Hamdullah established *naskh* as the preferred style for copying the Qur'an,

and its durable popularity earned it the epithet *khadim al-Qur'an* (servant of the Qur'an). *Naskh* also lends its name as the general term for all rounded, or cursive, styles of Arabic script (in contrast to the geometric, or *Kufic,* styles). Some commentators note that the name is a synonym of "cancel" and thereby suggest that *naskh*'s popularity abolished other styles. *Naskh*'s presentation champions clarity, and it later provided the visual model for printed Ottoman typefaces.

The *naskh alif* measures five *nuqta* tall and displays very little curvature (see Figure 5). Although the *alif* has no serif, the *naskh lām* is distinguished by a small serif on the top right. *Naskh*'s small size reduces horizontal sweep, and a consistent baseline is rigidly enforced. Final flourishes rarely extend below subsequent letter blocks. The horizontal compactness and reduced curvature accentuate clarity, even at small sizes. And Ottoman *naskh* inclines slightly to the left, a stylistic variation introduced by Şeyh Hamdullah. Compared to *thuluth, naskh*'s vertical strokes are shorter, its horizontals are straighter, and its counters appear larger. *Naskh* plays the straight man to the dancing curves of the larger display style. Its bowls appear flatter than the bowls of *thuluth,* and blocks of text display more regular vertical arrangement. *Tashkil* are written with a similar-size pen as those used with *rasm* and *i'jaam.* But the layers of *tashkil* display more separation from the letters they modify. This guides the reading eye, much like the serifs of printed Latin.

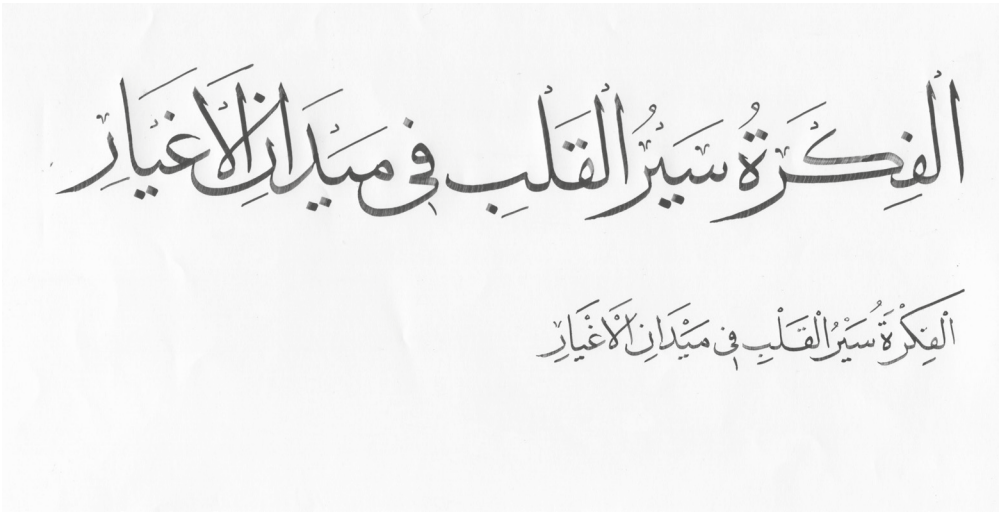


Figure 6: *Muhaqqaq* and *Rayhan*

This pairing of styles consists of the larger *muhaqqaq* (Turkish *muhakkak*) and the smaller *rayhan* (Turkish *reyhanî*). Distinctive features include the straight verticals and the sharp points of the terminals. All the displayed styles of script transcribe the same line of text. (Illustration courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)

Muhaqqaq (Turkish: *muhakkak*), which means "meticulously produced" is the most hieratic style of *al-aqlam al-sittah.* It was one of the first proportional styles employed for Qur'anic masahif, and it has very strong religious and sacred connotations. Ottoman scribes employed *muhaqqaq* for displays of religious significance and as a framing device for grand *masahif* and Qur'anic passages. It was rarely, if ever, used as a copyist style for nonreligious material. *Muhaqqaq* is the sister style of the smaller *rayhan,* but it also operates in counterpoint to the flowing curves of *thuluth.* This can be seen in Osman's *hilye* template, where the sharpness of *muhaqqaq* contrasts with the more fluid pairing of *thuluth* and *naskh* (see Figure 2 and 3). The *muhaqqaq basmala* frames the *hilye* with an aura of sacredness, stateliness, and deeply classical religiosity.

Muhaqqaq's defining features are its grandness, the straightness of its lines, the flatness of its bowls, the openness of its counters, and the sharpness of its terminals (see Figure 6). It is the tallest of *al-aqlam al-sittah,* with an *alif* measuring nine *nuqta* tall. It is also the most angular, with letters tapering to knifelike points. The *muhaqqaq alif* is tall and straight, with a rightward-facing barbed serif and a pointed base, and the *rā'* class of letters ends in sharp leftward-facing terminals. These arrowlike forms direct the eye along the baseline axis of reading. The stark contrasts of tall verticals, flat horizontals, and open counters invoke a sense of exactitude and clarity. The *tashkil* of *muhaqqaq*—like those of *thuluth*—are drawn with a finer pen. This further emphasizes the sharpness of the primary *rasm,* contrasting bold and stately letters with more delicate *tashkil.*

Rayhan (Turkish: *reyhani*) appears as a smaller, more delicate version of *muhaqqaq. Rayhan* letters resemble those of its larger, statelier cousin, but they are traced in a finer pen (see Figure 6). As a result, terminals appear less sharp and display less contrast between thick and thin. Despite its small size, and unlike *naskh,* the *rayhan alif* retains a small serif on the top right. Due to a linguistic similarity with the Arabic word for "basil," *rayhan* is sometimes described as the visual and written equivalent of finely pointed basil leaves. *Tashkil* and the primary text are traced with the same pen, and *rayhan* may therefore be described as *muhaqqaq* lines drawn with a *tashkil* pen. Ottoman scribes employed *rayhan* infrequently, and usage declined noticeably alongside the rising popularity of *naskh.* It occasionally appears as a decorative style for small passages or in contrast with the sister style of *muhaqqaq.* In the later Ottoman period, the term sometimes referred to a larger variant, which more closely resembles *muhaqqaq.*

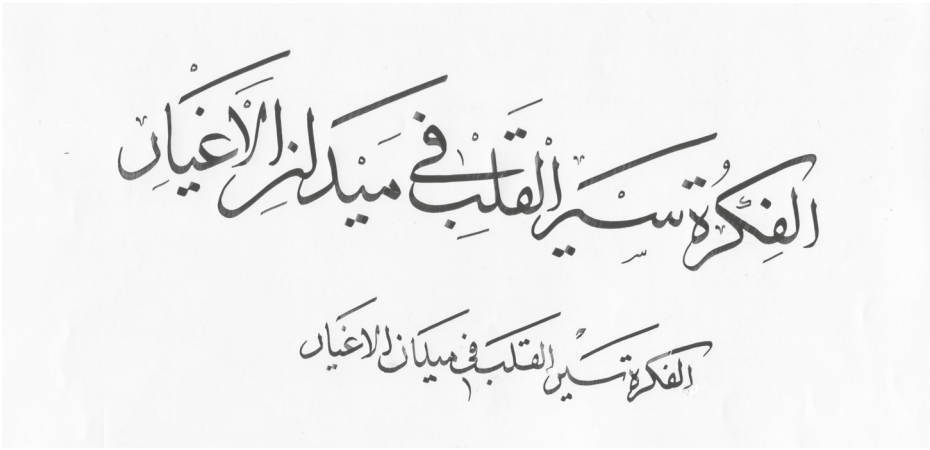


Figure 7: *Tawqi'* and *Riqa'*

This pairing of styles consists of the larger *tawqi'* (Turkish *tevki*) and the smaller *riqa'* (Turkish *rika*). Note how the baseline of these styles rises slightly from right to left. All the displayed styles of script transcribe the same line of text. (Illustration courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)

Tawqi' (Turkish: *tevki*) is the rarest of *al-aqlam al-sittah* in Ottoman practice. It began as an Abbasid chancery style, and its name relates to the Arabic word for "signature." In Abbasid decrees, a *tawqi'* signature authenticated texts written in the smaller sister style of *riqa'.* The fluidity of *tawqi'* and its occasional unorthodox connections served to distinguish these decrees from earlier Umayyad protocols, which were penned in the grand style of *tumar. Tawqi'* is slightly smaller than *thuluth,* and the line of writing rises to the left (see Figure 7). The style exaggerates curvature, and the *tawqi'-riqa'* pair is the most rounded of all *al-aqlam al-sittah.* Ottoman scribes employed *tawqi'* as a display

style where its exaggerated roundness stood opposite *muhaqqaq*'s rigid straightness. In relation to *thuluth, muhaqqaq* is taller and straighter while *tawqi'* is shorter and smoother. Identifying traits also include overlapping and vertically stacked letter blocks. A distinctive feature of *tawqi'* is the occasional unorthodox connection. In later Ottoman *tawqi',* for example, the combination of *alif* followed by *lām* may resemble a strong horizontal crossbar. In proper Arabic script grammar, *alif* does not connect with the letter that follows it.

Riqa' (Turkish: *rika)* is the smaller sister style of *tawqi'.* Its vertical shortness emphasizes curvature, and the writing displays a wide degree of visual bounce in relation to the thickness of the pen (see Figure 7). Like *tawqi',* the line of letters rises as it moves to the left. The Ottomans also referred to *riqa'* as the *ijazah* (Turkish: *icaza*) style. It played a particular role in the drafting of *ijazah,* a diploma or certificate of transmission. An *ijazah* certified a scribe's ability to write in a particular style of script. The process of obtaining an *ijazah* was time intensive, and apprentice scribes would devote years to studying and copying historical examples. Once ready, the student would copy an exemplar in the chosen style (for example, *thuluth, muhaqqaq, tawqi',* etc.). The copy should accurately represent the style and proportions of the original. If an authorized teacher approved the student copy, that is, the teacher perceived the *khatt* and form of the student's work as identical to the exemplar, the student received an *ijazah.* The formal certificate would display the student's passage in the chosen style, followed by the teacher's acceptance written in *riqa'.* With certificate in hand, the student could practice the style, copy texts that required it, teach it to others, and sign her or his name on decorative pieces. The dedication and precision required to obtain an *ijazah* preserved the various scribal styles as visually distinct and recognizable types.

Other Scripts and Forms

The Ottoman script of *ta'liq* (Turkish: *talik*) is known in Persia as *nasta'liq,* which is itself a combination of *naskh* and *ta'liq.* It developed as a Persian chancery style, and the name refers to its distinctive "hanging" appearance. *Ta'liq* has particularly strong connotations of Persian influence, and it is occasionally referred to as *al-khatt al-Farisi* (Persian script) in the Arab world. The hanging structure and sweeping curves align with Persian orthography, and *nasta'liq* remains the dominant handwritten style of Iran, Pakistan, and much of Central Asia. In Ottoman circles, the popularity of *ta'liq* grew over time. By the end of the Ottoman era, *ta'liq* even rivaled *thuluth* as the dominant style of decorative panels. Usage spread from the copying of Persian poetry to prose works, popular religious materials, and educational texts. In the religious realm, *ta'liq* presented devotional and mystical commentaries, and it eventually came to represent official pronouncements of the grand mufti, the *Şeyhülislam. But ta'liq*'s religious role was supportive and devotional rather than hieratic. It was rarely, if ever, utilized for the transcription of Ottoman *masahif. Ta'liq* was used for interlinear Persian translations of Qur'anic Arabic passages, but it was never applied to the primary Arabic text.

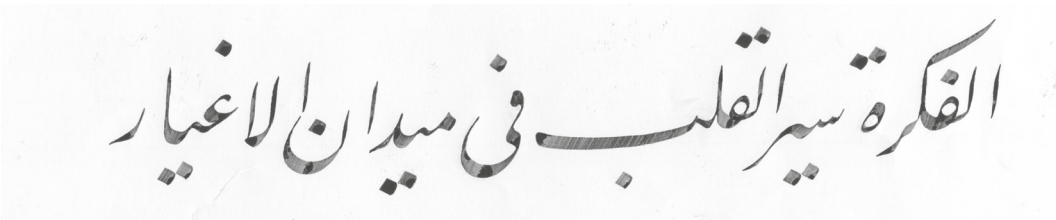


Figure 8: ***Ta'liq***

The display style of *ta'liq* (Turkish: *talik*). Note how the baseline sweeps down from the right. The *ta'liq* style originated in Persia and signified texts of Persian origin or influence. All the displayed styles of script transcribe the same line of text. (Illustration courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)

The line of *ta'liq* slopes from top right to bottom left, and letter blocks descend as if hanging from a clothesline (see Figure 8). Blocks often stack vertically with the first letter of a block located directly above the final letter of the previous block. The *alif* is very short relative to the *nuqta,* and it does not sport a serif. Vertical motion arises from the angled line rather than the height of individual letters. A number of visual differences distinguish *ta'liq / nasta'liq* from *naskh.* These include the pronounced slant of the line, the comparative shortness of the verticals, the elongation of horizontal letters, and the stacking of final forms. The counters of the *mīm,* medial *'ayn,* and *fā'* are often filled solid, or blind, and the vertical teeth of the *bā'*-class letters appear minimal. The teeth of the *sīn* class may disappear altogether, transforming the *rasm* into a long, sweeping horizontal. The overall effect conveys a sense of fluid, almost dancelike diagonal movement. This contrasts sharply with the solidity of *naskh* in particular, and *al-aqlam al-sittah* more generally, in which the perpendicular interplay of horizontal and vertical remains dominant.

Diwani (Turkish: *divani*) served as the official style of the Ottoman chancery and takes its name from the imperial council. It recorded Ottoman *fermans* (permissions), *vakifs* (endowments), *berat* (title grants), statements of honor, appointments, and patents. The imperial court maintained proprietary control, and the style was not to be used for unsanctioned communications. It was never used for Qur'anic *masahif,* nor was it used for quotidian texts. In contrast to *al-aqlam al-sittah,* which represent classical Arabic—and the particular trio of *thuluth, naskh,* and *muhaqqaq* that transcribed the eternal Qur'an—*diwani* signified the temporal order of the Ottoman state. Umayyad decrees employed the early *tumar* style, Abbasid decrees employed the signature *tawqi'* style, and Ottoman decrees employed *diwani.* In each case, secular authority was encoded and enforced through a distinctive style of script.

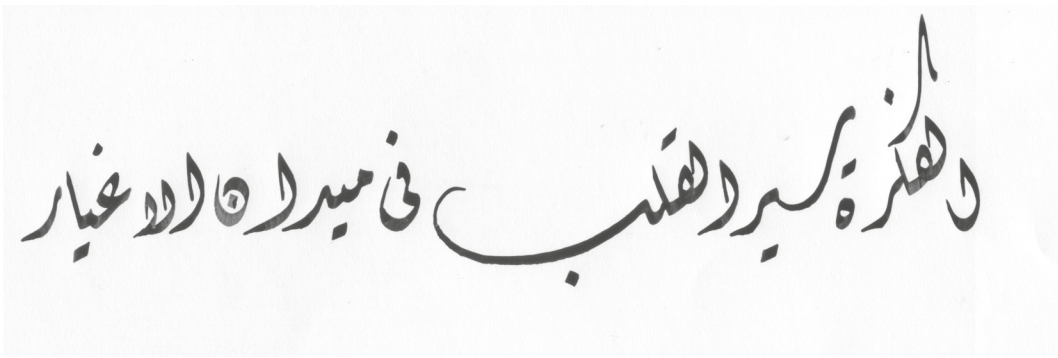


Figure 9: ***Diwani***

The complicated style of diwani (Turkish: *divani*) was the exclusive style of the Ottoman royal chancery. All the displayed styles transcribe the same line of text. (Illustration courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)

Diwani resembles an excessively cursive and super-structured version of *ta'liq* (see Figure 9). Its bowls are deep and rounded with exaggerated final loops. Both *alif* and *lam* display a distinctive half-moon shape and sport a pronounced left-hand serif. Like *ta'liq,* the *mīm* is blind, and the teeth of *bā'* and *sīn* are underplayed. And the *nūn* may adopt a near-circular shape with its *nuqta* in the center. The earliest *diwani* styles were written without *tashkil,* but complexity developed over time. The addition of *tashkil* and the higher layers of Arabic script evolved into a dense pattern of decorative elements. The density of forms approximates solid shapes when viewed from a distance, and the line rises on the left to resemble the prow of a ship. The excessive curvature and density sharply contrasted with the horizontal emphasis of more prosaic *naskh* texts.

The style's visual complexity reinforced its functional role. *Diwani* preserved precise legal wording as drawn and linear structure. Excessive decoration and intense curves distinguished *diwani* from other Ottoman styles, especially *al-aqlam al-sittah*. And *diwani's* distinctive shape protected content from forgery and fraudulent additions. *Diwani* was difficult to write, and it was drawn only by specifically trained scribes of the Ottoman chancery. It was difficult to read, and it was typically deciphered only by official bureaucrats. The requisite precision, combined with expensive materials such as gold-flecked inks and an illuminated *tughra* signature, visually certified a document of royal origin. Extended sheets of paper recorded the entirety of the proclamation without page breaks, and *diwani* scrolls were often displayed as vibrant visual markers of royal permission.

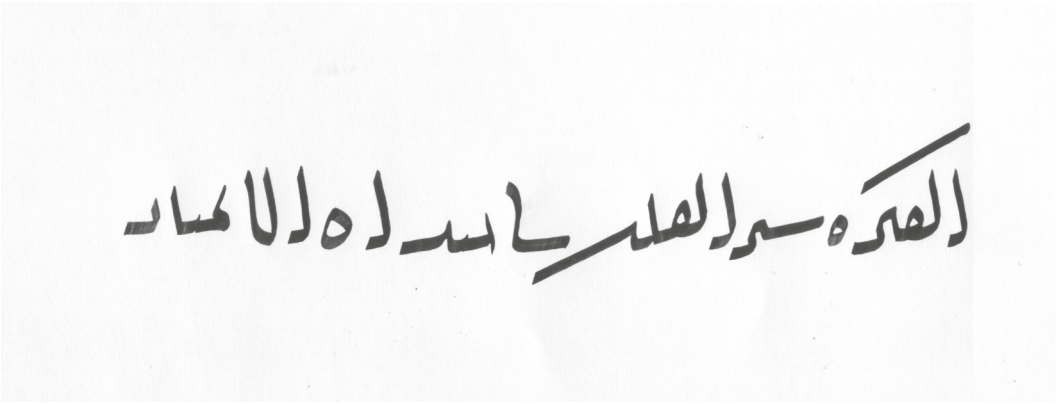


Figure 10: ***Siayaqah***

The unorthodox style of siyaqah (Turkish: *siyakat*) recorded financial transactions. Note the lack of *nokta* (i'jaam). All the displayed styles transcribe the same line of text. (Illustration courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)

Siyaqah (Turkish: *siyakat*) recorded Ottoman financial documents and land registers. Although the textual content of such registers strove for directness and clarity, the visual presentation is highly ambiguous and difficult to decipher. *Siyaqah* is also known by the name *qirmah* (broken), which adequately describes its appearance (see Figure 10). The style deliberately breaks common rules of orthography and script grammar. It consists only of *rasm* (layer 1), without any *nuqta* or *tashkil,* and words were written with a great deal of alphabetic abbreviation. *Siyaqah*'s purposeful ambiguity protected financial documents from false additions, and it limited readership to certified officials with the requisite specialized literacy. When a trained reader recited a *siyaqah* text, the clearly worded legal content was shared with listening audiences. The style played a purely bureaucratic role, and it was never used for artistic, decorative, or religious purposes.

Ruq'ah (Turkish: *rik'a*) labels the style of daily memos and personal correspondence, and it continues to be used for everyday handwriting across much of the Arabic world. The name is often confused with *riqa'* due to lexical similarity. The names of both styles derive from the common root word for a sheet of paper. Visually, however, the styles are quite distinct. *Riqa'* is a smaller version of the highly curved *tawqi'. Ruq'ah,* in contrast, resembles a flatter version of *ta'liq*. As the style of daily penmanship, *ruq'ah* aids quick transcription and conveys an aura of informality. This distinguishes *ruq'ah* texts from formal publications copied in *al-aqlam al-sittah, diwani,* and other styles. The distinction continued into the era of print. Most Arabic typefaces mimicked the publishable and clearly formed style of *naskh,* while unpublished handwriting remains *ruq'ah.*

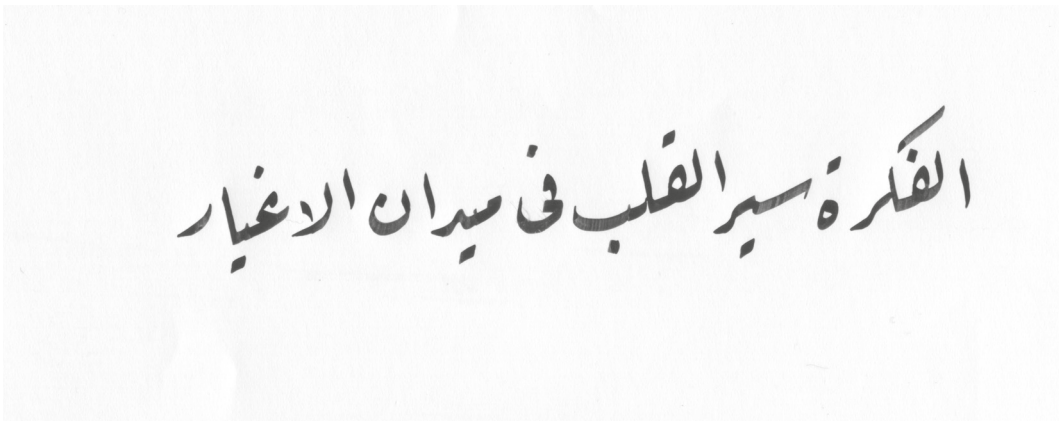


Figure 11: ***Ruq'ah***

Ruq'ah (Turkish: *rik'a*) was the style of everyday penmanship and correspondence. All the displayed styles of script transcribe the same line of text. All the displayed styles transcribe the same line of text. (Illustration courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)

Ruq'ah letters are vertically short with thick strokes relative to their height (see Figure 11). The *alif* has no serif. As with *ta'liq* and *diwani,* letter blocks begin above the baseline and slope downward to the left. The final letter of each block rests on a common baseline. Despite its informality, *ruq'ah* follows clearly delineated rules of penmanship that minimize the number of required strokes. This facilitates quick transcription. *Nuqta,* for example, are marked in shorthand: dual *nuqta* merge as a horizontal dash, and triple *nuqta* take the form of a carat (with the right-side ascent noticeably thicker than the left-side descent). *Tashkil* typically is unmarked but may appear sporadically in order to clarify an ambiguous term, highlight a particular vocalization, or specify a foreign name.

The term *jali* (Turkish: *celi*) identifies larger and more decorative versions of other styles. It is not a unique style in its own right. As a style becomes larger, its character is emphasized and its proportional relations become more noticeable. *Jali* transformations adapt stylistic proportions for larger-size pens and larger displays. They preserve the proportions of smaller scripts at larger sizes. The most common *jali* varieties are *thuluth jali, ta'liq jali,* and *diwani jali. Thuluth jali* was used for architectural inscriptions, wall hangings, and decorative display pieces. *Ta'liq jali* was used for decorative display of Persianate poetry and religious aphorisms. And *diwani jali,* although not necessarily larger than other *diwani* writings, appears excessively decorated.

Jali thuluth (Turkish: *celî sülüs*) affords artists and designers great flexibility. *Jali* designs are composed as spatial constructions rather than singular lines of writing. Principles of balance, rhythm, unity, and architecture guide the placement of forms. Letter blocks arrange vertically and horizontally, with phrases beginning on the bottom right. Completed compositions adopt a wide range of shapes and forms, from medallions to cones to fruit and birds (see Figure 12) The *alif* of *jali-thuluth* pitches slightly to the left and displays a prominent wedge-shaped serif, which points downward and to the right. The terminals of final letters often end in thin curves that point upward. All seven layers of script are common, with *tashkil* and decorative marks standing in aesthetic and compositional counterpoint to the dominant *rasm* forms. The *tashkil* marks are drawn with a smaller pen, often one-third or one-fourth the size of the *rasm* pen. They aesthetically balance the composition by filling spatial holes between letters.



Figure 12: ***Jali Thuluth*** Composition

This calligraphy is composed in *jali thuluth* (Turkish *celî sülüs*) style. The highly structured image displays all seven layers of Arabic script. The transcribed text is that same passage that appears in illustrations of the various styles. (Figures 4-11) (Illustration courtesy of Mohamed Zakariya.)

As letters increase or decrease in size, the relational system governing positive and negative space must adjust accordingly. In typographic design, larger point sizes require typesetters to minimize and alter the kerning (spacing) between characters. Similar problems plagued *jali thuluth* until Mustafa Rakim (1757–1826 C.E.) proposed a solution in the eighteenth century. Rakim applied a system of squares that geometrically enlarged small-scale compositions for large-scale applications. Using this method, Kazasker Mustafa Izzet Effendi (1801–1877 C.E.) designed the large *thuluth* roundels in Hagia Sophia. The roundels accurately recreate the relationships of *thuluth,* and although they appear handwritten, they were geometrically enlarged. Drafting them by hand would have required a pen measuring thirty-five centimeters in diameter.

As a measure of size, *ghubar* stands opposite the large decorative varieties of jali. *Ghubar* labels diminutive varieties, and the name derives from the Arabic word for a speck of dust. The name often references a diminutive form of *naskh,* but, as a descriptor of size, it can apply to any style. *Ghubar* versions of other styles, such as *ghubar muhaqqaq* and *ghubar ta'liq,* also exist. Despite their minuscule nature, *ghubar* varieties preserve legibility. As functional styles, they recorded messages sent by pigeon post. Ottoman scribes also applied the small size to a variety of aesthetic, talismanic, and spiritual practices. *Ghubar* copies of Qur'anic *masahif* measure less than five centimeters across. They take the form of small codices or octagon-shaped amulets and were often worn on cords or hung from battle standards.

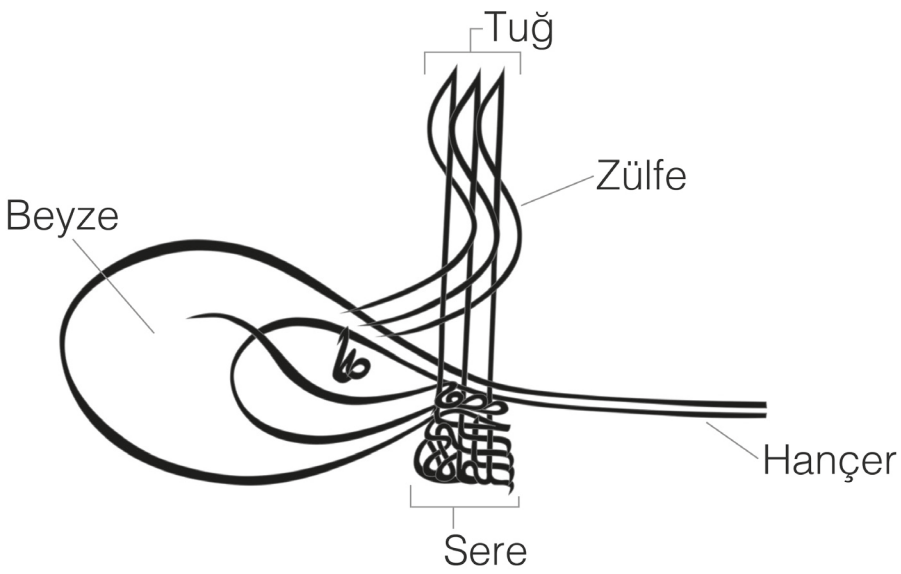


Figure 13: ***Tughra*** **Composition**

The *tughra* (Turkish: *tuğra*) logotype was the official signature of Ottoman sultans. It often topped and authorized chancery pronouncements written in the royal *diwani* style. This diagram labels the constituent components of the *tughra,* which remained consistent over time. The displayed signature is that of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent (reigned 1520-1566 C.E.). (Image produced in Adobe Creative Suite, based on a design by M. Şinasi Acar; see Acar 1999, Turk Hat Sanatı, 163.)

The *tughra* (Turkish: *tuğra*) is a calligraphic form that serves as the royal signature of Ottoman sultans (see Figure 13) Although it is composed of writing, it is not a style per se, and it therefore differs from other entries described in this chapter. Instead, the closest modern analogy of the *tughra* is the logotype. Logos communicate a visual synthesis of an idea or entity, such as a business, a corporation, or an agency. Logos remain recognizable as unique marks, regardless of familiarity with the referent or an immediate ability to decipher their textual content. *Tughra* operate along similar principles: they serve as the logo of the Ottoman state. *Tughra* incorporate a stylized version of the sultan's name as an official seal and signature. Although the written name changed with each new sultan, the *tughra* shape did not. The logo form remained a consistent visual marker of Ottoman authority, even as its specific linguistic content shifted with the times.

Tughra were drawn by specialized artist-designers, and their presence certified official documents penned in the *diwani* style. Key components of the *tughra* logo include (1) the *sere,* a stacked base of compressed letters that indicate the name and genealogy of the sultan, as well as honorifics such as "khan" and *al-muzaffar da'im* (the eternally victorious); (2) the *tuğ,* three tall shafts that vertically extend the *alifs* of said honorifics; (3) *zülfe,* S-shaped serifs that fall from the left-hand side of the *tuğ* in semblance of battle standards; (3) ovular *beyze* that expand the letter *nun* as a large loop to the left of the *tuğ;* and (4) the *hançer,* which draws the lines of the *beyze* in a fine pincerlike dagger on the right. Like any good logo, the shape translates concept into visual form. It communicates a sense of "gathering." The expansiveness of the ovular *beyze* are threaded, needlelike, through the shafts of the *tug* and into the point of the *kol.* The sultan's name provides a solid foundation on which lines march through vertical battle standards.

Ottoman Scribes as Typographers and Designers

In 1930, Beatrice Warde famously described typography as a crystal goblet. A crystal goblet presents wine in optimal fashion: its clear glass highlights the wine's color, its shape channels the wine's aroma, and its delicate stem allows one to hold the content up to the light before directing the wine to the lips. The wine is the message, and the goblet delivers the message without interference. The taster should notice the wine, not the glass. Warde suggested that type holds content in similar fashion. It reveals the color and flavor of a text, and it should step aside when delivering its message. Both vessels—goblet and type—direct attention away from themselves and toward their content. Typography should not interfere with presentation of text; readers should feast on the meaning and message of the words. Stanley Morison seconds Warde's analogy in his *First Principles of Typography*: "any disposition of printing material which, whatever the intention, has the effect of coming between the author and the reader is wrong." Classical typography is an invisible and infrastructural art. It strives for clarity and transparency. It is ever-present and necessary but unobtrusive and unnoticed. Type holds text like a goblet holds wine.

To craft the proper goblet, a typographer considers the textual copy. A designer has a toolbox of fonts and styles, and she or he determines which of the available options best honors the requested task. Some contents appear best in Helvetica, others in Times New Roman, Palatino, Garamond, or Edwardian Script. Font variations of regular, **bold,** *italic,* and SMALL CAPS further dress the text, as does the sizing, justification, and alignment. Legal documents do not employ Comic Sans, and children's books do not condense stories into eleven-point Times New Roman. Long-form printed texts are more likely to employ serif typefaces; small text displayed on screens works better with sans serifs. Professional typographers, like scribes, certainly beautify texts, but their craft acts in service to the intended message. Successful typography conveys necessary information to necessary audiences, all the while remaining faithful to content, source, and sponsor. Type clothes the message in an outfit suitable to its role.

The same principles apply to scribal design. Ottoman scribes dressed written messages in the proper garment of display. They copied, clarified, honored, and occasionally disguised written content in the selection and application of appropriate styles.[55] When delving into manuscript collections, scholars usually focus on the textual content. They rarely notice the different styles of script that hold the content. This is good design, and *khatt* was the typography of the Ottoman era. Ottoman scribes drew the crystal goblets that held and emphasized textual wine. In some cases, the goblet clearly indicated genre, origin, and authority: the *diwani* style signified official pronouncements of the imperial court, and the *siyaqah* style recorded financial statements. Other goblets operated through connotation: the *muhaqqaq* style conveyed a stately divinity, and the *ta'liq* style implied Persian influence. These vectors of *khatt* and scribal design directed texts into appropriate channels.

Robert Bringhurst defines typography as "a craft by which meanings of a text can be clarified, honored and shared, or knowingly disguised."[56] A more apt description of Ottoman scribal practice is hard to find. Scribal design strives for the same ideals as Bringhurst's vision of typography: (1) invite the reader into the text, (2) reveal the tenor and meaning of the text, (3) clarify the structure and order of the text, (4) harmonize the text with supporting elements (such as illustrations, citations, and notes), and (5) induce a state of energetic repose.[57] The following section demonstrates this parallelism by applying Bringhurst's *Elements of Typographic Style* to Ottoman scribal design.

First, our hypothetical Ottoman designer "chooses a [style] or a group of [styles] that will elucidate the character of the text."[58] This begins with technical considerations of material and medium: "consider the medium for which the [style] was originally designed."[59] Modern typographers distinguish between natively digital fonts and those adapted from metal type.[60] Styles of Arabic script were similarly designed for different technologies and tools. Texts carved or printed in stone look and feel different than texts written on papyrus, parchment, or paper. The bold forms of archaic *Kufic* work well when scratched onto parchment and papyrus. And geometric *Kufic* lends itself to mosaic tiling. *Kufic* styles pair well with hard mediums, and they remained popular in architectural inscription long after being replaced on paper. The *naskh* styles, in contrast, were designed for paper. The adoption of paper nudged Arabic script toward a more delicate line. But not all paper is created equal: "Choose [styles] that suit the paper you intend to [write] on, or paper that suits the [styles] you wish to use."[61] As early as Umayyad times, the size of the paper sheet informed the size of the Arabic pen. The base measure of *tumar* refers to both a sheet of paper and the size of its corresponding pen.[62] Similarly, the large pens of *muhaqqaq* do not serve the delicate line of *diwani,* and the reed pen for *thuluth* is larger than the pen for *naskh.* The larger styles of *thuluth* and *muhaqqaq* utilize a smaller pen to mark *tashkil,* whereas the *tashkil* of *naskh* and *rayhan* are drawn with the same pen used for the base letters.

Next, the designer, "chooses [styles] that suit the task as well as the subject."[63] The proper style has "historical echoes and associations that are in harmony with the text."[64] Thus, the classical Arabic styles of *al-aqlam al-sittah* were employed for Qur'anic *masahif.* Classical styles visually and scribally linked Ottoman *masahif* with the Arabic source and Arabic language of the Qur'an. *Al-aqlam al-sittah* reference Yaqut al-Musta'simi and Abbasid scribal tradition. The call was answered by Şeyh Hamdullah and echoed in his association with Yaqut's hometown. This stylistic connection subtly underscored Ottoman claims to the caliphate and Sunni orthodoxy. The historically Persian associations of *ta'liq,* in contrast, echo romantic Persian poetry and spiritual reflection. The *ta'liq* style transcribed Persian texts and Ottoman writings in Persian style. Although *ta'liq* became an incredibly popular style, Ottoman scribes never employed it for copying the Qur'an.[65] The Arabic language of the Qur'an and the visual language of *ta'liq* spoke different idioms. Persian translations and commentary were occasionally inserted between lines of Qur'anic text. But even when this occurred, the interlinear insertions used *ta'liq,* while the primary text preserved classic Arabic style. The cultural connotations of the two styles differentiated Arabic source from Persian interpretation. The *diwani* style, in contrast, suited the task and subject of Ottoman power. It echoed the royal court and recorded texts in Ottoman Turkish. *Al-aqlam al-sittah, ta'liq,* and *diwani* all display letters and forms of Arabic script. But they communicate in different cultural, linguistic, and connotative registers.

The styles of *al-aqlam al-sittah* operate like a font family. Their shared history and classical connotations provide "variety and homogeneity at the same time: many shapes and sizes but a single [scribal] culture."[66] The sister-script pairings of *al-aqlam al-sittah* provided complementary styles at different sizes. This afforded both consistency of idiom and visual contrast. Scribes seeking the classical connotations of the scribal family could still choose a particular style "whose individual

spirit and character [are] in keeping with the text."[67] In the unique case of the Qur'an, the visual varieties of *al-aqlam al-sittah* explored the depth and multiple messages of the text. *Muhaqqaq,* the most preeminently hieratic of *al-aqlam al-sittah,* exclusively recorded Qur'anic passages and quotations. The meticulous and stately appearance of *muhaqqaq* exhibits the eternal spirit and character of the Qur'an. *Thuluth* characterizes the Qur'an's fluidity, adaptability, and compositional perfection. And the spirit of *naskh* communicated the Qur'an's clarity and accessibility. These three Qur'anic scripts share a common idiom of classical Arabic, but they convey the idiom with distinct character.

Elsewhere, stylistic variety conveys textual hierarchy. The Ottoman pairing of *thuluth* and *naskh* parallels the typographic distinction of display type and text type.[68] *Thuluth* titles and headings mark textual divisions and modulate the body of *naskh* text. Display types are typically larger and more expressive. They present titles and headings while aiming to capture reader attention. Text types are typically smaller and more consistent. They present the body of written content, emphasize legibility, while aiming to hold reader attention. As a display style, the flexibility and decorative fluidity of *thuluth* captures attention. As a text, or body, style, the clarity of *naskh* presents content in an easily legible register. *Naskh*'s clearly distinguished letterforms, consistent baseline, open counters, and tracklike *tashkil* stress legibility. Its spirit and character benefit the presentation and reading of long-form texts. Not surprisingly, therefore, *naskh* became the model for Ottoman and Arabic movable type. Within the wide spectrum of Ottoman scribal styles, *naskh* already recorded texts of wide distribution and shared legibility.

Finally, our Ottoman designer aligns the chosen styles with other visual elements and the page as a whole.[69] Designers strive to articulate the conceptual relationships of visual elements: "Shape the page and frame the text block so that it honors and reveals every element, every relationship between elements, and every logical nuance of the text."[70] Such nuanced design of logical relations occurs in the layers of Arabic script itself. The higher layers of *tashkil* and *i'jaam* inform the logical priority of *rasm.* Styles such as *muhaqqaq* and *thuluth* reveal and honor this relationship by using a larger pen for *rasm* and a smaller-tipped pen for *tashkil. Tughra*-topped *diwani* scrolls provide another wonderful example of coordinated design. *Diwani* texts functioned as official slips of permission, and they were often displayed as such. Thus, the text was drafted as a single block on an extended scroll. The scroll format allowed the entire text to be displayed at once. The *tughra* logotype confirmed the sultan's authority, and the text that followed, written in *diwani,* conveyed the idiom of Ottoman power. *Diwani* flaunts ornateness, complexity, and a highly aestheticized presentation. Its unorthodox ligatures and the density of its forms made the content difficult to decipher, while protecting the pronouncement from forgery and unsanctioned interpolations. Although the textual content was highly significant, that significance did not translate into efficient legibility.[71] The coordinated design of a *diwani* scroll both protected and authorized its contents. The recognizable *tughra* logotype, the stylistic complexity, the textual content, the extended sheet, and the suitability for display all convey a logically consistent message: a precisely worded grant of royal permission, that should not be forged or altered.[72]

Hafiz Osman's *hilye* template raised the visual arrangement of textual and visual elements to a new plateau (see Figures 2 and 3). A variety of elements—both linguistic and otherwise—bolster and reinforce a shared message. *Hilye* transform stylistic variety into a richly layered symbolic architecture, and communicative depth arises from the perception of multiplicity: multiple styles of script, multiple textual passages, and multiple visual forms. As scribal depictions of the Prophet, *hilye* encapsulate the varieties of Ottoman style and the importance of reading between the lines. Stylistic variety entices viewers through a contrast of linear rhythms: "The flowing movement produced by writing can be compared to the lapping of waves produced by water. Effect and counter

effect form both the water's wave and that of script. [A script] is a rhythmic shape with a succession of similar shapes. Its chief rhythmic elements are: straight-curved, vertical-horizontal, arch shaped-garlanded, slanted-back slanted, circular-straight, pressure-resistance, tension-counter tension, upwards-downwards, start-end."[73]

By organizing scribal tensions, Osman's *hilye* template invoked a new language of design. The text flows from the pinnacles of *muhaqqaq,* through the regulated pacing of *naskh,* to the deep valleys of *thuluth,* and back again. The effect is emphasized by the eddies of *thuluth jali* that surround the deep central pool (the *göbek*) of *naskh. Hilye* traverse a series of stylistic comparisons and tensions: big and small, *thuluth* and *naskh, thuluth* and *muhaqqaq,* circular and rectangular, text and decoration, writing and image. *Muhaqqaq* is strongly hieratic. It implicates the divine and opens the *hilye* as a pious and spiritual remembrance. *Thuluth* rose to supremacy as the predominant Ottoman display script, and it occupies the design's commanding central position. *Naskh* presents longer lines of content clearly and consistently without challenging the primacy of the two larger styles. The interaction evokes a style beyond style. Viewers learn to appreciate the differences of scribal styles, each in its proper place and each with a distinct aesthetic calling. Scribal style, in this broad and communicative sense of the word, does not refer to any one particular Ottoman script, but the power to move freely through the whole domain of scribal practice with grace and vitality.[74]

Considering Scribal Design

Ottoman scribes were textual designers. They certainly beautified text, and their products more than deserve aesthetic appreciation as calligraphic art. But Ottoman scribal texts were also functional and operational. Visual style and textual copy are two sides of the same coin. Styles of script communicate alongside, and in support of, written content. Ottoman scribes dressed written messages in appropriate outfits. They designed texts to connect content and audience. Visual distinctions began with notational differences. Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Armenian, and Latin characters all targeted distinct communities. Stylistic variety internal to a script further specified the direction of the text. That direction, the vector of communication, was visualized through *khatt*. The lines of *khatt* draw letters, outline text boxes, direct messages, target audiences, and connect readers across time and space. Ottoman scribes certainly beautified text, and their products more than deserve aesthetic appreciation as calligraphic art. But Ottoman scribal texts were also functional and operational. Visual style and textual copy are two sides of the same coin. Like crystal goblets, styles of script communicate alongside, and in support of, written content.

Ottoman scribes were textual designers. They dressed written messages in appropriate outfits, and they designed texts to connect content and audience. Ottoman scribal distinctions began with notational differences. Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Armenian, and Latin characters all targeted distinct communities. Stylistic variety internal to a script—such as the stylistic varieties of Arabic script outlined in this essay—further specified the direction of the text. That direction, the vector of communication, was visualized through *khatt*. The lines of *khatt* draw letters; they outline text boxes; they direct messages; they target audiences; and they connect readers across time and space. *Al-khatt al-mansub* provided a powerful system for the construction of formalized proportions and recognizable types. These types, or styles, were systemized, practiced, and taught. They were repeated by multiple scribes in multiple scriptoria across multiple centuries. Ottoman scribal tradition was incredibly durable, with a deep understanding of visual, graphic, and textual design.

The rich vocabulary of Ottoman design can, and should, be mined for contemporary considerations and analytic concepts.. Some terms, such as *al-aqlam al-sittah,* delineate specific proportions and identify specific styles of script. Others, such *jali* or *ghubar,* refer to the size or scale of a particular variation. And yet others, such as *tughra* and *hilye,* refer to particular forms and the spatial organization of textual content. Practices of *khatt,* understood as design, unites a vast range of textual and visual activity. Designs can be formal or informal, rounded or stately, traditional or experimental; style of script can be large or small, red or black, bold or fluid; the regulated vector of textual content can unfold as a single line or splinter into a collection of frames and boxes. Despite drastic differences in content, technology, and practice, the considerations of contemporary designers and scribal practice overlap. Digital designers weigh choices of hardware, software, and fonts. Ottoman designers weighed choices of paper, pen, and style. Different sizes and finishes of paper, different widths and cuts of the reed pen, and different styles of script all carry cultural, practical and regional connotations.

If form follows function, the diversity of Ottoman styles attests to a diversity of functional solutions. Ottoman design applied suitable styles and suitable tools to the copy at hand. Reframing scribal practice—and calligraphy more broadly—as textual design allows us to analyze and recover these earlier processes as models of current practice. It repositions products of Ottoman design as communicative objects with form, function, and practical insight. As we now digitize and remediate the Ottoman scribal legacy, how do we retain, remember, and reinvigorate these practices? And how might similar practices inform contemporary communication? Is there a place for conventionalized styles in a digital, global, and networked world? Scribal models encourage us to examine our communicative dilemmas from new and pertinent angles. The wealth and quantity of textual material has certainly increased since Ottoman times, but Ottoman society was no less design literate than our own. Approaching Ottoman *khatt* as a practice of communicative design reinvigorates the history of writing. Lines of *khatt* once again become functional templates and successful models of design solutions.

Endnotes

[1] Grabar 1992, 60. Grabar notes that the Greek word *kalligraphos,* as opposed to *kalligraphia,* means simply "scribe."

[2] Ibid., 66.

[3] Marks 2010, 199.

[4] Lupton and Phillips 2015, 13: "Point, line, and plane are the building blocks of design. From these elements, designers create images, icons, textures, patterns, diagrams, animations, and typographic systems."

[5] Ingold 2007, 128.

[6] Acar 1999, 26–27; Derman and Çetin 1998, 37. Jamal Elias relates a similar story in which Ibn Muqlah retreats for forty days in order to improve and refine Arabic letters. Elias 2012, 239.

[7] Type designer Erik Spiekermann describes a similar method for updating and adapting historical examples: "I look at [the letter] for a long time . . . and I draw it and I sketch over it. Then I put it away, and the next day, I draw it from memory." Spiekermann 2011.

[8] Stanley 2004, 56. Common Ottoman form defined *masahif* of fifteen lines per page on sheets measuring 18 by 12 centimeters. A ruling board, or *mistar,* used prior to writing, ensured consistency of line spacing from page to page. The *mistar* delineated borders, frame, and lines of text with threads. Pressing the paper onto the *mistar* would impress the template upon the paper.

[9] Mahir 1999, 31.

[10] Schimmel 1984, 36; Ülker 1987, 60.

[11] Stanley 2004, 56.

[12] Ülker 1987, 79; Blair 2006, 492.
[13] Sheila Blair notes that Hafiz Osman lightly altered Hamdullah's style of *naskh* by "smoothing out the strokes, reducing the number of swooping tails and sublinear flourishes, and opening up the spaces between letters and words so that the layout is more compact and regular." Blair 2006, 483.
[14] Acar 1999, 218.
[15] Associations of the *hilye* components with parts of the body—the *başmakan* as head, the belly of the *göbek,* and the *etek* as foot or skirt—convey a bodily portrait-like quality. Elias 2012, 239; Marks 2010, 235.
[16] Grabar 1992, 74.
[17] The text of Osman's *hilye* presents a description of the Prophet Muhammad as relayed by his nephew 'Ali. An English translation of the passage can be found in Blair 2006, 483–484.
[18] The brief descriptions of specific styles draw heavily on Adam Gacek's *Arabic Manuscripts: A Vademecum* (2009) and the descriptions in Sheila Blair's *Islamic Calligraphy* (2006) and Uğur Derman and Nihad M. Çetin's *The Art of Calligraphy* (1998). The books that introduced me to the concept of stylistic variety as a marker of genre are Wijdan Ali's *What Is Islamic Art?* (1996), Muammer Ülker's *Başlangıctan Günümüze Türk Hat Sanatı (The Art of Turkish Calligraphy from the Beginning up to the Present)* (1987), and Yasin Safadi's *Islamic Calligraphy* (1979).
[19] Mohamed Zakariya provided the translation. The passage appears in Ibn 'Ata'Allah 1978.
[20] Gacek 2009, 274.
[21] For a more detailed discussion of the seven layers of Arabic script, see Chapter 1 of *Letters of Light: Arabic Script in Calligraphy, Print, and Digital Design*. Osborn 2017, 23-32.
[22] Qadi 1959, 56.
[23] Gacek 2009, 164.
[24] Mansour 2010. Mansour provides a close examination of *muhaqqaq,* its history, its traditional hieratic character, and the shape of each of its letters.
[25] Schimmel 1984, 23; Mahir 1999, 12.
[26] Gacek 2009, 160; Qadi 1959, 137.
[27] Gacek 2009, 223.
[28] Safadi 1979, 20.
[29] Gacek 2009, 223.
[30] Ibid., 264: The prevalence of unorthodox connections made *tawqi'* a common base style for writing *musalsal,* or chained, compositions. *Musalsal* compositions deliberately deviate from proper script grammar and connect all letter blocks in a single unbroken line.
[31] Blair 2006, 516–517. Blair analyzes a collection of *hadith* written for Süleyman's son Mehmet. The Arabic traditions of the prophet are transcribed in *tawqi',* while the accompanying Persian commentary is written in *ta'liq.* The Abbasid and traditional Arabic connotations of *tawqi'* distinguish it from the Persian connotations of *ta'liq* script.
[32] See, for example, Derman 1998. Derman lists the genealogies of famous scribes and the teachers from whom they received *ijazah.*
[33] The *ketebe,* or the calligraphers' signature, was a mark of pride and individuality in an otherwise regulated system of scripts. The signature allowed scribes to design their own logotype: incorporating additional flourishes such as decorative serifs or intertwined loops that made their *ketebe* visually unique.
[34] Gacek 2009, 165.
[35] In appearance and form, the Persian script *ta'liq* more closely resembles the Ottoman script *diwani.* Gacek 2009, 263.
[36] Blair's opening discussion of Arabic script explores how the script's flexibility allowed it to adapt and emphasize the linguistic features of diverse languages. Arabic emphasizes the verticality of repeated *alifs,* Persian highlights the flowing curves of final *yā'* and *nūn,* and Turkish builds upon the repeated cross-strokes of *kāf* and *gāf.* Blair 2006, 11–15.
[37] Derman and Çetin 1998, 42.

[38] Blair 2006, 433; Gacek 2009, 166.
[39] Wright 2012, 234–239.
[40] Ali 1996, 45.
[41] Blair 2006, 508.
[42] Gacek 2009, 252.
[43] Fekete 1955. Fekete learned *siyaqah* from Turkish prisoners while held in a concentration camp during World War I. See also Bagheri 1998.
[44] Gacek 2009, 252.
[45] Darling 2012, 180.
[46] Mitchell 1953.
[47] Derman and Çetin 1998, 40–41.
[48] *Ghubar* refers to the smallest and airiest variety of script. The term *hurde* was used for scripts written with a thinner pen than normal, but larger than *ghubar.* Acar 1999, *Turk Hat Sanatı (Turkish Calligraphy),* 286.
[49] Acar 1999, 228. Upon obtaining the throne, the sultan would select a new *tughra* from a variety of compositions presented before him. Once a design was settled upon, the *tughra* form remained consistent throughout the sultan's reign.
[50] Blair 2006, 509; via Wittek 1948. See also Acar 1999, 227–228.
[51] Warde 1955.
[52] Morison 1936.
[53] For a methodological introduction to infrastructural inversion, a practice in which invisible technologies are problematized and made visible, see Bowker and Star 1999. Typically, infrastructural technologies are only noticed when they break down. For example, readers are more likely to comment on a typeface if it is difficult to decipher.
[54] A fun take on typographic rules and the ways they have been broken is Felton 2006.
[55] The dominant Ottoman styles remain recognizably distinct, much like modern fonts. But they are not as easily exchanged as digital fonts; a scribal style cannot be altered without recopying an entire document. Typographers receive textual copy and dress it in the proper uniform. Scribes dressed the copy during inscription. There is no equivalent of "plain text" in a scribal environment. The style of script—the attributes of rich text—are applied and inscribed at the time of production. The formalized proportions, shapes, and ligatures of a particular style of manuscript copy were regulated and maintained as it was written. The font and style of script—the attributes of "rich text"—were chosen before production, and texts were directed to specialist scribes trained in the requisite style.
[56] Bringhurst 1997, 1.1.1: 17. Citations to Bringhurst contain both section numbers and page numbers. The section numbers are relatively consistent across all versions of his text. Page numbers are from the 1997 second edition.
[57] Ibid., 1.3: 24.
[58] Ibid., 1.2.4: 22.
[59] Ibid., 6.1.1: 93.
[60] Ibid, 6.1.2: 93. Letterpress also differs from photographic typesetting. Letterpress adds bulk to the form, whereas serifs and fine lines appear reduced in photographic typesetting.
[61] Ibid., 6.1.4: 94–95.
[62] Karabacek 1991, 70.
[63] Bringhurst 1997, 6.2.1: 95.
[64] Ibid., 6.3.1: 98–99.
[65] Schimmel 1970; Blair 2006, 433; Gacek 2009, 166.
[66] Bringhurst 1997, 6.5.1: 102.
[67] Ibid., 6.4.1: 99–102.
[68] White 2011, 177.
[69] Bringhurst 1997, 1.2.3: 21–22.

[70] Ibid., 1.2.5: 23–24.

[71] *Diwani*'s aestheticized appearance might tempt us to classify it as a display style. And indeed, *diwani*-inspired forms are often used for decoration and display in modern advertising and design. But the formalized style of Ottoman diwani was not simply for creative display. It served as the official style for a particular format of document. It therefore complicates the binary distinction of display styles and text styles. As a text style, it transcribes particular content; as a display style, it privileges aesthetics and complicates legibility. *Diwani* scrolls—despite their relative illegibility—authorized holders to act in particular ways.

[72] While the linguistic content of an Ottoman *ferman*-–written in the *diwani* style and topped with an ornate *tughra*—communicates to a limited audience of knowledgeable readers, the aesthetic display communicates its import to a much wider audience. This "double writing" draws upon conventional expectations (both linguistic and stylistic) in order to reach multiple audiences. For a discussion of artistic "double writing," see Jules-Rosette 1984: 227.

[73] Ruder 2013, 66.

[74] Bringhurst 1997, 1.1.3, 19–20: "There is a style beyond style." These two sentences, from "the interaction . . ." to ". . . grace and vitality" borrow heavily from Bringhurst's poetic phrasing.

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Next two pages: Calligraphic panel (Turkish: *levha*) with gilded lettering by Sultan Mahmud II (1785-1839). The inscription is verse 45 of the Ahzab surah, *Yâ eyyühe'n-nebiyyü innâ erselnâke şâhiden ve mübeşşiran ve nezîran* (O Prophet! Truly we have sent thee as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings, and warner). The proportions of the letters and calligraphic equilibrium of the composition in Jali Thuluth, *celî sülüs*, reflects the influence of Mustafa Râkım's (1758-1826) style on Sultan Mahmud II.

Mahmud's signature (*ketebe*) at the bottom center of the *levha* (highlighted below), which reads, *Ketebehu Mahmûd Hân b. Abdulhamîd* (written by Mahmud Han son of Abdülhamid), was designed by Mustafa Râkım Efendi, the most influential calligrapher of the period.
Hafız Ahmed Agha Library, Rhodes.

Photos: T. Tuten







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"The Prophet Muhammad is related to have said, "Whoever builds a mosque, God will build for him a similar place in Paradise." I want to believe that the same holds for libraries—for those who build them, and for those who maintain and perpetuate them as well. In this age of computers and global connectivity, some may ask, are traditional libraries still relevant? Are high-resolution scans not enough for all but the most inveterate cellulose addict? But nothing can substitute for the materiality of an old book—the experience of holding and beholding a volume that has outlived tens of generations, particularly in the serene silence of a good reading room. The Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Library stands as testimony to the persistance of human values against the cultural narrow mindedness that often rears its head on both sides of the Aegean, and I am honored to be part of the Conversation."

İrvin Cemil Schick

*This article was originally published in *Routledge Handbook on Turkish Literature*
ed. Didem Havlioğlu and Zeynep Uysal, Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Taylor & Francis/Routledge, 2023.
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Reading and Writing Practices in the Ottoman Empire*

This chapter focuses on Ottoman-Muslim reading and writing practices, and on the textual media through which those practices were exercised. It starts with the centrality of reading and writing in Islam, followed by a brief discussion of the relationship between literacy and orality, and between writing and performativity, principally in the Ottoman-Muslim context. The role and function of inscriptions on buildings and objects is described in order to highlight the presence of reading and writing in everyday life even in a society with a very low rate of literacy. The importance given to calligraphy is highlighted and the different functions assigned in the Ottoman-Muslim context to various scripts is discussed. The chapter then turns to books as objects, their different formats as well as the respective functions of those formats, and their collection in libraries. Finally, the adoption and popularization of printing is briefly mentioned in the context of Ottoman practices of reading and writing.

According to a saying attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad (d. Medina, 632), known as a *ḥadīth*,

> The first thing that God created was the pen. And He said to it: "Write!" It said: "Lord, what should I write?" He said: "Write down the destiny of all things until the final hour." (*Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, *Sunnah* 42:105)

Moreover, the first few verses of *Sūrah al-ʿAlaq*, the ninety-sixth chapter of the Qur'ān, considered the beginning of the Divine Revelation, are as follows:

> Read! in the name of thy Lord who has created — created man from a clot. Read! And thy Lord is the most bounteous, Who teaches by the pen, taught man that which he knew not. (*al-ʿAlaq* 96: 1–5)

These two remarkable statements tell us a great deal about the centrality of reading and writing in the Islamic cosmology. If God first created the pen and ordered it to write everything that will ever be, then all of creation is fundamentally a written text. The Qur'ān is a "user's manual" that helps believers read and comprehend that text by explicating the signs that God has placed all around them and, conversely, the material world helps believers read and interpret the message of the Qur'ān. Together, the universe and the Scripture constitute an "intertext" that guides believers in worshipping God with a fuller understanding of His power and grace.[1]

The Qur'ān is believed to be the verbatim record of the word of God as revealed to the Prophet, a unique and miraculous text the likes of which could not have been written by mere mortals. It subdivides non-Muslims into those who have received a revelation, known as "People of the Book" (Jews and Christians), and those who have not, the unbelievers.

Although the Qur'ān was revealed to the Prophet gradually, in fact it is generally believed to have pre-existed the Revelation, indeed to be "uncreated." Verses like "Nay but it is a glorious Qur'ān in a Preserved Tablet" (*al-Burūj* 85:21–22) and "With Him is the Mother of the Book" (*al-Raʿd* 13:39) are taken to indicate that the text of the Qur'ān is conserved, perhaps in archetypical form, by the side of God. Moreover, everything that has happened, is happening, and will happen is recorded on the Preserved Tablet, and this is why Muslims often refer to fate in terms of writing—in colloquial Turkish, for example, "what is written" (*yazgı*) and "the writing on the forehead" (*alın yazısı*).

1 For a more detailed discussion, see İrvin Cemil Schick, "Text," in *Key Themes for the Study of Islam*, ed. Jamal J. Elias (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2010), pp. 321–335, 420–422.

In short, reading and writing are inextricably linked with the Islamic faith, and this fact constitutes the foundation of the Ottoman practices of reading and writing. A revealing anecdote is told about the scholar and Qur'ān commentator Elmalılı Muhammed Hamdi Yazır (d. Istanbul, 1942). When a young boy, so the story goes, he placed a discarded container on the floor to help his elderly teacher step over a high threshold. The latter exclaimed that it would be a grave sin for him to do so, because there were inscriptions on the container. The boy said, "But this is not Islamic writing," meaning that the inscription was in Latin script. His teacher responded: "Muslims and infidels both have writing, but there is no such thing as Muslim writing and infidel writing. Can what is done with one not be done with the other? All writing deserves respect, provided that it is used not for evil but for good."[2]

The Caliph ʻAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. Kufa, 661) is reported to have said, "Knowledge is fugitive; tie it down with writing," while his contemporary and rival Muʻāwīyah ibn Abī Sufyān (d. Damascus, 680) similarly said, "He who relies on memory is deceived, and he who relies on the record is contented."[3] These are forceful statements in support of textual practices in early Islam and it is clear that many Muslims took them to heart: bibliographical dictionaries such as *Kitāb al-Fihrist* by al-Nadīm (d. Baghdād, 990) and *Kashf al-ẓunūn ʻan asāmī al-kutub wa al-funūn* by Kâtip Çelebi (a.k.a. Hacı Halîfe, d. İstanbul, 1657) list many thousands of titles, underscoring both the importance of scholarship in the Muslim World and the proliferation of written records of that scholarship.[4]

In addition, keeping written records of financial transactions was mandated by the Qur'ān, which declares, in part:

> O you who believe! When you contract a debt for a fixed term, record it in writing. Let a scribe record it in writing between you in [terms of] equity. No scribe should refuse to write as God has taught him, so let him write, and let him who incurs the debt dictate, and let him observe his duty to God his Lord, and diminish nothing of it. But if he who owes the debt is of low understanding, or weak, or unable himself to dictate, then let the guardian of his interests dictate in [terms of] equity. [...] Do not be averse to writing down [the contract] whether it be small or great, with [record of] its term. That is more equitable in the sight of God and more sure for testimony, and the best way of avoiding doubt between you. (*al-Baqara* 2:282)

Similarly, the Prophet had ʻAlī prepare a written document to record the terms of the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyya. (*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, al-Jizya wa al-mawādaʻa* 58:26) Such rulings can only have encouraged

2 Mahmud Bedreddin Yazır, *Medeniyet Âleminde Yazı ve İslâm Medeniyetinde Kalem Güzeli*, ed. Uğur Derman (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1972–1989), vol. 1, pp. 74–75.

3 Cited in Nefes Zade İbrahim, *Gülzarı Savab*, ed. Kilisli Muallim Rifat [Bilge] (Istanbul: Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi Neşriyatı, 1939), pp. 32, 38.

4 See Franz Rosenthal, "'Of Making Many Books There Is No End': the Classical Muslim View," in *The Book in the Islamic World: The Written Word and Communication in the Middle East*, ed. George N. Atiyeh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), pp. 33–55. This is not to say, of course, that everything was committed to writing, immediately and all at once, upon the advent of Islam. On the gradual transitions from oral to written and from aural to read, see Gregor Schoeler, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam: from the Aural to the Read*, rev. and trans. Shawkat Toorawa (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009). On the persistence of orality, particularly in the context of Shi'ī Islam, see Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Oral Transmission and the Book in Islamic Education: the Spoken and the Written Word," in *The Book in the Islamic World: The Written Word and Communication in the Middle East*, pp. 57–70; on Mamluk Egypt, see Jonathan Porter Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: a Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 24–31, 59–60.

the maintenance of written records[5] and that may explain, at least in part, the enormous wealth of Ottoman archival sources available to the historian today.

Received opinion has it that the process of modernization involves, among other things, a definitive transition from oral to written culture. There are good reasons to question this premise, not least because of the persistence of orality in developed societies even today and indeed Ottoman history provides many examples of the continuing imbrication of orality and literacy. In addition to the important place of orality in certain types of specialized training, such as calligraphy[6] and music,[7] and in certain sectors of officialdom, such as public administration[8] and jurisprudence,[9] literature too continued to straddle the line between oral and written.

In this respect, it is important to bear in mind that reading has not always been the solitary occupation it often is today. Classical poetry, for example, was typically recited and discussed in literary salons known as *meclis* (from the Arabic verb *jalasa*, to sit).[10] In other words, there was not always a clear-cut distinction between reading and performance.[11] An important consequence of this persisting orality was that reading inevitably remained an exclusive occupation: women, for example, were generally not allowed in the *meclis* and were therefore largely locked out of such literary pursuits.[12] Likewise, public readings of popular literary works were fairly common, as attested not only by marginal notes scribbled into the manuscripts[13] but also by some European

5 See, e.g., Jeanette A. Wakin, "Introduction," in *The Function of Documents in Islamic Law: the Chapters on Sales from Taḥāwī's* Kitāb al-shurūṭ al-kabir, ed. Jeanette A. Wakin (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1972), pp. 1–10. For an interesting study of writing and authority in the modern era, see Brinkley Messick, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1993); note, however, that "calligraphic" in the title is an unfortunate misnomer, as the subject of the book is the written text, not the art of beautiful writing.

6 İrvin Cemil Schick, "Bedensel Hafıza, Zihinsel Hafıza, Yazılı Kaynak: Hat Sanatının Günümüze İntikalinin Bazı Boyutları," in *Nasıl Hatırlıyoruz? Türkiye'de Bellek Çalışmaları*, ed. Leyla Neyzi (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2011), pp. 12–39.

7 Cem Behar, *Zaman, Mekân, Müzik: Klâsik Türk Musıkisinde Eğitim (Meşk), İcra ve Aktarım* (Istanbul: AFA Yayıncılık, 1993).

8 Nicolas Vatin, "Remarques sur l'oral et l'écrit dans l'administration ottomane au XVI^{e} siècle," Oral et écrit dans le monde turco-ottoman, *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 75–76 (1995), pp. 143–154.

9 Işık Tamdoğan-Abel, "L'écrit comme échec de l'oral? L'oralité des engagements et des règlements à travers les registres de cadis d'Adana au XVIII^{e} siècle," Oral et écrit dans le monde turco-ottoman, *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 75–76 (1995), pp. 155–165.

10 See, e.g., Belkıs Gürsoy, "XV. Yüzyıldan İtibaren İstanbul'daki Edebî Muhitlere Genel Bir Bakış," *Bilig: Türk Dünyası Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 2 (1996), pp. 188–202. For a useful account of pre-Ottoman Islamic salons, see Samer M. Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons in the Islamic Middle Ages: Poetry, Public Performance, and the Presentation of the Past* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

11 For an interesting account in a pre-Ottoman context, see Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands: a Social and Cultural History of Reading Practices* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012).

12 Didem Havlioğlu, *Mihrî Hatun: Performance, Gender-Bending, and Subversion in Ottoman Intellectual History* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2017), pp. 101–114.

13 See, e.g., Tülün Değirmenci, "Bir Kitabı Kaç Kişi Okur? Osmanlı'da Okurlar ve Okuma Biçimleri Üzerine Bazı Gözlemler," *Tarih ve Toplum: Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 13 (2011), pp. 7–43; Elif Sezer, *The Oral and the Written in Ottoman Literature: the Reader Notes on the Story of Fîrûzşâh* (Istanbul: Libra Kitapçılık, 2015), pp. 67–84. For pre-Ottoman examples, see Pierre A. MacKay, "Certificates of Transmission on a Manuscript of the *Maqāmāt* of Ḥarīrī (MS. Cairo, *Adab* 105)," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* n.s. 61, 4 (1971); Jan Just Witkam, "The Human Element between Text and Reader: the *ijāza* in Arabic Manuscripts," in *The Codicology of Islamic Manuscripts:*

travelers' accounts. For example, Ottaviano Bon, a Venetian envoy who spent some two and a half years in Istanbul during the first decade of the seventeenth century, wrote:

> And among the *Turks*, he that can but read, and write, is held a very learned man, and esteemed far above others, by the common ignorant people; insomuch that when a craft fellow hath got a book, which he knows will please their humours [. . .] he forthwith gets him with his book to some *Cahve* house [i.e. coffee house], or other, where there is always great resort, and there, being set down in the middle of them, he falls to reading, the people evermore giving credit to whatsoever he says; and so having spent an hour, or two, he takes their benevolences, which is usually more than the price of his book comes to; such is their simplicity, and such is their delight in hearing a man read fables.[14]

In other words, reading was often a collective activity that included audience participation in the form of public comments as well as expressions of approval or displeasure. As coffeehouses—even more than literary salons—were fundamentally homosocial spaces, these public readings too played a role in enforcing the gendered nature of literary activities in the Ottoman Empire.

Another way in which the masses, whether literate or not, interacted daily with written texts was by navigating among the countless architectural inscriptions that dotted the Ottoman urban landscape.[15] Although such inscriptions have been studied for their documentary content as well as their artistic merit, the way in which they were articulated with reading and writing practices has not been given the attention it deserves. It has been suggested, for example, that the difficulty in deciphering complex calligraphic compositions, their sometimes inaccessible positioning, and the occasional presence of textual or orthographical errors together suggest that architectural inscriptions were primarily decorative and not intended to be read.[16] This, however, overlooks the fact that reading and writing are culturally specific activities and that the way an Ottoman might have approached an inscription is not necessarily identical to the way we might today.

In particular, it must be borne in mind that people were far less mobile in the past, so that a given person would have been exposed to the same architectural inscriptions day in, day out, for months or years, and would thus have had ample opportunity to parse even a complex composition or at least ask others for help in doing so; and that many architectural inscriptions contain texts—

Proceedings of the Second Conference of Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 4–5 December 1993, ed. Yasin Dutton (London: Al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1995), pp. 123–136; Stefan Leder, "Understanding a Text through its Transmission: Documented *Samā'*, Copies, Reception," in *Manuscript Notes as Documentary Sources*, eds. Andreas Görke and Konrad Hirschler (Beirut: Orient-Institut and Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2011), pp. 59–72.

14 Ottaviano Bon, *The Sultan's Seraglio: An Intimate Portrait of Life at the Ottoman Court*, trans. John Withers, intro. and annot. Godfrey Goodwin (London: Saqi Books, 1996), pp. 143–144. For a survey of Ottoman book culture as described by European travelers, see Engin Cihad Tekin, *Osmanlı'da Kitap Kültürü ve Batı Dünyası: Avrupalı Seyyahların Bakış Açısından Osmanlı'da Kitap ve KütüphaneKültürü (1453–1699)* (Istanbul: Hiperlink Yayınları, 2018).

15 See, e.g., the contributions to *Calligraphy and Architecture in the Muslim World*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour and İrvin Cemil Schick (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013).

16 See, e.g., Richard Ettinghausen. "Arabic Epigraphy: Communication or Symbolic Affirmation," in *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History: Studies in Honor of George C. Miles*, ed. Dickran K. Kouymjian (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1974), pp. 299–300, 304. For a critique, see İrvin Cemil Schick and Mohammad Gharipour, "Introduction," in *Calligraphy and Architecture in the Muslim World*, pp. 1–2.

such as certain popular Qur'ānic verses—that would have been familiar to most Ottomans and could therefore be reconstructed once no more than a couple of words had been deciphered. The same may be said for the myriad everyday objects that bore inscriptions, from scarves to swords, from copper bowls to mirrors. The texts with which such objects were inscribed were, once again, often fairly well known, so that a reader would have had no difficulty recognizing them, even if not by actually making out each and every individual letter of which they were composed.

So, one may justifiably ask, if many of the texts inscribed onto objects and buildings were likely to be known by both the writers and the potential readers, what was the purpose of writing and reading them in the first place? The answer lies once again in the various culturally specific meanings ascribed to the acts of reading and writing in Ottoman society. In some cases, books served as vectors for the transmission of knowledge, whether they were read from cover to cover or simply used for reference.[17] In other cases, however, their function could be ritual or devotional and for such objects "reading" meant something quite different. For example, reading (and re-reading) the Qur'ān, popular books like al-Jazūlī's (d. Āsafī, 1465) *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt* or Yazıcıoğlu Meḥemmed's (d. Gelibolu, 1451) *Muḥammediyye*, or one's favorite book of daily prayers (*evrād*/*awrād*) was an act of affirmation, worship, and meditation as much as communication or education. Likewise, Qur'ānic verses, *ḥadīth*s, or *bon mot*s (*kelâm-ı kibar*) inscribed on everyday objects were not purely informative. They could also be moralistic, say, or devotional; not least, they were a confirmation of Islam's religious and cultural sovereignty over the material world.

Most inscriptions by far have always consisted of ordinary writing; only some have been bona fide works of calligraphy, that is, beautiful writing. It is important to distinguish one from the other not only on aesthetic grounds but also functionally. Born of the imperative to preserve the word of God in the most beautiful form, calligraphy is arguably the most recognizably "Islamic" of the arts practiced in the Muslim world. Its abstract nature, moreover, appears to have been found especially appealing by Ottomans, who excelled at writing several scripts and even invented a number of their own. But calligraphy is more than just artistic writing: the form of calligraphy often conveys meanings above and beyond that contained in the text itself.[18] For example, different scripts were sometimes used for different purposes, as were different formats, and readers' responses to the texts before them would inevitably be influenced by such seemingly purely formal factors.

The most widely used script during the Ottoman period was *nesih* (*naskh*), the "book script" par excellence. Unlike some other scripts, *nesih* can be fully vocalized (that is, diacritics indicating short vowels can be added to the consonants), making the texts easier to read as well as less ambiguous. It was used primarily for texts in Arabic and Ottoman, and for religious and scholarly works, as well as popular prose. By contrast, *ta'lîk* (*nasta'līq*) is very seldom vocalized. In the Ottoman context, it was used primarily for texts in Persian as well as for literary prose and poetry in Ottoman. It is an extremely graceful script, but achieves its beauty at the cost of some legibility. These two scripts were responsible for the virtual totality of book production in the Ottoman Empire, at least until the nineteenth century when *rık'a* (*riq'a*) script gained popularity. Designed for speed rather than aesthetics, *rık'a* was initially used in official correspondence but gradually became the standard everyday script of educated Ottomans. Like *rık'a*, *dîvânî* (*dīwānī*) script too was utilized in Ottoman

17 Christoph K. Neumann, "Üç Tarz-ı Mütalaa: Yeniçağ Osmanlı Dünyası'nda Kitap Yazmak ve Okumak," *Tarih ve Toplum: Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 1 (2005), pp. 51–76.

18 See İrvin Cemil Schick, "The Iconicity of Islamic Calligraphy in Turkey," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 53–54 (2008), pp. 211–224; idem, "The Content of Form: Islamic Calligraphy Between Text and Representation," in *Sign and Design*, ed. Brigitte Bedos-Rezak and Jeffrey Hamburger (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2016), 169–190.

official correspondence; it was never used by ordinary people, however. Finally, *sülüs* (*thulth*) was principally a calligraphic script. Its large version, *celî* (*jalī*) *sülüs*, as well as the similarly large *celî ta'lîk* script, were most commonly used on Ottoman architectural inscriptions. One often encounters references to Arabic script written on objects as "calligraphy;" it is important, however, not to lose sight of the fact that calligraphy is a very specific kind of inscription, one in which certain rules are followed with the aim of producing something that is more than just the record of a particular text: it is a beautiful rendition of the text.[19]

Like different scripts, different formats can also sometimes suggest the nature of the texts' contents.[20] For example, vertical oblong albums with horizontally-oriented spines at the top, known in Turkish as *cönk*, were typically used to collect folk poetry. Albums with a vertically-oriented spine on the right, known as *mecmû'a* (from the Arabic for "collected") were likewise used to compile all sorts of materials, from anecdotes to poetry, from treatises to prayers.[21] Both formats are highly idiosyncratic in that they contain material that individuals found interesting and worth recording. They also bridged the gap between written and oral: on the one hand, they recorded oral communications such as folk poetry, much of which was orally transmitted; on the other, they served a performative function by providing material to be read in social gatherings.

The word *mushaf* (from the Arabic for "composed of pages") signified a codex and the construct *mushaf-ı şerîf* (noble codex) meant specifically a manuscript of the Qur'ān. However, the "*şerîf*" part was often dropped, so that *mushaf* is frequently used (albeit inaptly) as shorthand for the Qur'ān. By contrast, *kitâb* (from the Arabic verb "to write") simply means "book" and often figures in the title of books, as, for instance, in *Kitāb ta'bīri'r-ru'yā* (Book of Dream Interpretation). Another term that sometimes figures in titles is *risâle*, an Arabic word that means "treatise" or "booklet," as, for instance, in *Risāle fī'n-nisā* (Treatise on Women). One also rarely encounters scrolls, particularly in the case of sufi and other genealogies (*silsilenâme*).

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19 For useful surveys in English, see Sheila S. Blair, *Islamic Inscriptions* (New York: New York University Press, 1998); idem, *Islamic Calligraphy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008).

20 Recent years have witnessed the publication of several imporant works on Islamic codicology, that is, on Islamic books as objects. Although most focus on Arabic manuscripts, much of what they describe applies equally well to Ottoman works. Johannes Pedersen's *The Arabic Book*, trans. Geoffrey French, ed. Robert Hillenbrand (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984) was first published in Danish in 1946 and is a pioneering, if somewhat dated, source. More recent works include: François Déroche and Francis Richard, eds., *Scribes et manuscrits du Moyen-Orient* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997); François Déroche et al., *Manuel de codicologie des manuscrits en écriture arabe* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2000); Adam Gacek, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition: a Glossary of Technical Terms and Bibliography* (Leiden, Boston, and Köln: Brill, 2001); idem, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition: a Glossary of Technical Terms and Bibliography – Supplement* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012); idem, *Arabic Manuscripts: a Vademecum for Readers* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012). There are also a number of dictionaries of bookmaking terminology in Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, notably: Mine Esiner Özen, *Yazma Kitap Sanatları Sözlüğü* (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Fen Fakültesi, 1985); İrvin Cemil Schick, "Taczâde Risâlesine Göre Sülüs Hattına Dair Bazı Istılâhat," in *M. Uğur Derman 65 Yaş Armağanı*, ed. İrvin Cemil Schick (Istanbul: Sabancı Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2000), pp. 457–482; Hasan Özönder, *Ansiklopedik Hat ve Tezhip Sanatları Deyim ve Terimleri Sözlüğü* (Konya: n.p., 2003); Abdülkadir Yılmaz, *Türk Kitap Sanatları Tabir ve Istılahları* (Istanbul: Damla Yayınevi, 2004); 'Afīf al-Bahnasī, *Mu'jam muṣṭalaḥāt al-khaṭṭ al-'Arabī wa al-khaṭṭāṭīn* (Beirut: Maktaba Lubnān, 1995); Māyil Haravī, *Lughāt va-iṣṭilāḥāt-i fann-i kitābsāzī: hamrāh bā iṣṭilāḥāt-i jildsāzī, tazhīb, naqqāshī* ([Tehran]: Bunyād-i Farhang-i Irān, 1353 [1974]); Ḥamīd Riżā Qilichkhānī, *Farhang-i vāzhagān va iṣṭilāḥāt-i khvushnivīsī va hunarhā-yi vābastah* ([Tehran]: Intishārāt-i Rawzanah, 1390 [2011]).

21 See, e.g., the contributions to *Mecmûa: Osmanlı Edebiyatının Kırkambarı*, ed. Hatice Aynur, Müjgân Çakır, Hanife Koncu, Selim S. Kuru, and Ali Emre Özyıldırım (Istanbul: Turkuaz, 2012).

In the case of works of calligraphy, the most frequently encountered formats—besides books—are small single pieces known as *kıt'a* (*qiṭ'a*) and larger panels known as *levha* (*lawḥa*). Often such items served talismanic/apotropaic purposes. Sometimes several *kıt'a*s were collected together in book or concertina (accordion-like) form; such albums are known as *murakka'a* (from the arabic for "patched"). In addition, disparate pages of calligraphy and sometimes also miniatures were pasted into notebooks to form albums (*mecmû'a*); such manuscripts may have been assembled with educational purposes or simply to preserve collections of specimens.[22]

Until the late nineteenth century, books were expensive and few could afford them.[23] Add to that the generally low rate of literacy[24] and it becomes clear that large private libraries were rare. Precious collections assembled by sultans[25] and by dedicated scholars and bibliophiles such as Veliyüddîn Cârullâh Efendi (d. Istanbul, 1738)[26] and Ali Emîrî Efendi (d. Istanbul, 1924)[27] are extant, and studies often based on probate registers (*tereke kaydı*) have shed light on the personal libraries of ordinary people.[28] In addition to such private libraries, many pious foundations (*vakıf/waqf*) established and

22 See, e.g., Wheeler M.Thackston, *Album Prefaces and Other Documents on the History of Calligraphers and Painters* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2001); David J. Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image: the Writing of Art History in Sixteenth-Century Iran* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2001).

23 For a useful brief summary of Ottoman book culture, see Frédéric Hitzel, "Manuscrits, livres et culture livresque à Istanbul," Livres et lecture dans le monde ottoman, *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 87–88 (1999), pp. 19–38.

24 See, e.g., Benjamin C. Fortna, *Learning to Read in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Early Turkish Republic* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Orhan Koloğlu, *Osmanlıcadan Türkçeye Okuryazarlığımız* (Istanbul: Tarihçi Kitabevi, 2015).

25 See, e.g., İsmail Baykal, "Fatih Sultan Mehmed'in Hususi Kütüphanesi ve Kitabları," *Vakıflar Dergisi* 4 (1958), pp. 77–79; Emine Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013), pp. 25–57; Gülru Necipoğlu, Cemal Kafadar, and Cornell H. Fleischer, eds., *Treasures of Knowledge: an Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/3–1503/4)* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019).

26 Berat Açıl, ed., *Osmanlı Kitap Kültürü: Cârullah Efendi Kütüphanesi ve Derkenar Notları* ([Istanbul]: İLEM Kitaplığı and Ankara: Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık, 2015).

27 Ekrem Işın, ed., *Ali Emîrî Efendi ve Dünyası: Fermanlar, Beratlar, Hatlar, Kitaplar* (Istanbul: Pera Müzesi Yayınları, 2007).

28 See, e.g., Ali İhsan Karataş, "Tereke Kayıtlarına Göre XVI. Yüzyılda Bursa'da İnsan-Kitap İlişkisi," *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlâhiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 8, 8 (1999), pp. 317–328; idem, "Şer'iyye Sicilleri Bağlamında Klasik Dönem Bursa Halkının Kitap Dünyası," *38. ICANAS/ Uluslararası Asya ve Kuzey Afrika Çalışmaları Kongresi* (Ankara, 2007), pp. 119–136; Meropi Anastassiadou, "Livres et 'bibliothèques' dans les inventaires après décès de Salonique au XIX^{e} siècle," Livres et lecture dans le monde ottoman, *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 87–88 (1999), pp. 111–141; Abdullah Saydam, "Trabzon'da Halkın Kitap Sahibi Olma Düzeyi (1795–1846)," Milli Eğitim 176 (2006), pp. 187–201; Henning Sievert, "Verlorene Schätze – Bücher von Bürokraten in den *Muḥallefāt*-Registern," in *Buchkultur im Nahen Osten des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Tobias Heinzelmann and Henning Sievert (Berlin etc.: Peter Lang, 2010), pp. 199–263; Faruk Doğan, "Bir Eğitim Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Giresun Şer'iye Sicilleri: Tereke Kayıtlarına Yansıyan Kitaplar," *Turkish Studies* 10, no. 9 (2015), pp. 153–168; Asim Zubčević, "Book Ownership in Ottoman Sarajevo, 1707–1828," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Leiden University, 2015; Ekrem Tak and Bilgin Aydın, "XVII. Yüzyılda İstanbul Medreselerinde Okutulan Kitaplar (Tereke Kayıtları Üzerine bir Değerlendirme)," *Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları* 19 (2019), pp. 183–236. On Ottoman Syria, see Colette Establet and Jean-Paul Pascual, "Les livres des gens à Damas vers 1700," Livres et lecture dans le monde ottoman, *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 87–88 (1999), pp. 143–169; Colette Establet, "Les inventaires après-décès, sources d'histoire culturelle (Damas),"in *Etudes sur les villes du Proche-Orient, XVI^{e}-XIX^{e} siècle: Hommage à André Raymond*, ed. Brigitte Marino (Damascus: Institut français d'études arabes de Damas, 2001), pp. 81–90. For a wide-ranging survey of Ottoman Egypt, see Nelly Hanna, *In Praise of Books: a Cultural History of Cairo's Middle Class, Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003), pp. 79–103. For an interesting pre-Ottoman list of books studied by an educated Persian Muslim, see A.J. Arberry,

maintained libraries.[29] Some of these libraries were located in mosques and dervish lodges, while others were independent. Studies have shown that lending and renting made books available to a wider public than could have afforded to own them. Nevertheless, a relatively brisk book market did exist in Istanbul and other major Ottoman cities.[30]

Although printing presses were established by non-Muslim Ottomans as early as the 1490s, they did not print books in Ottoman or Turkish; moreover, it was long forbidden to import books printed in the languages of the Muslim world. When the first printing press officially sanctioned to print books in Ottoman was established in 1728 by the Hungarian-born İbrahim Müteferrika (d. Istanbul, 1745), its products were so expensive that manuscript books continued to be produced in large numbers.[31] Thus, printing did not bring about significant changes until the early part of the twentieth century, when increased literacy, free enterprise ("print capitalism"), and the climate of freedom ushered in by the proclamation of Constitutional Monarchy in 1908 combined to create a whole new set of reading and writing practices.





A Twelfth-Century Reading List: a Chapter in Arab Bibliography (London: Emery Walker,1951).

29 See, e.g., İsmail E. Erünsal, *Osmanlılarda Kütüphaneler ve Kütüphanecilik: Tarihi Gelişimi ve Organizasyonu* (Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2018); Faruk Bilici, "Les bibliothèques vakıf-s à Istanbul au XVI[e] siècle, prémice de grandes bibliothèques publiques," Livres et lecture dans le monde ottoman, *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 87–88 (1999), pp. 39–59. On Ottoman libraries more generally, see Meral Alpay and Safiye Özkan, *İstanbul Kütüphaneleri* (Istanbul: n.p., 1982); Özer Soysal, *Türk Kütüphaneciliği* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Kütüphaneler Genel Müdürlüğü, 1998–1999); Özlem Bayram et al., eds., *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Bilim, Kültür ve Kütüphaneler* (Ankara: Türk Kütüphaneciler Derneği, 1999); Mert Ağaoğlu and Ayhan Altundağ, *Osmanlı Devri Müstakil İstanbul Kütüphaneleri* (Istanbul: Cinius Yayınları, 2018). On pre-Ottoman Islamic libraries, see, e.g., Youssef Eche, *Les bibliothèques arabes publiques et semi-publiques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Egypte au Moyen Age* (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1967); Houari Touati, *L'armoire à sagesse: Bibliothèques et collections en Islam* (Paris: Aubier, 2003); Konrad Hirschler, *Medieval Damascus: Plurality and Diversity in an Arabic Library* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016); İsmail E. Erünsal, *Orta Çağ İslâm Dünyasında Kitap ve Kütüphâne* (Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2018).

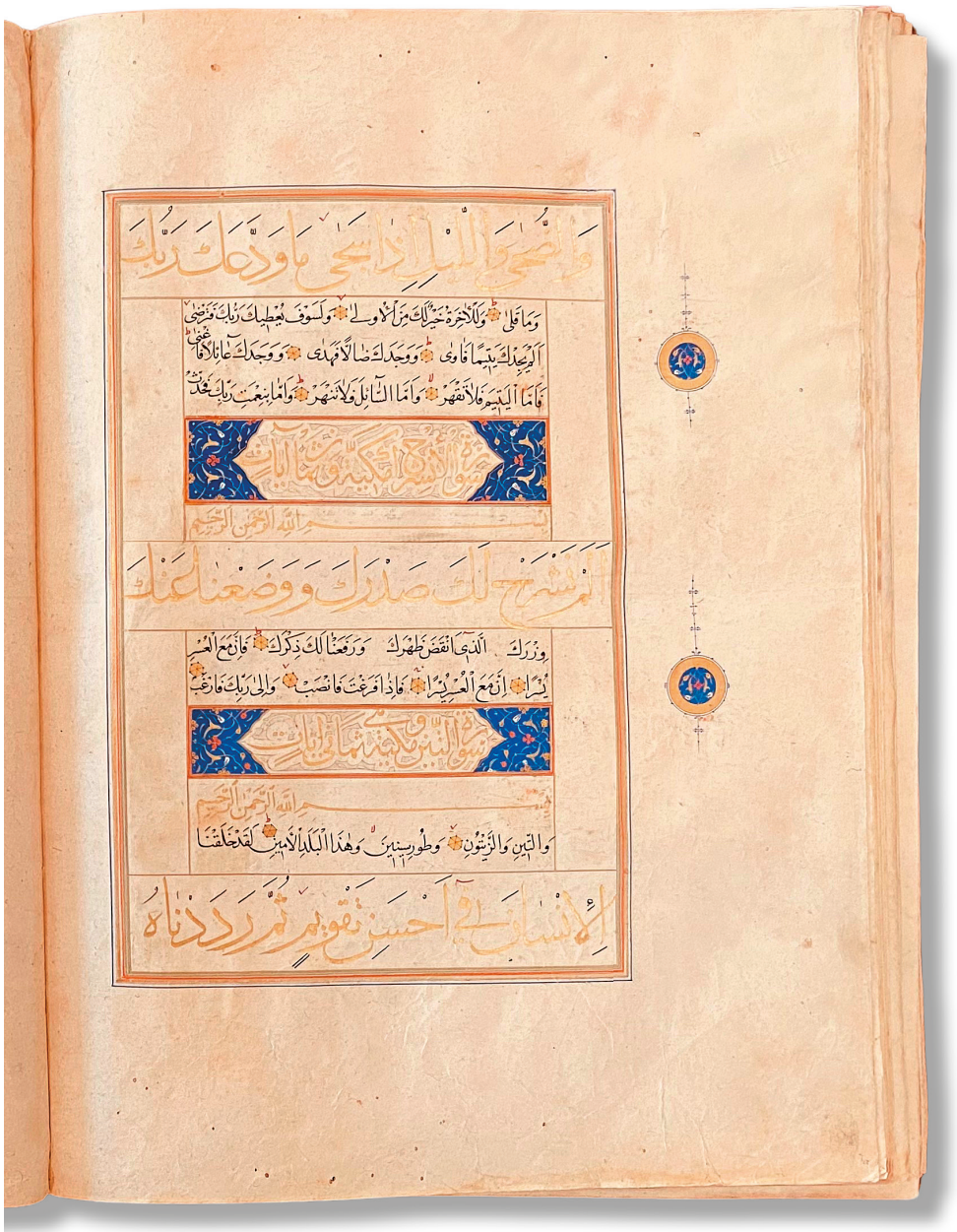
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31 On early printing in the Ottoman Empire, see, e.g., Franz Babinger, *Stambuler Buchwesen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: Deutscher Verein für Buchwesen und Schrifttum, 1919); Selim Nüzhet [Gerçek], *Türk Matbaacılığı: İki Yüzüncü Sene-i Devriyesi Münasebetiyle* (Istanbul: Matbaa-ı Ebüzziya, 1928); Aladár v. Simonffy, *Ibrahim Müteferrika: Bahnbrecher des Buchdrucks in der Türkei* (Budapest: Dr. Vajna & Bokor, 1944); Osman Ersoy, *Türkiye'ye Matbaanın Girişi ve İlk Basılan Eserler* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Yayınları, 1959); William J. Watson, "İbrahim Müteferrika and Turkish Incunabula," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 88, 3 (1968), pp. 435–441; A[khmet] Kh[alilovich] Rafikov, *Ocherki istorii knigopechataniya v Turtsii* (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1973); Wahid Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie: Evolution de l'environment culturel (1706–1787)* (Tunis: Publications de l'Institut Supérieur de Documentation, 1985); Orlin Sabev, *İbrahim Müteferrika, ya da İlk Osmanlı Matbaa Serüveni (1726–1746): Yeniden Değerlendirme* (Istanbul: Yeditepe Yayınları, 2006); Fikret Sarıcaoğlu and Coşkun Yılmaz, *Müteferrika: Basmacı İbrahim Efendi and the Müteferrika Press* (Istanbul: Esen Ofset, 2008).

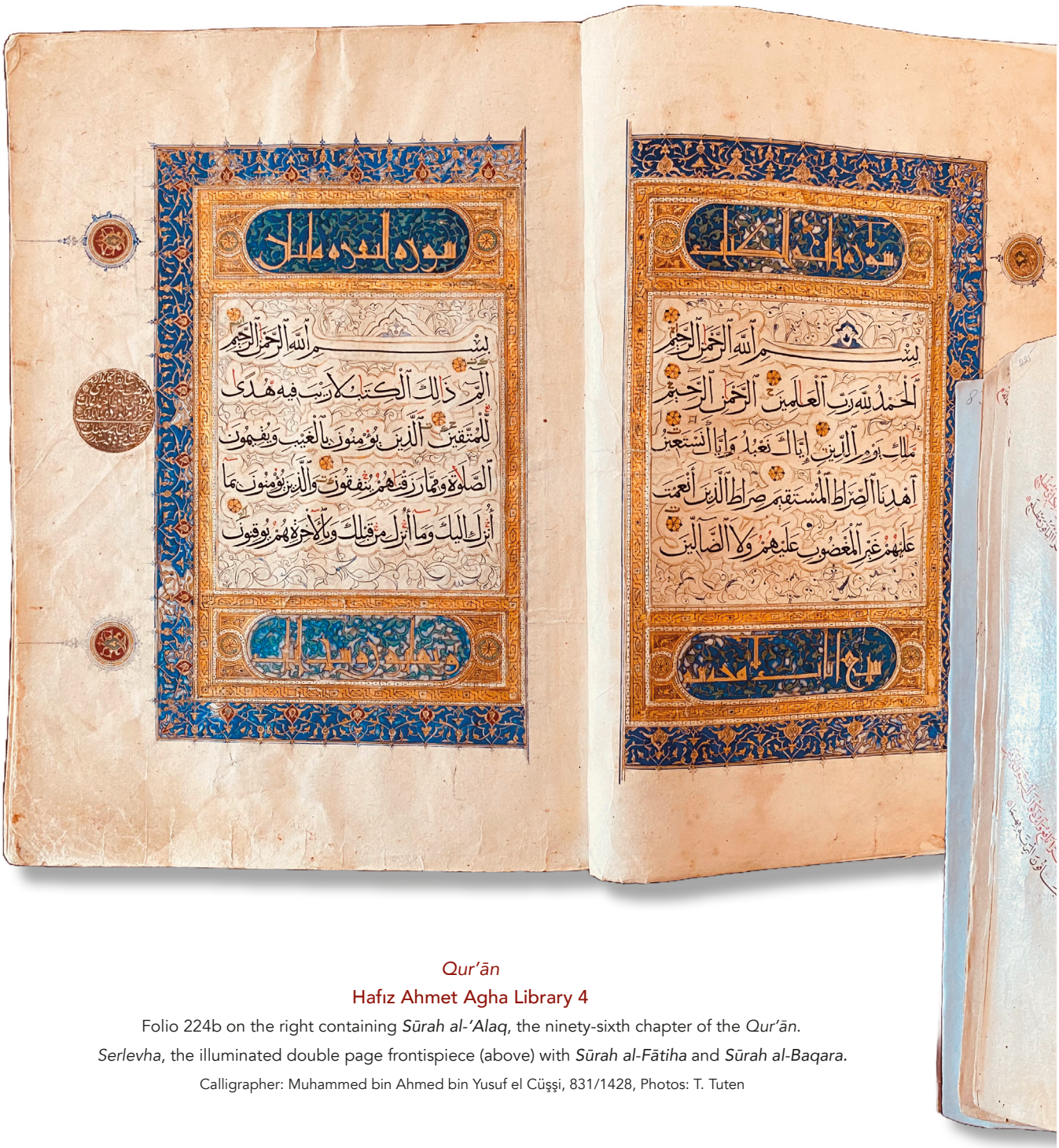


Qur'ān
Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 3
Folios 411b - 412a (above), 412b - 413a (below)
Sūrah al-'Alaq, the ninety-sixth chapter of the *Qur'ān*,
Qur'ān and its Translation and Tarcama-i Tafsīr-i Abū al-Layth, 1077/1666
Calligrapher: Galatalı Yelkenci Ömer Çelebi - Mustafa bin Hasan
Photos: T. Tuten





Qur'ān
Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1
Folios 257b - 258a
Sūrah al-'Alaq, the ninety-sixth chapter of the *Qur'ān* (left page)
Calligrapher: Maksûd et-Tabrîzî, 963/1555
Photos: T. Tuten



Qur'ān

Hafız Ahmet Agha Library 4

Folio 224b on the right containing *Sūrah al-'Alaq*, the ninety-sixth chapter of the *Qur'ān*.

Serlevha, the illuminated double page frontispiece (above) with *Sūrah al-Fātiha* and *Sūrah al-Baqara*.

Calligrapher: Muhammed bin Ahmed bin Yusuf el Cüşşi, 831/1428, Photos: T. Tuten



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"Thinking of all the unknown ibraries in the world fills everyone working with manuscripts with awe. When you discover new ones, you approach them very humbly. When Tarık Tüten contacted me and made me aware of the Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Library, this is precisely what happened to me. Since then, I have been priviledged to cooperate with Tarık and to discover, step by step, this rich collection, like leafing through a book. This includes discoveries for my own research, too. The conservation and preservation of these voices from the past is a huge merit of Tarık Tüten and the foundation. However, another decisive step has been taken, too: These treasures can best unfold their impact when known to many others. Through digitisation and online cataloguing (Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı) these manuscripts can now be studied in their historical contexts – with the multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary breadth that is best reflected in the "Conversation" project."

Stefanie Brinkmann

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Manuscript Cultures
Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC), Universität Hamburg

[**] Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg

Multilingualism in Ottoman Manuscripts*

The multilingualism of the multiethnic and multireligious Ottoman Empire refers to the spoken language, the written language and the liturgical language, not to mention the many different dialects. A further aspect was the interrelation between script and language, which was sometimes based on practical considerations, served the social and religious affiliation, or was a political issue. Arabic speaking Jews partly used the Hebrew alphabet to write in Arabic, for example, while the Christian Orthodox Karamanlı made use of the Greek alphabet to write in Turkish. And in the course of Austria Hungary's attempts at territorial annexation, the use of the Arabic script in Bosnia could also be seen as a political statement.



Figure 1: SUB HH**, Cod. orient. 100, p. 209.

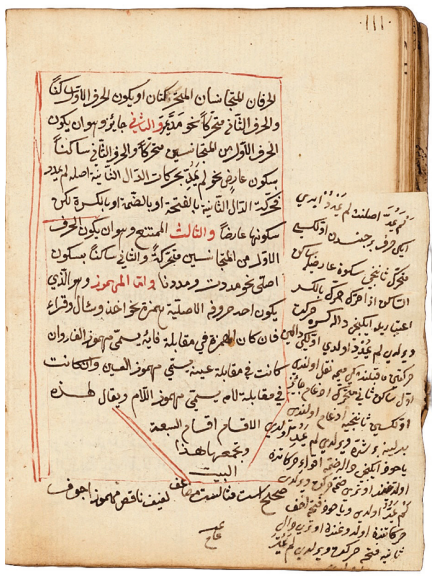


Figure 2: SUB HH, Cod. orient. 149, p. 111.

The use of certain languages in manuscripts always depended on their thematic context: texts in documents produced by the Ottoman administration and in the field of jurisprudence were mainly written in Turkish. At the same time, the many multilingual Ottoman manuscripts show us how political, economical, juridical and social relations were organised in the empire. Since the ruling elite, their servants and a large part of the general population believed in Islam, it became inevitable for them all to study the Arabic language and adopt and impart Arabic Islamic literature. On the one hand, this resulted in turn in manuscripts on Arabic grammar and conversation being translated, paraphrased and explained, and led to many dictionaries being made that were needed to that end. On the other hand, the Quran and texts on Islamic law in Arabic were translated into Turkish (and other languages) and/or were commented on in these languages. There are also many multilingual prayer books, containing Arabic prayers accompanied by a Turkish commentary. Scientific works in Arabic, such as works on medicine, were annotated in different languages by later readers as well. As for literature, Persian and Arabic poetry was most influential; as with other genres, there are manuscripts containing texts in the original language that were translated into other languages, often interlinearly, and particularly into Turkish.

On the one hand, multilingualism appears in manuscripts where later users added annotations or amendments to the main text in different languages. An example of this can be seen in Cod. orient. 100, in which Arabic, Persian and Armenian annotations follow a medical work written in Arabic (Figure 1). Other examples are found in Cod. orient. 149, in which an Arabic text on grammar is followed by Turkish annotations in the righthand margin and a didactic verse in Persian at the bottom (Figure 2).



Figure 3: SUB HH, Cod. orient. 82, p. 289/290.

On the other hand, some manuscripts were designed for multilingual purposes right from the outset. Cod. orient. 82 is an impressive illustration of one – the Arabic text on the Islamic prayer was written with a particularly wide line spacing in order to put an interlinear Turkish translation into the blank space gained by that layout. An interlinear translation was added up to page 289, but from page 290 onwards, the line space reserved for the Turkish translation is blank (Figure 3). Other typical examples are found in Arabic Turkish prayer books which contain Islamic prayers in Arabic along with Turkish explanations (*şerḥ*).

In order to avoid confusion, annotations, and comments (written in other languages than the main text) were often put in the margin or between the lines of the main text, written diagonally, vertically, and sometimes even upside down (Figure 4). Other ways to visually differentiate between the main text and texts added in other languages were the use of different sizes or styles of a script and the use of ink in another colour. An example is Cod. orient. 523: the various inflections of the Persian word *kardan* ('to do', 'to make') appear in large red script, while the Turkish explanations are written underneath in a smaller black script and in a triangular shape (Figure 5).



Figure 4: SUB HH, Cod. orient. 81, fols. 2ᵛ/3ʳ, Turkish and Arabic annotations in the margins and spaces between the lines (above)

Figure 5: SUB HH, Cod. orient. 523, fols. 106ᵛ/107ʳ (below).



Part of multilingualism in manuscripts are the many multipletext manuscripts, which either were prepared like this intentionally from the outset, and the composite volumes, which were bound together at a later stage. Cod. orient. 523 contains eight Persian, Arabic and Turkish texts, which were most probably intended to form a multilingual collection from the outset. Apparently, the aforementioned Cod. orient. 100 with its Arabic and Persian texts from the field of (folk) medicine was also supposed to be multilingual from the very beginning, but several leaves containing Turkish texts were added to it later.



Figure 6: Aḥmad Sūdī al-Busnawī, *Sharḥ-i Diwān-i Ḥāfez*, 1041.
Opening pages fols. 1^{v}/2^{r}, Seal of the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library (above).
The original Persian verses supralined in red, followed by Turkish commentary, fols. 8^{v}/9^{r} (below)
Photos: T. Tuten





Figure 7: Qur'an with Turkish translation and *Terceme-i Tafsīr-i Abū al-Layth, 1077/1666 and 1084/1673.* The interlinear Turkish translation in red ink, and the Turkish version of commentary in the margins. • Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 2, fols. 12ᵛ/13ʳ (above), Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 3, fols. 387ᵛ/388ʳ (below)
Photos: T. Tuten





Figure 8: *Sharḥ-i Būstān*, Aḥmad Sūdī al-Busnawī, Hafız Ahmed Agha Library 1067, Opening pages, fols. 1ᵛ/2ʳ (above with the library's seal), fols. 2ᵛ/3ʳ (below). Turkish commentary on Saʿdī's Būstān. The Persian is marked with a line above, in the margin, there are Persian verses with metrical information.
Photos: T. Tuten



Research into the use of language and script in the Ottoman Empire has already provided some valuable information on the empire's social history. Even so, many questions are still waiting to be answered. Among other topics to investigate, one could look into the question of how far multilingual manuscripts actually mirror 'linguistic reality', who produced and read or used texts of this kind, how scribal workshops were organised, and which language was required in a particular social context.

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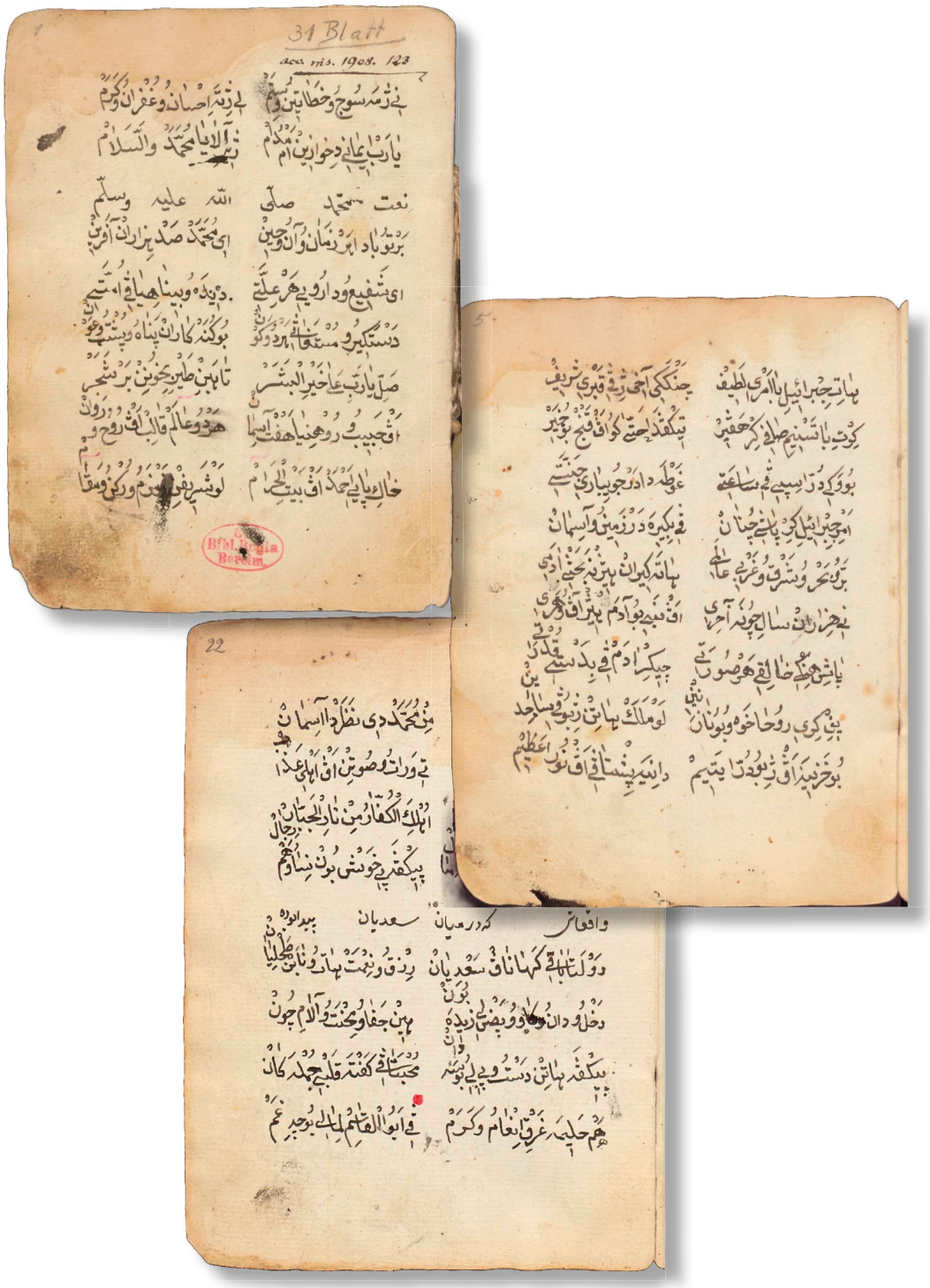
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Dîwânâ Melayê Cizîrî, A Kurdish divan (collection of poetry) written in Arabic script.
Milli Kütüphane, 5086/1



Mawlid an-Nabî, Kurdish devotional text from 1854 celebrating the birth of Prophet Muhammad, written in Arabic script.
Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. or. oct. 1083.



Written in classical Syriac and transcribed by Church Fathers, this liturgical codex is palaeographically attributed to the 16th century. A marginal note indicates that it underwent conservation or repair in 1717.
Courtesy of Ancient Syriac Virgin Mary Church of Diyarbekir & Nil Baydar, Şifâhâne.
Photo: T. Tuten



Written in classical Syriac in the Monestary of Mor Abrohom and Hobel in Midyat in 1470,
Beth-Gazo is a collection of church hymns and praises.
Courtesy of Ancient Syriac Virgin Mary Church of Diyarbekir & Nil Baydar, Şifâhâne.
Photo: T. Tuten

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"Libraries are supposed to be silent places that do not lend themselves to conversation, yet they may be the place of conversation par excellence. Letters, on the other hand, constitute a conversation written down for an eternity, short or long. Three co-authors writing a study of letters, in a volume devoted to libraries, is a conversation upon conversation - an excellent path toward knowledge. We are glad, moreover, that we participate to the Conversation created by chapters of different authors in this volume - a library in itself."

Marinos Sariyannis

Ottoman Personal Letters
as a Source for Cultural History

Scholarly interest in letters and letter-writing has been constantly growing, partly as a result of the 'linguistic turn' but mostly of the growth of cultural history and the study of private life.[1] Studies in ancient, medieval and early modern epistolography have been blooming for almost half a century,[2] while the importance of letters not only for social and economic history but also for the history of ideas (e.g. the emphasis on the political significance of the Italian *ars dictaminis*),[3] the history of gender or of the self has long been acknowledged. Broadly speaking, the presence of letter-writing in history is three-fold, at least in the cultures of the Mediterranean basin and Eurasia: there are compendiums of exemplary letters, made to guide potential authors along the various types of the genre (administrative, commercial, private or love letters, etc.); there are collections of actual letters written by a (usually prominent) personality, sometimes compiled in order to serve as epistolary models too; and there are actual private letters, scattered in various archives, often written by illiterate persons without any literary or rhetoric claims. All three groups have different yet significant appeal for the historian, who can use letters either as sources of historical information on topics as varied as economic transactions, family relations, intimacy and affection, and so forth, or as an object of research per se, focusing in the development of the genre, its limits and its interaction with society.

Along with specialists of European history, scholars of Islamicate societies have also considerably developed the study of letters.[4] Still, Ottoman letter-writing is an almost completely unexplored yet extraordinarily promising source of information for understanding the social and cultural realities of Ottoman history. Whereas the attention of scholars to the manuals of correspondence

1 On the 'linguistic turn', see e.g. V. E. Bonnell – L. Hunt (eds), *Beyond the Cultural Turn. New directions in the study of society and culture*, Berkeley 1999. On the turn to the study of private life, see Ph. Ariès – G. Duby (eds), *Histoire de la vie privée*, 5 vols, Paris 1985, and cf. M. Mavroudi, "The Modern Study of Selfhood in Byzantium compared with Medieval Europe and the Islamic World: Parallel and Diverging Trends in the Construction of 'East' and 'West'", *Palaeoslavica* 30/1-2 (2022), 234-304.

2 See e.g. M. L. Stirewalt Jr., *Studies in Ancient Greek Epistolography*, Atlanta 1993, and P. Ceccarelli, *Ancient Letter Writing: A Cultural History*, Oxford 2013 on ancient Greek epistolography. J. Darrouzès, "Notes d'épistolographie et d'histoire des textes," *Revue des Etudes byzantines* 12 (1954), 176-186; M. Mullet, "Epistolography", in E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon and R. Cormack (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, Oxford 2008; and S. Papaioannou, "Fragile Literature: Byzantine Letter Collections and the Case of Michael Psellos" in P. Odorico (ed.), *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine. Le texte en tant que message immédiat*, Paris 2012, 289-328, on the Byzantine case. G. Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections*, Turnhout.1976 on the Middle Ages. J. Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing (1512-1635)*, London 2012 on early modern English letters.

3 Q. Skinner, *The foundations of modern political thought*, 2 vols, Cambridge 1978, I:28ff.

4 W. Qureshi, *Insha Literature in Persian: A Critical Study*, Lahore 1952; W. Diem, *Arabische Privatbriefe des 9. bis 15. Jahrhunderts aus der Osterreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Wien* (Documenta Arabica Antiqua 2), Wiesbaden 1996 and Idem, *Arabische Amtliche Briefe des 10. bis 16. Jahrhunderts aus der Osterreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Wien* (Documenta Arabica Antiqua 3), Wiesbaden 1996; A. Gully, *The Culture of Letter-Writing in Pre-modern Islamic Society*, Edinburgh 2008.

has been drawn for half a century now,[5] few such manuals have been published[6] and there is no comprehensive study of them. Some Ottoman collections of letters have been transliterated and published: especially those belonging to sultans, from the famous love letters of the harem[7] to the dream notes of Murad III,[8] but also collections authored by Sufi sheikhs[9] or poets.[10] Finally, from the apparently vast amount of private letters preserved in various libraries and public or private archives, only a very limited number has been known to scholarship and it definitely has not drawn the attention it deserves.[11]

Manuals, collections and private letters

The significance of letter-writing in Ottoman culture is manifest from the fact that even imperial orders follow a pattern and structure that may classify them into yet another epistolary genre.[12] Ottoman bureaucrats gave tremendous importance to the model prose, *münşeat* or *inşa* (meaning "construction" or "creative composition"). Such collections contained models and instructions with

5 W. Björkman, "Die Anfänge der türkischen Briefsammlungen," *Orientalia Suecana* 5 (1956), 20-29; J. Matuz, "Über die Epistolographie und Inšā'-Literatur der Osmanen", *Deutscher Orientalistentag 1968*, Wiesbaden 1970, 574-594; O. Ş. Gökyay, "Tanzimat dönemine değin mektup", *Türk Dili* 30/274 (1974), 17-87; C. Woodhead, "Ottoman *İnşa* and the Art of Letter-Writing: Influences Upon the Career of the Nişancı and Prose Stylist Okçuzade (d. 1630)", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 7-8 (1988), 143-159; eadem, "Circles of Correspondence: Ottoman Letter-Writing in the Early Seventeenth Century", *Journal of Turkish Literature* 4 (2007), 53-68; eadem, "The Ottoman Art of Word-Painting. Rhyme and Reason in Seventeenth-Century Turkish Literary Letters". *The Seventeenth Century*, 38/5 (2023), 885–903; H. İ. Haksever, "Münşeat mecmuaları ve edebiyat tarihimiz için önemi", *İlmi Araştırmalar* 10 (2000), 65-76; A. J. Riedlmayer, "Ottoman Copybooks of Correspondence and Miscellanies as a Source for Political and Cultural History", *Acta Orientalia Hung.* 61 (2008), 201-214; E. E. Tuşalp Atiyas, "Political Literacy and the Politics of Eloquence: Ottoman Scribal Community in the Seventeenth Century", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University 2013; H. Gültekin, *Türk edebiyatında inşa*, Istanbul 2015.

6 W. Björkman, "Eine türkische Briefsammlung aus dem 15. Jahrhundert," *Documenta islamica inedita*, Berlin 1952, 189-196; N. Lugal – A. Erzi, *Fâtih Devrine âit Münşeat Mecmuası (Wien, Nationalbibl. H. O. 161)*, Istanbul 1956; V. L. Ménage, "An Ottoman Manual of Provincial Correspondence", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Morgenlandes* 68 (1976), 31-45; Ş. Tekin, *Menâhicü'l-inşâ. The earliest Ottoman chancery manual by Yahyâ bin Mehmed el-Kâtib from the 15th Century*, Cambridge MA 1971; idem, *Kırımlu Hafız Hüsam: Teressül (Hacı Selimağa, Nurbanu No:122/5). Edition in transcription, translation into Turkish, notes and facsimile*, Cambridge MA 2008.

7 Ç. Uluçay, *Osmanlı Sultanlarına Aşk Mektupları*, Istanbul 1950.

8 Ö. Felek, *Kitābü'l-menāmāt. Sultan III. Murad'ın rüya mektupları*, Istanbul 2016; for other specimens see A. Yıldız, "*Şehzadeye öğütler*: Ebûbekir Ratıb Efendi'nin Şehzade Selim'e (III) bir mektubu", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/ The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 42 (2013), 233-274; K. Gurulkan, *"*Şehzade Korkut'un mektupları*", Ceride: Ben-Anlatıları Araştırmaları Dergisi/Journal of Ego-Documents Studies* 1/2 (2023), 205-225.

9 M. S. Güven, "Çeşitli yönleriyle Azîz Mahmûd Hüdâyî'nin mektupları", unpublished MA thesis, Marmara University 1992; S. Akkach, *Letters of a Sufi Scholar: the Correspondence of 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī (1641-1731)*, Leiden 2010.

10 J. R. Walsh, "The *Esālību'l-mekātīb* (*Münşe'āt*) of Mehmed Nergīsī Efendi", *Archivum Ottomanicum* 1 (1969), 213-303; V. L. Ménage, "The *Gül-i sad-berg* of Mesīhī", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 7 (1988), 11-32; H. İ. Haksever, "Eski Türk edebiyatında münşeatlar ve Nergisi'nin münşeatı", unpublished PhD thesis, İnönü University 1995; H. A. Esir, *Münşeat-i Lamii: Lamii Çelebi'nin Mektupları*, Trabzon 2006; İ. H. Aksoyak, *Gelibolulu Mustafa Âli: Menşeü'l-inşâ*, Ankara 2007; A. Oktay, *Münşeat-ı Nabi. Nabi'nin mektupları*, Istanbul 2017.

11 Among the very few studies using such sources see R. Murphey, "Forms of Differentiation and Expression of Individuality in Ottoman Society", *Turcica* 34 (2002), 135-170; D. Giagtzoglou, "Η προσωπική επιστολογραφία ως πηγή για την κοινωνική και πολιτισμική ιστορία των Οθωμανών" [Personal epistolography as a source for Ottoman social and cultural history], unpublished MA thesis, University of Crete 2018.

12 See e.g. J. Reychman – A. Zajączkowski, *Handbook of Ottoman-Turkish Diplomatics*, ed. T. Halasi-Kun, The Hague – Paris 1968, 139-149.

all the necessary ornaments for composing letters with a view to serving as the pattern for the day-to-day correspondence of the government. Usually, such collections were compiled and used alongside collections of official documents, copies of registers and law regulations, and other useful texts.[13] Model letters were classified into several categories, such as letters of friendly enquiry, of congratulation (*tehniyet*), condolences (*taziyet*), professional complaint (*şikâyet*), requests and recommendations.[14] The earliest known example, comes from the early 15th century, *Teressül* ("Correspondence") by Kırımlu Hâfız Hüsâm (who was probably trained in the Germiyan court of Kütahya in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century), contains general advice for letter-writing and specific model phrases for letters addressed to governors, viziers, princes, various officials, and ulema, as well as to merchants, sheikhs, friends, and various relatives, including husbands and wives (as well as lovers, both male and female); model letters (and model answers to them) follow, together with model documents, mainly appointment diplomas for teachers, judges and officers.[15] The manual by the poet Ahmed Da'î (d. after 1421) is of similar nature.[16]

As the palace bureaucracy was becoming an increasingly powerful and diversified apparatus, such manuals kept being produced throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (the next known specimen was copied in 1479), culminating with Feridun Bey (d. 1583) and his famous collection of sultanic letters and treaties, *Münşe'âtü's-selâtîn* ("The correspondence of sultans"), completed in 1575.[17] Feridun, the private secretary of the grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha, presented this collection to Murad III in 1575; it contains more than 500 documents, running from the first years of Islam until Murad's own time. Not all these documents were genuine, and some were probably forged or invented by Feridun himself in order to legitimize the Ottoman dynasty and its worldview: as Dimitris Kastritsis has recently observed, the collection "was never intended as a practical chancery manual at all, but rather as a type of history writing".[18] Whereas later manuals are more focused in official correspondence, it may be the case that manuals of the late 17th and 18th centuries show a return to letters of private character, as they contain categories between parents and children, or between husband and wife.[19]

Ottomans themselves highly valued private letters, as they collected them either in compilations aimed to promote a sheikh's wisdom and success, or in miscellanies for private use. Apart from the exemplary letters of the *inşa* literature, actual letters compiled with eloquence and rhetoric competence would constitute model collections in their own right. A great number of such *münşe'ât* were authored by poets aspiring for a post in the administration,[20] or by educated officials of the

13 For a list of *inşâ* collections see Matuz, "Über die Epistolographie", 585-591.

14 Woodhead, "Circles of Correspondence".

15 Tekin, *Kırımlu Hafız Hüsam: Teressül*.

16 H. İ. Haksever, "Ahmed-i Dâ'î'nin *Teressül*'ü", *Turkish Studies* 6/1 (2011), 1265-1273; C. Sucu, "Ahmed-i Dâ'î ve edeb eserlerinin Osmanlı okuyucu çevrelerine aktarımı", *in* E. Ökten and S. Polatoğlu (eds), *Tarihsel bir inceleme alanı olarak edeb*, Istanbul 2024, 151-180 at 169-173.

17 Ferîdûn Bey, *Mecmû'a-yı münşe'ât-i Ferîdûn Bey*, 2 vols. Konstantiniye H. 1264/1848; there are two different printed Ottoman editions of this monumental work and a modern systematic study is highly needed.

18 D. Kastritsis, "Ferîdûn Beg's *Münşe'âtü's-selâtîn* ('Correspondence of sultans') and late sixteenth-century Ottoman views of the political world", in S. Bazzaz – Y. Batsaki – D. Angelov (eds), *Imperial geographies in Byzantine and Ottoman space*, Washington 2013, 91-110 at 107.

19 As in a 1792 unpublished manual; see Giagtzoglou, "Η προσωπική επιστολογραφία", 27. For even later examples see F. Eren, "Osmanlı hanımlarının mektup yazma kurallarına dair iki kitap", *Adıyaman Üniversitesi, Ulusal Eski Türk Edebiyatı Sempozyumu (15-16 Mayıs 2009)*, Ankara 2010, 1-7.

20 Walsh, "The *Esālību'l-mekātīb* (*Münşe'āt*)"; Ménage, "The *Gül-i sad-berg* of Mesīhī"; Haksever, "Eski Türk

higher grades.[21] These were written to colleagues, superiors or other acquaintances and while they do refer to specific requests or events of the authors' lives, their main purpose is often both to exhibit their eloquence and to assert their sentiments of fidelity and friendship.

In the same vein, often Sufi sheikhs (or their entourage) would collect their letters to their peers or disciples, in order to demonstrate their importance and to instruct their inspirations and insights. Some famous examples include the collection of letters or *Tezâkir* long attributed to Aziz Mahmud Hüdayî, an important Celveti sheikh of the early 17th century, but which (as shown by Derin Terzioğlu)[22] belong to a late-16th-century Crimean Sufi, or the letters of the influential early-18th-century sheikh al-Nabulusi.[23] Miscellanies include correspondence with a specific topic: among the most well-known examples, we can quote a seventeenth-century lady from Üsküp/Skopje, Asiye Hatun, who sent systematically her dreams to her sheikh, as the Sufi order she belonged to, the Halvetis, considered dream a privileged way for God to communicate with the believer.[24] Similarly, Özgen Felek recently studied and published the letters and notes Murad III (r. 1574-1595) sent to his sheikh, Şeyh Şücâ', informing him of his dreams and visions but also answering to his requests for personal favours or asking his opinion on matters of internal and foreign policy.[25]

What is more, private letters can be found in numerous archives, and these tackle with topics as diverse as friendly and family exchanges, introductions of protegés, commercial transactions, or requests for favours.[26] A comprehensive study of this material would shed light into practically every aspect of Ottoman realities: from the function of family and friendship ties to education and literacy, from the practicalities of posting to methods of cryptography, from family and social hierarchies to the client networks, and from magic spells to the history of emotions. The turn to the history of private life led to the discovery and study of numerous first-person narratives or, as they are perhaps more properly called, ego-documents, which previously were considered absent from Ottoman literature.[27] This topic

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edebiyatında münşeatlar"; Aksoyak, *Gelibolulu Mustafa Âli: Menşeü'l-inşâ*; H. A. Esir, "Klasik Edebiyatımızda İnşa ve Lamii Çelebi'nin *Münşeat'i*", in H. Aynur, et al. (eds), *Nesrin İnşası. Düzyazıda Dil, Üslup ve Türler*, Istanbul 2010, 140-65; C. Woodhead, "The Gift of Letters: Correspondence Between Nergisi (d. 1634) and Veysi (d. 1627)", in H. Aynur, B. Aydın, and M. B. Ülker (eds), *Kitaplara vakfedilen bir ömre tuhfe: İsmail E. Erünsal'a armağan*, vol. 2: *Edebiyat ve tasavvuf, kütüphanecilik ve arşivcilik*, Istanbul 2014, 971-988; H. İ. Haksever, B. Selçuk and M. Algül, "The Letters of Sünbülzâde Vehbî", *International Journal of Language Academy* 6/5 (2018), 353-390.

21 See e.g. C. Imber, "Four Letters of Ebu's-su'ud", *Arab Historical Review* 15-16 (1997), 177-183; C. Woodhead, "Writing to a Grand Vezir: Azmizade Efendi's Letters to Nasuh Paşa, 1611-1614", in F. Emecen, İ. Keskin and A. Ahmetbeyoğlu (eds), *Osmanlı'nın izinde. Prof. Dr. Mehmet İpşirli armağanı*, vol. II, Istanbul 2013, 485-492; A. Kılıç, "Unutulmuş bir münşî, Akhisarî Abdülkerîm Çelebi, münşeâtı ve Şeyhülislâm Yahyâ Efendi'ye bayram tebriği vesilesiyle gönderdiği mektubu", *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmaları Dergisi* 8/40 (2015), 102-111.

22 D. Terzioğlu, "Power, Patronage, and Confessionalism: Ottoman Politics Through the Eyes of a Crimean Sufi, 1580-1593", in M. Sariyannis (ed.), *Political Thought and Practice in the Ottoman Empire. Halcyon Days in Crete IX - A symposium held in Rethymno, 9-11 January 2015*, Rethymno 2018, 149-186.

23 Güven, "Çeşitli yönleriyle"; Akkach, *Letters of a Sufi Scholar*.

24 C. Kafadar, *Asiye Hatun: Rüya mektupları*, Istanbul 1994; L. Schick and C. Kafadar, "Dream Letters of a Sufi Woman in Skopje, 1640s", in H. Karateke and H. Anetshofer (eds), *The Ottoman World. A Cultural History Reader, 1450-1700*, Oakland 2021, 29-35.

25 Felek, *Kitābü'l-menāmāt*.

26 Giagtzoglou, "Η προσωπική επιστολογραφία".

27 C. Kafadar, "The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Ottoman Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature", *Studia Islamica* 69 (1989), 121-150; D. Terzioğlu, "Autobiography in Fragments: Reading Ottoman Personal Miscellanies in the Early Modern Era", in O. Akyildiz, H. Kara and B. Sagaster (eds), *Autobiographical Themes in Turkish Literature: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives*, Würzburg 2007, 83-99; R. Elger – Y. Köse (eds), *Many Ways of Speaking About the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-Documents in Arabic, Persian and*

is still thriving and new texts are constantly discovered and analyzed; very recently (2023), a special journal was launched, *Ceride: Ben-Anlatıları Araştırmaları Dergisi/Journal of Ego-Documents Studies,*[28] focusing in Ottoman ego-documents. Yet, whereas these new texts include diaries, travelogues, dream diaries and notes, memoirs and autobiographies, very few scholars have thought of private letters as parts of this genre.[29]

Christine Woodhead, the scholar who has *par excellence* studied Ottoman collections of *inşâ'* literature, states that "there appear to be no significant caches of *original* sixteenth- or seventeenth-century personal letters".[30] Indeed, the ephemeral nature of letters which were not part of the *inşâ* genre and were not kept by their authors for future display of their skills means that they must have often been thrown away after being read, or at any rate that compilers of archival collections did not bother to keep what seemed like insignificant notes of strictly private nature. Yet, on the one hand, as we have already remarked, collections of letters of Sufi content preserve rich private material, and these have also begun to be located and published. On the other hand, significant numbers of private letters of lesser importance (or, more precisely, composed by less important persons) remain scattered and dispersed in libraries and archives. The major source, abundant in Turkish and European manuscript libraries, are copybooks and miscellanies (*mecmu'a*), which are one of the richest sources of information on private life, as they contain all sorts of notes, from magic spells to recipes and from poems and prayers to calculations and personal memoirs, including copies of texts that seemed valuable or useful to the author of the miscellany. *Mecmu'a*s have been the subject of numerous recent studies,[31] but letters as content have attracted the attention of few scholars.[32] But apart from letters copied in miscellanies, we know that a large number of private letters has been preserved in loose leaves. A cursory study of archival collections in the Balkans, for examples, shows that they often contain letters that have some relationship with the owner of the archive: for instance, letters sent to the Prior of an Orthodox monastery would be preserved in its archive (and monastic archives are extremely rich).[33] Back in 1932, Lajos Fekete had located a collection of twenty-four letters in the archive of Nikolaus Esterhazy, dated from the early 17th century; these letters are highly interesting and yet have attracted minimal attention so far.[34] More letters from the Austrian archives, dating from the mid-16th century, were published by Gisela Procházka-Eisl and Claudia Römer.[35] Such private letters can be found in monastic and state archives, but also in libraries.

Turkish (14th-20th) Century, Wiesbaden 2010; S. Karahasanoğlu, "Ottoman Ego-Documents: State of the Art", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 53 (2021), 301-308.

28 The journal is available in open access: https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/ceride

29 See e.g. A. T. Şen, "The Emotional Universe of Insecure Scholars in the Early Modern Ottoman Hierarchy of Learning", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 53 (2021), 315-321; Gurulkan, "Şehzade Korkut'un mektupları".

30 Woodhead, "The Ottoman Art of Word-Painting", 888.

31 G. Procházka-Eisl – H. Çelik, *Texts on Popular Learning in Early Modern Ottoman Times. Part I: Hidden Treasures: Selected Texts from Ottoman* Mecmūʿas *(Miscellanies)*, Harvard 2015; J. Schmidt, "From "One-Volume Libraries" to Scrapbooks. Ottoman Multiple Text and Composite Manuscripts in the Early Modern Age (1400-1800)", in M. Friedrich, C. Schwarke (eds), *One-Volume Libraries: Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts*, Berlin 2016, 207-232.

32 J. Schmidt, "First Person Narratives in Ottoman Miscellaneous Manuscripts", in Elger and Köse (eds), *Many Ways of Speaking*, 159-170.

33 See e.g. E. Kolovos, Οθωμανικές πηγές για τη νεώτερη ιστορία της Λευκάδας [Ottoman sources on the early modern history of Leukada/Ayamavra], Iraklio 2013, 396-397.

34 L. Fekete, *Türkische Schriften aus dem Archiv des Palatins Nikolaus Esterhazy*, Budapest 1932. For some studies see Murphey, "Forms of Differentiation"; Giagtzoglou, "Η προσωπική επιστολογραφία".

35 G. Procházka-Eisl – C. Römer, *Osmanische Beamtenschreiben und Privatbriefe der Zeit Suleymans des Prachtigen aus dem Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv zu Wien*, Vienna 2007.

The relationship of actual private letters with the requirements of the *inşâ* genre is a topic that merits special attention. Many of the "private letters" were written by professional scribes, who must have been acquainted with an at least superficial knowledge of *inşâ* literature. There are stories about well-educated high officials, who would be happy to review and amend letters of their peers or even inferiors.[36] However, we can tell that at least some were composed by their authors, as evidenced by lack of proper spelling or calligraphy[37] or by the total neglect for the formalities and the established sections.[38]

A research agenda

Thus, Ottoman letters constitute a superb source for intellectual, cultural and social history, not to mention the various topics (e.g. of political or economic history) they can give us information about. Their systematic study would show how the Ottoman world itself was connected and how relationships were continued across an empire. For example, it has been observed that high ranking judges had to write letters to connect with each other while each was sent to a different town for service.[39] The study of such material will provide an opportunity to think about Ottoman imperial servants "on the move."

Moreover, a detailed study of Ottoman correspondence will shed light upon the history of communication: the speed and width of the flow of information on political, social and cultural trends between Istanbul and the periphery (but also with the "infidel" world) is an important aspect of Ottoman realities that has not been examined yet.[40] We know that news of political developments, especially revolts, were quickly spreading throughout the Ottoman Empire; that aesthetic trends and literary tropes, as well as social fashions were also quick to expand their influence;[41] that religious, philosophical or other topics (e.g. the use of tobacco) were debated in real time through treatises circulating all over the Ottoman territory.[42] Yet we do not know the exact mechanisms such information traveled. We must assume that news (private or public) did not travel only by hearsay: various known private letters attest to this, and it is expected that much more will be discovered by carefully looking into the archives. The systematic examination of private letters will shed light into this important topic, in other words into the material basis of information exchange. We know that Ottomans maintained a postal system, which, however, was only for official use, often using cryptographic methods.[43] The way private letters travelled is still obscure. Information on the bearer

36 R. Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi*, Leiden 2001, 77-78.

37 Schmidt, "First Person Narratives".

38 See e.g. Fekete, *Türkische Schriften*, 203.

39 A. Niyazioğlu, *Dreams and Lives in Ottoman Istanbul: A Seventeenth-Century Biographer's Perspective*, London 2017, 24-25.

40 Cf. S. Peksevgen, "Secrecy, Information Control and Power Building in the Ottoman Empire, 1566-1603", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, McGill University 2004.

41 For instance, one may take the common tropes and even verses in funerary inscriptions throughout the Empire (E. Eldem and N. Vatin, *L'épitaphe ottomane musulmane (XVI^e-XX^e siècles). Contribution à une histoire de la culture ottomane*, Paris 2007; A. Anastasopoulos, "The Islamic Gravestones of Ottoman Rethymno: Preliminary Remarks and Thoughts about Them", in idem (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman Rule: Crete, 1645-1840 (Halcyon Days in Crete VI, A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 13-15 January 2006)* (Rethymno 2008), 317-329), or the spread of the Kadızadeli movement all the way to Sarajevo even one century after its original rise in Istanbul (K. Filan, 'Life in Sarajevo in the 18th Century (According to Mulla Mustafa's *Mecmua*)', in V. Costantini and M. Koller (eds), *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community: Essays in Honour of Suraiya Faroqhi*, Leiden 2008, 335-337).

42 N. Shafir, *The Order and Disorder of Communication: Pamphlets and Polemics in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire*, Stanford 2024.

43 C. Heywood, "The Ottoman *menzilhane* and *ulak* System in Rumeli in the Eighteenth Century", in O. Okyar

is often mentioned in letters, sometimes as a friend or a *protégé* worthy of attention. Indeed, letters for recommendation are a major source to study Ottoman networking.[44] These letters usually follow the "recommendation triangle" or "*amicitia* triangle", known from similar letters of the Roman world,[45] comprising the author of the letter, the receiver and the person recommended.[46] We also know of letters accompanying (or accompanied by) gifts or other material objects.[47] Even collections of exemplary letters can reveal important information on networks.[48] Actual private letters may be more difficult in this respect, since they are often found in loose leaves without context, but they also often contain greetings to acquaintances of the receiver that reveal valuable information on networking.[49]

An important aspect concerns the evolution of the genre, closely connected to the evolution of Ottoman rhetoric.[50] In the *inşâ* level, a letter as an alternative for poems in some cases, and vice versa: they share the style, the vocabulary and the tropes of high-level rhetoric and they could serve similar purposes as they both could be used to display one's skills or affection.[51] It has been noticed that *inşâ* manuals present little difference in terms of language and style throughout the Ottoman period,[52] something noted also in early modern France.[53] Woodhead notes that the same has been remarked for Ottoman poetry;[54] however, as a matter of fact Ottoman poetry does present significant changes between the 15th or 16th and the 18th centuries.[55]

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and H. İnalcık (eds), *Türkiye'nin sosyal ve ekonomik tarihi*, Ankara 1980, 179-186. On Ottoman cryptography, see İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, "Âmedî Galib Efendi'nin murahhaslığı ve Paris'ten gönderdiği şifreli mektuplar", *Belleten* 1 (1937), 371-430.

44 C. Woodhead, "Puff and Patronage: Ottoman *takriz*-writing and Literacy Recommendation in the 17th Century", in C. Balim-Harding and C. Imber (eds), *The Balance of Truth: Essays in Honour of Professor Geoffrey Lewis*, Istanbul 2000, 395-406. Such letters are related to the texts recommending literary or historiographical works (*takriz*), a sub-genre in its own right; on these see F. Rosenthal, "'Blurbs' from Fourteenth Century Egypt", *Oriens* 27-28 (1981), 177-196.

45 R. Rees, "Letters of Recommendation and the Rhetoric of Praise", in R. Morello and A. D. Morrison (eds), *Ancient Letters: Classical and Late Antique Epistolography*, Oxford 2007, 148-168.

46 On friendship and sociability cf. M. Sariyannis, "Sociability, Public Life, and Decorum", in Sh. Hamadeh and Ç. Kafescioğlu (eds), *A Companion to Early Modern Istanbul* (Brill's Companions to European History 26), Leiden 2021, 473-502.

47 For the Byzantine case, cf. A. Karpozilos, "Realia in Byzantine Epistolography", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 77 (1984), 20-30.

48 Woodhead, "The Ottoman Art of Word-Painting", 894-899.

49 See e.g. Fekete, *Türkische Schriften*, 152-153.

50 Cf. C. Ferrard, "The Development of an Ottoman Rhetoric up to 1882. Part I: The *Medrese* Tradition", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 3 (1982), 163–88 and idem, "The Development of an Ottoman Rhetoric up to 1882. Part II: Contributions from Outside the *Medrese*". *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 4 (1984), 19–34. On the evolution of scribal writing style and language, see Matuz, "*Über* die Epistolographie"; Woodhead, "Ottoman *İnşa"*; Riedlmayer, "Ottoman Copybooks of Correspondence"; L. T. Darling, "Ottoman Turkish: Written Language and Scribal Practice, 13th to 20th Centuries", in B. Spooner – W. L. Hanaway (eds), *Literacy in the Persianate World. Writing and the Social Order*, Philadelphia 2013, 171-195; Tuşalp Atiyas, "Political Literacy", 138ff.

51 Woodhead, "Ottoman *İnşa"*, 157-159 and eadem, "The Gift of Letters", 979.

52 Gökyay, "Tanzimat dönemine değin mektup".

53 R. Chartier, "*Secrétaires* for the People? Model Letters of the *Ancien Régime*: Between Court Literature and Popular Chapbooks", in R. Chartier et al. (eds), *Correspondence: Models of Letter-Writing From the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, London 1977, 59-111.

54 Woodhead, "Circles of Correspondence".

55 See e.g. F. Turan, "Synthesizing the Novelties Within Old Structures: Voicing New Trends in Old Genres in the 18th Century Ottoman Poetry", *Archivum Ottomanicum* 25 (2008), 151-171.

What seems to have remained intact is the internal structure of letters, containing several sections or "pillars" (*rükün*) which have to be of similar length and power of expression (hence the name "pillar"). Thus sections such as the beginning (*ibtida'*), the praise of the receiver (*senā*), the prayer (*du'ā*) and so forth were more or less formulaic, although they had a variety of forms according to the rank of the correspondent or the content of the letter.[56] Non-literary letters had a less composite character, as expected. At any rate, every letter would contain the *invocatio* (*elkāb/ḫiṭāb*), addressing the receiver according to their rank and relationship to the author, the introduction (*ibtida'*), containing prayers for the receiver and expressions of respect (*'arż-ı ḫulūṣ*), the *narratio* or main text (*beyān-ı maẓmūn*)—after a short sentence, *budur ki* or "[the cause of the letter] is the following", named "salvation" or "escape" (*taḫalluṣ*)—followed by the completing sections and the signature (*imża'*), usually preceded by an expression of respect (e.g. *bende*, "your slave"). The name and other information on the addressee would be written in the verso of the document.[57]

Perhaps the most important aim of the study of private letters would be its contribution to the history of emotions and of private life. History of emotions, while a field considerably studied by now in European history,[58] is a topic that only recently started to be explored by Ottomanists and which is still in a very early stage of development.[59] As Woodhead remarks, letters collected as model examples were written in what has been termed the "language of fidelity",[60] which functioned per se as an indicator of the author's feelings: in other words, the very use of bombastic expressions of friendship was part of a "language game", just as the function of gifts in the court or diplomatic practice.[61] This was a feature that Ottoman culture shared not only with previous Arabic tradition[62] but also with other medieval and early modern traditions of Europe.[63] No collection of Ottoman letters can be understood without taking this fact into account.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that a meticulous study of emotions displayed will not be extremely fruitful for cultural history. For one thing, the very inclusion of private letters into collections shows a tendency to exhibit one's emotions, even in a formulaic form; the absence thereof in some cases indicates a different attitude (e.g. when al-Nabulusi states that he got bored of such "friendly letters").[64] Not only affection, but also fear, anxiety, insecurity or joy are visible in

56 On official letters see M. S. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı belgelerinin dili (diplomatik)*, Istanbul 1994, 221-229.

57 For an analysis of the sections see Fekete, *Türkische Schriften*; Procházka-Eisl and Römer, *Osmanische Beamtenschreiben*.

58 Among the numerous publications, see B. H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, Ithaca 2006; J. Liliequist (ed.), *History of Emotions, 1200-1800*, London 2012; J. Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction*, tr. by K. Tribe, Oxford 2015.

59 W. G. Andrews, "Ottoman Love: Preface to a Theory of Emotional Ecology", in Liliequist (ed.), *History of Emotions,* 21-47; E. G. Ambros, "Emotivity as a Stylistic Marker in Ottoman Lyric Poetry of the 15th and 16th Centuries", in C. Czygan and S. Conermann (eds), *An Iridescent Device: Premodern Ottoman Poetry*, Bonn 2018, 33-48; I. Ben-Ami, (2019). "Wonder in Early Modern Ottoman Society: A Case Study in the History of Emotions", *History Compass* 17/7 (2019) https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12578; M. Sariyannis, « "Nous étions tous stupéfaits et effrayés". Émotions ottomanes face au surnaturel ». *Turcica* 53 (2022), 277-306; N. Tekgül, *Emotions in the Ottoman Empire: Politics, Society, and Family in the Early Modern Era*, London 2023.

60 A term coined by A. L. Herman, "The Language of Fidelity in Early Modern France", *Journal of Modern History* 67/1 (1995), 1-24.

61 Woodhead, "Writing to a Grand Vezir".

62 Gully, *The Culture of Letter-Writing*, 1-23.

63 Woodhead, "The Gift of Letters", 972-973.

64 Akkach, *Letters of a Sufi Scholar*, 26-28; Woodhead, "The Gift of Letters", 974.

private letters.[65] On the other hand, from the early 17th century on the predominant epistolographers became more inward-looking than their predecessors, who had given more importance to official letters.[66] Even if we exclude the various private letters existing in archives, Sufi correspondence is much less formulaic and gives precedence to content; in its context, expressions of affection, but also of fear, awe, trouble and so forth must be taken as having a sincere content, albeit expressed in established forms of speech. In this respect, private letters may compensate for what has been described as the "absence of emotions in Ottoman self-narratives".[67]



65 A. T. Şen, "Letters of an Insecure Scholar", in H. Karateke and H. Anetshofer (eds), *The Ottoman World. A Cultural History Reader, 1450-1700*, Oakland 2021, 1-7.

66 Woodhead, "Ottoman *İnşa"*, 146.

67 Tekgül, *Emotions in the Ottoman Empire*, 38-40.

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"My brief visit to Rhodes with my family holds a very special place in my heart—not only because of the island's beauty but also due to the profound connection I felt with its rich historical heritage. Thanks to the unmatched hospitality of Yusuf Kıbrıslı and his wife, Gülten Kıbrıslı, I had the privilege of spending a few unforgettable hours at the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library. The visit became even more meaningful upon learning that Namık Kemal had spent part of his exile at this very library nearly 150 years ago. Walking among the shelves, browsing the manuscripts, and observing the long table and chairs where he once sat made this experience deeply moving, intimately linking me to Rhodes' Ottoman past."

A. Tunç Şen

Ottoman Manuscripts as Pirates' Spoils

Traveling by sea was a perilous and burdensome undertaking for many in pre-modern Ottoman society. As numerous Ottoman readers of Saʿdī Shīrāzī's (d. 1292) *Gulistan* would have recognized, "in the sea there are good things innumerable; but if you wish for safety, you must seek it on the shore."[1] Ottoman men of letters also developed their own idioms and expressions on the dangers of the sea. Perhaps the most frequently circulated one declares, "They said to keep water in a glass and see a ship [only] on paper," cautioning readers against engaging with the sea's unpredictable and often dangerous nature.[2] The renowned Ottoman litterateur of the late sixteenth century, Muṣṭafā ʿĀlī (d. 1600), took this caution a step further. He asserted that "it is impermissible for an intelligent and prudent man to board a ship and travel by sea except in cases of absolute necessity."[3] The only justifiable reason, he argued, would be to cross from one shore to an island to learn the exalted path of the sharia from a knowledgeable spiritual guide residing there. Or, if one were afflicted with a fatal illness and a cure could be found only in a distant location, then such a journey might be warranted. Otherwise, sea travel was not considered reasonable.

Despite such hesitance and disdain toward sea travel, maritime journeys were certainly not uncommon among Ottoman subjects, particularly among the men of knowledge who were in pursuit of state service, scholarly exchange, or pilgrimage. Scholars, scribes, jurists, and judges frequently sailed from imperial centers, such as Istanbul and Cairo, toward provincial and frontier regions, sometimes carrying with them the cherished copies of books from their personal libraries or treatises in progress.[4] These manuscripts were not merely sources of knowledge or entertainment—they were also deemed as "talismanic objects," providing their readers with the much-needed feeling of divine protection and safety vis-a-vis all the perils of traveling by the sea.

The routes that connected Ottoman subjects to their intended destinations often exposed them to the threat of piracy. Catholic pirates sailing under the flags of Venice, Rhodes, Malta, and Spain, patrolled these waters with aggression and opportunism.[5] The seizure of ships meant not only the enslavement or ransoming of their passengers, but also the appropriation of their cargo—coins, textiles, foodstuffs, and on occasion, books. Once claimed as spoil, these manuscripts entered new trajectories. Many were discarded immediately, out of faith-related anxieties; others were probably

1 Saʿdī, *The Gulistan, or, Rose Garden,* ed. Musle-Huddeen Sheik Saadi (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1865), 137.

2 "*Suyu bardakda dimişler gemiyi kāġıdda*." See, for instance, Seydî Ali Reis, *Mir'âtü'l-memâlik: İnceleme, Metin, İndeks*, ed. Mehmet Kiremit (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, 1999). Some other versions of the idiom use "wall" (*divār*) instead of "paper" (*kāġıd*).

3 Douglas Scott Brookes, "Tables of Delicacies Concerning the Rules of Social Gatherings: an Annotated Translation of Gelibolulu Mustafa Âli's *Mevâ'idü'n-Nefâ'is fi Kavâ'idi'l-Mecalis*" (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1998), 328.

4 Ṭaşköprülüzāde provides several examples in his *Madīnat al-ʿulūm* of scholars (*ʿulamā'*) who carried their books with them while traveling. See İhsan Fazlıoğlu and İbrahim Halil Üçer, eds., *Taşköprülüzâde'de Bilgi, Bilim ve Varlık* (İstanbul: İlem Yayınları, 2020), 179–80. Biographical dictionaries of poets also present several examples of poets writing or reading from their poetry *majmūʿa*s while at sea. See, for instance, the entry on Nigārī in Kınalızāde Ḥasan Çelebi's *Tezkiretü'ş-şu'arā'*, ed. Aysun Sungurhan, electronic resource (T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Kütüphaneler ve Yayımlar Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara, 2017), 864.

5 See, for instance, Molly Greene, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants: A Maritime History of the Mediterranean* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2010); Emrah Safa Gürkan, *Sultanın Korsanları: Osmanlı Akdenizi'nde Gazâ, Yağma ve Esaret, 1500-1700* (İstanbul: Kronik Kitap, 2018).

sold in the slave markets of the Mediterranean or shipped northward to enrich the libraries of European notables. Over time, library collections in the Vatican, Florence, Madrid, Leiden, Paris, and elsewhere began to list Arabic-script volumes bearing Ottoman ownership marks that were seized as pirates' spoils. In their new settings, the very texts once intended to nourish the intellectual and spiritual lives of their Ottoman owners started serving the emerging Western Orientalist scholarship. In what follows, I turn to several case studies that trace the itineraries of traveling Ottoman learned men, the manuscripts they carried, and the episodes of capture that disrupted their journeys. Drawing on surviving manuscripts themselves—as well as the marginalia and miscellaneous notes scattered across folios—I aim to show how these codices became both cultural trophies and silent witnesses to the hazards of maritime mobility in the early modern Mediterranean.[6]

Ottomans' Texts in Motion

Early modern Ottomans provide us with rich documentary evidence about books and other textual materials carried during travel. First of all, a range of anecdotes recount the presence of books accompanying sultans and soldiers on the march during military campaigns. Some of these items were undoubtedly preferred for their entertainment value, while others were favored for their ascribed talismanic and protective power—such as copies of the Qur'an in various sizes or prayerbooks. For example, one late sixteenth century anecdote about Sultan Selīm I (r. 1512–1520) coming from the son of a courtier of the sultan, describes how, during Selīm's campaign against the Mamluks, the sultan took pleasure in reading a copy of the *History of Wassaf*.[7] Sultans—particularly when they still physically led Ottoman armies in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—may have had the luxury of reading for leisure and pleasure amid military campaigns. Ottoman soldiers, however, had more immediate and pragmatic reasons for keeping textual materials in their possession. Unfortunately, due mainly to the relative scarcity of early modern Ottoman soldierly writings, we know little about the social, personal, and emotional dynamics of warfare from the perspective of men-at-arms.[8] Nevertheless, some extant sources indicate that books and other textual objects did, in fact, travel in the baggage of certain fighting troops. A notable example appears in a late-fifteenth-century memoir by Konstantin Mihailović (d. *circa* 1500), a Janissary of Christian Serbian origin who served in the army of Meḥmed II (r. 1444–46; 1451–81). Mihailović notes that his fellow Ottoman soldiers frequently carried a particular type of small book he referred to as *hamahely*.[9] These were,

6 The remainder of this study is adapted from my previously published article: "Manuscripts on the Battlefields: Early Modern Ottoman Subjects in the European Theatre of War and Their Textual Relations to the Supernatural in Their Fight for Survival," *Aca'ib: Occasional Papers on the Ottoman Perceptions of the Supernatural* 2 (2021): 77–106.

7 "*merḥūm pādişāh ol nüsḫaya mā'iller olub yolda eğlenceleri imiş*," cited in İsmail E. Erünsal, "Fatih Sultan Mehmed'in İlgi Duyduğu Kitaplar ve Kütüphanesi" in *Düşten Fethe İstanbul,* ed. Coşkun Yılmaz (İstanbul: Üsküdar Belediyesi, 2015), 203–12, at p. 203.

8 Rhoads Murphey had also addressed the absence of literature on the personal motivations and experiences of soldiers in the early modern Ottoman world in his *Ottoman Warfare, 1500-1700* (London: UCL Press, 1999). For an intriguing textual example from the late seventeenth century written by a certain Ḥasan, who expressed all the hardships he and his peers suffered as guardians in Podolia, see: Orhan Şaik Gökyay, "Kamaniçe Muhafızlarının Çektiği," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* no. 32 (1979): 281-300. Also see the memoirs of a certain sailor with the name Talati, who took part in the naval campaign of 1736-7 in the Black Sea against the Russian fleet: Fevzi Kurtoğlu, ed., *1736-1737 Seferine İştirak Eden Bir Türk Denizcisinin Hatıraları: 200 Sene Evvel Yazılmıştır* (İstanbul: Deniz Matbaası, 1935). For an insightful account on early modern soldierly writings in the context of the Hispanic world, see: Miguel Martínez, *Front Lines: Soldiers' Writing in the Early Modern Hispanic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

9 Konstanty Michałowicz, *Memoirs of a Janissary,* trans. by Benjamin Stolz, ed. by Svat Soucek (Princeton:

in fact, *ḥamā'il*—small, amuletic booklets containing Qur'anic verses, inscriptions of divine names or the names of angels, typically fastened to the arm or turban. According to Mihailović, Ottoman soldiers believed these objects provided them with spiritual assistance and protection.

Aside from the hefty sultanic codices and tiny protective booklets carried into combat zones, we also have evidence of works that were drafted or presented during military campaigns. Historians, scholars, artists, secretaries, poets, and other men of learning in the service of sultans and ruling elites accompanied their patrons on such expeditions, often in official capacities. The extensive campaign-narrative literature—*ġazavātnāme*s and *fetḥnāme*s—along with surviving manuscripts in this genre, particularly the messier ones, merit close examination for traces of disarranged notes and rough drafts jotted down during the journeys themselves. In addition to possible sketches of campaign narratives, there are several treatises that were either written or at least presented in the course of military expeditions, as evidenced by surviving manuscript records. For instance, the autograph copy of the fifteenth-century polymath ʿAlī Qushjī's (d. 1474) astronomical treatise *al-Risāla al-fatḥiyya*, now housed in the Ayasofya collection of the Süleymaniye Library, reveals through its colophon that it was composed and presented to Qushjī's new patron Sultan Meḥmed II in August 1473 during the sultan's campaign against the Aqqoyunlu ruler Uzun Ḥasan (r. 1457–1478), which culminated in the Ottoman victory at Otlukbeli—hence, the treatise is titled *al-fatḥiyya,* meaning "the victorious".[10] Perhaps surprisingly, Qushjī's treatise is not the only astronomical text copied or presented during an Ottoman campaign. In the 1660s, Tezkireci Köse İbrāhīm Efendi (fl. 17th century), a finance bureaucrat in the chancery and translator of a French treatise on Copernican astronomy, reported that, with the encouragement of the military judge at the time, he worked on his translation while stationed in Belgrade during the Ottoman campaign against Habsburg Austria in 1663.[11]

It should come as no surprise that members of the scholarly establishment and bureaucrats in the imperial chancery constitute the largest group of individuals who composed or consumed texts while on the move. These texts encompass a wide range of genres, from captivity narratives and miscellanies (*majmūʿa*) of various sorts—including personal letters, official correspondence, poems, law codes, legal opinions, and medical or magical recipes—to individual treatises on diverse branches of knowledge. With particular regard to captivity narratives, the better-known examples were authored by Ottoman scholars and bureaucrats who were captured by corsairs or other agents of early modern ransom slavery operating in the Mediterranean.[12] One such example is the memoir of Maʿcūncuzāde Muṣṭafā Efendi (d. after 1602), an Ottoman judge from Istanbul who was appointed in 1597 to a judicial post in Cyprus but was seized en route by the Knights Hospitaller of Malta, the

Markus Wieners Publishers, 2010), 5. For *ḥamā'il* and its etymological connection to amulets, which Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall had mentioned in the nineteenth century, see: B. Carra de Vaux, "Ḥamā'il," *Encyclopaedia of Islam, First Edition (1913-1936)*, online edition; Constant Hamès, "Amulet," *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE,* online edition. For the use of amulets on battlefields, see Maryam Ekhtiar and Rachel Parikh, "Power and Piety: Islamic Talismans on the Battlefield," in *Islamicate Occult Sciences in Theory and Practice,* eds. Liana Saif *et al.* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 420–53.

10 Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Ayasofya 2733, f. 70a, also cited in Hasan Umut, "Theoretical Astronomy in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire: ʿAlī al-Qūshjī's *al-Risāla al-Fatḥiyya*," (Ph.D. Dissertation, McGill University, 2019).

11 Kandilli Observatory Library 403, cited in *Osmanlı Astronomi Literatürü Tarihi = History of Astronomy Literature during the Ottoman Period* vol. 1, ed. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu (Istanbul : IRCICA, 1997), 342.

12 For the socio-economic and cultural significance of early modern ransom slavery from the Ottoman perspective, see the articles in Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, eds., *Ransom Slavery Along the Ottoman Borders: Early Fifteenth-Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007).

Catholic military and religious order that had relocated from Rhodes a few decades earlier.[13] As Maʿcūncuzāde himself recounts, the text was composed during his captivity in Malta.[14] Of course, such authorial claims should not be taken at face value. In many cases, including Maʿcūncuzāde's account, the content and surviving manuscript evidence suggest that these narratives were written later as retrospective recollections, often well after the author's release. Still, regardless of where or under what circumstances they were actually composed, these narratives are especially striking for the quotidian details they offer about life in captivity, conditions aboard ships, and the social role that reading and writing played among those traveling by sea or held as captives.

Captivity narratives, along with the letters that captives sent to their families and others to complain about their conditions and request ransom payments, offer vivid insights into how captives socialized around texts and formed group bonds around shared themes of *ġurbet* (longing associated with being in a foreign land) and *miḥnet* (ordeal).[15] Maʿcūncuzāde's memoir, for instance, contains frequent references to captives copying or reading texts during their spare time, composing chronograms to mark the release dates of fellow captives, and exchanging papers inscribed with *ghazal*s and *qasida*s. Among the books copied, Maʿcūncuzāde mentions a copy of the Qur'an and a Turkish translation of Ḥusayn Vāʿiẓ Kāshifī's (d. 1504–5) Persian treatise on ethics and morality, *Aḫlāk-ı Muḥsinī*, completed by a certain ʿAzmī in sixteenth century.[16] Another late-sixteenth-century captivity narrative, written by Hindī Maḥmūd—another scribe in the imperial chancery—portrays how the more learned individuals among travelers and captives would recite verses from the Qur'an and other texts, such as *Mawlid-i Nabī* (used to celebrate the Prophet Muhammed's nativity), to boost morale aboard the ship.[17]

13 Anthony T. Luttrell, "Malta and Rhodes: Hospitallers and Islanders," in *Hospitaller Malta 1530–1798. Studies on Early Modern Malta and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem,* ed. Victor Mallia-Milanes, 255–84.

14 The text was first introduced by İsmet Parmaksızoğlu in the following study: "Bir Türk Kadısının Esaret Hatıraları," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* 5, no. 8 (1953): 77–84. Fahir İz then published the text in Arabic script based on the sole surviving manuscript at the Selim Ağa Library in İstanbul. See: Fahir İz, "Macuncuzade Mustafa'nın Malta Anıları: Sergüzeşt-i Esiri-i Malta," *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı-Belleten* 18 (1970): 69–122. For a recent French translation of the text together with an introductory essay on the relevant historical context, see Hayri Gökşin Özkoray, ed., *Le captif de Malte: récit autobiographique d'un cadi ottoman* (Toulouse: Anacharsis, 2019).

15 Salvatore Bono, *Schiavi Musulmani nell'Italia moderna* (Napoli: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 1999); Pieter Sjoerd van Koningsveld, "Muslim Slaves and Captives in Western Europe during the Late Middle Ages," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 6, no. 1 (1995): 5–23; Luca Berardi, "Copying Islamic Manuscripts in Captivity: The Case of the Qur'an of Muḥammad al-Tāzī/Baldassarre Loyola Mandes (1631–1667)," *Manuscript Studies: A Journal of the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies* 9, no. 1 (2024): 1–16; Güner Doğan, "Napoli 'Küffarından' Esir Mektupları ya da Bir Deniz Savaşının/Cenginin Anlatımı," *Türk Savaş Çalışmaları Dergisi* 2, no. 2 (2021): 159–69; Uğur Demir, "Esir/Esire Mektupları ve Arzuhalleri (1700-1750)," *Uluslararası Türk Savaş Esirleri Sempozyumu Bildiri Kitabı, 14-15 Mart 2017* (İstanbul, 2018), 53–94.

16 İz, "Macuncuzade Mustafa'nın Malta Anıları," 78.

17 Hindî Mahmûd, *Sergüzeştname-i Hindi Mahmud: İnebahtı gazisi Hindi Mahmud ve Esaret Hatıraları,* ed. Ahmet Karataş (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2013). Crews often included a specific individual called "muʿallim" or "hoca," a learned person in religious sciences and other branches of knowledge, who offered help to people on the ship to perform prayers properly or pull themselves together in formidable circumstances. In some cases, they interpreted the horoscopes at the moment or consulted books on divination to provide guidance. We know next to nothing about the identities of those *muʿallim*s and how they were selected, but both Ottoman and European sources attest to their presence on board. See for instance Emrah Safa Gürkan, *Sultanın Korsanları,* 197, 249.

As a matter of fact, copies of the Qur'an, either full or partial, were essential components of textual interaction among seafarers, fostering both solidarity among peers and hostility across confessional lines. In the autobiographical account of the sixteenth-century Ottoman admiral Seydī ʿAlī (d. 1563), which recounts his adventures in the Indian Ocean and later in present-day India, Afghanistan, parts of Central Asia, and Iran, Qur'an copies appear on several occasions where he and his surviving crewmates perform the art of bibliomancy—divination by books—by randomly opening a page and interpreting the first verse chanced upon to find guidance.[18] In yet another captivity narrative, composed as a long letter by a scribe in the expanding imperial bureaucracy during the early reign of Sultan Süleymān (r. 1520–1566), Christian captors are reported to have seized the books of Ottoman captives—specifically Qur'ans and amulets containing inscribed verses (referred to in the letter as "*ḥamāyil-i ʿaẓīme*")—and thrown them into the sea or, at times, into a fire. The "infidel corsairs," the anonymous scribe reports, believed that "the books of the Turks on board were the chief cause of the violent storms at sea."[19]

There is little doubt that many of the texts Ottoman subjects carried to frontier regions and combat zones were lost forever due to such instances of destruction and confessionally driven violence. Yet many others undeniably passed into European hands during episodes of plunder and captivity.[20] Through a series of intermediaries, these manuscripts eventually made their way into the court libraries of monarchs, ecclesiastical libraries—including those of the Vatican—and the private collections of European Orientalists. For instance, the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana alone holds at least fifteen Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish manuscripts that were transferred from Malta to the Vatican library by Monsignor Leonetto della Corbara, who served as the Apostolic Delegate and Inquisitor of the Island of Malta from 1607 to 1609. This transfer was carried out under the order of Pope Paul V (d. 1621).[21] All of these manuscripts—Mss. Ar. 201, 204, 205, 224, 227, 237, 238, 302, 307; Turc 3, 4, 6, 26, 31, 354—bear on their flyleaves an inscription confirming their relocation to the Vatican by Inquisitor Corbara (*portato da Malta da Mons.* Della Corbara).[22] Among these manuscripts that must have been seized from Ottoman and North African subjects by the Knights Hospitaller of Malta or their associates operating in the Mediterranean are five copies of the Qurʿan (full or partial), collections of prayers and magical incantations, at least three pocket-sized prayer books (*duʿānāme*), a Turkish epic recounting the legendary holy warrior Seyyid Baṭṭal Ġāzī, and miscellaneous compilations of poems.

18 Seydî Ali Reis, *Mir'âtü'l-memâlik*, 87, 102.

19 BnF Turc 223, f. 66a, also cited in Halil Sahillioğlu, "Akdeniz'de Korsanlara Esir Düşen Abdi Çelebi'nin Mektubu," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* vol. 13, no. 17 (1963): 241–56, the specific detail is on p. 252. In the letters sent by Ottoman captives to their families in their homelands, one could also find references to copies of the Qur'an and prayerbooks. For instance, in the year 1646, a certain Receb, a *sipahi* from Pécs living under the captivity of the Hungarians, wrote a letter to his mother and asked her to send his "poor father's prayer book." See Zsuzsanna J. Újváry, "A Muslim captive's vicissitudes in Ottoman Hungary (mid-seventeenth century)," in *Ransom Slavery along the Ottoman Borders: Early Fifteenth-Early Eighteenth Centuries*, eds. Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (Leiden;Boston: Brill, 2007), 141–67, the specific detail is on p. 157.

20 The probable consequences of the many decades of Ottoman-Safavid warfare also deserve to be investigated in this regard.

21 Giorgio Levi della Vida, *Elenco dei manoscritti Arabi Islamici della biblioteca vaticana: Vaticani, Berberiniani, Borgiani, Rossiani* (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1935), 260.

22 For Della Corbara's engagement in Muslim magical texts, see Alexander Bonnici, "Superstitions in Malta: Towards the Middle of the Seventeenth Century in the light of the Inquisition Trials," *Melita Historica* 4, no. 3 (1966): 154–83; Catherine Rider *et al.*, "Infirmities and Invisible Ink: Enslaved Muslims and Magic in Malta, c. 1598–c. 1608," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 39, no. 1 (2024): 43–67.



Islamic manuscripts transferred from Malta to the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana by Monsignor Leonetto della Corbara, who served as the Apostolic Delegate and Inquisitor of the Island of Malta from 1607 to 1609. These manuscripts were likely seized from Ottoman and North African subjects by the Knights Hospitaller of Malta or their associates operating in the Mediterranean. Copies of the Qurʾan (above), collections of prayers (*duʿānāme*) below. Courtesy of Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.



While the majority of scholarship on the accumulation of Islamic manuscripts in early modern Europe has focused primarily on the role of European intellectuals and (proto-)Orientalists in acquiring manuscripts from the Muslim world, there is growing interest in examining the role of warfare and violence in the transfer of these manuscripts into European collections. For example, the recent special issue of the *Journal of Erudition and the Republic of Letters*, titled "The Turkish Wars and the Study of Islam in Early Modern Europe," highlights numerous manuscripts of Ottoman and North

African provenance that were captured as war booty or through acts of piracy and are now housed in various European collections.[23] However, even within this important revisionist scholarship, which rightly underscores the role of war and violence in the transmission of manuscripts, the focus remains almost exclusively on those early modern Europeans who were so eager to learn Islamicate languages and customs by collecting manuscripts.[24] There is little comparable scholarly attention to the stories, however fragmented or obscure, of the Ottoman and North African subjects who once possessed these manuscripts, engaged with them in meaningful ways while on the move, and ultimately lost them permanently after their capture.

In his pioneering article on the role of piracy and warfare in the acquisition of Islamic manuscripts in early modern Europe, Robert Jones identifies more than a dozen manuscripts of Ottoman and North African provenance that found their way into various European collections.[25] To locate these manuscripts, he primarily relied on inscriptions—written in Latin or European vernacular languages—left on the flyleaves by European hands, sometimes detailing the specific circumstances under which the books were seized. For example, on the flyleaf of Leiden Or. 222, an undated copy of a bilingual (Arabic-Turkish) work on Islamic jurisprudence, there is a note in Spanish by a certain Bernardo de Josa stating that the book was delivered to him in Rome by Don Guillem de San Clemente—a Spanish nobleman, soldier, and diplomat—who had participated in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 and acquired the manuscript at that time, perhaps along with other similar items.[26] Unfortunately, Leiden Or. 222 does not contain any inscriptions or manuscript notes from its former Ottoman owner(s) who may have taken part in the battle. As a result, we are unable to reconstruct the particular social history of the book, identify its Ottoman possessor(s), or determine why a text on jurisprudence would have been brought into combat zone. It is worth noting, however, that carrying a heavy volume related strictly to jurisprudence while traveling, especially during sea voyages, was not unheard of in Islamic history. As Joel Blecher points out in his article on Hadith (Prophetic Tradition) commentaries, seafarers often kept copies of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muḥammad al-Bukhārī (d. 870) on their ships as a means of securing protection from harm.[27]

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23 Paul Babinski and Jan Loop, "Looting and Learning: War and the Qur'an in European Oriental Studies," *Erudition and the Republic of Letters* 9 (2024): 239–80; Laura Hinrichsen, "The Circulation of Arabic Books from Ifrīqiya in Europe after the Sack of Tunis (1535)," 281–308; Chiara Petrolini, "Captive Books, Captive Teachers. Spoils of the Long Turkish Wars in 17th-Century Vienna," 309–35; Asaph Ben-Tov, "The Great Turkish War and the Study of the Qur'an: The Case of Matthias Friedrich Beck (1649–1701)," 336–63.

24 For an overview of the extent of early modern European scholarly and diplomatic interest in gathering Islamic manuscripts and learning oriental languages, see Alastair Hamilton et al. *The Republic of Letters and the Levant* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Alexander Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018); Simon Mills, *A Commerce of Knowledge: Trade, Religion, and Scholarship between England and the Ottoman Empire, c.1600-1760* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2020); Paul Babinski, "World Literature in Practice: the Orientalist's Manuscript Between the Ottoman Empire and Germany" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 2020); John Robert Jones, ed., *Learning Arabic in Renaissance Europe (1505-1624)* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2020).

25 Robert Jones, "Piracy, war, and the acquisition of Arabic manuscripts in Renaissance Europe," *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 2 (1987): 96–110. For the intriguing story of the sultan of Morocco's royal book collection's being stolen by French pirates and eventually reaching Spain and later becoming the core of the oriental collection at the Escorial library, see Daniel Hershenzon, "Traveling Libraries: The Arabic Manuscripts of Muley Zidan and the Escorial Library," *Journal of Early Modern History* 18/6 (2014): 535–58.

26 See the note in Jan Schmidt, *Catalogue of Turkish manuscripts in the library of Leiden University and other collections in the Netherlands* vol. 1 (Leiden: Leiden University Library/Brill, 2000), 25–6.

27 Joel Blecher, "Ḥadīth Commentary in the Presence of Students, Patrons, and Rivals: Ibn Ḥajar and Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī in Mamluk Cairo," *Oriens* 41, no. 3/4 (2013): 261–87, at p. 262.



Leiden Cod. Or. 222, an undated copy of a bilingual (Arabic-Turkish) work on Islamic jurisprudence, *Wiqāyat al-riwāyah fī masā'il al-Hidāyah* by Burhān al-Dīn Mahmūd al-Mahbūbī (d. 1346) with a note in Spanish by a certain Bernardo de Josa stating that the manuscript was delivered to him in Rome by Don Guillem de San Clemente—a Spanish nobleman, soldier, and diplomat—who had participated in the Battle of Lepanto in October 1571. Courtesy of Leiden University Library.

Other scholars have also identified manuscripts of Ottoman provenance that were taken by Europeans as spoils of war. A specific research field known as *Türkenbeute* (literally "booty from the Turks") traces objects—including manuscripts—seized from defeated Ottoman subjects as war trophies. One finds, especially in the manuscript libraries and museums of Germany, Austria, Hungary, Poland, and Italy, volumes looted from madrasa and mosque libraries, or snatched directly from the bodies of Ottoman soldiers by troops advancing deeper into Ottoman territories in Central and South-Eastern Europe after the failed Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683.[28] Inscriptions and other manuscript notes in Latin or local vernacular languages found in these manuscripts describe—sometimes in graphic detail—when and how the item in question was obtained. One example, held at the Gotha Research Library, is a volume containing prayers and extracts from the Qur'an. A note on folio 2b states that the book was found on the body of a Turk who was shot when Buda was captured by the Holy League in 1686.[29] It is likely that many more were obtained under similar circumstances,

28 See, for instance, Boris Liebrenz, *Arabische, Persische und Türkische Handschriften in Leipzig: Geschichte ihrer Sammlung und Erschliessung von Den Anfängen bis zu Karl Vollers* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2008), 18–28; Alastair Hamilton, "'To Rescue the Honour of the Germans': Qur'an Translations by Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century German Protestants," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 77 (2014): 173–209; Tilman Seidensticker, "How Arabic Manuscripts Moved to German Libraries," *Manuscript Cultures* 10 (2017): 73–82; Paul Babinski, "World Literature in Practice: the Orientalist's Manuscript Between the Ottoman Empire and Germany," 283–302.

29 Seidensticker, 78.

although lacking such explicit inscriptions. In his study on Arabic-script manuscripts in German libraries, Tilman Seidensticker notes that, before the gradual expansion of its Oriental collection, the Gotha Research Library possessed 74 Islamic manuscripts in the eighteenth century, 14 of which are evidently identified by inscriptions as having been acquired as war booty. Seidensticker further estimates that about "a third or even half" of those 74 manuscripts are "instances of *Türkenbeute*."[30] It would be inaccurate, however, to classify all *Türkenbeute* manuscripts as texts seized from Ottoman subjects in transit. Most were looted from rather stationary institutions—madrasas, mosques, libraries, and private residences—in Ottoman towns in Central Europe that fell to European forces from the late seventeenth century onward. Still, numerous textual materials, including bureaucratic ledgers and registers from the Ottoman central administration, were brought to the European theatre of war by Ottoman military and administrative officials—and many of them remained there permanently.[31]

Thus, a systematic inventory of texts that found their way into European collections through processes initially set in motion by early modern Ottoman subjects on the move would substantially enhance the existing body of knowledge. Such an inventory could help identify specific volumes, analyze which particular genres and titles were most widely circulated among different Ottoman social groups in transit, and explore the contents of these books with an eye toward tracking notes of personal and emotional nature by their former Ottoman possessors. This task, however, is daunting. It requires the meticulous labor and collaborative expertise of a broad range of scholars and professionals—librarians, manuscript cataloguers, codicologists, philologists, historians, and others—and spans a vast spatial and temporal landscape, from Western to Eastern Europe and from the early sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. The challenge is further compounded by the fact that descriptive manuscript inscriptions on flyleaves—those that clearly document provenance and ownership—are sporadic and limited. Many more manuscripts, despite lacking such explicit notes, were nonetheless part of the textual holdings of mobile early modern Ottoman subjects. Identifying them often depends on little more than good fortune or serendipitous discoveries made through close and patient examination of their contents.

In this light, the manuscript holdings of the Ḥāfız Aḥmed Ağa Library in Rhodes merit close investigation through the same lens. As a provincial repository situated at the intersection of Ottoman, Mediterranean, and European maritime worlds, the Ḥāfız Aḥmed Ağa collection may well contain volumes that echo the trajectories traced here—books once carried by scholars, jurists, or pilgrims traveling across the Mediterranean and perhaps seized, displaced, rescued, and re-shelved in the wake of imperial or local upheaval. A focused study of the library's Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish manuscripts—particularly those bearing ownership notes, travel marks, or devotional traces—has the potential to enrich our understanding of how books traveled, endured, and bore witness to the entangled histories of war, devotion, and displacement in the early modern Mediterranean.

30 Ibid.

31 For instances of Ottoman bureaucratic registers brought from the Ottoman capital and remained in European hands, see Hans Georg Majer, ed., *Das Osmanische "Registerbuch der Beschwerden" (Şikāyet Defteri) vom Jahre 1675: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Cod. mixt. 683* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1984); Atilla Çetin, "Savaşlar ve Arşivler: İstila-yı keferede kalan Osmanlı defterleri," *Türk Dünyası Tarih Dergisi* 3 (1987): 6–8; Feridun Emecen, "Sefere Götürülen Defterlerin Defteri," in *Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan* to enrich our understanding of how books traveled, endured, and bore witness to the entangled histories of war, devotion, and displacement in the early modern Mediterranean. (İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1991), 241–68.

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*"**Conversation in the Library** offers a great opportunity to discuss the production and circulation of Greek manuscripts in Constantinople in the second half of the fifteenth century. Its very proposal and target audience give authors the chance of communicating their thoughts on this topic to a wider readership."*

José Maksimczuk

Greek Manuscripts in the Ottoman Empire

Athens, Εθνική Βιβλιοθήκη της Ελλάδος, 1067

A Philosophical Manuscript from Constantinople around 1460s

After the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans in 1453, a large community of Greek speaking people remained in the city. That group ensured the circulation of Greek texts in the conquered metropolis. Scholars and learned men, such as Matthaios Kamariotes and Demetrios Angelos, just to name two among many others, copied Greek texts for their own use or that of their commissioners. Beyond the private sphere, the Greek intellectuals, who were part of Mehmed II's Constantinopolitan court, also needed Greek books. A quota of them were produced in the scriptorium established by the Sultan himself, which functioned in the city at least since the early 1460s up to the late 1470s, gathering numerous proficient Greek calligraphers. The production and circulation of Greek manuscripts were vital not only for the preservation of knowledge but, equally important, of the cultural identity of the Byzantines who stayed in the city during the first decades of the Ottoman rule.[1]

The corpus of surviving Greek manuscripts seemingly or surely produced in Constantinople short after 1453 reflects the various interests of their target readership. They transmit literary, scientific, philosophical, historical, geographical, theological and political works composed between the Archaic period in Greek history up to the Byzantine time. In this chapter, one Greek manuscript produced in Constantinople during the Ottoman rule will be discussed in detail.

Athens, Εθνική Βιβλιοθήκη της Ελλάδος, 1067 is a paper manuscript of 314 folios with a size of 29 x 20 cm. It transmits a collection of treatises known as the Organon, arguably the most influential corpus of texts on logic and scientific reasoning ever written. The collection opens with the *Isagoge* (fols 1r-13v), written by the Neoplatonist philosopher Porphyry of Tyre in the third century of our era; six treatises by Aristotle follow: *Categories* (fols 14r-36v), *De interpretatione* (fols 37r-50r), *First Analytics* (fols 50v-129r), *Second Analytics* (fols 129v-178r), *Topics* (fols 178v-281v), and *Sophistical Refutations* (fols 281v-314v). In EBE 1067, the text of the Organon is accompanied by a set of exegetical notes written in the margins and between the lines of the folios, mostly with red ink. Titles and subtitles are also written in red (Figure 1). The watermarks in the paper suggest a dating around the 1460s.[2]

EBE 1067 was written by one single scribe, whom I identified as the philosopher Georgios Amiroutzes, formerly dubbed Anonymus 4b Harlfinger. The table below Figure 1 shows a few but telling coincidences in the script of the scribe of EBE 1067 and that of Amiroutzes' as identified in the codex Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, grec 1289:[3]

1 For overviews of the production and circulation of Greek manuscripts in Constantinople after 1453, see, inter alia, Raby 1983; Orlandi 2019; Cassin and Cronier 2018; Budak 2024.

2 The most complete description of EBE 1067 is found in Moraux et al. 1976, 8-9 (Diether R. Reinsch).

3 For the nickname Anonymus 4b Harlfinger, see Harlfinger 1971, 418. The scribe was identified as Georgios Amiroutzes in Orlandi 2019 (with numerous further identifications of manuscripts written by him). The hand of Amiroutzes in EBE 1067 was identified by me in Maksimczuk and Orlandi 2025. For my table, I benefited from the peculiar traces in the script of Amiroutzes already isolated in Orlandi 2019. The script of Amiroutzes in Par. gr. 1289 was identified in Orlandi 2019. Further identifications of manuscripts written by Amiroutzes are in Budak 2024 and Maksimczuk and Orlandi 2025.



Figure 1: Athens, EBE, 1067, fol. 1r.
© National Library of Greece



Amiroutzes is also responsible for the rubricae in the manuscript and most of the exegetical notes that comment on the complex core text, which are especially numerous on the folios containing the *Isagoge*, *Categories*, and *De interpretatione*. A second hand contemporary to Amiroutzes is detected in EBE 1067, fol. 1r. In the bottom margin of that folio, a scribe whom I identified as Georgios Scholarios – Patriarch Gennadios II (ca. 1400 – ca. 1472; in office as Patriarch between 1454 and 1456), wrote a diagram on the five terms discussed in Porphyry's *Isagoge*: genus (γένος), species (εἶδος), difference (διαφορά), property (ἴδιον), and accident (συμβεβηκός) (Figure 2).[4] The identity of this second hand can be established on palaeographic bases. The following table offers a comparison of Scholarios' script in Par. gr. 1289 and that of the second hand in EBE 1067:[5]



4 I identified Scholarios' hand in Maksimczuk and Orlandi 2025. For Scholarios' biography see Tinnefeld 2002 and Blanchet 2008.

5 The script of Scholarios in Par. gr. 1289 was identified in RGK II.

The palaeographic evidence can be complemented with content-related information. Remarkably, the content of the diagram written by Scholarios on EBE 1067, fol. 1r coincides with a passage of the long commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge* authored by Georgios Scholarios himself in the mid-1430s.[6] Here, I offer a transcription of the diagram, in which I tried to reproduce its visual organization as written in EBE 1067. Some sections are not legible anymore, due to material damage in the lower outer margin of the folio.

διότι τὸ κατηγορούμεμον

ἢ ἐν τῷ τί ἐστι

ἢ ἐν ὁποῖον τί ἐστι

ἢ κατὰ διαφερόντων τῷ εἴδει, καὶ καλεῖται, γένος

ἢ κατὰ διαφερόντων τῷ ἀριθμῷ καὶ καλεῖται εἶδος

ἢ ἐν τῷ ὁποῖον τί ἐστι κατ᾽ οὐσίαν· καὶ ἐστίν ἡ διαφορά

ἢ ἐν τῷ ὁποῖον τι ἐστιν, ἐπουσιωδῶς κατὰ συμβεβηκός

ἢ ἀντιστρέφον καὶ ἐξισάζον καὶ καλεῖται ἴδιον

ἢ ... ἐν πλείοσι ... συμβεβηκός

Table 1: Transcription of the diagram written by Georgios Scholarion on EBE 1067, fol. 1r.

Now, compare the content of the diagram with the text of Scholarios' commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, as it was published by Jugie et al. 1936, 48, 32 – 49, 1:

Πᾶν τὸ κατηγορούμενον ἢ ἐν τῷ τί ἐστι κατηγορεῖται, ἢ ἐν τῷ ὁποῖον τί ἐστιν· εἰ ἐν τῷ τί ἐστιν, ἢ κατὰ πλειόνων καὶ διαφερόντων τῷ ἀριθμῷ, καὶ οὕτως ἐστὶ τὸ εἶδος· ἢ κατὰ διαφερόντων τῷ εἴδει, καὶ οὕτως ἐστὶ τὸ γένος. Εἰ δὲ ἐν τῷ ὁποῖον τί ἐστιν, ἢ ἐν τῷ ὁποῖον κατ᾽ οὐσίαν, ἢ ἐν τῷ ὁποῖον κατὰ συμβεβηκός. Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐν τῷ ὁποῖον τί ἐστι κατ᾽ οὐσίαν, ἐστὶν ἡ διαφορά.

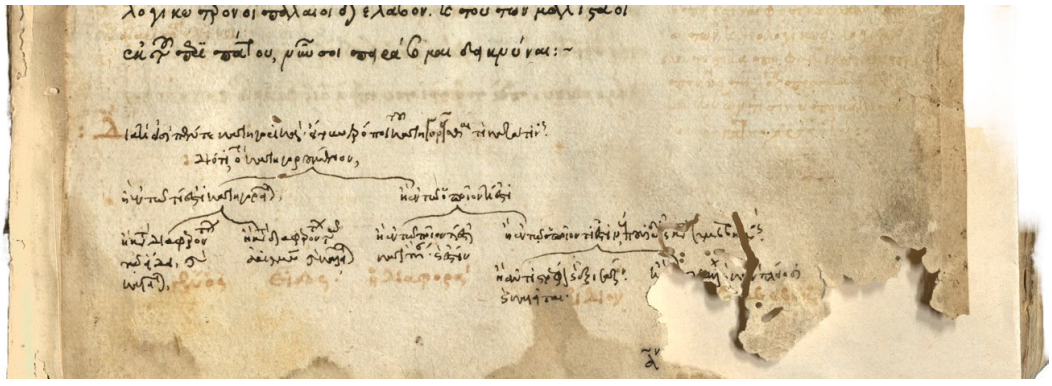


Figure 2: Athens, EBE, 1067, fol. 1r (detail: lower margin).
Diagram written by Georgios Scholarios, © National Library of Greece.

6 Edition in Jugie et al. 1936, 7-113.

Thus, it becomes apparent that Scholarios used his own commentary as the source for the diagram he wrote on EBE 1067, fol. 1r. Crucial to understand the way in which EBE 1067 was produced is the observation that the last words in each of the five bottom branches of the diagram (in red ink) were not written by Scholarios, but by Amiroutzes (cf. Figure 2), most probably while adding the rubricae and the exegetical notes in the margins and between the lines of the core text. Accordingly, the conclusion that imposes itself is that Amiroutzes and Scholarios cooperated in the production of EBE 1067. That these two men wrote a manuscript in tandem should not be surprising. They were included among the close Greek advisors of Sultan Mehmed II in the mid-1460s: Amiroutzes was reportedly the Sultan's tutor on Greek philosophy, while Scholarios was his main reference regarding Orthodox Christian theology (and perhaps also one of his translators for Latin texts into Greek).[7] Furthermore, both cooperated in at least three other manuscripts: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, grec 1289, 1292, and 1294. These codices contain theological treatises composed by Byzantine theologians from the fifteenth century, especially Georgios Scholarios (Figure 3).[8]

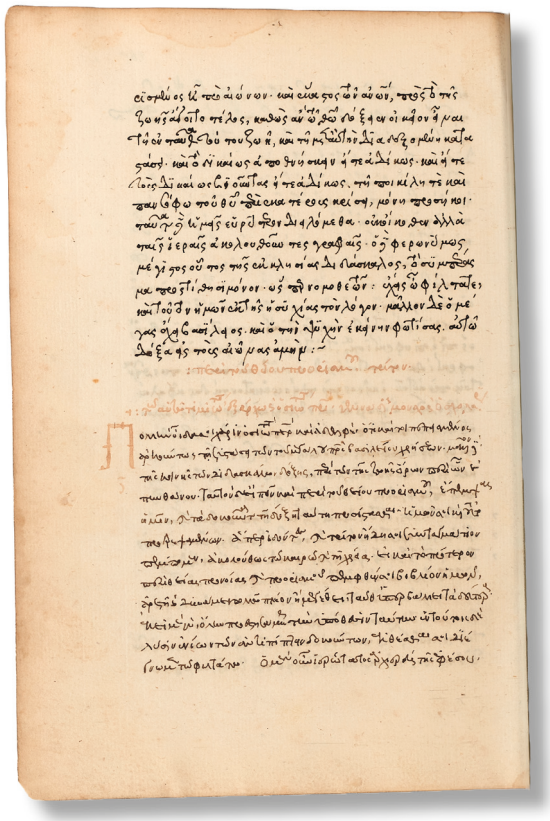


Figure 3: Paris, Bibliotheque nationale de France, grec 1289, fol. 180v. Lines 1-13, written by Georgios Amiroutzes; lines 14-27, written by Georgios Scholarios, © BnF.

7 The connection between Amiroutzes and Scholarios might date back to the late 1430s when both took part in the Council of Ferrara-Firenze. For Amiroutzes and Scholarios in Mehmed II's court in the mid-1460s, see below.

8 Identification of Scholarios' hand in RGK II; identification of Amiroutzes' hand in Orlandi 2019.

As pointed out, the margins of the folios containing *Isagoge*, *Categories*, and *De interpretatione* host numerous short texts. Most of them are written in red ink and function as exegetical notes shedding light on the complex core content, i.e. the text of the Organon. Core content and exegetical paracontent are linked through symbols. A given symbol is found at the beginning of a note and again above the pericope of the core text the note in question explains. In terms of their contents, the exegetical notes in the margins of the folios of EBE 1067 quote from late antique commentaries on the Organon. I offer here the complete list of the notes commenting on the text of Porphyry's *Isagoge*, while detailing the part of the core text they discuss, their incipit, and, whenever possible, the ultimate source.

fol. 1r, on Isag., p. 1, 1 (παρὰ Ἀριστοτέλει): ὁ γὰρ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν ταῖς Κατηγορίαις…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 30, 10 – 31, 2

fol. 1r, on Isag., p. 1, 5 (τῶν ὁρισμῶν): … γὰρ ἐκ γένους καὶ διαφορᾶς…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 36, 11-13

fol. 1r, on Isag., p. 1, 6 (ἀποδείξεως): τὰς γὰρ ἀποδείξεις ποιοῦμεν…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 36, 14-15

fol. 1r, on Isag., p. 1, 7 (ὥσπερ): illeg (ink faded in my digital reproduction)

fol. 1r, on Isag., p.1, 8 (Τῶν μὲν βαθυτέρων): ἀπηλλάχθαι διὰ τούτου…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 38, 21

fol. 1r, on Isag., p. 1, 12 (χωριστὰ): ἤγουν εἴτε ἀσώματα ὄντα…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 42, 19-20

fol. 1r, on Isag., p. 1, 12 (τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς): ἢ ἀχώριστα ὡς τὰ ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς.
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 42, 20

fol. 1r, on Isag., p. 1, 14 (λογικώτερον): ἐπεὶ ἔστι καὶ φυσικῶς…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 45, 8 ff.[9]

fol. 2r, on Isag., p. 2, 18 (τὸ τοῦτο): τὸ οὗτος καὶ τὸ τοῦτο…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 63, 12-14

fol. 2r, on Isag., p. 2, 27 (τῷ ἀριθμῷ): τοῖς ἐν ἑκάστῳ…

fol. 2v, on Isag., p. 3, 20 (τῆς ἐννοίας): τουτέστι τοῦ ἐννοηματικοῦ γένους…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 69, 5-9

fol. 4r, on Isag., p. 5, 17 (Ἀφορίζονται): ἀντὶ τοῦ ὑπογράφουσι…

fol. 4v, on Isag., p. 6, 6 (κείσθω): ὑποκείσθω φησὶν νῦν ἀρχὰς εἶναι…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 84, 2

fol. 4v, on Isag., p. 6, 24 (Ἀποδεδομένου): ἐνταῦθα βούλεται προθεῖναι…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 88, 5-6

fol. 5r, on Isag., p. 7, 8 (καθ᾽ ὧν): ἕτερον θεώρημα τοῦτο…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 89, 3-4

fol. 5v, on Isag., p. 8, 7 (Περὶ διαφορᾶς): διαφορὰ ἐστὶ ἑτερότης…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 92, 3

9 In the case of this note, the ink has faded and it is not easy to read.

fol. 6r, on Isag., p. 8, 16-17 (εἰδοποιῷ διαφορᾷ): Τουτέστι συμπληρωτικῇ…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 94, 5-8
fol. 6v, on Isag., p. 10, 1 (πάλιν): οὐκ ἄλλαι οὖσαι καὶ ἄλλαι· ἀλλ᾽ αἱ αὐταὶ …
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 98, 22 - 99, 2
fol. 7r, no symbol in core text: Τὸ μάλιστα ὅτι…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 100, 22 - 101, 4
fol. 7r, on Isag., p. 11, 4 (ἀξιοῦσι): ἐπειδὴ ὁ Πορφύριος Πλατονικὸς ὢν…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 106, 4-7
fol. 7r, on Isag., p. 11, 5 (καὶ οὕτως): ἀξίωμα γὰρ τὸ μὴ γίνεσθαί τι ἐκ μηδαμῇ μηδαμῶς ὄντος
John Philoponus, In Gen. et Corr., p. 44, 4
fol. 7v, on Isag., p. 11, 14 (ἐξ ὕλης): οὐκ κυρίως δέ…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 106, 20-21
fol. 7v, on Isag., p. 11, 15 (ὁ κοινὸς): κοινὸς ὁ καθ᾽ ἕκαστα εἰδικὸς…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 107, 23
fol. 7v, no symbol in core text: ὥσπερ κατ᾽ οὐσίαν οὐδὲν διαφέρουσιν…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 107, 12-21
fol. 7v, on Isag., p. 12, 3 (καὶ ὃ τοῦ τί ἦν εἶναι): ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰς τὸν ὁρισμὸν…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 108, 9-14
fol. 7v, on Isag., p. 12, 4 (διαφορὰ ἀνθρώπου): οὐ γὰρ κατὰ τὸ ναυτίλ<λ>εσθαι ὁ ἄνρθωπος…
Ammonius, In Isag., p. 108, 18-19
fol. 8v, on Isag., p. 13, 20 (ἀλλὰ προηγουμένως): καὶ τὰ γένη καὶ αἱ διαφοραὶ…

The table above is relevant for different obvious reasons. Firstly, it clearly shows that the commentary on *Isagoge* composed by Ammonius Hermiae was the exegetical source preferred by Amiroutzes. Ammonius, active in the fifth and sixth centuries of our era, was a Neoplatonist philosopher who wrote numerous commentaries on Aristotelian treatises. In EBE 1067, out of twenty-seven notes commenting on the text of *Isagoge*, twenty-two quote from Ammonius' exegetical work.[10] Secondly, even a cursory glance at the table shows that most of the notes are written on fols 1 and 7, which transmit the introduction to the *Isagoge* and the beginning of the chapter on the difference (διαφορά), respectively. Was this distribution accidentally produced, or does it rather reflect the sections of the *Isagoge* in which Amiroutzes was most interested? Lastly, it is interesting to notice that one marginal note commenting on *Isagoge*, p. 11, 5 appears to ultimately proceed from John Philoponus' commentary on Aristotle's biological treatise *De corruptione et generatione*, in which Aristotle explores the causes how items come into being. John Philoponus was a Christian philosopher and scholar, pupil of Ammonius Hermiae, born in Alexandria in the late fifth century. The use of his commentary on the *De generatione et corruptione* is entirely pertinent for the context: at *Isagoge*, p. 11, 5-6 Porphyry advances the view that 'nothing comes to be out of what is not'[11] (οὔτε ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων τι γίνεται).

10 An edition of this treatise is in Busse 1891.

11 Translation from Barnes 2003.

Next to the exegetical notes, a different type of text is found in the margins of EBE 1067. They are more or less short pieces of core text that were initially forgotten by Amiroutzes and later recovered by the scribe himself or subsequent users that collated the manuscript. Contrary to the case of the exegetical notes, these texts were written in black ink. The exact place in the core text where they should have been positioned is indicated through symbols. In order to show that the marginal text is not paracontent but part of the core content, the keyword κείμενον ('text'), which must be understood as opposite to ἐξήγησις ('commentary'), was added in red ink or black ink. Figure 4 shows the case of an omission in the middle of Aristotle's *De interpretatione* ch. 6, later recovered in the lower margin of the folio by Georgios Amiroutzes.

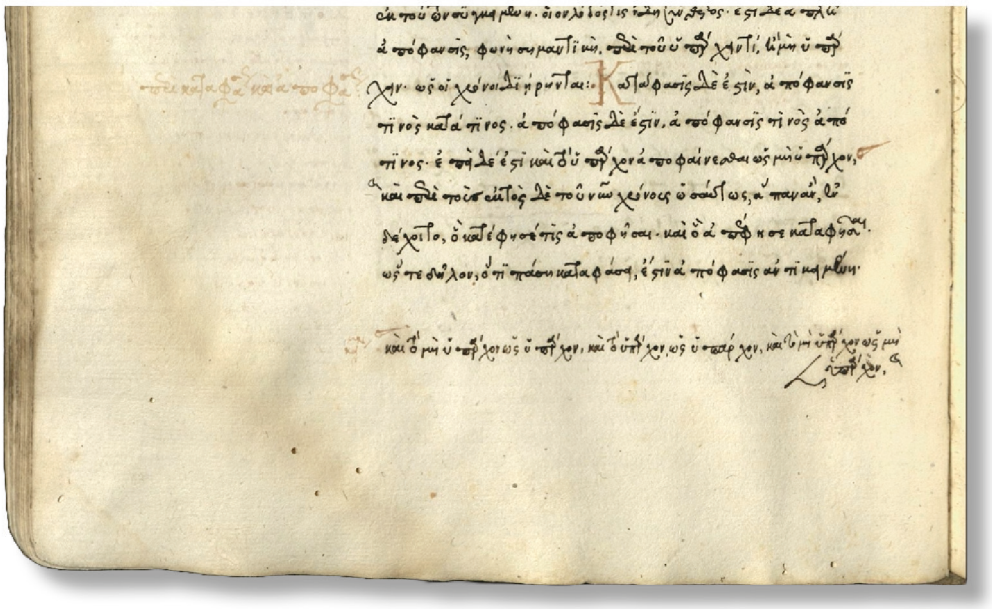


Figure 4: Athens, EBE, 1067, fol. 38v (detail).
The pericope καὶ τὸ μὴ ὑπάρχον … ὡς μὴ ὑπάρχον was initially omitted by Amiroutzes in the core text and later supplied by himself in the lower margin, © National Library of Greece

In addition to marginal notes, Amiroutzes also wrote shorter notes between the lines of the core text. He wrote most of them in red ink to facilitate distinguishing them from the core text. The main function of the interlinear notes is to provide clarification for a given term or group of terms used in the core text. Let us exemplify this with *Categories* 1 a 20, where the core text reads: Τῶν ὄντων τὰ μὲν καθ' ὑποκειμένου τινὸς λέγεται (trsl.: Among the things that exist, some are said of one subject). Amiroutzes wrote two interlinear notes to clarify to which entities τὰ μὲν ('some') refer and in which sense Aristotle uses the term λέγεται ('are said') in the context, respectively. The note explaining τὰ μὲν reads ἤγουν ἡ καθόλου οὐσία (trsl.: Namely, the universal substance); the one explaining λέγεται reads ἀντὶ τοῦ κατηγορεῖται (trsl.: It is used instead of 'is imputed').

Less often, the interlinear notes offer a variant reading compared to the one copied in the text of EBE 1067. For instance, at *Categories* 1 a 10-11, Amiroutzes wrote in the core text of EBE 1067 the following: ἐὰν γὰρ ἀποδιδῶ τίς τὸν ἑκάστου λόγον κτλ. (trsl.: If some provides the explanation of each etc.). Later he wrote, in red ink, τέρου above the ending of the word ἑκάστου, indicating that a possible, alternative reading would be ἑκατέρου (each of the two).

Let us come back to the two scribes who cooperated in the production of EBE 1067 in the 1460s: What does their cooperation mean for the provenance of the manuscript? Although many details of his life are still unclear, Georgios Amiroutzes is not a completely unknown figure and pieces of biographical information on him can be used to illuminate the history of EBE 1067. Known as 'the philosopher', Amiroutzes served as μέγας λογοθέτης and πρωτοβεστιάριος in the court of the Empire of Trebizond where he was born in the early fifteenth century. Amazed by his erudition, Mehmed II invited Amiroutzes to join his court in Constantinople in the early 1460s, after the conquest of Trebizond by the Ottomans in 1461. Amiroutzes enjoyed Mehmed II's favour due to his knowledge of ancient Greek philosophy and maybe his family connections. Be that as it may, Amiroutzes quickly became a man of confidence for Mehmed II and most probably his tutor for Greek philosophy. Amiroutzes' stay at the court of Mehmed II in Constantinople in the 1460s is testified by reliable witnesses: the historian Michael Kritoboulos and the Greek scholar and emigree Georgios Trapezountios. Recently, Luigi Orlandi also proved that Amiroutzes was one of the several scribes working at the Greek scriptorium established by Mehmed II in Constantinople.[12] The biography of the other scribe who produced EBE 1067, Georgios Scholarios, is much better known. For the period of interest, the 1460s, Scholarios appears to have resided at three different places: the Monastery of Vatopedi, on Mount Athos, in the early 1460s; Constantinople in 1462-1463 and again in 1464-1466/67; the Monastery of John Prodromos, on Mount Menecee from 1466/67 onwards. For the period he spent in Constantinople he must have been 'invited' by Mehmed II to fulfil some function, maybe that of translator of Latin texts into Greek.[13] Thus, it is tempting to assign the production of EBE 1067 to a time between 1462 and 1467, when both Amiroutzes and Scholarios were in Constantinople as part of Mehmed II's court or entourage.

Palaeographical and philological study of other Organon manuscripts supply further evidence for the Constantinopolitan origin of EBE 1067. Among the more than 150 surviving Greek manuscripts of the logical treatises, I identified the script of Georgios Amiroutzes in one codex today housed at the National Library of France: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Coislin 327. This Coislinianus transmits the Organon in its entirety: *Isagoge* (fols 1r-13v), *Categories* (fols 14r-35r), *De interpretatione* (fols 36v-47r), *First Analytics* (fols 47v-131v), *Second Analytics* (fols 132r-166r), *Topics* (fols 166r-250v), *Sophistical Refutations* (fols 251r-275r). Coisl. 327 was written by a group of anonymous scribes, who can be datable, on palaeographic bases, to the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth centuries.[14] This Coislin manuscript had an adventurous life. It passed through several scholarly hands in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and is a primary example of a multilayered written artefact, namely, a manuscript whose material and content evolved over centuries due to changes introduced by different users.[15] As mentioned, one of the identified annotators of Coisl. 327 was Georgios Amiroutzes, who wrote some marginal notes and apparently rewrote the text of the Organon at some places where the original ink had faded (Figure 5). But Amiroutzes is not the only individual who had both EBE 1067 and Coisl. 327 in their hands. As Brigitte Mondrain showed, Georgios Scholarios also left written traces of his use of Coisl. 327 (Figure 6).[16] Important to know the whereabouts of Coisl. 327 during the early stages of its biography is the identification of further scribes who wrote down notes in this written artefact. Sophia Kotzabassi and

12 For Amiroutzes' biography, see, among other sources, Janssens and Van Deun 2004; Monfassani 2011, esp. 5–12; Orlandi 2019; Kukjalko 2020, esp. 286–298; Budak 2024, esp. 374-379.

13 Blanchet 2008, 210–223.

14 Mondrain 2000, 21.

15 For the concept of multilayered written artefact, see Maksimczuk et al. 2024.

16 Maksimczuk and Orlandi 2025 (identification of Amiroutzes' hand) and Mondrain 2000, 25 (identification of Scholarios' script).

Brigitte Mondrain found the hand of the Monk Malachias, formerly known as *Anonymus Aristotelicus*, who collated long portions of the core text and added numerous notes commenting on it throughout the codex.[17] Mondrain also discovered the script of the polymath and teacher Neophytos Prodromenos, who in a colophon presented himself as the hieromonk Neophytos.[18] These two intellectuals, Malachias and Neophytos, were active in Constantinople in the fourteenth century.

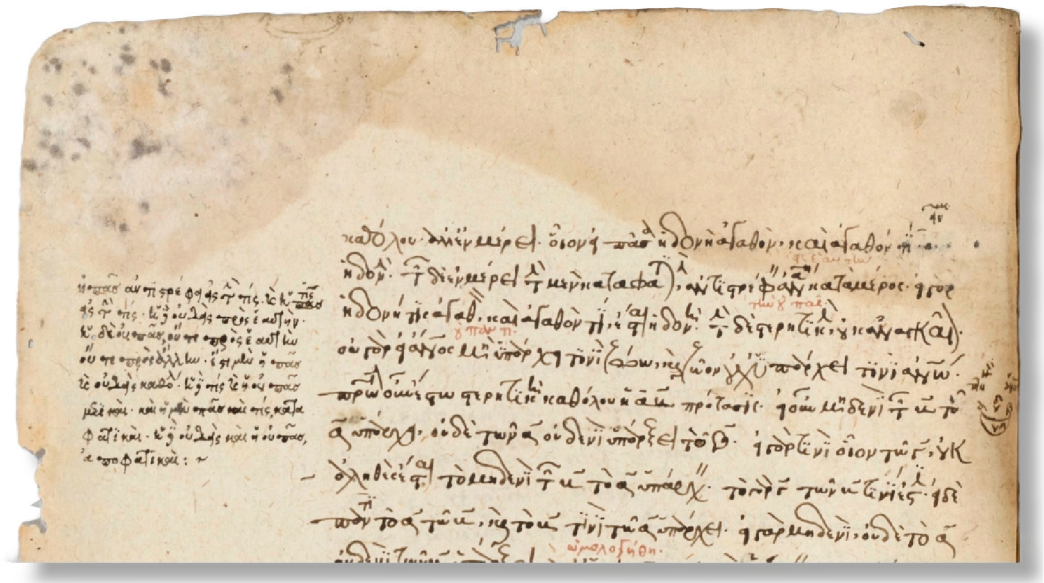


Figure 5: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Coisl. 327, fol. 48v (detail). Marginal note written by Georgios Amiroutzes, © BnF.

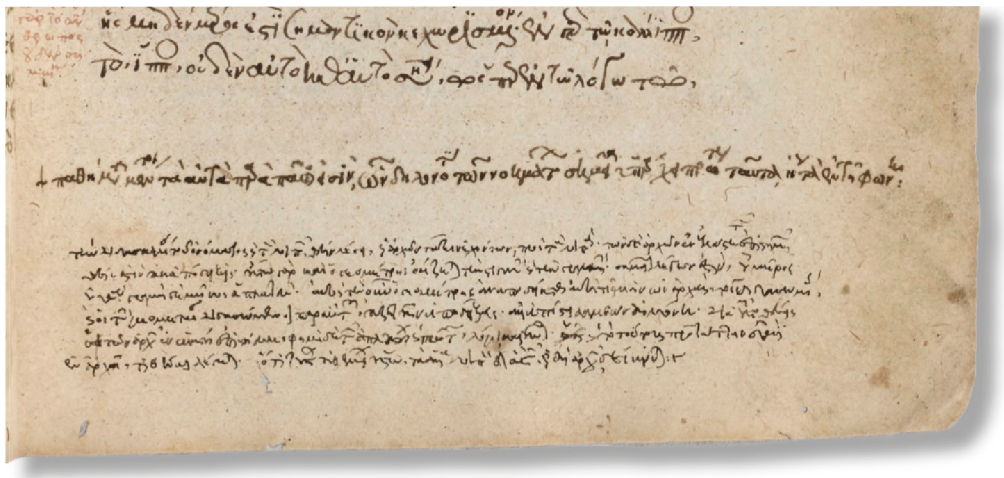


Figure 6: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Coisl. 327, fol. 36r (detail). Note in the lowest margin of the folio, written by Georgios Scholarios, © BnF.

17 Kotzabassi 1999, 13 n. 50; Mondrain 2000, 21. For the identity of the scribe, see Mondrain 2005, 23 and Martínez Manzano 2019.

18 Mondrain 2000, 25.

I have collated long portions of Porphyry's *Isagoge* and Aristotle's *First Analytics* in around 140 Greek manuscripts. The result of my text study indicates that EBE 1067 is a copy of Coisl. 327: the former reproduces all the important innovations and errors in the latter while adding some of its own. Even more tellingly, EBE 1067 offers in a visually clean text parts of the several layers of annotations and corrections that different individuals wrote in Coisl. 327 during decades.

The combination of the multiple layers of Coisl. 327 in EBE 1067 can be better assessed through the study of the paracontent in both manuscripts. As pointed out, Coisl. 327 offers several strata of annotations added by different users in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It was the multilayered paracontent of Coisl. 327 that served as the model for the exegetical interlinear and marginal notes in EBE 1067. Let us illustrate this with the exegetical notes on EBE 1067, fol. 2r (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Athens, EBE, 1067, fol. 2r. Core and paracontent written by Georgios Amiroutzes around 1460s, ©National Library of Greece.

There, Amiroutzes wrote five exegetical texts which I will assign for the sake of the discussion letters a-e.

Outer margin of fol. 2r:

a. τὸ οὗτος καὶ τὸ τοῦτο καλῶς οἱ φιλόσοφοι κατὰ τῶν μερικῶν ἤγαγον· ταῦτα γὰρ αἰθήσει ὑποπίπτουσι.
b. τοῖς ἐν ἑκάστῳ αὐτῶν συμβεβηκόσιν· ἤγουν λευκότητι...[19]

Between the lines of the core text:

c. ἤγουν τὰ μερικά· ὡς μὴ τεμνόμενα μήτε εἰς ὁμοειδῆ μήτε εἰς ἀνομοειδῆ
d. ἤγουν τῇ συνδρομῇ τῶν συμβεβηκότων
e. τῇ φύσει
f. τὸ γελαστικὸν κατὰ μόνου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων, ἤγουν τῶν ἀτόμων

Five out of the six commenting notes are virtually identically found on Coisl. 327, fol. 1r. With an essential difference: in the Coislin manuscript they were written at different moments by different individuals. An anonymous, fourteenth-century annotator wrote the parallels of notes b-d and f whereas Malachias wrote that of note a (Figure 8). The fact that all of them were copied in one-go by Georgios Amiroutzes in EBE 1067 is an unequivocal sign that he had Coisl. 327 in front of his eyes. Interestingly, note e, which is not found anymore on Coisl. 327, fol. 1r was most probably transmitted in the manuscript but it is illegible now due to physical damage (cf. line six from the bottom, above διαφέρουσι in the core text).

Connecting the codex EBE 1067 and the biographies of its producers, Georgios Amiroutzes and Georgios Scholarios, strongly suggests that the manuscript was written in Constantinople, soon after the Ottoman conquest, sometime between 1462 and 1466/67. The study of EBE 1067 and the identification of its direct model Coisl. 327 is important not only to better assess the production of Greek philosophical manuscripts in Constantinople during the early years of the Ottoman rule but also to refine our understanding of the relationship between Amiroutzes and Scholarios. So far, we knew that both men cooperated in transcribing theological treatises written by Scholarios in manuscripts preserved in the National Library of France (Par. gr. 1289, 1292, and 1294). The context in which EBE 1067 was created appears to be different. EBE 1067 is a product of Amiroutzes and Scholarios' engagement in the study and discussion of Aristotelian philosophy.

19 The last word I cannot read (the ink faded).



Figure 8: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Coisl. 327, fol. 1r. Core text copied by an anonymous scribe in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth centuries; notes in black ink written by an anonymous reader in the fourteenth century; note in red ink written by Malachias in the second half of the fourteenth century, © Bnf.

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Irina Wandrey works as head of the research library at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC) at the University of Hamburg. Since 2011 she has built up a special collection focussing on manuscript studies in Asia, Africa and Europe. After studying German Literature and Jewish Studies in Berlin and Jerusalem, she wrote her doctoral thesis on medieval Jewish magical literature. Since then she has participated in different research projects, on manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah and on the edition of the Samaritan Torah, and taught Jewish Studies and Hebrew at the Freie Universität Berlin, in the Jewish Community Berlin and also at the University of Hamburg. Her research focusses on Hebrew manuscripts. In 2014 she organized an exhibition showing a choice of beautiful and typical examples of Jewish manuscript cultures from the important and extensive collection of Hebrew manuscripts at the State and University Library in Hamburg (exhibition catalogue: *Tora – Talmud –Siddur*, ed. by Irina Wandrey, Hamburg, 2014 [= *manuscript cultures* 6], https://fiona.uni-hamburg.de/21507602/manuscript-cultures-06.pdf). Also, Dr. Wandrey was managing editor of CSMC's research journal *manuscript cultures* until last year and continues with this task in the current editorial team (https://journals.sub.uni-hamburg.de/hup4/mc/index).

"The invitation by Tarık Tüten to participate in this marvellous book project about the Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Library on Rhodes and the world in which it was and is situated in today surprised and enchanted me, and I am grateful to be able to participate with my modest contribution. Being a librarian myself, I think the meaning of a library cannot be overestimated as each true library strives to include the world, to be comprehensive and – to borrow a term reinterpreted by Isaac Luria for his system of Kabbalah (1534–1572, Zefat, Galilee, Ottoman Empire) – to bring forward with its very own means, intentionally or unintentionally, the tiqqun of the world. That means to salvage the divine sparks of light scattered and entrapped in our physical world and to repair the primordial cosmic catastrophe and enable "the restoration of harmony" (see Sholem, 1946, 244–286; cf. Fig. 10)."

Irina Wandrey

Jewish Manuscript Cultures on Rhodes and in the Ottoman Empire

There were Jewish communities in all the regions that belonged to the Ottoman Empire from the 15th to the early 20th century. These groups had a long history dating back hundreds or even thousands of years: for example, to antiquity in Jerusalem, Damascus and Aleppo; to the Hellenistic and Roman eras in Constantinople/Istanbul and Adrianople/Edirne, Rhodes, Thessaloniki, Philippopolis/Plovdiv and Sofia; numerous other oriental Arabic-speaking communities, both rabbinical and Karaite, developed in the Levant, Mesopotamia and Egypt from the early Middle Ages.[1]

The Greek-speaking Jews, the Romaniots (from Ῥωμανία, designation for the Eastern Roman Empire), lived in Greece, the Balkans, and in Asia Minor under Eastern Roman and Byzantine rule. As an example of the close integration of the Jewish communities into Hellenistic culture, I would like to present a votive inscription from the late antique synagogue of Andriake, Lykia (today Demre, Turkey), as it is often found in ancient synagogues in the Mediterranean (Figure 1). This inscription is engraved on two marble panels which were probably placed next to each other. It is written in Greek and all names mentioned in it are Greek as well. Only the last single letter, a *shin*, is Hebrew and is an abbreviation of the Hebrew word *shalom*. The votive dedication ends with the formula:

ΕΥΛΟΓΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΪΡΗΝΗ ΠΑΝΤΙ ΤΩ ΙΣΡΑΗΛ ΑΜΗΝ ש.

The whole text reads: "Offering of Makedonios, son of Romanos, and his (Makedonios') wife Prokle and their parents Romanos and Theodote. Blessing and peace onto all Israel. Amen! (corresponds to the last part of the Kaddish prayer) Shalom."[2]

Jewish settlement on Rhodes has been attested since the end of the Hellenistic period, first in a decree between the Roman Senate and the High Priest Simeon (142 BCE), later during the reign of Herod the Great (1st c. BCE) who visited Rhodes several times (mentioned by the historian Josephus Flavius in his *Bellum Iudaicum* and his *Antiquitates*). However, as far as I am aware there are no written artefacts from Jewish Rhodes in Antiquity. During the Middle Ages the Jewish community on Rhodes was attested, e.g. by the Jewish travellers Benjamin of Tudela (12th c.), Meshullam of Volterra (1481) and Obadiah of Bertinoro (1488).[3]

A few major events significantly altered the structure of the Jewish population in the former Byzantine and now Ottoman Empire during the 15th and 16th centuries. First, the resettlement of entire Jewish communities following the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks. All Romaniote communities in Asia Minor and numerous communities in Greece, Macedonia and Bulgaria as well as the large Karaite community of Adrianople/Edirne were resettled there (*sürgün*)

1 This contribution is a revised and enlarged version of my article from 2016. The research for it was funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) under Germany´s Excellence Strategy – EXC 2176 'Understanding Written Artefacts: Material, Interaction and Transmission in Manuscript Cultures', project no. 390893796. The research was conducted within the scope of the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC) at the University of Hamburg.

2 Cf. Çevik et al. 2010, 245ff.

3 Gafni and Kerem 2007; for the population and the distribution of the Jewish settlements in Byzantium in the Middle Ages see Starr 1949, 85ff.; for Benjamin of Tudela see also Bowman 1985, 336.



Figure 1: Antalya Museum, Turkey, acquisition number 2009/217. Marble panel from the antique Synagogue (5th c.) of Andriake (Demre, Turkey) with Jewish inscription in Greek and depiction of a *menorah* (candelabrum) and other paraphernalia that were originally required for the service in the Jerusalem temple and after its destruction included in the synagogue service. A second inscription found next to it and more damaged complements the first one. They can be interpreted as a votive dedication, as often found in ancient synagogues. Photography and © Dick Osseman; CC BY-SA 4.0.

in the first 20 years after the capture of Constantinople in 1453. There were also repeated forced resettlements later on.[4]

Secondly, at the end of the 15th century (1492–1498) the Jewish population of Spain and Portugal (*Sefardim*) was expelled: an estimated 12,000 Jewish families (approx. 60,000 people) were admitted to the Ottoman Empire in the following decades; the number of Jews in the entire Ottoman Empire as determined by the preserved tax records (*tapu* or *taḥrir defterleri*) from this time was around 150,000 at the end of the 16th century. The most important Jewish cities after the admission of the Spanish and Portuguese refugees became Istanbul, Izmir[5] and Salonika, Sarajevo and Sofia, but also Cairo, Alexandria and Rosetta, Safed and Tiberias, Damascus and Aleppo, for example. In the 17th century, around 10% of the population of Istanbul was Jewish (approximately 11,000 persons).[6]

4 Rozen 2010, 46f.
5 Barnai 2023.
6 Epstein 1980, 178ff.; Rozen 2010, 50ff.

Rhodes was a special case as the Byzantine rule lasted, with several interruptions, only until 1309, when the Knights Hospitallers of St. John took the island. Since 1522, the year of the conquest of Rhodes by the Ottoman Turks from the Knights Hospitallers, the Jewish population of Rhodes grew again, after their numbers had declined drastically in the previous two decades due to displacement.[7] On the one hand many expelled Sefardim from the Iberian Peninsula settled there now and on the other hand *c*. 150 Sefardic families from Salonika were resettled on Rhodes – hence the Spanish name for the Jewish Quarter of the town of Rhodes *La Judería*. This policy led to a large number of Jewish families on Rhodes, especially in the town of Rhodes, whose number was said by some to be at times even higher than that of the Turkish population.[8] A *Sefer Torah* (parchment Torah scroll for the synagogue service, containing the five books of Moses), which was written in the 15th century on the Iberian Peninsula, as the script reveals, can be understood as a handwritten symbol of the immigration of Sefardic Jews to Rhodes as it was brought to Rhodes with the Iberian refugees and used in the synagogue service for centuries. During the German occupation in 1943–1944, it was kept in safety by Turkish community leaders and remained on Rhodes until 1984 (Figure 2).[9]



Figure 2: Jerusalem, The National Library of Israel, Ms. Heb. 7404=24, first three columns. Sefarad (Iberian Peninsula), 15th century, parchment, Hebrew, Sefardic square script. Torah scroll for synagogue service, beginning of Genesis, the first book of Mose. © The National Library of Israel. "Ktiv" Project; public domain.

7 Angel 1978, 17ff.

8 Angel 1978, 21f.

9 The Torah Scroll is today in the National Library of Israel, Ms. Heb. 7404=24; see manuscript description in *Ktiv* https://www.nli.org.il/en/manuscripts/NNL_ALEPH990025600390205171/NLI#$FL177060246 (last visited 20 May 2025); cf. Hasson 2003; Rhodes Jewish Museum, "800 Year-Old Torah of Rhodes" https://rhodesjewishmuseum.org/history/the-800-year-old-torah/ (last visited on 20 May 2025).

Rhodes developed in the 16th century into an important Sefardic centre with a population speaking and writing Judaeo-Spanish, and the Romaniote population, now in the minority, gradually assimilated.[10] The significance and prosperity of the Jewish community on Rhodes can also be seen in the synagogue buildings erected, of which only the Kahal Shalom Synagogue from 1575 still exists today.[11]

The Ottoman Jewish communities were associated with different cultural developments which varied considerably in terms of liturgical and everyday language and in respect of religious and secular traditions. Likewise, the respective manuscript cultures also had their own idiosyncrasies with regard to the production of manuscripts, their script and visual organisation. What all groups had in common, however, was their association with the Bible and its interpretation, the liturgical and traditional literary canon as well as the Hebrew script and the Hebrew and Aramaic languages.

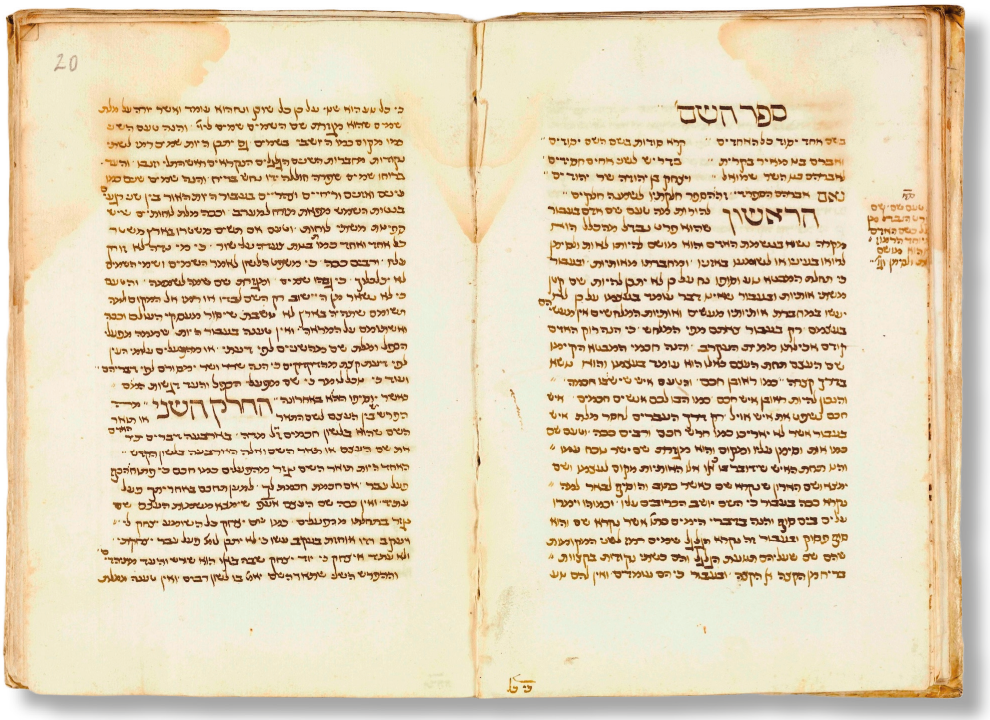


Figure 3: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Cod. Levy 113, fol. 19v. Ottoman Empire, 1466, paper, Byzantine cursive script. Multiple-text manuscript on mathematics and astronomy, opening of the *Sefer ha-Shem* ("Book of the Name [of God]") by Abraham Ibn Ezra (*c.*1089/1092 – *c.*1164/1167), Spanish Bible commentator, scientist, and philosopher. https://digitalisate.sub.uni-hamburg.de/recherche/detail?tx_dlf%5Bdouble%5D=0&tx_dlf%5Bid%5D=21373&tx_dlf%5Bpage%5D=1&tx_dlf%5Bpagegrid%5D=0&cHash=8717af5abe91cab70406a06678e5db4b. Public Domain Mark 1.0.

10 Angel 1978, 23f. Cf. Rozen 2010, 87ff.

11 Foundation for Jewish Heritage and the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (ed.), *Historic Synagogues of Europe*, "Kal Kadosh Shalom Synagogue in Rhodes", https://cja.huji.ac.il/mhs/browser.php?mode=set&id=20790 (last visited on 20 May 2025).

There are three different types of Hebrew writing: square script (predominantly used for Bible texts, headings and initial words), semi-cursive script and cursive script.[12] These three types were used in almost all Jewish book-production traditions. The specific palaeographical features of each geocultural tradition are clearly pronounced during the Middle Ages.[13] The Byzantine style of writing of the Greek-speaking Jews, or Romaniots, was influenced by the way in which Greek letters were written (Figure 3). The oriental Arabic-speaking Jews living in the Levant, Mesopotamia and Egypt, but also in territories which were only loosely under the control of the Ottoman Empire such as the Maghreb and Yemen, developed a characteristic oriental style (Figures 4 and 5) which in turn can be split into sub-groups. The disputed peripheral regions of the Empire such as Hungary, the Caucasus, Persia, Kurdistan (Figure 6) and Crimea were also home to long-established Jewish communities.[14]

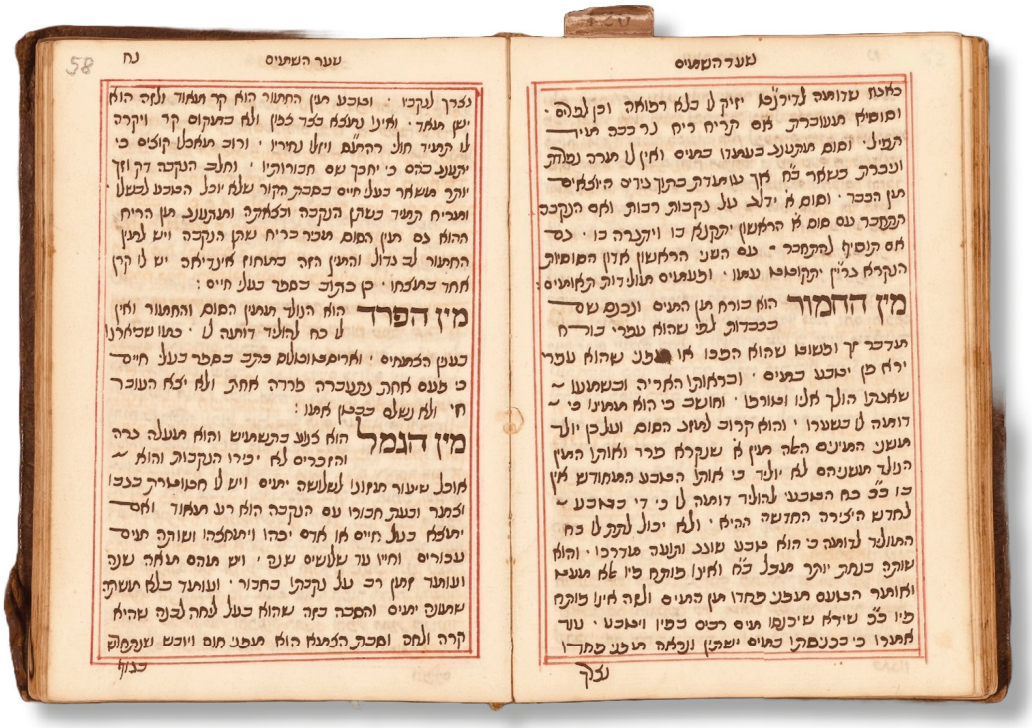


Figure 4: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Cod. Levy 120, fols. 57v/58r. Baghdad, 1828, paper, oriental semi-cursive script with the written space framed in red, and title and catchwords written outside the frame. Gershon ben Shlomo of Arles (13th c.), *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* ("The Gate of Heaven"), a popular encyclopaedia; here the sections on the ass, the mule and the camel. Public Domain Mark 1.0.

12 For the definition and comparison with classifications of Latin Medieval scripts as *textualis*, *hybrida* and *cursiva* see Beit-Arié 1993, 34.

13 Beit-Arié 1993, 25–78.

14 See Geller 2007, 523ff.



Figure 5: Manchester, UK, John Rylands Library, Genizah Collection, L 192r. Cairo, Ottoman Empire, early 19th c., Judaeo-Arabic, Hebrew cursive script. Commercial letter from Abraham ha-Levi to Francis Karo on the delivery of figs, salt and coal, among other things. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

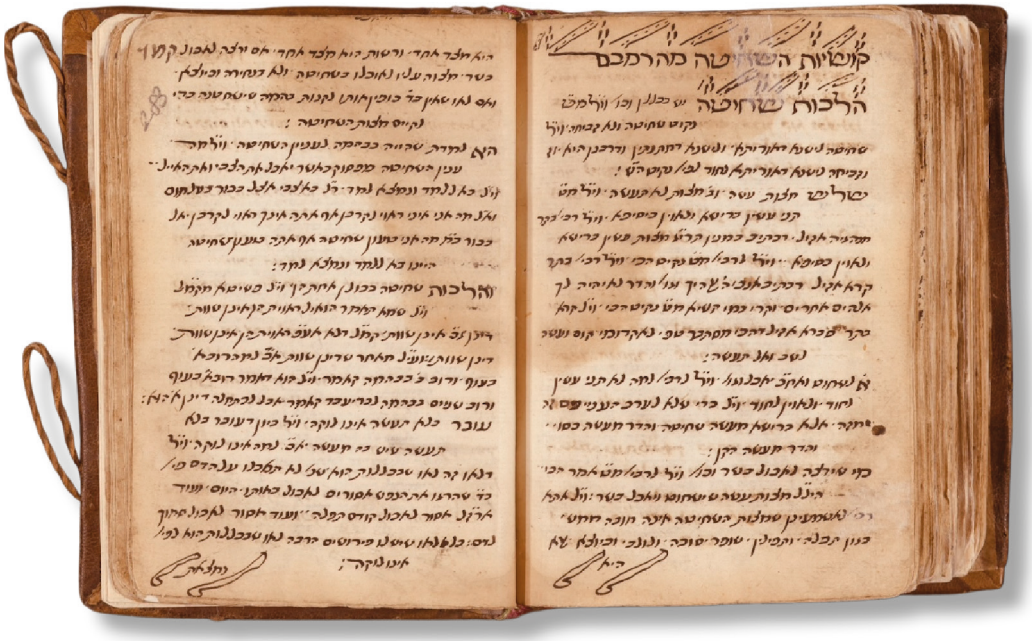


Figure 6: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Cod. Levy 148, fols. 282v/283r. Maragheh (Iranian Azerbaijan), 1657, paper, Judaeo-Persian/-Kurdish cursive script. Multiple-text manuscript containing legends, stories and *halakhah* (religious law). Title in square script and ornamented catchwords. Public Domain Mark 1.0.

The styles of writing and the methods of book production used by immigrants, be they Sefardim, Ashkenazim or Italians, were generally retained and thus also migrated in a sense. With time, however, styles changed and merged. Therefore, also the Byzantine style changed due to the Sefardic influence until it finally faded, but for some time a Sefardic-Byzantine style is discernible (cf. Figure 19 colophon).[15] The Sefardic Jews who settled throughout the Ottoman Empire retained their own script as well as the Judaeo-Spanish language (Ladino) (Figure 7), their liturgical traditions and other customs; they were modified through cultural assimilation, however, so that it is even possible to speak of an Ottoman style of calligraphy here (Figures 8 and 9).[16] The Sefardic and oriental writing styles which developed in regions with an Arabic speaking population, mostly under Muslim rule, have many similarities to Arabic calligraphy, it is even appropriate to describe this style as "Arabized" (cf. Figure 10).[17] The methods of book production and the codicological features of the local Hebrew manuscripts resembled strongly those of the Arabic or Ottoman books produced: the book format, the quire structure (usually quinions, i.e. five *bifolia* [double sheets], which when placed one inside the other result in 20 pages), the numbering of quires, the visual organisation of the page and the ruling, the oriental processing of parchment and the usage of glossy polished oriental paper (cf. Figure 8, which shows the reflection of the polished paper).[18]

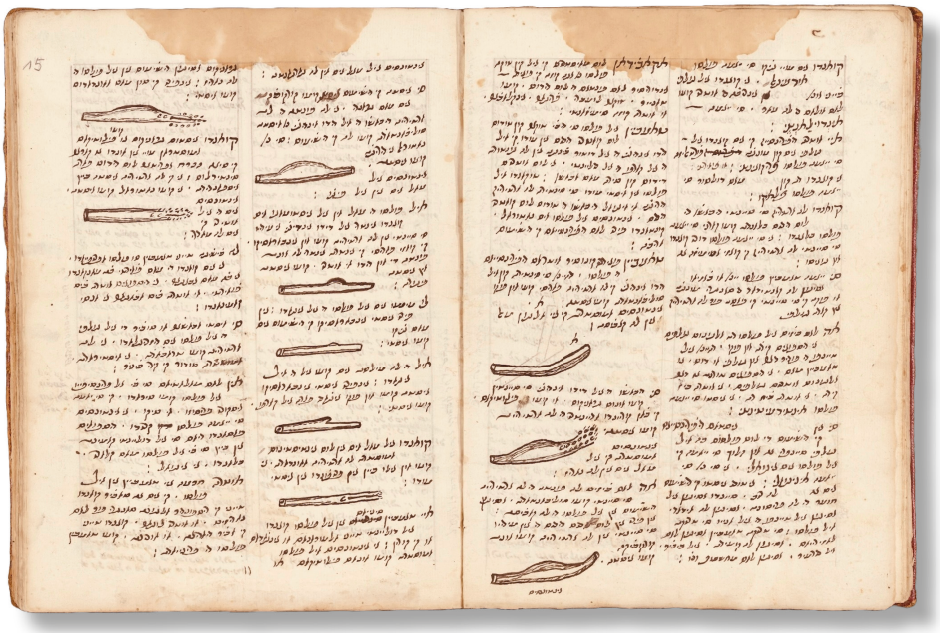


Figure 7: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Cod. Levy 130, part I, fols. 14v/15r. Jerusalem, 1840, paper, Judaeo-Spanish written in Hebrew script, oriental cursive script. Hayyim Yisraʾel Meʾir Mizrahi, *Sefer Tzitz Refuʾa* ("Book of the Crown of Medicine") with anatomical illustrations (here of blood vessels). Public Domain Mark 1.0.

15 "During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the [Byzantine] semi-cursive script took on variations, apparently due to the influence of the Sefardic script imported to the region by Sefardic immigrants." Beit Arié 2022, 84.

16 Beit-Arié 1993, 35.

17 Cf. Beit-Arié 1993, 56f.

18 Beit-Arié 2022,



Figure 8: Cincinnati, OH, USA, Hebrew Union College Library, Ms. 161, fol. 24r. Izmir, 17th–18th century, oriental polished paper, Hebrew and Judaeo-Spanish, different oriental and Sefardic scripts. Collection of *she'elot u-teshuvot* ("questions and answers", *responsa*, i.e. written *halakhic* [legal] decisions and rulings) of Turkish Rabbis, partly autographs. Shown here the beginning of a *responsum* by Yehoshu'a Shababo, written on top of the page: "answers by the Rav Perah Shoshan [Yehoshu'a Shababo], manuscripts which have not yet been printed". https://mss.huc.edu/portfolio/ms-161/ (last visited on 20 May 2025). © Hebrew Union College.

The monograms serving as signatures, which are often found at the end of a text, are a further example of how the aesthetic characteristics of neighbouring manuscript cultures were assimilated. They appear to emulate the Ottoman *tuğra*s (the royal monogram of the sultan above the text of a *ferman*) or the *pençe*s ('hand-binding') and Greek *monocondylia* (names or phrases written ornately in one continuous line without any spaces between the letters or words), which in turn were inspired by Arabic models (Figures 11–14).[19]

19 Sirat 2002, 228–229.



Figure 9: *Sefer ginat weradim, she'elot u-teshuvot u-fiske dinim mehudashim be-seder Arba'ah Turim* ("Book of the Rose Garden"). Constantinople (Kostandina) 1716–1717, printed by Yonah [ben] Ya'akov. Title page of the collection of *halakhic* decisions *onww* the influential *halakhic* work *Arba'ah Turim* ("Four Rows") written by Ya'akov bar Asher (1270–*c.*1340) by three authors, one of them Yehoshu'a Shababo. New York Public Library https://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433104979509 (last visited on 20 May 2025). Open access.



Figure 10: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Cod. Levy 94, fols. 193v/194r. Baghdad, 1679/80, Hebrew, oriental cursive script emulating Arabic characters with the title in square script along with catchwords and glosses. Kabbalistic commentaries to the *Zohar* ("The Book of Splendor") in the tradition of Yitzhaq Luria and Hayyim Vital. The scribe is Shim'on ben Yona Mizrahi, who, like his well-known brother Ya'akov in Aleppo, was an adherent of Lurianic Kabbalah and at the same time active in the fields of astronomy and mathematics (Goldstein 1981, 245, 249). Public Domain Mark 1.0.



Figure 11: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Cod. Levy 94, fol. 217v, detail. Baghdad, 1679/80, Hebrew, oriental cursive script. Lurianic Kabbalah. Colophon and monogram of the name Shimʿon Mizrahi. Public Domain Mark 1.0.

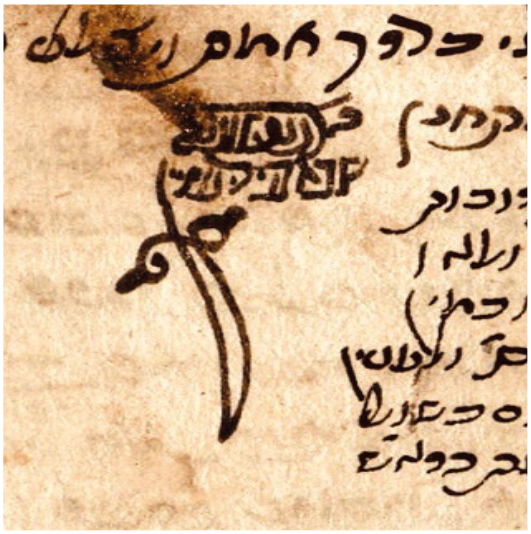


Figure 12: Cincinnati, OH, USA, Hebrew Union College Library, Ms. 161, fol. 33v. Detail: subscription of the name Yehoshuʿa Shababo (cf. Figure 8). https://mss.huc.edu/portfolio/ms-161/ (last visited on 20 May 2025). © Hebrew Union College.

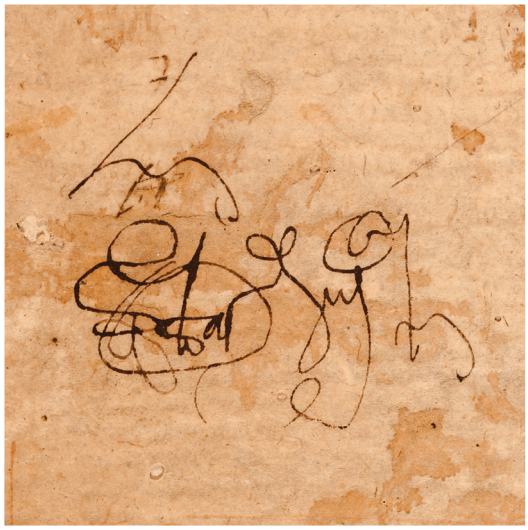


Figure 13: Oxford, UK, Bodleian Library, MS. Barocci 126, fol. 216v, detail. Byzantium, 13th–14th century, Greek. Gregory of Nazianzus, diverse texts. *Monocondylion* of the scribe's name θωμᾶς (Thomas). Photo: © Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, CC BY-NC 4.0.



Figure 14: Ottoman passport issued at Jaffa for the Ottoman subject Eliezer Schalite, born in Russia and living in Rishon Lezion near Yaffa, in 1914. Private Collection (Huddyhuddy's Collection of Old Passports). Above the dark line separating the Ottoman and the French written parts of the passport the tuğra of Sultan Mehmet V is visible. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1914_Turkish_Ottoman_passport_issued_at_Jaffa.jpg#file (last visited on 20 May 2025). Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International.

Jewish manuscripts were not produced in scriptoriums and rarely in an institutionalised academic or other professionalised context, but primarily in scholarly circles and were intended for the scholars' own personal use or for their families. This is often indicated in the colophon at the end of a manuscript or text (Figures 15–19).

As a first example see the colophon from a Byzantine manuscript of the *Siddur* (daily prayer book) *Rav Amran Gaon* (fl. 9th c. CE) written in the year 1426 on Rhodes (see Figure 18). The colophon reads like this: "It was completed with the help of God, here in the city of Rhodes by my hands, by me 'a worm and not a man' (Psalm 22:7), Moshe, son of the honoured Rabbi Yitzhak Gracian, on Tuesday, the 24th day of Tevet, in the year 5186 (=1426 CE) and may it come to pass as it is written, 'this Book of the Torah shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night' (Josua 1:8). And a request to everybody who reads this book to judge the compiler and the scribe favourably."

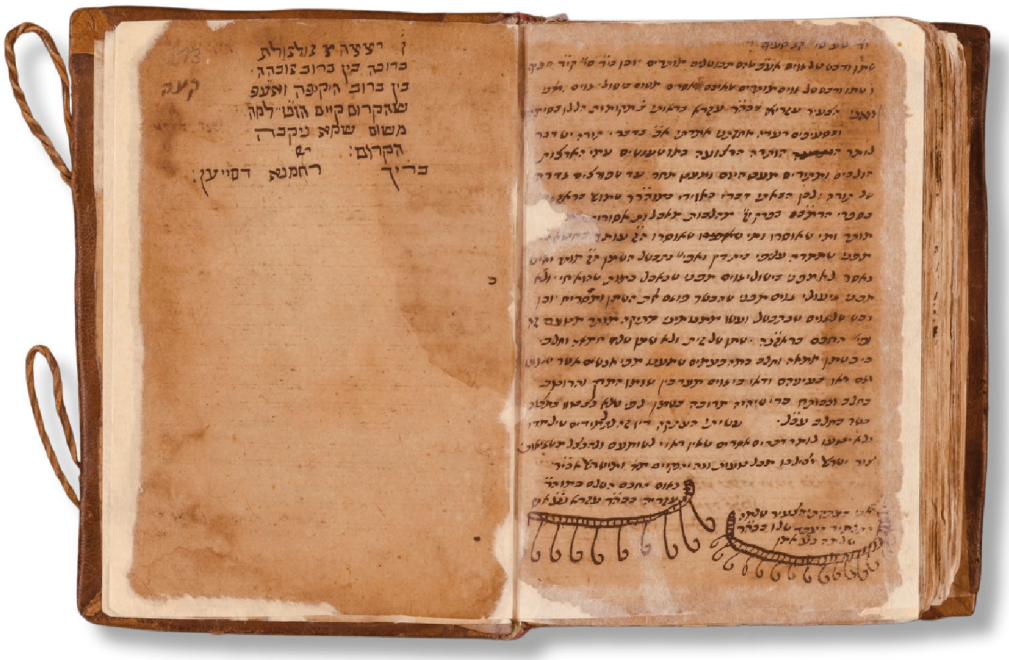


Figure 15: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Cod. Levy 148, fol. 312v, detail. Maragheh (Iranian Azerbaidjan), 1657, Judaeo-Persian/-Kurdish cursive script. Ornamented colophon specifying the name of the scribe as "the young Shelomo". Public Domain Mark 1.0.



Figure 16: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Cod. Levy 149, fol. 71v, detail. Zêbar (today Iraq), 17th century, Judaeo-Persian/-Kurdish cursive script. Colophon at end of the text in the shape of a flower containing the name of the compiler and scribe, Yaʿaqov ben Pinhas. Public Domain Mark 1.0.



Figure 17: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Cod. Levy 153, fols. 181v/182r. 16th–19th century, oriental cursive script. Multiple-text manuscript containing poetry, legends and homilies. Anthropomorphic monogram of the scribe's name ʿOvadya ben Moshe, written twice. Public Domain Mark 1.0.

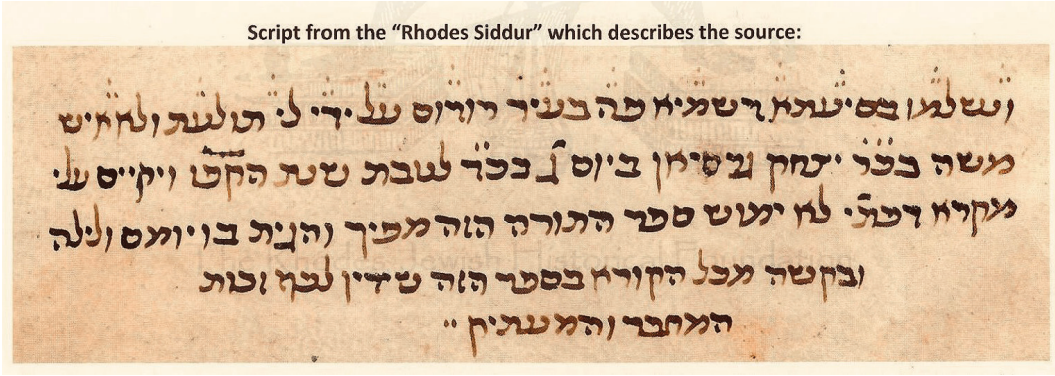


Figure 18: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Opp. Add. 4° 28, fol. 90r, Rhodes, 1426, Hebrew, Byzantine semi-cursive script. *Siddur* (daily prayer book) *Rav Amran Gaon*, detail: colophon. Image citation from website of *Ké Haber* 2009, https://rhodesjewishmuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Ke-Haber-2009-Newsletter.pdf (last visited 20 May 2025). © Bodleian Libraries, Oxford.

Another colophon stems from a manuscript containing several kabbalistic and philosophical texts. It was written on Rhodes in the year 1383 (Figure 19).

> "I completed the teacher's book with the help of the Creator on Thursday in the city of Rhodes in the year five thousand one hundred and forty-three since the creation of the world (= 1383 CE), on the twentieth day of the month of Iyyar. And I wrote it, I, Moses Kimchi, for Rabbi Eliezer Kimchi, my son, may he be blessed to study it, he and his son after him, as it is said, 'This is my covenant with them, says the Lord' (Jesaja 59:21)." (fol. 67r)

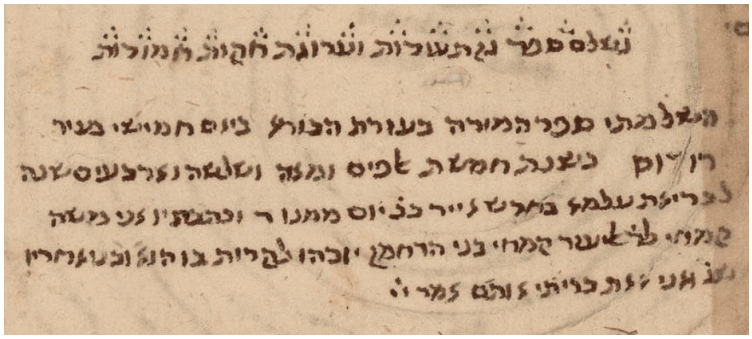


Figure 19: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. ebr. 221 (Palatine Collection, Fondo Fuggeriana ebr. 75), fol. 67r, Rhodes, 1383, Byzantine and Sefardic-Byzantine semi-cursive script. Kabbalah and philosophy, detail: colophon. https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.45157#0139 (last visited 20 May 2025).
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Figure 20: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Codex Levy 149, fol. 102r, detail. Zêbar (today Iraq), 17th century. Judaeo-Kurdish terms (recognisable by the vocalisation marks indicating the correct pronunciation) preluded by the words 'in our language' or 'in Aramaic'. Public Domain Mark 1.0.

The Hebrew script was not limited to Hebrew or Aramaic texts – it was also regularly used to write literature and correspondence in the various different Jewish vernaculars of the time such as Greek, (Judaeo-)Arabic, (Judaeo-)Persian, (Judaeo-)Spanish or German (Yiddish). Examples include a Kurdish Jewish manuscript where selected terms are explained using Judaeo-Aramaic – the language is enriched by loan words from Kurdish, Persian, Arabic, Turkish, and Hebrew (Figure 20), as well as a medical compendium written in Judaeo-Spanish (Figure 7) or a Judaeo-Arabic trade letter from Ottoman Cairo (Figure 5).



Figure 21: Hamburg, Germany, State and University Library, Cod. Levy 81, fol. 1r. Baghdad, 1810, Hebrew, oriental script. Hayyim Vital, *Sefer ha-Gilgulim* ('Book of Reincarnations'). Title page influenced by print layout. Public Domain Mark 1.0.

Sefardic Jews brought the new technique of printing to Constantinople in 1493, with Istanbul becoming one of the two main centres for Hebrew printing during the 16th century, along with Venice (cf. Figure 9).[20] Manuscript production nevertheless carried on into the 20th century – not just for *responsa*, marriage certificates, divorce documents, circumcision books, letters, records, notes and so on, but for all kinds of texts. The key factor in deciding whether to print a work were the anticipated earnings, and profit was generated predominantly from bibles, texts on religious law and liturgical works. At the same time, printed books came to serve as models for manuscript production. The idea of having a title page preceding the main body of the text was adopted, for example (Figure 21).

20 Tamari 2002.

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The Armenian Manuscript Tradition under Ottoman Rule*

Armenia was only conquered by the Ottoman Empire in the first quarter of the 16th century. While it is true that the lowest point in the history of Armenian manuscript production was in the first half of that century, the cause was the destruction and insecurity resulting from the Turkish invasions and occupation. By the second half of the century, manuscript copying had begun to accelerate again, which is clearly visible graphically. The production of Armenian manuscripts peaked in the 17th century, especially the second part of it, with a sharp decline occurring in the 18th century when printed Armenian books finally became cheaper or more costeffective than exploiting the free work of monkscribes in monasteries.

uring the Ottoman era, scribes continued copying texts almost without interruption, both in the monastic centres in the northeast and in the vast Armenian diaspora – the Crimea, Central Europe and Iran, in other words. With no Armenian state or government after the end of the 14th century, it was the Armenian Church and its monasteries that served as centres of learning and book production. Although the over whelming majority of Armenians lived under Ottoman rule, there was little hindrance of the development of writing and copying since Armenians were accepted as one of the three nonMuslim populations of the Empire tolerated from the very beginning, the other two being the Orthodox Christians and the Jews. During this period, though not necessarily under the Ottomans as many of the localities where copying was carried out were not part of the sultan's domains, monaster ies were responsible for producing the vast majority of texts. The most important of these scribal centres were located in or near Bitlis, Erzurum, Muş and Constantinople in presentday Turkey, Datev, Haghbat, Sanahin and Etchmiadzin in present day Armenia, and in diasporic centres elsewhere.

Throughout the period in which manuscripts were written and copied, namely from the 5th to the 19th century, only the Armenian alphabet was used. It was invented in part to render the Gospels in the vernacular shortly after the Armenians' conversion to Christianity in the 4th cen tury. Armenian letters, however, were often used to write other languages, – Kipchak Turkish, Ottoman Turkish and Kurdish, for example – because of their flexibility and the great variety of sounds the 39 letters could represent.

One example is the exhibit Ms. or. oct. 342 from the Berlin State Library – Prussian Cultural Heritage, Oriental Depart ment, a codex in ArmenoTurkish (Turkish in the Armenian script) with the legend of Saint John Chrysostom, originating from the 19th century (Figure 1).

Unlike the situation in Europe, where manuscript copy ing and production moved out of the monastic environment, at least in part, in the Armenian experience, the priesthood remained responsible for the copying of texts well after the first Armenian books were printed in the early 16th century. This continued to be the case until well into the 19th century, in fact, especially in the historical Armenian homeland, where printing only caught on in the 18th century. Of the estimated 30,000 to 35,000 Armenian manuscripts that still exist, the overwhelming majority were copied in the 17th and 18th centuries.



Figure 1: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Ottoman Empire, 19th century, Armeno-Turkish. The legend of Saint John Chrysostom.

Armenian printers started working in Venice as early as 1512 and then did so in other localities in the West with large Armenian populations. They were among the first to print books in the Ottoman Empire, Iran, Arab lands and even some urban localities further west. The major Armenian printing centres in the 17th and 18th century were Venice, Vienna, Rome, Constantinople, Amsterdam, Isfahan and Madras. Nevertheless, the texts could be read universally because manuscripts and printed books used the same Arme nian alphabet and only the classical version of the language, somewhat like Latin in Europe before printing in the ver nacular became popular.

Even though there have not been many studies on this phenomenon, it would seem that printing resulted in a dual process: the vast Armenian diaspora both to the east and the west of Armenia profited from the print revolution, while the central heartland of Armenia – deprived of urbanisation and, thus, such modern crafts as the mass production of books – did not.

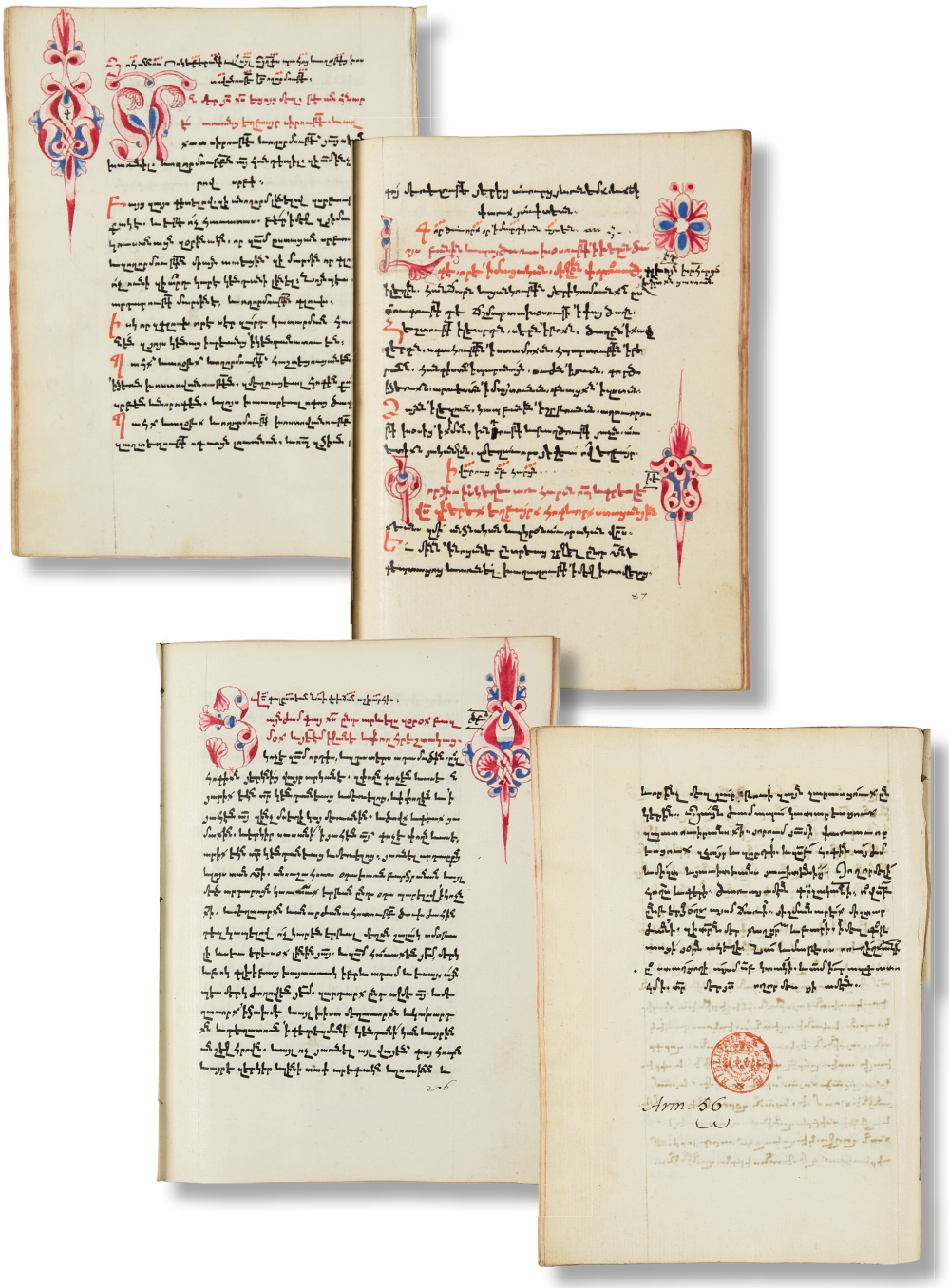
In terms of reading habits and the use of the written word, the introduction of printing does not seem to have felt like a dramatic revolution. Manuscript copying remained import ant until the mass production of texts substantially reduced the price per copy. There are cases in the 18th century, for instance, when those few secular individuals who could af ford to have private libraries added manuscripts and print ed books to them at the same time, even casually binding together works similar in nature, one text handwritten, the other printed. As in most traditions, the copying of



Figure 2: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - West Armenia, late 17th century, Armenian. Four Gospels

religious texts continued much longer than secular ones – often a cen tury or two longer, in fact, and mostly out of reverence. The most popular text to be copied was easily the Four Gospels (Figure 2). Monastic scriptoria continued copying them into the 19th century, even though the entire Bible had been printed in Amsterdam as early as 1666. And as in all writing trad itions, church decrees, formal directives and official docu ments continued to be written by hand.

The evolution of the Armenian manuscript tradition, its confrontation with printing and its ultimate demise seem to have been little affected by central government policies. In this respect, it might be closer to the pattern in Europe where printing imposed itself on the manuscript tradition. Despite the great distances separating Armenian centres in Asia Minor from diaspora colonies in Europe and Persia, the language itself remained the same – classical Armenian with essentially the same orthography as that of the 5th century, with a stable alphabet and vocabulary – until the late 19th century when regional vernaculars were written and printed. Monastic scriptoria and the 19thcentury Armenian school system throughout the Empire guaranteed rigorous consist ency in the language, although handcopying had become a matter of convenience rather than one of necessity by this time.



17th-century Armenian miscellany, purchased in Istanbul in 1730 by Père François Sevin.
Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Arménien 128.



Armenian hymnal (*Sharagan*) manuscript.
Raşid Efendi Manuscript Library 26789, Kayseri.

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The Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library is an exceptional institution that has represented continuity since the 18th century, serving as a bridge between the modern world and the Ottoman past. It is a great honour for me to take part in the preparation of a volume whose aim is to create awareness of this little-known yet unparalleled collection. Tarık Tüten's honorable invitation—which was a tremendous gift for me—arrived at a moment when I happened to be reading The Bosnian Chronicle, the unparalleled and sweeping novel by the Bosnian author Ivo Andrić, set around the time of the founding of the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library. The opportunity to immerse myself simultaneously in a literary work depicting life in a small Ottoman town and in the manuscript holdings of a bibliophile provincial Ottoman intellectual's library brought the twilight of the Ottoman Empire closer to me, turning it into a more personal and tangible experience. Just like Andrić's protagonists, the Hafiz Ahmed Agha Library now connects two worlds in its own way—and perhaps the writer's words are just as fitting for this institution, which recalls the Ottoman past of Rhodes: "No one truly knows what it means to be born and live on the edge of two worlds—to come to know and understand both, yet be powerless to bring them closer or make them explain one another; to love and hate both in equal measure; to waver and hesitate for a lifetime; to live in two countries without belonging to either; to feel at home everywhere, yet remain a stranger forever."

Benedek Péri

A Hitherto Unpublished *Gazel* by Sultan Süleymān Muhibbī

and its Place in 16th Century Ottoman Poetry

In a previous study,[1] I have already provided a detailed account of the earliest dated manuscript containing the *gazel*s of Sultan Süleymān Muhibbī,[2] which, according to the colophon, was compiled in 1520. The mapping of the mentioned manuscript is currently underway, and a partial result of this research is the present paper, which presents a previously unpublished *gazel* by Muhibbī and attempts to place the text within a literary-historical context.

The poem is found not only in Muhibbī's manuscript preserved in Warsaw but also in another manuscript that has not been used in previous text editions. As I have already indicated in my previous paper, the manuscript held in the Istanbul University Library's Nadir Eserler collection under inventory number nekty 2042 is most likely a copy of the Warsaw manuscript.[3] However, without the copyist errors present in the Warsaw version. The gazel is as follows:[4]

Her gönül ārāmıdur bildüm dil-ārāmum benüm
Ol sebebden yokdurur[5] *bu dilde ārāmum benüm*
I knew that my heart-comforter gives peace to every heart,
Thus, there is no peace in my own heart.
Dūd-ı āhumdan durur çerhün göründügi kebūd
Kılalı terk-i vefā serv-i gül-endāmum benüm
The smoke of my sighs has made the sky look blue,
Since my rose-bodied cypress abandoned loyalty.
Dāne-yi tesbīḥe bakmaz dūstlar bu murġ-ı dil
Olalı zünnār-ı zülfi boynuma dāmum benüm
The bird of my heart pays no heed to the rosary beads,
Since the sacred thread of her tress became a noose around my neck.
ʿAhduna meh-rūlarun etmesünler iʿtimād
Ey ṣabā yeli ilet ʿuṣṣāka peyġāmum benüm
So that none may trust the pledges of moon-faced ones
O breeze of Saba, deliver my message to the lovers.

1 Benedek Péri, "A Preliminary Report on Recent Discovery. The Earliest-Dated Collection of Poems by Kanunî Sultan Süleyman "Muhibbî", " in *Hürmetler. Studies in Honour of Pál Fodor*, ed. Géza Dávid and Antal Molnár (forthcoming).

2 Süleymān b. Selīm, *Dīvān-i Muḥibbī*, Library of the University of Warsaw, Ms. Sygn. 219 (= *Dīvān-i Muḥibbī* [W])

3 Süleymān b. Selīm, *Dīvān-i Muḥibbī*, Library of Istanbul University, Nadir Eserler Collection, Ms. nekty 2024 (= *Dīvān-i Muḥibbī* IU 2042)

4 *Dīvān-i Muḥibbī* [W], p. 180–179; *Dīvān-i Muḥibbī* IU 2042, f. 32b.

5 The scribe of the Warsaw manuscript consistently writes the word *yokdurur* in the following way, without a *vāv* after the initial *yā*.

Görmez isem gül yüzin ol gün benüm rūzum degül
Ermez isem zülfine hīç yokdurur şāmum benüm
If I do not see the rose-faced one, that day is not my day,
If I do not touch her tress, I have no night.
Ġamzesi tīrine karşu sīnemi kıldım siper
Kalısar ʿuşşāk içinde ger ölem nāmum benüm
Against the arrow of her gaze, I made a shield from my chest,
If I die, my name will endure among the lovers.
Aldı sāġar kim Muḥibbī nūş edüp ola feraḥ
Ḫūn-ı baġrumdan[6] *pür oldı eldeki cāmum benüm*
Muhibbī took the cup in hand to find joy,
The cup in my hand was filled with the blood of my soul.

Even a very superficial reading makes it completely clear that Muhibbī's *gazel* does not truly meet the expectations of 16th century critics regarding a good poem, as it is quite clumsy in terms of poetic ideas (*maʿnā*), poetic imagination (*ḫayāl*), and the use of rhetorical devices (*sanʿat*).[7] The poem seems to be an early attempt of a budding poet, engaged in literary experimentation. References scattered in the poem suggest that young Muhibbī was well-aware of not only the written and unwritten rules of *gazel* poetry but also of the newly established tradition of imperial Ottoman classical literature. As the third couplet indicates he knew the works of his contemporaries very well and used their poems as source texts incorporating the poetic ideas they developed into his own *gazel*. Classical poetical texts offer countless examples of poets comparing the beloved's braided tress to a rosary based on formal resemblance. There are also numerous examples of the beloved's tress being depicted as a trap intended to ensnare the poet's heart-bird, with the beauty mark serving as the bait. However, there are hardly any examples of these motifs being interconnected. The seed that either captures or fails to capture the heart-bird's attention here is not the beloved's beauty mark but rather the rosary bead, as can be observed in the following couplet by Necātī.

Meyl eder dāne-i tesbīḥe gönül murġı velī
Zülf-i miskīni koyup dām-ı belādan geçemez[8]
The heart-bird is drawn to the rosary bead, but
Even if it leaves the musk-scented tress, it cannot escape the trap of sorrow.

It strongly appears that Muhibbī borrowed the key elements from Necātī's couplet and embedded them into a modified poetic context. Beyond the poetic context, there is another significant difference between the two couplets. Necātī's *beyt* is smooth; the poet did not have to struggle to align the poetic message with the meter. In contrast, Muhibbī was forced to use filler words (*dūstlar* 'friends', *bu*

6 *Dīvān-i Muḥibbī* IU 2042 has *baġrundan*.

7 For a more detailed explanation of these expectations see Benedek Péri, "Love poetry with or without love? Classical ottoman amorous gazels in the early 16th century," in *Love in Ottoman Literature*, ed. Christiane Czygan and Hatice Aynur (forthcoming)-

8 Necati Beg, *Necati Beg Divanı*, ed. Ali Nihat Tarlan (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1997), 283.

'this') that hold no meaningful significance for his message in order to achieve the required syllable count in the first hemistich. The difficulties in reconciling the poetic message with the meter are even more evident in the second and the final couplet (*makta*), where the syntactic structure of the utterances that make up the first hemistiches (*misra*) turned out to be rather unusual.

The first *misra* of the second *beyt* is interesting from another perspective as well. In the traditional imagery of classical poetry, there are many associative connections that have solidified into poetic topoi. One such example is the comparison of the sigh of a lover suffering from unrequited love to smoke rising toward the sky. Though traditionally this smoke is black, still Muhibbī depicts it as blue.

Based on the analysis of a large number of early 16th-century poetic texts this associative connection hasn't been found in texts produced before Muhibbī. Moreover, except for the works of one poet, it is absent from the *gazel*s of the leading poets of the first half of the 16th century. That poet is Bākī, in whose *gazel*s the noun phrase *dūd-ı kebūd* ("blue smoke") appears multiple times.[9] Not many examples can be cited from later periods either for the connection between the concepts of 'smoke' and 'blue'. This suggests that, although the notion of 'blue smoke' became part of the *mundus significans* of Ottoman classical poetry, most poets did not recognize its poetic potential. In light of all this, it is rather peculiar and quite thought-provoking that, despite the rarity of this associative connection, its occurrence in Muhibbī's *gazel*s is strikingly high, which indicates the Sultan Süleymān as a poet liked the idea of connecting the two concepts. It thus is not inconceivable that this particular poetic idea and its verbal manifestation (*dūd-i kebūd*), which was most likely based on the blue colour of gunpowder smoke,[10] was introduced into the *signifying universe* of Ottoman classical poetry by Sultan Süleymān, who had witnessed many battles and the blue smoke emitted by guns and muskets was an everyday experience for him. However, confirming this hypothesis requires further in-depth analysis.

Muhibbī's inexperience as a poet in the above *gazel* is reflected not only in his struggle with meter but also in the absence of rhetorical figures. In the early 16th century, one of the key expectations of literary critics for a good *gazel* was that the poet should strive to incorporate as many rhetorical devices as possible into the text, with each couplet ideally serving as a display of rhetorical fireworks. One of the main reasons for this was that the primary goal of the classical *gazel* was to provide intellectual pleasure for the audience. Poets sought to achieve this through the skilful use of rhetorical devices by embedding numerous subtle details within the text, and in order to appreciate the text in its entirety the reader or listener had to discover them. These subtle details are absent from Muhibbī's gazel, although an effort to include them is occasionally visible.

To give just one example, skilled poets tried to link the two hemistichs of a couplet using various rhetorical devices. In Muhibbī's *gazel*, the poetic force that connects the two *misra* is completely absent from the fourth, sixth, and final couplets. These couplets consist of two utterances that are logically related but rhetorically unconnected.

9 In the following couplet, Bākī uses the expression in a poetic context similar to that of Muhibbī. *Şerer-ālūde görüp dūd-ı kebūd-ı āhum/Şandılar gök yüzidür encūm ile olmış zeyn* (They saw that the blue smoke of my sigh was mixed with sparks/They thought it was the sky adorned with stars.) Bâkî, *Bâkî Dîvânı. Tenkitli Basım*, ed. Sabahattin Küçük (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 1994), 333

10 Ahmet Atilla Şentürk quotes a couplet from a poem by Fevzī (d. 1679) where the phrase is used to describe the smoke emitted by guns. Ahmet Atillâ Şentürk, *Osmanlı Şiiri Kılavuzu*, vol. 3 (Istanbul: DBY Yayınları, 2019), 311.

One could think that this poem was not selected for inclusion in Muhibbī's elegantly illuminated, exclusive poetry collections compiled in the 1550s and 1560s—intended to reflect the Sultan's leadership role in the intellectual life of the empire and his power—due to these technical shortcomings.

However, in one such illuminated collection, a manuscript catalogued under inventory number netky 1976 in the Nadir Eserler collection of the Istanbul University Library, a very similar *gazel* appears.[11] Since the end of the manuscript is missing it is not known when it was compiled. However, considering when the project of compiling poems into elegant manuscripts began, it was undoubtedly compiled later than the Warsaw divan. The poem referred to here employs the same poetic framework comprising the metre *remel-i müsemmen-i mahzuf* (- . - - | - . - - | - . - - | - . -), the rhyme *-ām*, and the *redif* formed by the first-person possessive suffix and the first-person possessive pronoun (*-um benüm*).

Olayım rüsvā-yı ḫalk ey dil budur kāmum benüm
Cānumı hicr odına yakdı dil-ārāmum benüm
Let me be renowned among people, oh heart, this is my desire
My soul was burned by the fire of separation [ignited] by my heart's solace.
Bir yanadan ġam çeker bir yanadan derd ü belā
Bilmezem āḫir n'olısardur serencāmum benüm
On one hand, I suffer from sorrow; on the other, from pain and hardship
I do not know what my fate will ultimately be.
Nām u nāmūs istemem yeter bana bed-nāmlık
Anıla tā ʿışk ara bu nevʿ-ile nāmum benüm
I don't need a name or fame, notoriety is enough for me
So that my name may be mentioned in this way in love.
ʿĀşık oldım başuma geldi belā vü derd ü ġam
Miḥnet-ile geçdi sāl u māh u eyyāmum benüm
I fell in love, trouble, pain, and sorrow poured upon me
I spent my years, months, and days with suffering.
Ey Muḥibbī dāne-i ḫālın görüp bu murġ-ı dil
Bend oldı bilmedi zülfi imiş dāmum benüm
Oh Muhibbī, the bird of the heart saw the seed of her mole
Unaware, it was bound, her braid became the trap for me.

11 Süleymān b. Selīm, Dīvān-i Muḥibbī, Istanbul University Library, Nadir Eserler, Ms. nekty1976, f . 153a on the margin. The folio number is wrongly given in the *Bütün Şiirleri* edition of Muhibbī's poems. Kânûnî Sultan Süleyman, *Muhibbî Dîvânı. Bütün Şiirleri*, ed. Kemal Yavuz and Orhan Yavuz, vol. 2 (Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2016), 1089. For a short description of the manuscript and its place in the Muhibbī manuscript tradition see Christiane Czygan, "Was Süleymān Colour-Blind?" in *An Iridescent Device. Premodern Ottoman Poetry*, ed. Christiane Czygan and Stephan Connermann (Göttingen: V&R unipress , 2018), 184–185; Günay Kut, "Muhibbî Dîvanı'nın Yayımları ve Nüshaları Üzerine," in *Kanunî Sultan Süleyman dönemi ve Bursa,* ed. Burcu Kurt (Bursa: Bursa Osmangazi Belediyesi, 2019), 75.

The two poems are connected at three points on the textual level. In both poems, the first couplet contains the rhyming word *dil-ārām* ('heart-soothing'). The key elements of the third couplet in the Warsaw *gazel* reappear in the closing couplet of the Istanbul poem, but in a modified form that aligns with the traditional imagery of the classical tradition. The seed that serves as bait for the heart's bird is no longer the rosary bead but, in the customary manner of the *mundus significans* of classical poetry, the mole on the beloved's face. The third common point is the poetic idea found in the second hemistich of the sixth couplet in the Warsaw *divan*, which suggests that, due to the reasons described in the first hemistich, the poet-lover's name will endure among lovers.

Even upon a cursory reading, it is evident that this *gazel*, although rhetorically also rather flat, is free from the poetic-technical deficiencies previously mentioned in connection with the poem found in the Warsaw *divan*. The common points suggest that the Istanbul *gazel* is a heavily revised and rewritten version of the Warsaw poem, created by a much more experienced poet. It is impossible to say for certain whether this poet was the Sultan himself, who, over the course of at least thirty years between the compilation of the two collections, gained more experience and skill as a poet, or one of the professional poets entrusted with compiling and editing the elegant collections.[12]

Since one of the fundamental methods of composition in Ottoman poetry was imitation, it is always worth examining whether a given poem is a poetic reply, a *nazire*, inspired by an earlier text or by several earlier texts because if one succeeds in identifying the connection points that link a poem to other texts, *gazel*s, preserved in isolation from the circumstances of their creation, can be placed into a literary-historical context. It is likely that this way one can determine in which literary environment and approximately when it was created, and the potential influence it had on later texts can also be traced.

Research conducted on the corpus of *gazel*s composed in the of the first half of the 16th century revealed that the poetic framework used by Muhibbī in these two poems can also be found in the works of ten other poets, in eleven more poems. The poets are the following: Revānī (d. 1523),[13] Gelibolulu Sunʿī (d. 1534),[14] Üsküplü Ishāk Çelebi (d. 1536),[15] Remzī (d. 1548),[16] Fuzūlī (d. 1556),[17] Sehābī (d. 1564),[18] Muʿīdī (d. after 1568),[19] Üsküdarlı ʿAşkī (d. 1574),[20] Nāmī,[21] Sebzī.[22]

12 On the issue of professional editors of the later collections see Péri, "A Preliminary Report," Ü

13 Revânî, *Revânî Dîvânı*, ed. Ziya Avşar (Ankara: T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2017), 321–322.

14 Gelibolulu Sun'î, *Gelibolulu Sun'î Dîvânı*, ed. Halil İbrahim Yakar (Ankara: T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2018), 491.

15 Üsküblü Ishâk Çelebi, *Dîvan. Tenkidli Basım*, ed. Mehmed Çavuşoğlu and Ali Tanyeri (Istanbul: Mimar Sinan Üniversitesi, 1990), 226–227.

16 Bahadır Kurt, Remzî Dîvânı. Inceleme–Metin, MA thesis, Dumlupınar Üniversitesi, Kütahya, 2017, 269–270

17 Fuzûlî, *Fuzûlî Dîvânı*, ed. Abdülhakim Kılınç (Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2021), 804–805.

18 Sehâbî Hüsâmü'd-dîn Bin Hüseyn, *Sehâbî Dîvânı*, ed. Cemal Bayak (Ankara: T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2017), 114.

19 Gülçin Tanrıbuyurdu, Mu'îdî: Dîvân. Metin–Çeviri, Kocaeli Üniversitesi, Kocaeli, 2012, 269, 272–273.

20 Süreyya Uzun, Üsküdarlı Aşkî Divanı. Tenkitli Metin, Nesre Çeviri ve 16. yy. Osmanlı Hayatının Divandaki Yansımaları, MA thesis, Istanbul Üniversitesi, Istanbul, 2011, 491–492.

21 Muhlis Erol, Mecmû'a-i Eş'âr (06 mil yz a 4228/2): İnceleme, Metin ve Mestap'a Göre Tasnif, MA thesis, Bilecik Şeyh Edebali Üniversitesi, Bilecik, 2019, 279–280.

22 Hakan Yekbaş, Sebzî divanı. Inceleme–Tenkitli Metin, PhD diss, Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi, Sivas, 2011, 547–548.

Comparative analysis of the poems has clearly shown that they are *nazires*. However, as it is often the case with imitation poems, they are not poetic replies to a single model, but rather "poetic patchworks", which form a *nazire* network through the textual parallels identifiable within the texts. Although the reason is unknown, the *nazire* network does not appear in any of the large *nazire* collections compiled in the first half or the middle of the 16th century, suggesting that the poetic framework did not become popular. This is further evidenced by the fact that *-āmum benüm gazel* are not included in the *divan*s of poets active in the second half of the century.

The Warsaw manuscript of Muhibbī's *divan* makes it clear that the first poems of the network had already emerged by 1520. In imitation networks composed of contemporary poets' texts, it is often difficult to determine the author of the base poem, because beside a linear relationship between the model text and the poetic replies it inspired, it is also possible that authors who are well acquainted with each other engaged in a form of poetic game, testing their own talent and abilities by composing *gazel*s simultaneously, using the same poetic framework.

In the present case, due to the lack of data, it is not possible to determine with certainty whether the authors of the earliest poems knew each other and, if so, whether there was a point in their lives when they were in the same place at the same time. However, considering their biographical data and the date of the Warsaw manuscript, it may not be unfounded to assume that Revānī, Muhibbī, and Ishāk Çelebi were the first authors of the *-āmum benüm* gazels. The relatively high number of textual parallels between Revānī's *gazel* and other texts of the network suggests that Revānī may have been the author of the base poem.

Nevertheless, the textual connection between Muhibbī's Warsaw *gazel* and Revānī's poem is only very superficial. Muhibbī's opening and Revānī's closing couplet contain many identical textual elements, and the poetic message of the second hemistich in both couplets is very similar: due to unrequited love, the poet's heart finds no peace.

It raises intriguing questions that there are close parallels between the last couplet of the Warsaw *gazel* and the third *beyt* of Ishāk Çelebi's *nazire*.

Muhibbī VII

Aldı sāġar kim Muḥibbī nūş edüp ola feraḥ

Ḫūn-ı baġrumdan pür oldı eldeki cāmum benüm

Muhibbi took the cup in hand to find joy.

The cup in my hand was filled with the blood of my soul.

Ishāk Çelebi III

Sākī-i bezm-i belā ṭurmaz ṣunar cām-ı ġamı

Ben daḫı nūş etmedin bu eldeki cāmum benüm

The Sākī of the feast of sorrow does not stop; he keeps offering the cup of grief

Even though I have not yet finished the glass in my hand.

Among the parallels found in the two texts—such as the use of the same rhyming phrase, various forms of the verb *nūs etmek* ('to drink') and the appearance of the cup motif in the first hemistich—the most striking is the adjective used in connection with the rhyming word *cām* ('cup'). The adjective *eldeki* ('held in hand') appears only in these two poems within the *nazire* network and does not occur anywhere else in Ishāk Çelebī's *divan*. However, it can be found multiple times in Muhibbī's *gazel*s. All this would suggest that Ishak Çelebi was somehow familiar with Muhibbī's poem and that his *nazire* was, at least in part, inspired by the Warsaw *gazel*.

Textual parallels between Muhibbī's two poems and other *-āmum benüm gazel*s can also be observed on a textual level in the *nazire*s of Remzī, ʿAşkī, Muʿīdī, Sehābī, Sebzī and Nāmī. The only common point between Muhibbī's two gazels and Remzī's *nazire* is the couplet in which the rhyming word is the noun *dām* ('trap'), and the key motif is the beloved's braid, which appears as a tether ensnaring the bird of the heart.

Remzī

Bend-i ġamdan kurtuluş yok bana kim ṣayyād-ı ʿaşk

Kıldı bu zülf-i siyāhun aġını dāmum benüm

I cannot escape the shackles of sorrow, for the hunter of love

Has trapped me in the net of your black braid.

In Remzī's version, the poetic image is incomplete in the sense that it lacks the bait, the seed, which is represented by the rosary bead in the Warsaw *gazel* and by the beloved's beauty mark in the other Muhibbī poem. It has been previously mentioned that one of the aims of gazels is to provide intellectual pleasure, and Remzī's couplet indeed contains a poetic delicacy intended to offer the reader the joy of discovery. The second hemistich serves as an excellent example of the rhetorical strategies skilled poets employed to weave a rhetorical net around their couplets. This *beyt* demonstrates the highly creative use of the rhetorical device known as *tevriye*, which relies on ambiguity, and illustrates how, within a single hemistich, it can be effectively combined with another rhetorical device—in this case, opposition (*tezād*). In the context of the couplet, the word *aġını* means "his/her/its net", but when extracted from the text's overall meaning, it can also be interpreted as "his/her/its white colour". If the reader adopts this latter interpretation, the word forms a direct opposition with the preceding colour term *siyah* ('black').

ʿAşkī's *nazīre* connects to Muhibbī's two *gazel*s at two points. One of these is the same couplet as in Remzī's case, with the key difference that in ʿAşkī's version, the seed motif also appears.

ʿAşkī IV.

Istemez dil murġı bāġ-ı kudse pervāz etmege

Ḫāl ü zülf-i yār olaldan dāne vü dāmum benüm

The bird of my heart no longer longs to fly to the Sacred Garden

Since my beloved's beauty mark and braid have

become the seed and the trap for me.

The message of the couplet is almost identical to the similar *beyt* in the Warsaw *gazel*: ever since the poet fell in love with his beloved, he is no longer drawn to religion, that is to religious teachings in ʿAşkī's poem represented by the Garden of Paradise (*bāġ-ı kuds*) and to religious practices in Muhibbī's *gazel* symbolized by the *tesbih*, the rosary used by Sufis. The difference lies, once again, in the presence of the motif of the beloved's mole (*ḫāl*) in ʿAşkī's couplet, which is absent in Muhibbī's *gazel*. The other point where the two *gazel*s appear to be connected, albeit faintly, is the second hemistich of the sixth couplet in the Warsaw *gazel* and the second *misra* of the third *beyt* in ʿAşkī's *nazire*.

Muhibbi VIb

Kalısar ʿuşşāk içinde ger ölem nāmum benüm

If I die, my name will endure among the lovers.

ʿAşkī IIIb

Defter-i ʿuşşāka ey dil geçmedi nāmum benüm

Oh, my heart, my name was not recorded in the book of lovers.

The parallelism between the two hemistichs exists only at a formal level in the wording of the lines, that is in the combined appearance of the words *ʿuşşāk* ('lovers') and the rhyming word *nām* ('name'). However, the message of the two *misra* and the two couplets stands in direct opposition to each other.

In the second couplet of Muʿīdī's second *-āmum benüm gazel*, and the second couplet of Muhibbī's poem, which is also included in the *Bütün Şiirleri* collection, a strong textual parallel can be observed.

Muhibbī II.

Bir yanadan ġam çeker bir yanadan derd ü belā

Bilmezem āḫir n'olısardur serencāmum benüm

On one hand, I suffer from sorrow; on the other, from pain and hardship

I do not know what my fate will ultimately be.

Muʿīdī G 287/III.

Bende ne cevre taḥammül var ne sende merḥamet

Bilmezem kim ʿākıbet n'olur serencāmum benüm

I have no endurance to bear the pain, and in you, there is no mercy.

I do not know what my fate will ultimately be.

Interestingly, Sehābī's *nazīre* connects to Muhibbī's *gazel* at the same point.

Sehābī I.

Ḫūn-ı dilden ḫālī olmaz bir nefes cāmum benüm

Bilmezem kim nic'olur āḫır serencāmum benüm

The blood of my heart never empties from my cup.

I do not know what my fate will ultimately be.

The textual parallel between the second hemistich of Sehābī's couplet and the second *misra* of Muhibbī's *beyt* is quite clear. However, it is less immediately obvious that the first hemistich of Sehābī's couplet is related to the first hemistich of the closing couplet in Muhibbī's Warsaw *gazel*. Indeed, the message and formulation of the two hemistichs are very similar. The love-stricken poet suffers from unrequited love, and this suffering is conveyed through the metaphor of the poet's heart bleeding, while the wine in the cup consumed to sooth the pain still reminds him of his woes. The textual parallels between Muhibbī's two *gazels* and Sehābī's poem are certainly not accidental, nor is it coincidental that such strong parallels appear in the first couplet. In my previous studies on the imitation practices in classical poetry, I have repeatedly pointed out that poets often use the

opening couplet of a *nazire* to inform the reader, on the one hand, that their poem is a poetic reply, and on the other hand, to indicate whose poem served as the model.[23]

In this case, Sehābī likely intended to inform the reader that the Sultan's two poems served as the primary inspiration for his *-āmum benüm gazel*. This assumption seems to be supported by the fact that in Sehābī's fourth couplet, the motifs of the breeze called Sabā and the concept of 'message' expressed by the rhyming word *peyġām* appear—motifs which, among the *-āmum gazels*, available only here and in the Warsaw *gazel*. Moreover, in the final couplet, which, like the *makta* of the Warsaw *gazel*, relies on the *nām* rhyme, the expression *hidmetinde şāhimun* ("in the service of my ruler") appears, which can even be understood literally.

Sebzī's poem is only loosely connected to Muhibbī's Warsaw *gazel*, and this connection seems to be purely structural. It is evident in the fact that Sebzī's first and last couplets use the same rhyming words as Süleymān's verse.

Nāmī's *-āmum benüm* poem is connected to Muhibbī's *gazel* included in the *Bütün Şiirleri* collection, although this connection is quite loose, and the textual parallels are only incidental. The second hemistich of Nāmī's second couplet and the second hemistich of Muhibbī's fourth couplet convey a very similar message, and textual parallels can also be observed. In both lines, *eyyām* serves as the rhyming word, both contain the third person singular past tense form of the verb *geçmek* ('to pass'), and both include a noun (*ḥasret*, *miḥnet*) expressing the concept of 'grief' or 'sorrow', inflected with the *-lA* ('with') suffix.

Muhibbī IVb

Miḥnet-ile geçdi sāl u māh u eyyāmum benüm

I spent my years, months, and days with suffering.

Nāmī IIb

Āh kim ḥasretle geçdi cümle eyyāmum benüm

Oh, all my days were spent in sorrow

A comparative analysis of the poems within the *-āmum benüm* imitation network, with a focus on Muhibbī's two *gazels*, leads to the following conclusions. The earliest poems in the imitation network, including Muhibbī's first *gazel*, were composed around 1520. The exact chronological order of their composition remains unclear, but it is highly likely that the first poem was written by Revānī. As Prince Süleymān was almost certainly acquainted with him personally, it is not without reason to believe that the idea for the Warsaw *gazel* came from Revānī's poem. Since Ishāk Çelebi's *nazire* contains intertextual references only to the Warsaw *gazel*, this poem was most likely composed when Muhibbī's second *gazel* had not yet been completed.

It is not possible to determine the exact date of composition for Muhibbī's second ghazal, which appears to be a significantly revised version of the first. The earliest confirmed intertextual references to it appear in Sehābī's *nazire*, who passed away in 1564. This means that Muhibbī's second *gazel* was available before this date. It is not inconceivable that the second *gazel* was composed during the compilation of the illuminated manuscript preserved in the Istanbul University Library (nekty

23 See e.g. Benedek Péri, "Mīr ʿAlīşīr Navāyī and a Popular Ottoman Imitation Network from the 16th Century," in *Ali Şir Nevai ve XXI. Asır. 9. Uluslararası Konferans Bildirileri*, ed. Shuhrat Sirajiddinov and Vahit Türk (Tashkent–Bursa: Ali Şir Nevai Taşkent Devlet Özbek Dili ve Edebiyatı Üniversitesi–Uludağ Üniversitesi, 2024), 23.

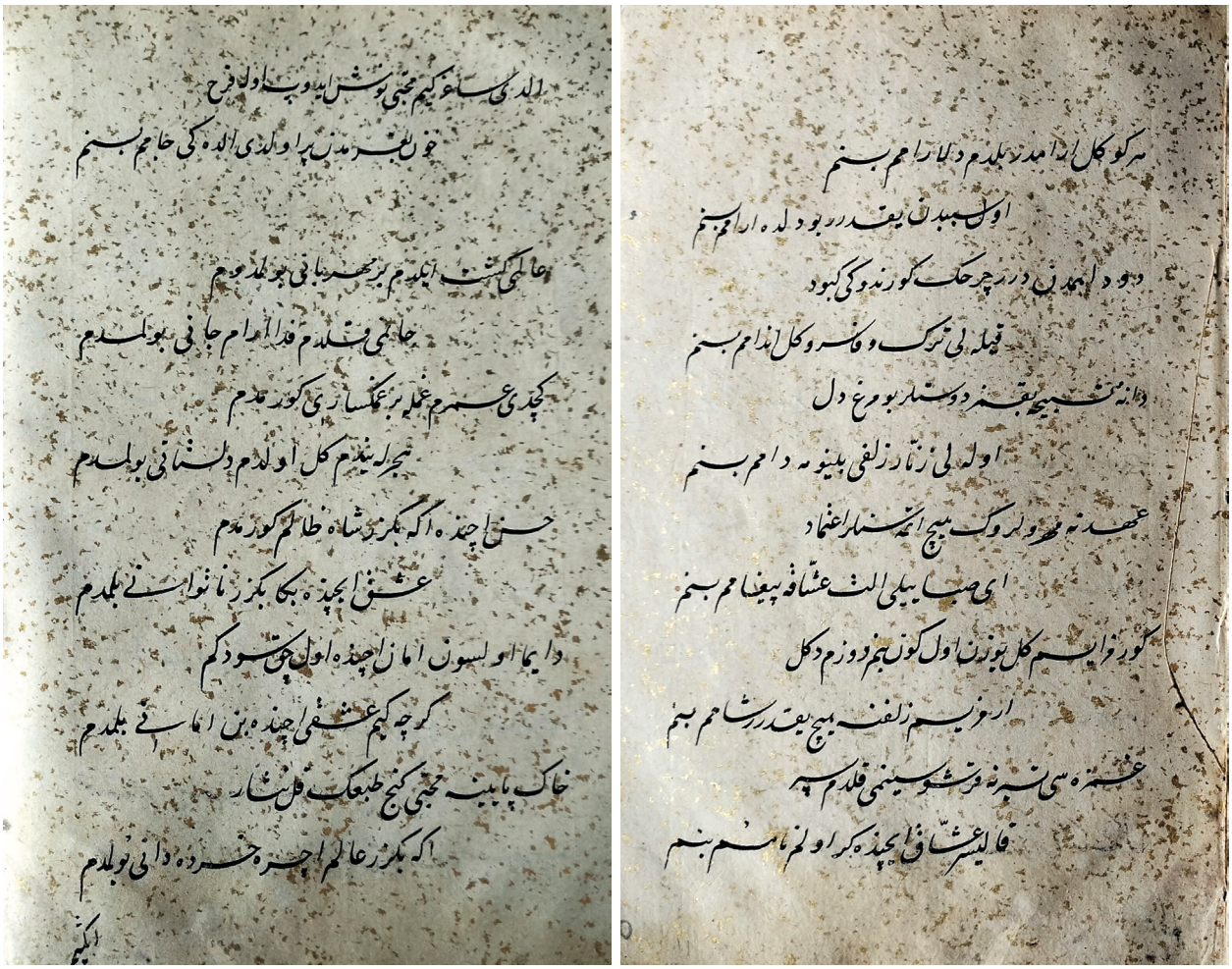
1976), but in the absence of further evidence, this claim remains purely speculative. The fact that the Warsaw *gazel* is alluded to in other poems within the *-āmum benüm nazire* network can indicate two possibilities. First, it may suggest that the *gazel* was available in several other manuscripts, such as IU 2042, that circulated among Ottoman litterateurs. Alternatively, as Fevrī hinted in his work *Ahlāk-ı Süleymānī*, it is also possible that Muhibbī's poems circulated orally.[24]

The case of Muhibbī's two imitation poems, which employ a relatively rare poetic framework, clearly demonstrates how deeply Sultan Süleymān's poetry was embedded in the literary life of his time. Muhibbī, as a poet, was well aware of the prevailing trends in Ottoman literary life and the new possibilities emerging through continuous poetic experimentation, the results of which he actively incorporated into his own poems. At the same time, his poetry was met with keen interest from his contemporaries—an interest that was undoubtedly linked not only to his social status as the Sultan but also to his poetic talent.



Süleymān b. Selīm, *Dīvān-i Muḥibbī*, Library of the University of Warsaw, Ms. Sygn. 219.
The outer cover (left) and the inner leather bound cover.
With special thanks to Natalia Królikowska.

24 Fevrī, *Ahlāk-i Süleymānī*. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Berlin, Ms. or. 873, f. 84b.



Süleymān b. Selīm, *Dīvān-i Muḥibbī*, Library of the University of Warsaw, Ms. Sygn. 219.
The *gazel* beginning with '*Her gönül ārāmıdur bildüm dil-ārāmum benüm,*' (right) and,
the *beyt* starting with '*Aldı sāġar kim Muḥibbī nūş edüp ola feraḥ*,' which is a *nazire* to Ishak Efendi (left).

With special thanks to Natalia Królikowska.

Lâle Uluç completed her PhD at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University and has taught as a visiting faculty member at Boğaziçi University. Her research focuses on Persian and Ottoman arts of the book and material culture. Her publications include various articles including "Selling to the Court: Late Sixteenth Century Shiraz Manuscripts," *Muqarnas* 17 (2000); "Shiraz Manuscripts during the Time of Shah 'Abbas I," in *The Arts of Iran in Istanbul and Anatolia* (2018); and "The Perusal of the Topkapı Albums: A Story of Connoisseurship," in *The Diez Albums* (2016). She has also authored books including *Turkman Governors, Shiraz Artisans and Ottoman Collectors: Sixteenth Century Shiraz manuscripts* (2006), *Impressions of Ottoman Culture in Europe* (with Nurhan Atasoy) (2013); *Illustrated Copies of the Works of 'Ali Shir Nava'i in Istanbul Libraries* (2020); *Ottoman Safavid Relations in the Sixteenth Century and the Importance of the Nakkaşhane* (2022); *The Shah Tahmasp Album from the Ottoman Royal Treasury* (with Bora Keskiner) (2025); and an edited book *From the Yıldız Palace to the Istanbul University* (2015).

"I am happy to contribute to the Conversation with an article on a richly illustrated copy of the Yusuf and Zulaikha of Abd al-Rahman Jami in Persian. It was produced towards the end of the sixteenth century during the most prolific period of luxury book production of the Safavid city of Shiraz, but was then somehow transferred to Istanbul to belong to the Ottoman imperial treasury. Even though it is now preserved at the Topkapı Museum in İstanbul and not in Rhodes, the Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Library has Haliloğlu Ali's Turkish version of the same Yusuf and Zulaikha story, which is not illustrated. The Topkapı manuscript therefore exemplifies the type of images that this story has in its illustrated versions."

Lâle Uluç

An Illustrated Copy of the *Yusuf and Zulaikha*
from the End of the Zu'lqadir Gubernatorial Period in Shiraz

Persianate classical epic/narrative poems (*masnavis*) relating the romance of Yusuf and Zulaikha are various re-workings or poetic interpretations of the story told in the 12th *Sura* of the Qur'an. Literary historical sources suggest that the earliest versions of these romantic epics were written in Persian in the 10th century. The first texts composed in Turkish are from a later period, the end of the 13th century. Throughout the centuries almost forty recensions in Persian were composed in addition to approximately fifty in Turkish.[1]

It is probably not exaggerated to say that there is no major Oriental manuscript collection that does not hold a copy of the *masnavi*, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, 'the most beautiful story' according to the *Qur'an*,[2] and one of the most popular *masnavis* in the Islamic world as is attested by library catalogues. The Hafız Ahmed Ağa Library also has a copy of the story, which is by Haliloğlu Ali, who rendered a certain Mahmud's version in Crimean/Northern Turkish into Anatolian Turkish, some time between 13th and 15th centuries.[3] It is a well-known work in the literature, and is significant for linguistic and cultural reasons.[4]

As the large number of manuscripts preserved in libraries throughout the Middle East, Central Asia and India indicate, the most widely read and most popular of all the versified accounts of the Yusuf and Zulaikha story in the Persianate world was the *masnavi* composed in 888 (1483-84) by the celebrated Timurid sufi poet, ʿAbd al-Rahman Jami (d. 1492), who is considered the last major poet of the classical style and as such is often called the "seal of poets" (*khatim al-shuʿara*).[5]

Jami wrote his version during the reign of the Timurid ruler Sultan Husain (r. 1469-1506), whose court in Herat was the uncontested center of art and culture during this period. Jami's version is worthy of attention not only for its immense popularity, but also for the boost it gave to the development of *Yusuf and Zulaikha* works in Turkish and for the purposes of this paper, for the sustained level of decorative attention it received throughout the centuries.

This study is about an illustrated copy of Jami's *Yusuf and Zulaikha* that is presently preserved at the Topkapı Palace Museum Library (hereafter TSMK) with the inventory number H.1084.[6] It is a large undated, illustrated manuscript of 41.5x26.5 cm. that can be attributed to the 1590s and to the Safavid city of Shiraz. The upper cover of its binding is identical to those from typical bindings found on almost all luxury Shiraz manuscripts from the last quarter of the sixteenth century, with its outer

1 For the information given in this section I would like to thank Benedek Peri and Ertuğrul Ökten, who were both incredibly generous in sharing their knowledge with me, see Péri 2018, 230-36; Ökten 2007.

2 Ayan 1996, 31.

3 About this work, see Ayan 1996, 36-38; Deniz 1998, 72-144. Not much is known about Haliloğlu Ali. The dating of his work is due to various scholars, who have evaluated its linguistic qualities.

4 At least three other copies of the work are known, see Deniz 1998, 77-81.

5 Lozensky *EIr*.

6 This article is a slightly extended and revised version of an earlier article in Turkish, see Uluç 2014. For the manuscript, see Karatay 1961, no. 749; İnal 1979; Simpson 1997, 141; Uluç 2000a, fig. 17; Uluç 2006, 337, 395, 406, figs. 9-14, 17-20, 187, 230, 249, 298, 307-9. For catalogue information on the manuscript, see Uluç 2000, 2: 500-01, ms. no. 66.

cover gilded and block pressed with a classical design of a central medallion with pendants and corner pieces enclosed in a framing border, while its doublure has gilded rectangular inner fields with a central medallion and corner pieces decorated with leather filigree motifs over multicolored grounds (Figures 1-2). This type of binding, and especially its doublure was so typically Shirazi that



Figure 1: TSMK H. 1084. Binding upper outer cover. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.



Figure 2: TSMK H. 1084. Binding upper doublure. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

it can be used for the attribution of manuscripts to this center.[7] However, it may not be a remnant of the manuscript's original binding as the lower cover of the binding is clearly not (Figures 3-4).[8] The rebinding appears to have been at the Ottoman palace, since the manuscript includes a page of explanation in Ottoman Turkish directly preceding or following each of its thirteen textual illustrations.



Figure 3: TSMK H. 1084. Lower outer cover. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

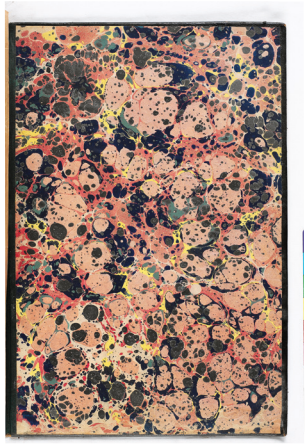


Figure 4: TSMK H. 1084. Binding lower doublure. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

7 For similar examples see Uluç 2006, figs. 171-72, 175-79, 184, 190, 192, 195-96, 198.

8 H.1084 may have retained the upper cover of its binding, or it may have been a re-used sixteenth century Shiraz one that was available within the Ottoman treasury, while the lower cover may have been either newly made at this time or was once again a re-used one.

This was probably when half of its double-folio frontispiece was lost,[9,10] as well as several folios from the end of the volume, including the last page of text, which may have had a colophon.

The volume opens with the remaining half of its frontispiece (fol. 1b), which can be easily seen to have been part of a double-folio composition (Figure 5), followed by a fully illuminated double-folio opening (*sarlauha*) (fols. 1b-2a) (Figure 6), and an illuminated heading (*unvan*) with the inscription "*Kitab-i Yusuf u Zulaikha-i Maulana Jami*" at the beginning of the text (fol. 2b) (Figure 7). It additionally has thirteen full page illustrations (Figures 8-20) with the facing text page in the bifolio opening decorated with golden textual backgrounds, and intercolumnar illumination, as well as some text bifolios within the codex that appear to have been chosen randomly to be decorated with



Figure 5: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 1a. Right half of a double folio frontispiece, outdoor entertainment. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95. >

9 Similar inserts are also found in a Timurid copy of the *Mir'ajnama*, today preserved in Paris (Bibliothèque National de France, supp. Turc 190), which was also re-bound in Istanbul, see Esin 1966, 111; Gruber 2008, 211-212, 346-352, figs. 5.6 and 5.8, as well as the *Shahnama* of Firdausi produced for Shah Tahmasp b. Isma'il, the second Safavid shah (r. 1524-76). This renowned manuscript is today dispersed and its 258 illustrations are preserved in various collections around the world. They are generally attributed to the years between 1522 and 1540, see Dickson – Welch 1981, 3-4. For the most recent summary of the literature on the *Shah Tahmasp Shahnama* and the collections where the individual paintings are found see, Canby 2014, 14-18. For a summary of the previous secondary literature on the volume and its provenance, see Rüstem 2012, notes 1-2. For color publications of all the illustrations of the Timurid *Mir'ajnama*, (Bibliothèque National de France, supp. Turc 190), see Seguy 1977.

10 This indicates that the manuscript may have acquired even the upper cover of its binding during its Ottoman rebounding, even though it is a typical Shiraz cover. The *Tahmasp Shahnama* also has a similar gilt leather binding, which is most probably not its original binding, see Dickson – Welch 1981, 2: pls. 262-65. The Ottoman Ahmed Feridun Paşa (d. 1583), in *Nüzhetü'l-Ahbar der sefer-i Sigetvar* dated 976 (1568) (TSMK H. 1339, fol. 246v), describes this *Shahnama* presented by the Safavid ambassador Shah Quli Khan to Selim II in 1568 as having two hundred and fifty-nine illustrations and a *murassa* (gem encrusted) binding. Today the manuscript only has two hundred and fifty-eight illustrations. Since it has clearly lost this precious binding at some point, an illustration may also have been extracted during the same time. Although it is impossible to determine with certainty the exact time of the rebinding of the manuscript, it is highly likely that this may have happened during the reign of Selim III (r. 1789-1807). An archival document (TSMA D. 38) dated 12 Safer 1204 (21 October 1790) records the collection of gold and silver objects from various persons at the court, starting with the sultan himself during the reign of Selim III, seems to shed light on the possible use of the gem-crusted binding of the manuscript which may have been used for the generation of much-needed funds for military campaigns, see Baykal 1944. During its rebinding the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp appears to have been bound not by a newly prepared Ottoman binding, but by a re-used sixteenth century Shiraz one that was available within the Ottoman treasury, since both its outer covers and doublures are identical to those from typical bindings found on almost all luxury Shiraz manuscripts from the middle of the sixteenth century, when Shiraz *Qur'ans*, and some of the illustrated manuscripts were easily as large as the *Tahmasp Shahnama*. The Ottoman Turkish inserts, providing an explanation for each of its illustrations, may also have been added during the same reign. In a separate sheet of explanation, which served as a colophon for the inserts and was located between the last two folios of the volume before it was dispersed, Müderriszade Tüfengcibaşı Mehmed ʿArif Efendi (d. 1829-33) declares that "in accordance with the decree of Sultan Selim III..." he provided the text of the inserts within a year. For a detailed discussion of the inserts, see Rüstem 2012, passim, and notes 28-33, for the career of this personage.



Figure 6: TSMK H. 1084, fols. 1b-2a. Fully illuminated openig bi-folio. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca*. 1588-95.

golden textual backgrounds, intercolumnar illumination, and gold floral or animated scrolls in the margins (Figure 21).

The inserted folios in Ottoman Turkish provide detailed explanatory information about the subjects depicted in each of the thirteen textual illustrations of the manuscript (Figures 8-20). These explanation pages, which translate the images into words in Ottoman Turkish, were written only on one side of the folios, and inserted into the volume to have the explanatory texts covering the matching illustration, excluding one, which faces the matching illustration (fols. 67b-68a) (Figure 9). Therefore, the inserted text pages correspond exactly to the pictures and can almost replace the pictures. The only illustration left out of this arrangement is the existing half of the frontispiece of the work.

The remaining half of the frontispiece of the manuscript depicts a scene of garden entertainment (fol. 1r). Yusuf, recognizable by the flame halo around his head and his beardless depiction, is seated on a throne (Figure 5). The fully illuminated double-folio opening pages (fols. 1v-2r) following the frontispiece is in the most popular illumination layout of the period (Figure 6); the central field has a tripartite linked medallion design with a full medallion in the center, while the wide, lobed borders have a triangular medallion in the middle of the side border. The basic color scheme of bright lapis blue and gold closely pursue the common practice of the time. The opening pages are followed by the beginning of the text with an illuminated heading (*unvan*), once again in the Shiraz illumination style of the period.

Although it lacks a dated colophon, H.1084 can be attributed to Shiraz ca. 1588-95. All of its illustrations, together with its illuminated folios and binding, are published here, as well as in

the earlier Turkish version of this article,[11] since they play an important role in determining the characteristics of the Shiraz manuscript production of this critical period when it decreased greatly due to the changing political situation of the Safavid state, and especially of the years around 1590, the key year when this change began.

The Qizilbash, who had played a crucial role in the conquest, were rewarded with important posts and continued to maintain a monopoly over influential military positions both at court and in the provinces for almost a century after the Safavid conquest. The region of Fars was assigned to the Zu'lqadir Turkman tribe immediately after the Safavid took over its capital, Shiraz, providing all the governors of the region until the crucial year of 1590.[12] During this period the Safavid army was essentially feudal. The Qizilbash troops depended upon their Turkman commanders who held all the important provincial gubernatorial posts and could not be controlled easily by the central government. The local governors collected the revenue from the region and remitted only a small portion of it to the central government.[13]



Figure 7: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 2b. Illuminated heading (*unvan*). Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

Shiraz was an important manuscript production center from at least the fourteenth century.[14] It remained so through its Timurid (1392-1452), Qaraqoyunlu (1452-67) and Aqqoyunlu (1467-1501) Turkman periods during the fifteenth century and after its Safavid conquest in 1503, was governed by the Turkman tribe Zu'lqadir. Even though it was merely a provincial center it is significant that the number of surviving high quality manuscripts from Shiraz, during both its Turkman and Safavid periods, is larger than those from any other center in the greater Iran region.

The absence of patrons' names in Shiraz manuscripts combined with their large number led to their being regarded as "commercial." To label Shiraz manuscripts "commercial" because of the sheer numbers and the absence of patrons' names is justified. They do seem to have been produced to be sold on the market. It should not, however, be assumed that just because they are produced for sale to an unknown patron, they are necessarily of indifferent quality.

The large numbers as well as the richness and highly refined style of the deluxe manuscripts of Shiraz suggest that they must have had some financial backing in spite of the absence of patrons' names, since their production involved considerable expense.[15] Circumstantial evidence as well aa a few instances when their names crop up in sources suggest that the Zu'lqadir governors supported manuscript production, especially since its decline corresponds to the reversal in fortunes of the Zu'lqadir tribe, when Shah 'Abbas I (r. 1588-1629) initiated centralizing policies and removed the gubernatorial power from the Zu'lqadir.

11 Uluç 2014, 397-422, figs. 1-43.

12 Qadi Ahmad 1959, 70.

13 Babayan 1996, 120; Roemer 1986, 264 and 344; Savory 1986, 364.

14 We don't have earlier extant illustrated manuscripts, but we know that in the tenth century, when Shiraz was one of the Buyid capitals, its library was renowned in the Islamic world, see Barthold 1984, 154-55.

15 See Çağman 2000, 70-72, for an account book dated 992 (1584) listing the huge sums expended for the production of a royal Ottoman Qur'an.



Figure 8: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 9b. Text page that was originally facing the illustration on fol. 11a (right); fol. 10a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 11a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (center); fol. 11a. Mi'raj of the Prophet Muhammad over the Ka'ba enclosure (left), Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

Two illustrated manuscripts, a copy of the *Shahnama* of Firdausi dated *Rajab* 1011 (December 1602) preserved at Rampur (Raza Library P.39a1 [M.K./491]),[16] and an incomplete copy of the *Masnavi* of Jalal al-Din Rumi, dated 1011 (1603), (New York Public Library, Spencer Pers.ms.12)[17] that bear the name of a Zu'lqadir patron, Imam Vardi Beg b. Alp Aslan Beg Zu'lqadir, provide some evidence, albeit circumstantial, of Zu'lqadir support for Shiraz manuscript production. Thus, the name of a Zu'lqadir patron finally appears in the colophons of two manuscripts, more than ten years after the Turkman tribe of Zu'lqadir had lost the governorship of Shiraz. The former is copied by a scribe named Ghiyath al-Din b. 'Abd al-Qadir b. Abi Ishaq, "probably in Ij, in the Shiraz region,"[18] while the latter appears to have been produced in Ottoman Baghdad, since it stylistically belongs with a group of Ottoman manuscripts executed in that city between 1590 and 1605.[19]

Support for the idea of Zu'lqadir backing for the Shiraz manuscript production is also supplied by an unillustrated copy of *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi* from the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul (Ayasofya ms.no. 3055), which must have entered the Ottoman treasury during the reign of Sultan Süleyman I (1520-1566), since it bears the oval imperial seal (*muhr-i Humayun*) of this sultan on its first and last folios. The opening bi-folio of the book bears two medallions that state that it was produced by the order of the library of Shah Tahmasp (*Bi rasm-i khizanat-i kutub al-sultan b. al-sultan b. al-sultan..... Abu al-Muzaffar Shah Tahmasp Bahadur Khan*), but at Shiraz and for a Zu'lqadir governor of the city.

16 Schmitz and Desai 2006, 211-12, cat. no. IV.32.
17 Schmitz 1992, 265.
18 Schmitz and Desai 2006, 211.
19 Schmitz 1992, 265-67. For Baghdad painting, see Çağman 1979; Milstein 1990; Taner 2019.



Figure 9: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 67b. Yusuf taken to the desert by his brothers (right); fol. 68a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish facing the illustration on fol. 67b (center); fol. 69a. Text page that was originally facing the illustration on fol. 67b (left), Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95

Besides bearing the signature of a prolific Shiraz scribe, Muhammad Qivam *katib-i* Shirazi,[20] the book includes a postscript that elaborates the *raison d'être* of its production and closes with a panegyric poem for the shah (Figures 25-26). Here it is explained that an individual named Shah Vali Tatioghlu, who is referred to as "*ghulam-i dargah-i 'alam-panah,*" had this copy prepared for the shah, because the shah had read an older copy of the same text, which he thought was rather worn (*Kuhna / Köhne*) and that it was important to have one in a better condition.[21] Shah Vali Tatioghlu was a member of the Zu'lqadir tribe, who had served as governor of Mashhad and later Shiraz, as well as the guardian of the fourth son of Shah Tahmasp, Sultan Sulaiman Mirza.[22]

Zu'lqadir Shiraz governors appear to have been deeply involved in the last stages of the power struggle between the Turkman aristocracy and the shah. The last powerful Zu'lqadir governor Ya'qub Khan revolted against the shah, but was captured and executed in 1590-91.[23] Kathryn Babayan pinpoints Ya'qub Khan's death as the event that marked the end of the Safavid civil war of 1576-90, which had begun after the death of Shah Tahmasp (r. 1524-76), and the final victory of Shah 'Abbas I over the rebellious Qizilbash.[24] The Zu'lqadir tribe continued to provide governors of Shiraz for a few more years: They lost the governorship of Shiraz in 1592-93, but were given it back a year later.[25]

20 Many manuscripts carry the name Muhammad Qivam al-Shirazi, although it is impossible to assert with certainty whether any of these signatures are by the same individual or not. For a discussion of a few, see Uluç 2000, 299-302. For a list of manuscripts bearing this name, see Uluç 2000, 335-338.

21 Also see Uluç 2018, 103-5, figs. 9-10; Uluç 2022a, 613-15, figs. 10-11.

22 Iskandar Beg Munshi 1978, 1: 216 and 316.

23 Iskandar Beg Munshi 1978, 1: 539 and 2: 610-11.

24 Babayan 1994, 137, n. 6, and p. 142.

25 Iskandar Beg Munshi 1978, 2: 631.

In the same year, according to Natanzi, the Shah farmed out *(muqta' namud)* the province of Fars for a three-year period for the sum of 120,000 *tuman* to a group of notables from the province itself.[26] Although these notables, who filled the post of governor of Shiraz were members of the Zu'lqadir tribe, they were no longer tribal leaders but *shahisivans,* whose loyalty to the shah was above their loyalty to their tribes.[27]

The shah's policy of neutralizing the Turkman military aristocracy meant the abolition of the



Figure 10: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 72a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 73a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (left); Yusuf's escape from the well (right). Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

nearly independent tribal rulers like the Zu'lqadir in Fars. After less than a year of reinstatement as governors of Shiraz, the Zu'lqadir lost the governorship of Fars altogether in 1594-95.[28] The governorship was transferred to Allahvardi Khan, a Georgian slave *(ghulam)* who was the first commander *(qullar-agasi)* of 'Abbas I's new non-Turkman military corps *(qullar)* and was among the officers of state closest to the shah.[29] This marked the total collapse of the power of the Zu'lqadir, together with the other Qizilbash tribal groups.

26 Natanzi 1350/1971, 458, cited by McChesney 1981, 187.

27 Babayan 1993, 46, nn. 84, and 66-67. *Shahisivan* literally means those who love the shah. They were members of various qizilbash tribes who were ready to break away from the tribe and fight for the shah in return for an official post.

28 Iskandar Beg Munshi 1978, 2: 674. During his recounting of the events of the year 1594-95, Iskandar Munshi comments, "In most of the provinces under the jurisdiction of the officers of the Safavid state, matters had now been settled in accordance with the shah's intent; headstrong governors had been removed from office and replaced by the shah's own protégés."

29 Iskandar Munshi 1978, 2: 631 and 690-91; Roemer 1986, 265.



Figure 11: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 92a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 93a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (left), Yusuf acting as a shepherd (right). Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.



Figure 12: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 103a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 104a, which replaces the illustr. in the bifolio of text and insert (left); Yusuf in the vineyard built for him by Zulaikh (right). Jami, Yusuf and *Zulaikha, Shiraz, ca.* 1588-95.

From the 1560s onwards Shiraz manuscripts had begun to display a degree of richness that reached its zenith in the 1580s, when a remarkable number of illustrated manuscripts incorporated all the outward trappings of sumptuous court productions. Many of the large size, sumptuously illustrated Shiraz manuscripts from this decade carried lacquer painted bindings that resembled those of the Safavid court manuscripts, while precious pigments of gold, silver, and lapis blue were employed more frequently, in more varied tones and in a purer and more intense form than they had been. Both brighter colors and pastel shades were additionally used in an extended color palette. The volumes were written on highly sized, gold-flecked paper and opened with a number of decorated bi-folios: A double-folio figurative frontispiece and an illuminated bi-folio at the beginning of text, with, sometimes, another bi-folio of illuminated medallions. Many also had double-folio figurative finispieces, while all double-folio illustrations that marked the beginning or the end of a text, or a separate section thereof, were framed by illuminated borders. Illuminated or illustrated folios often also had gold textual backgrounds, and inter-columnar illumination (*bayn al-sutur*), while their margins were decorated with golden floral scrolls or animal and vegetal motifs (*halkar*).

The most noticeable change that occurred in the illustrations of the second half of the century was seen in the picture space of the textual illustrations, which was extended first into the upper margin within a ruled frame and then into the lower margin as well. In the 1570s, the manuscripts in which both the upper and lower margins were utilized were all at least 40 cm in height. Furthermore, in the next decade, all Shiraz manuscripts included illustrations at least with the top extension, regardless of their sizes.

From the early 1590s onwards the figures in Shiraz illustrations became proportionally larger and by the second half of the 1590s the smaller figure type was no longer used at all. This was also the year when the luxury level of Shiraz manuscripts began to decline. Although luxury manuscripts of 40 cm high or more continued to be produced, by 1595 they almost exclusively consisted of copies of the *Shahnama* of Firdausi; other texts were produced on a much smaller and less luxurious scale. The creative variety of illustrations from the previous decade was also lost, and the use of precious materials, such as gold, silver, and lapis blue gradually began to cease. The textual illustrations with extended picture frames were used only in a few manuscripts with larger sizes and only in one or two instances. A second indication of the change in Shiraz practice in this early period seems to be the disappearance of multi-unit architectural depictions, which were one of the most prominent features of the Shiraz manuscripts from the 1570's onward, while the developed balance, fine details, and volumetric features of the examples dated to the 1580s could not be matched. Along with all of these changes, the luxurious manuscript production of Shiraz gradually lost its former richness.

After 1595, the quality of Shiraz manuscripts declined radically. Illuminated areas were considerably reduced, gold-flecked paper, intercolumnar illumination, and marginal gold floral scrolls and animals, all of which had been distinct features of the luxury production of the previous decade, disappeared; the amount of detail in paintings was much reduced, along with the range and intensity of colors. Gold was replaced with yellow pigments. By the end of the century, the production of large luxury manuscripts with the sumptuous characteristics of the 1580s had ceased altogether.

Such changes in color quality observed in Shiraz manuscripts belonging to the Topkapı Palace Museum are supported by the recently published findings of tests conducted on four illustrated folios from two fragmentary Shiraz *Shahnama* manuscripts from the Norma Jean Calderwood Collection at the Harvard Art Museums.[30] One of the analyzed folios is from a copy of the *Shahnama* dated 969

30 Knipe with Eremin 2013.

(1562), while three others are from an undated *Shahnama*, which has been attributed to circa 1575-90 on art-historical grounds.[31] According to the test results, "the full palette of the paintings in the circa 1575-90 *Shahnama* appears somewhat limited relative to that of the 1562 manuscript…This is especially apparent with respect to the greens…The issue of natural greens versus mixtures deserves further investigation…A related question concerns the color blue. While ultramarine [from lapis lazuli] was present, the circa 1575-90 paintings also used indigo [from *indigofera* plant genus], both with orpiment to make green and alone as a blue colorant. *In the 1562 painting, only ultramarine was present; indigo was never found despite repeated analyses*" (my emphasis).[32] Visual evidence from Istanbul examples also suggests a problem with the greens in Shiraz practice, since a bright, deep shade of green seen for the first time in the 1560s, no longer appears in the 1590s.[33]



Figure 13: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 111a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 112a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (left); Zulaikha preparing to meet Yusuf (right), Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

H.1084, with twelve out of its fourteen illustrations featuring intricate architectural structures, reflects the trend in manuscripts of this period toward the use of multi-unit, complex architectural depictions. It is, thus, one of the most notable examples of this trend, showcasing an increased interest in depicting elaborate building designs reminiscent of palace architecture in Shiraz and was probably one of the last manuscripts of the 1580s to be illustrated with complicated compositions and multi-unit structures. It is therefore dated to ca. 1588-95 here, due to four of its distinctive characteristics: (1) its large size (41.5x26.5 cm); (2) the small-scale of the figures with respect to the

31 Simpson 2013, 80.

32 Knipe with Eremin 2013, 127.

33 A most striking example of this bright green is a tree with its leaves in a bright deep shade of green in the illustration of Rustam rescuing Bizhan from the pit from a copy of the *Shahnama* dated 993 (1585), TSMK R. 1548, fol. 165v, see Uluç 2006, fig. 174.

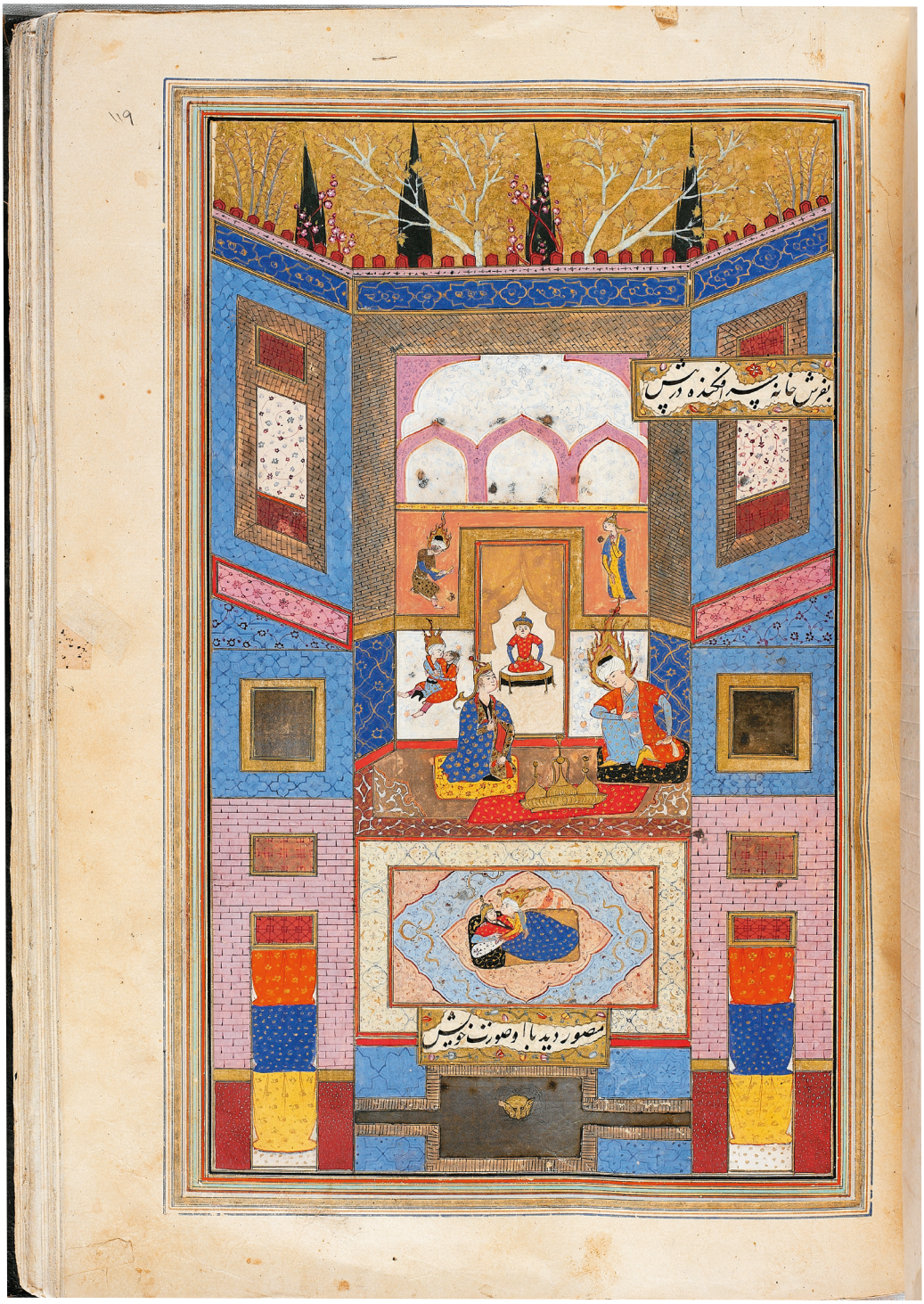


Figure 14-a: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 119a. The meeting of *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.



Figure 14-b: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 118a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 119a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert, Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

picture space in all the images, since from the early 1590s onward the figures become proportionally larger; (3) the fact that while ten out of its fourteen illustrations have architectural depictions, they lack the detail of the earlier ones from the manuscripts of around 1585, which makes it one of the last manuscripts to be illustrated with multiple complicated compositions and multi-unit structures; (4) the use of precious pigments with gold, silver, lapis lazuli (ultramarine) as well as a bright green, together with their cheaper counterparts.



Figure 15: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 118a. Insert of explanation in Ottoman Turkish covering the illustration on fol. 124a, which replaces the illustration in the bifolio of text and insert (left); Zulaikha attempting a suicide (right), Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

The last two characteristics also suggest a completion date for the illustrations after the quality of illustrated Shiraz manuscripts had already begun to decline. A good example is the structure found in the illustration depicting "The meeting of Yusuf and Zulaikha" (H.1084, fol. 119a, Figure 14),[34] which can be compared to similar structures in two illustrations; the first depicting "The death of Khusrau Parviz" in a Shiraz copy of the *Shahnama* of Firdausi dated 993 (1585) (TSMK R.1548, fol.

34 Uluç 2006, fig. 9-10.

536b, Figure 22),[35] and the second, "Iskandar and the seven sages" in an undated Shiraz *Khamsa* of Nizami, also dated to ca. 1585 (TSMK A.3559, fol. 398b, Figure 24).[36] While the structures in H.1084 are arranged with more detail than those in the later Shiraz examples from the post-1595 period, the vibrant colors and details of the earlier depictions from the 1580s are missing. This difference is particularly striking when comparing the tile panels on the walls of the buildings.

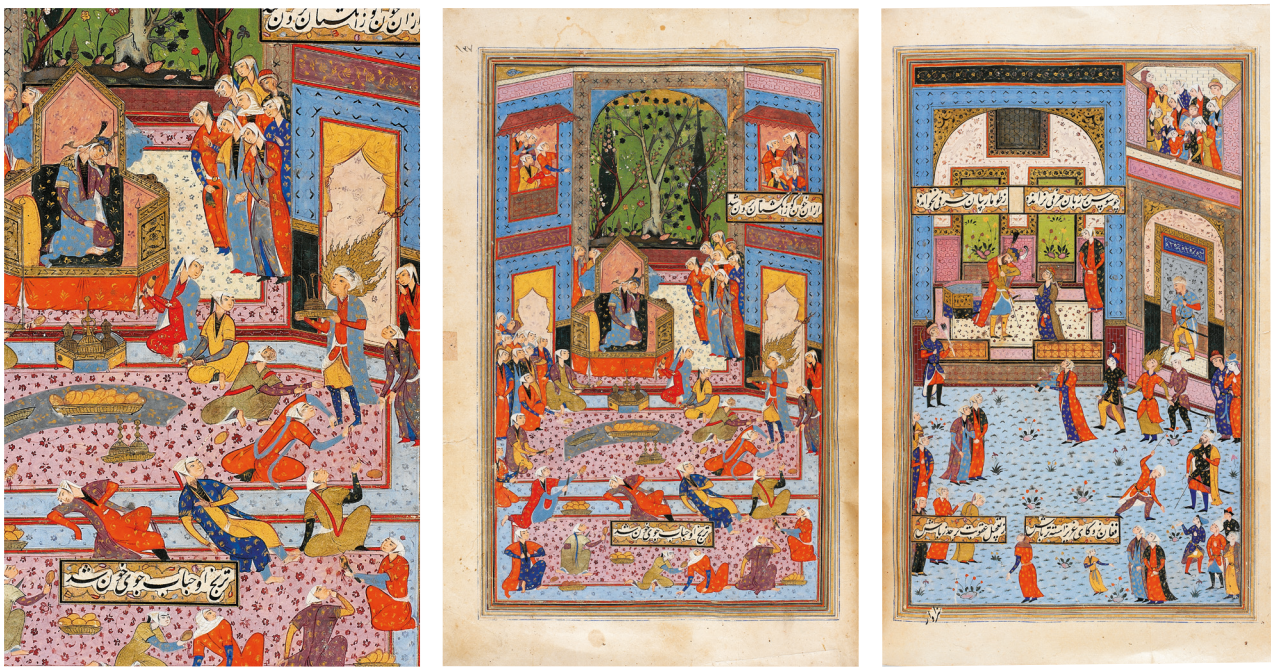


Figure 16 and 17: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 129b (16) Yusuf imprisoned by Zulaikha's husband (right); fol. 137a (17) the women of Egypt affected by Yusuf's beauty, cut their hands instead of the fruit (center); detail (left). Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, ca. 1588-95.

A similar situation arises when comparing the structure in the illustration depicting "Zulaikha visiting Yusuf in Prison" (H.1084, fol. 149b, Figure 18)[37] with one from an illustration depicting "Zulaikha watches Yusuf explaining religious points to her ladies-in-waiting" from a copy of the *Haft Aurang* of Jami dated to ca. 1575 (TSMK H.751, fol. 178b, Figure 23).[38] A second structure in the illustration showing "The marriage of Yusuf and Zulaikha" from a second copy of the *Haft Aurang*

35 The date in the colophon of R.1548 was erroneously written as 399 rather than 993. This manuscript also supplies the names of two artisans, its scribe and its illuminator: the name of the scribe, Nizami b. Amir Jalal Kashi, is in the colophon and that of the illuminator, Qasim 'Ali Shirazi, on the border of the heading on fol. 12v. Unfortunately, no other known manuscript mentions either of them. Karatay 1961, no. 363; For catalogue information on the manuscript, see Uluç 2000, 2: 484-85

36 Karatay 1961, no. 432; İnal 1982; Stchoukine 1977, 130-33. For catalogue information on the manuscript, see Uluç 2000, 2: 493-95

37 Uluç 2006, fig. 250.

38 Canby – Thompson 2003, 45, fig. 2.18; Uluç 2006, fig. 204-5. Karatay 1961, no. 461. For catalogue information on the manuscript, see Uluç 2000, 2: 438-39.



Figure 18: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 149b. Zulaikha visits Yusuf at prison (next page); details of the same (above), Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

of Jami dated to ca. 1585 (London, British Library, Or.4122, fol. 155b),[39] more closely resembles the one from H.1084. Related features found in both buildings are the high-ceilinged main interior spaces with a second story above them and the double storied side walls with an upper terrace. Each painting shows sleeping guards in the paved area just outside the pavilion. Although the figures are well-positioned in each spatial unit in the H.1084 painting as well, it lacks the finer detail of the earlier one. In addition, the tile panels on the walls of the buildings, once again, showcase the particularly striking difference between the two images.

Despite these features, it seems more likely that H.1084 was begun to be illustrated around 1590 rather than at a post-1590 date. In addition to the intricate architectural depictions in the manuscript, the proportionately small figures, which are not seen after 1590, support this conclusion. A second characteristic that the manuscript displays, namely the use of both precious pigments and their cheaper counterparts in each illustration also suggest that it was begun to be illustrated at a time when these colors were still in use in the Shiraz workshops even though the simultaneous use of dull colors point to a post-1590 date. Almost all illustrations of the manuscript have certain details colored in the more precious pigments, while others lack them. In the depiction of "Zulaikha visiting Yusuf in prison" (folio 149b), for example, the brightness of both the greens used for the garden on the right and the lapis blue of the sky are remnants of the previous decade, while the blues used in the pavilion representing Yusuf's prison are much duller. The change in blue tones is most strikingly seen in the depiction of "Zulaikha's attendants cutting their hands instead of fruit, as they admire Yusuf," where Yusuf's robe, with its carelessly depicted pattern, is in a dull light blue tone instead of the bright and dark lapis lazuli blue (H. 1084, fol. 137a).[40]

39 Uluç 2006, fig. 248. Rieu 1879-95, supp. 189; Stchoukine 1959, 125, pls. XLIX-LI; Titley 1977, cat. no. 214. For catalogue information on the manuscript, see Uluç 2000, 2: 496-97.

40 Uluç 2006, fig. 250; Uluç 2014, 416, fig. 30.


بدیدش حسن پسر سجاده از دور
چو خورشید در خان غره در نور

The overall decoration program of H.1084 clearly shows that it was planned to be an extremely richly decorated volume, before the support for illustrated manuscripts disappeared in Shiraz. The text pages opposite all of the thirteen textual illustrations as well as the illuminated heading of the manuscript were decorated with golden textual backgrounds and intercolumnar illumination, which had been a distinct feature of the luxury production of the previous decade (for example fols. 9b-11a, and 102b-104a).

In addition, even some of the text pages were decorated with golden textual backgrounds, intercolumnar illumination, and gold floral *khatai* (a stylized lotus motif stemming from Chinese models) scrolls in the margins. All of this indicates that the decoration level of this copy was planned at the highest level, but it was completed much more modestly due to the Safavid civil war and the post-1590 administrative changes of Shah Abbas.



Figure 19: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 160b. Yusuf interpreting the Pharoh's dream. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.



Figure 20: TSMK H. 1084, fol. 171a. Zulaikha as an old woman asks Yusuf for a cure for her blindness. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

Two important illustrations of the manuscript that refer back to a string of earlier court examples form a further distinguishing characteristic that showcase the significance of this copy.[41] They demonstrate that during the 1580s, Shiraz manuscripts used not only the compositions that were seen in the Safavid court styles but also those from the court styles of earlier dynasties.

41 İnal 1979, figs. 2 and 3; Uluç 2006, figs. 298 and 307-09; Uluç 2014, 406-07, figs. 10-11.

The first of these depicts the *Mi'raj* of the Prophet Muhammad over the Ka'ba enclosure (fol. 11a, Figure 8).[42] It is a combination of the *Mi'raj* and Ka'ba scenes, in which the upper half of the illustration shows the prophet Muhammad on his steed, Buraq, a mythical winged beast with a human head, surrounded by flying angels. They are moving through the clouds towards Archangel Gabriel, who stands in front of them, as in typical *Mi'raj* (ascension) scenes. The lower half of the image shows the Ka'ba enclosure. This combination was not new: it had been used in a number of manuscripts in earlier high-court styles. Its earliest extant rendition is found in an anthology

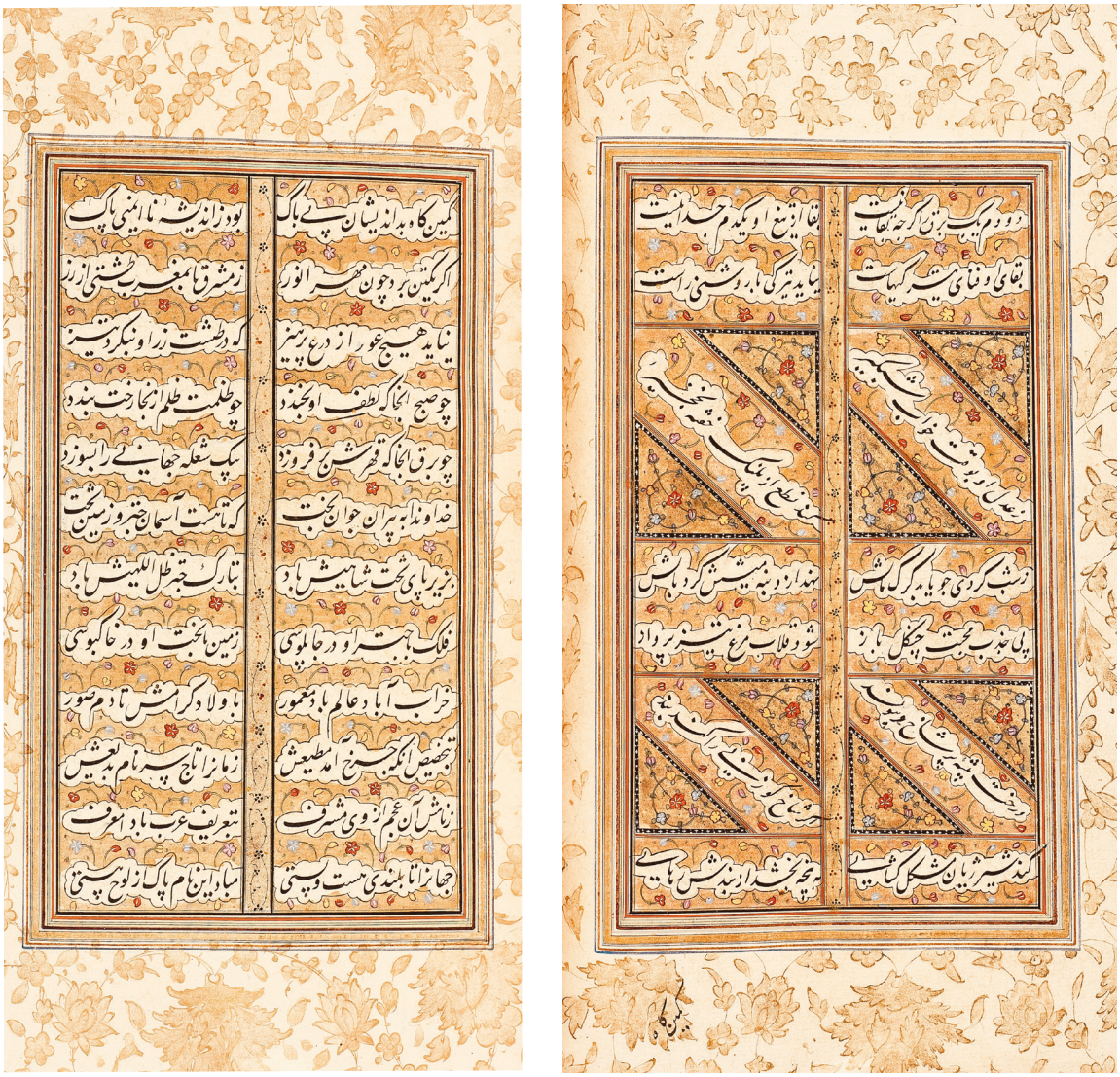


Figure 21: TSMK H. 1084, fols. 16b-17a. Decorated bi-folio of text. Jami, *Yusuf and Zulaikha*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1588-95.

42 İnal 1976-77, fig. 14; İnal 1979, fig. 2; Uluç 2006, fig. 298; Uluç 2014, 406, fig. 10. For images of the *Mi'raj* of the prophet Muhammad, see Gruber 2005; Gruber 2008.

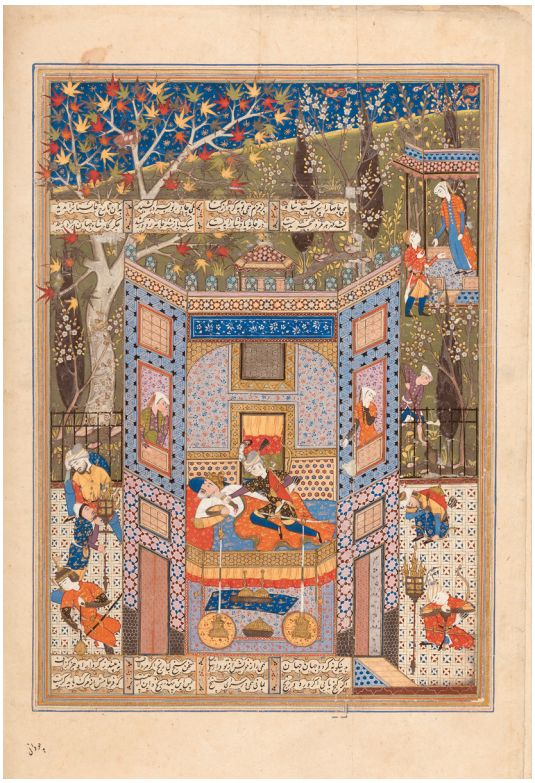


Figure 22: TSMK R.1548, fol. 536b. The death of Khusrau Parviz. Firdausi, *Shahnama*, Shiraz, 993, *ca.* 1585.

dated 813-14 (1410-11) (London, British Library, Add.27261, fol. 6r),[43] made for the Timurid prince Iskandar Mirza, while he was the governor of Shiraz (1410-14). However, after his 1414 rebellion against his uncle, the Timurid ruler Shahrukh (r.1405-47), he was eliminated, while the artists from the ateliers he supported as well as the manuscripts that he had commissioned were all moved to the Timurid capital Herat. Since Iskandar Mirza had been the most important patron of manuscripts of his time, and the manuscripts he commissioned were the most sumptuous, they became models to be emulated by the Herat artists. Thus, the next manuscript that has a similar combination of *Mi'raj* and Ka'ba scenes is a copy of the *Khamsa* of Nizami (TSMK H.761, fol. 4v).[44] The manuscript's two colophons (fols. 200a and 309a) dated 866 (1461) and 881 (1476) indicate that it was planned and completed largely at an earlier stage in Herat, possibly during the reign of the Timurid sultan Shahrukh, but then belonged to the library of the two princely Turkman governors of Shiraz. It was brought back to Shiraz by the first, the Qaraqoyunlu prince Pir Budaq (d. 1467) after the brief Qaraqoyunlu occupation of Herat in 1458.[45] It reached its final stage under the Aqqoyunlu prince Khalil Sultan (d. 1578), who must have taken over Pir Budaq's manuscript production workshop and library *(kitabkhana)* in Shiraz, when he became the city's next princely governor, after its Aqqoyunlu takeover. The third combination of *Mi'raj* and Ka'ba scenes is in the Herat tradition of the reign of the Timurid sultan Husain Mirza (r. 1469-1506) practiced by the venerated court artist, Bihzad, and is found in the Herat-based *Khamsa* of Nizami dated 900 (1494-95) (London, British Library, Or.6810, fol. 5v).[46] The last one is on a detached folio in the Keir collection.[47] It was extracted from the celebrated royal copy of the *Khamsa* of Nizami associated with the Aqqoyunlu ruler Ya'qub Beg (r. 1478-90), which has two colophons (fols. 148r and 316r) dated 880 (1475-76) and 886 (1481) as well as a long postscript (fols. 316v-317r) added to the work during the reign of the Safavid shah, Isma'il I (r. 1501-23) (TSMK

43 Titley 1977, cat. no. 98; Uluç 2006, 396, fig. 299.

44 Karatay 1961, no. 410; Çağman – Tanındı 1979, cat. no. 37; Brend 2003, 107; London 2005, 251, cat. no. 215: Roxburgh 2014, 212; Uluç 2000a, fig. 18; Uluç 2006, 397, fig. 300.

45 Lentz – Lowry 1989, 139.

46 Gray 1961, 115-23; Titley 1977, cat. no. 319; Stchoukine 1954, 78-81, pl. LXIX; Lukens-Swietochowski 1979, 199, fig. 110, pl. LXII; Lentz – Lowry 1989, cat. no. 140. One of its illustrations contain the date 900 (1494-95) and many carry attributions to the Timurid painter Bihzad.

47 Robinson et al. 1976, 178, cat. no. III.207, pl. 19; Sims et al. 2002, fig. 66.

H.762).[48] The Keir folio of the *Mir'aj* records the date 910 (1505) on a small building at the lower left of the picture frame, showing that it belongs to the final phase of the manuscript's production.



Figure 23: TSMK H.752, fol. 178b. Zulaikha watches Yusuf explaining religious points to her ladies-in-waiting. Jami, *Haft Aurang, Yusuf ile Züleyha'nın gerdek gecesi*, Shiraz, *ca.* 1575.

This iconographical line thus connects the early Timurid court of Iskandar Sultan (1510-14) at Shiraz, the Timurid courts of Shahruh (r.1405-47) and Sultan Husain at Herat (r. 1469-1501), the Qaraqoyunlu court of Pir Budaq (d. 1467) at Shiraz, the Aqqoyunlu courts of Khalil Sultan (1471-78) and Sultan Ya'qub (r. 1478-90) at Shiraz and Tabriz, the Safavid court of Shah Isma'il I (r. 1501-23) at Tabriz, and finally the provincial manuscript production center of Shiraz under the governorship of the Zu'lqadir tribe (1503-90). Three of the earlier four manuscripts had been owned by governors of Shiraz, at a time when the manuscripts produced in Shiraz were on a royal level. The appearance of a similar image in a manuscript produced at Shiraz in the late 1580s supports the hypothesis that luxury manuscripts from Shiraz emulated earlier royal models.

Although the general compositional elements of the Istanbul *Yusuf and Zulaikha* illustration of the combined *Mi'raj* and Ka'ba scenes link it to earlier illustrations found in court manuscripts, some of its specific features are highly original. The *Mi'raj* portion of the illustration contains representations of four planets commonly found in copies of the *'Aja'ib al-makhluqat* of Qazvini (d. 1283-4), presumably to represent the levels of the heavens to which the prophet Mohammad rose. The planet Mars is represented by a four-armed male figure holding a sword, a severed head, a rabbit, and a dish full of flames; he stands in front of an empty seat on the top left corner of the picture frame. The planet Venus is represented by a female figure playing a harp, who is seated near the prophet Mohammad and Buraq. The planet Jupiter is represented by a male figure, who sits reading towards the bottom left, and the moon is represented by a female face on the bottom right.

48 The postscript added during the Safavid period summarizes the chain of royal patrons for the manuscript, beginning with the Timurid prince Babur and continuing with the Qaraqoyunlu prince Pir Budaq and Aqqoyunlu prince Halil Sultan, who initiated the illustration of the manuscript and most probably moved this valuable work to the Aqqoyunlu palace in Tabriz when he briefly became the ruler in 1478. It continues with his brother Yakub Beg, who succeeded him as the Aqqoyunlu ruler (r. 1479-92), to be finally be presented to Shah Ismail I. For this important manuscript, see Karatay 1961, no. 412; Stchoukine 1966, 3-16; Stchoukine 1977, 71-81, ms. no. XIII; Çağman 1971; Çağman - Tanındı 1979, cat. no. 45; Çağman - Tanındı 1986, nos. 71-73; Robinson et al. 1976, 178, cat. no. III.207; Robinson 1976, 242; Dickson - Welch 1981, 1: 17; Lentz - Lowry 1989, 244-45; Soucek *EIr*; Soucek 1990, 58; Tanındı 2003, 162, figs. 6.2-6.3; Tanındı 2009, 259-60; Uluç 2006, 58-61; Uluç 2006a, 58-61; Rettig 2011, 243-244; Roxburgh 2014, 175-76. For the translation of the postscript, see Thackston 1989, 333-34; Thackston 2001, 50.

The second illustration from the Istanbul *Yusuf and Zulaikha* with distinct links to earlier court paintings depicts "Yusuf being taken to the desert by his brothers" (H.1084, fol. 67b, Figure 9).[49] Its original model was from the Herat school of Bihzad, which is linked to Shiraz in the 1580s through two intermediary manuscripts: the celebrated *Shahnama* of Firdausi with a dedicatory page bearing the name of and praises to Shah Tahmasp b. Isma'il, the second Safavid shah (r. 1524-76), commonly known as the *Shahnama-i Shahi* or the *Tahmasp Shahnama,*[50] and the *Haft Aurang* of Jami, which was produced for Shah Tahmasp's nephew, Sultan Ibrahim Mirza b. Bahram Mirza (d. 1577), while he was the governor of Mashhad (1556-65).[51] The first Herat-based composition is from the famous London *Khamsa* of Nizami dated 900 (1494-95), showing "Iskandar visiting a hermit" (London, British Library, Or.6810, fol. 273r).[52] The composition from the *Tahmasp Shahnama* depicts "Haftvad and the worm," and is dated 943 (1537) (fol. 521v).[53] The scene from Ibrahim Mirza's *Haft Aurang,* dated 963-72 (1556-65), depicts "Zulaikha's arrival in Egypt" (Washington DC, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art 46.12, fol. 100v).[54] Although the Shiraz example is stylistically different, all these examples resemble each other in composition, especially those from the *Tahmasp Shahnama* and the Shiraz Jami. Each represents a city in the background and a group of people outside the city, in an almost separate pocket of space in the foreground.[55] These two illustrations from the Istanbul *Yusuf and Zulaikha* of c. 1585-90, perhaps more than any others, show the efforts the Shiraz workshops made to maintain the earlier courtly traditions of book production.



Figure 24: TSMK A.3559, fol. 398b. Iskandar and the seven sages. Nizami, *Khamsa*, *ca.* 1585.

49 İnal 1979, fig. 3; Uluç 2006, fig. 307; Uluç 2014, 407, fig. 12.

50 This renowned manuscript is today dispersed and its 258 illustrations are preserved in various collections around the world. They are generally attributed to the years between 1522 and 1540, see Dickson – Welch 1981, 3-4. For the most recent summary of the literature on the *Shah Tahmasp Shahnama* and the collections where the individual paintings are found see, Canby 2014, 14-18. Also see Rüstem 2012, for all previous secondary references.

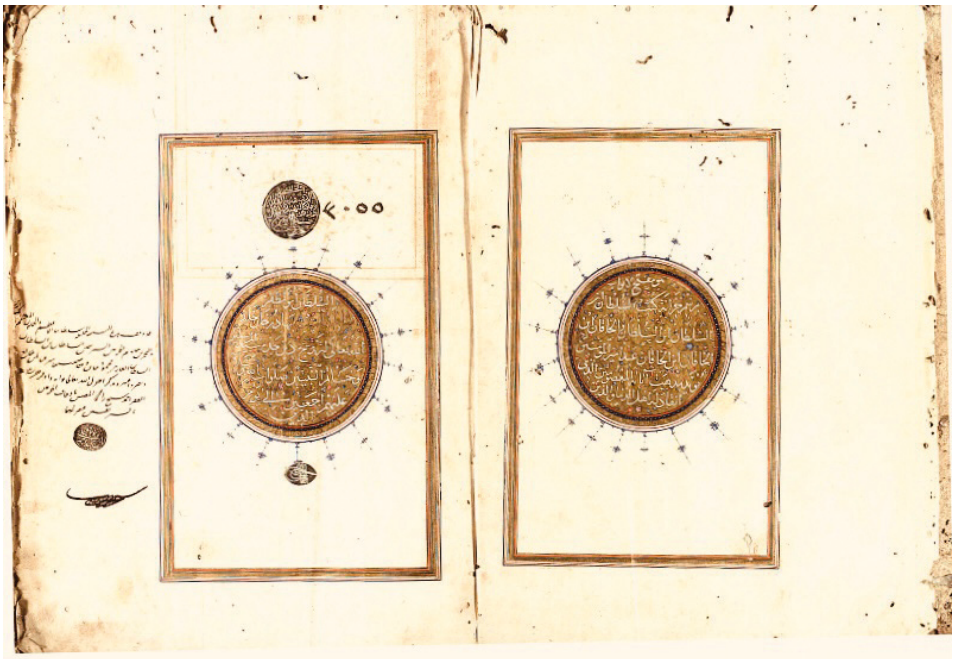
51 Simpson 1997, 28-34 and app. A.1.14, pp. 344-45.

52 Lentz – Lowry 1989, 250, cat. no. 140; Sims et al. 2002, fig. 117.

53 Dickson – Welch 1981, 1: color pl. 14, 2: pl. 218; S.C. Welch 1979, 98-101, pl. 31; Canby 2014, 280.

54 Stchoukine 1959, pl. XLII; Canby 1990, 102, fig. 3; Simpson 1997, 118-21.

55 A copy of the same *Tahmasp Shahnama* illustration of "Haftvad and the worm" (fol. 521v) was sold at Sotheby's, see Sotheby's sale catalogue, London, 12 October, 1990, lot 148. It is impossible to place its production securely in Shiraz since it is on a detached page and is not available for examination, but it appears to be in the Shiraz style of the 1580s.



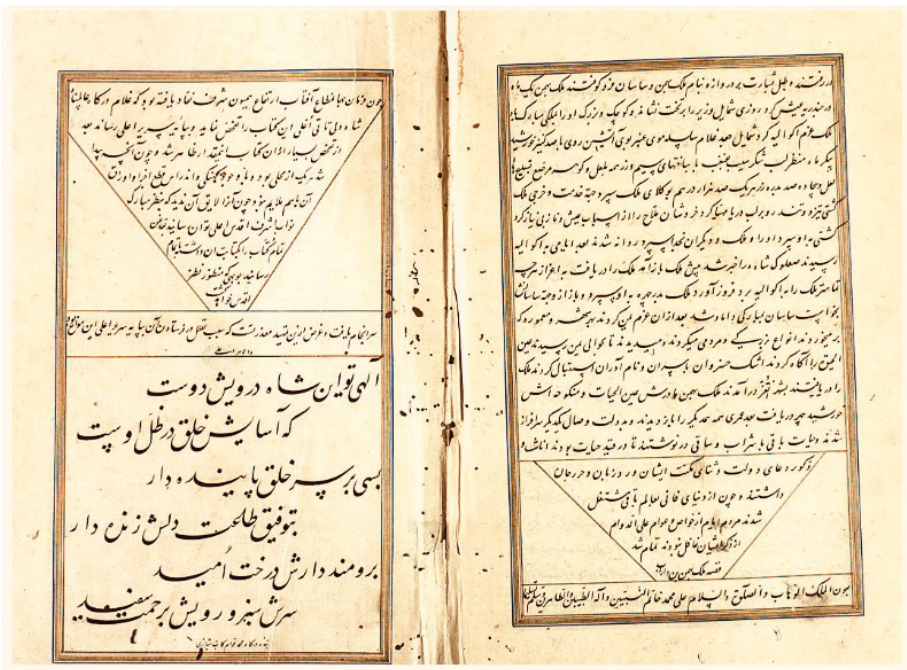


Figure 25 and 26: Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library Ayasofya 3055, fols. 1b-2a (above) colophon (below). *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, copied by Muhammad Qivam katib-i Shirazi, *ca.* 1570.

The production of luxury manuscripts ceased after the end of Zu'lqadir control in Shiraz, during the reign of Shah 'Abbas I (r. 1588-1629).[56] The Shah's policy of neutralizing the Turkman military aristocracy meant the abolition of the nearly independent tribal rulers like the Zu'lqadir in Fars. In 1595, the governorship of the city was given to Allahvardi Khan, a Georgian slave *(ghulam)*, who had risen to high office under royal protection, functioning in proximity to and for the shah, rather than as a governor residing in his province, the model followed by Shiraz's previous Zu'lqadir governors. This major difference in status can be seen in the references to Shiraz in the contemporary Safavid chronicles, which only mention Shiraz under Zu'lqadir rule whenever it falls within the royal orbit, a relatively rare occurrence. The activities of Allahvardi Khan, however, are much more connected to those of the shah and as a result are mentioned more prominently in the chronicles that record the activities at the royal court of Isfahan.

The close parallel between the gradual decrease of the luxury book production in Shiraz and the gradual loss of power of the Ẕū'lqadir tribe suggests that they were the principal supporters of this enterprise, even though their names do not appear in the colophons of Shiraz manuscripts.[57] The sudden appearance of a Zu'lqadir name as the patron of two illustrated manuscripts,[58] the colophons of which bear dates from the beginning of the seventeenth century, when members of the tribe were no longer in control of the Fars region, as well as the postscript of a third, unillustrated manuscript declaring that a Zu'lqadir Shiraz governor had it produced for Shah Tahmasp further support the hypothesis that the Zu'lqadir governors kept their names off the colophons of manuscripts on purpose during their rule even though they provided the necessary financial backing. [59]

The copy of the *Yusuf and Zulaikha* of Jami from the Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H.1084 is an important volume from the end of the Zu'lqadir rule, showcasing the difference created by the change of gubernatorial power for the luxury manuscript production of Shiraz.

56 See Uluç 2006, 52-55; Uluç 2018, 99-101.

57 Uluç 2006, 463-67; Uluç 2018, 102-08.

58 These are an illustrated copy of the *Shahnama* of Firdausi dated *Rajab* 1011 (December 1602) (Rampur, Raza Library P.39a1 [M.K./491]), see Schmitz – Desai 2006, 211-12, cat. no. IV.32; and an incomplete, illustrated copy of the *Masnavi* of Jalal al-Din Rumi, dated 1011 (1603), (New York Public Library, Spencer Pers.ms.12), see Schmitz 1992, 265.

59 This is an unillustrated copy of the *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi* (Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Ayasofya ms.no. 3055), see Uluç 2018, 104-5, figs. 9-10; Uluç 2022, 613-15, figs. 10-11.

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Samİ Arslan is an Ottoman historian specializing in manuscript-book culture, codicology, and the circulation of knowledge in the early modern Islamic world. His research focuses on the transmission and reproduction of scholarly texts during the Ottoman period, with particular attention to the role of manuscript copying in disseminating knowledge. He examines the places where manuscripts were written, copied, and preserved, as well as the authors, copiers, owners, and readers involved in these processes. Sami Arslan studied history at Istanbul University and obtained his PhD at FSMVÜ with a dissertation on how manuscript copying enhanced the production and circulation of knowledge during the era of the İznik and Süleymaniye madrasas. Dr. Arslan teaches Ottoman paleography, Ottoman Turkish, Ottoman culture, and manuscript studies at the Department of History at FSMVÜ. He is also the director of the FSM Center for Manuscript Studies, where he leads national and international collaborations on manuscript research. Under his leadership, the Center organizes workshops, publishes books, and has launched *Yazmabilim: Journal for Manuscript Studies*, the first thematic, peer-reviewed, biannual academic journal in Turkey dedicated to manuscript and book culture studies.

"I first encountered the Rhodes manuscripts through my elder in the craft, Ali b. Ahmed, who, originally from Homs, was in Rhodes between 22 May and 29 December 1551. During this time, he copied a mecmua *containing twelve works. As I leafed through its pages, I began to hear sighs —* ah u enin *— rising from every corner. I leaned closer, and realized they came from Ali b. Ahmed himself: in the margins and between the lines, he had woven, stitch by stitch, his own story into the* istinsah *records.*

At times in a raised voice, at times in silence, he gave expression to his outrage over the injustice he had endured. He believed he had been sent to the island through a plot, and his heart ached for his homeland, Homs. He wished only to return. To beautiful Rhodes he bestowed a sorrowful name — dâru'l-firâk, *'the land of partings.' In his* istinsah *notes, his loved ones pass before us in solemn procession: his father, his grandfather, his grandfather's father, his wife, his children, his friends, his allies, and even those he despised.*

It was this deep, human tenderness that led me to gaze more closely — and with greater ardor — at those sections of manuscripts once dismissed as mere hurde, *the marginal traces, the manuscript's so-called odds and ends. And so, across five centuries, I offer my thanks to my master and pray for mercy upon him. Whether he was ever reunited with his children, his wife, and his beloveds, we cannot know — but I hope that now they dwell together in some corner of paradise.*

I am grateful for my encounter and engagement with this Rhodian mecmua *of Ali b. Ahmed, grateful that these manuscripts still endure, and grateful for the good souls who guard them…"*

Sami Arslan

An Exile's Discreet Cry in Rhodes

İstinsah Kayıtları - Copying Records, as a Reflection of the Soul

Abstract

A manuscript is a cumulative medium of knowledge in the triad of the author or *müellif*, the scribe or *müstensih*, and the reader, where the main component is the text, yet it encompasses numerous elements beyond the primary text. These elements are enriched with new inputs as they travel through centuries and geographies. One group of the elements of manuscripts are the *istinsah kayıtları,* notes and colophons made by the scribe. *İstinsah* notes not only convey the imprints of the book and copy itself to the reader but also encompass (external) information that illuminates and serves as a valuable source for understanding social and cultural contexts. In the mid-16th century (1551), the *istinsah* notes in the *mecmua*, a manuscript that contains multiple texts, compiled by Ali b. Ahmed of Homs also contain the external information mentioned earlier. This *mecmua*, copied by Ali b. Ahmed in Rhodes, a place he could never fully adapt to, contain twelve works. In this article, the *istinsah* notes of the mentioned works in the *mecmua* will be analyzed chronologically, with the aim of analyzing the biography of Ali b. Ahmed based exclusively on these *istinsah* notes. Indeed, Ali b. Ahmed provides examples that demonstrate how such notes can serve as a valuable source for historiography, as he shares his personal story with the readers rather than merely providing bibliographic details of the work.

Introduction

Manuscripts may not possess the mythical allure of Aladdin's lamp, but they hold a wealth of elements that can astonish, excite, and invite readers into worlds of mystery. These manuscripts encompass numerous elements extending over centuries, including the author's text, useful and external information (typically related to humans, nature, and the manuscripts). Through these elements, a variety of information pertaining to humanity, time, and place has been preserved across centuries within copies. Each leaf of a copy may provide a glimpse into a specific moment in life, capturing a fleeting intersection of time, place, and experience. Systematic and patient research on copies can reveal overlooked historical and cultural dimensions, offering new perspectives for historiography. The study, edited by Berat Açıl[1], notes on the marginal notes kept by the 18th-century Ottoman scholar and bibliophile Carullah Efendi (d. 1718) throughout his life, the article written by Fikret Turan[2] based on the reader's notes in the Suleymaniye Library, Esat Efendi Department, MS No. 3463, ff. 82v-84r, and, more generally, the work edited by Konrad Hirschler and Andreas Gorke[3], which concludes that the documents outside the main text can directly be a subject of research, are proficient examples showing how certain biographies can be written, improved, or proofread

1 Berat Açıl, ed., *Osmanlı Kitap Kültürü, Carullah Efendi Kütüphanesi ve Derkenar Notları* (Ankara: Nobel yayınları, 2015).

2 Fikret Turan, "*Elyazması Mecmualarda Gündelik Hayat, Güncel Sorunlar ve Günlük Dil: 18. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Edebiyatında Mahallileşmenin Kapsamı*," FSM İlmî Araştırmalar İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Dergisi 2 (2013): 343-365.

3 Andreas Görke, Konrad Hirscler, ed., *Manuscripts notes as a documentary sources* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, Beirut, 2001).

through these extra-textual elements. These are competent examples that demonstrate how the gaps in reading and writing practices can be filled and how miscellanies can be transformed into a social medium. One of the elements of the manuscript is *istinsah* notes. *İstinsah* notes are not merely a part that provides information about the time and place of the copying process, nor is it a part where the imprint of the manuscript and copy are included. *İstinsah* note is a text in which vivid depictions are made, interlinear notes are provided, ideological debates are occasionally presented indirectly, and subtexts are included. These works should also be used systematically as a secondary source in historiography.

Today, archival materials, *Şeriyye* registers, chronicles, and memoirs-journals are commonly used as sources in Ottoman exile literature.[4] In addition to these sources, one of the elements that should be used as a resource in exile literature is these manuscripts. For instance, the information regarding Carullah Efendi's exile to Edirne has been identified through two margin notes written by him.[5] One of the manuscript elements, the marginal notes, will reveal Ali b. Ahmed, a *müstensih* from Homs, who, in the mid-16th century, eagerly awaited in Rhodes the day he could return to his homeland and constantly praised God for the opportunity. In this context, it is possible to suggest that the mentioned works not only offer insights into the copying process but can also be considered indirect examples of the *firakname* genre.

Ali b. Ahmed can be described as a *müstensih* or a copyist, an author, and a reader. He copied all the works in the *mecmua* discussed below, personally authored some of them, at least as evidenced by the reading notes he left, and carefully studied certain texts. This study, however, will not focus on his literacy. The article, which focuses exclusively on Ali b. Ahmed's role as a *müstensih*, is divided into two parts. In the first part, the notes/records from twelve manuscripts, copied by Ali b. Ahmed to form a single manuscript, a *mecmua*, will be analyzed. Based on these works, an analysis of Ali b. Ahmed will be conducted. In the second part, it will be demonstrated that certain words used by the *müstensih* in both the marginal notes and various parts of the *mecmua*, implicitly or explicitly indicate the difficult and sorrowful situation he was in.

Ali b. Ahmed from Homs is both the author and the *müstensih* of four of the twelve works in the *mecmua* numbered 2705, held in the Şehid Ali Pasha Collection of the Suleymaniye Library. For the other eight works, he is solely the *müstensih*.[6] Ali b. Ahmed, in the mentioned *mecmua*, wrote four works using the *iltikât* method. In dictionaries, the term '*iltikât*' refers to a form of collection that is a

4 See also. M. Çağatay Uluçay, "Sürgünler-Yeni ve Yakın Çağlarda Manisa'ya ve Manisa'dan Sürülenler," *Belleten* 15 (1951); Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bir İskan ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Sürgünler," İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası 13/1-4 (1951-1952): 56-78; Osman Köksal, "Osmanlı Hukukunda Bir Ceza Olarak Sürgün ve İki Osmanlı Sultanının Sürgünle ilgili Hattı-ı Hümayunları," *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi (OTAM)* 19 (2006); Kemal Daşçıoğlu, *Osmanlı'da Sürgün Osmanlı Devleti'nin Sürgün Siyaseti (XVIII. Yüzyıl)* (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınları, 2007); Suha Oğuz Baytimur, "Osmanlı Devletinde Hapis ve Sürgün Cezaları 1791-1808," (Doktora Tezi, Fırat Üniversitesi, 2011.); Mehmet Güneş, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Sürgün Cezası ve Karahisâr-ı Sâhib'e Yapılan Sürgünler (1815-1839)," *History Studies, International Journal of Histroy* 8/1 (2016).

5 Sami Arslan, "Eserden Müessire Seyr u Sefer: Carullah Efendi'nin Derkenar Notlarının Biyografisine Katkıları," *Fatih Sultan Mehmet Üniversitesi İlmî Araştırmalar İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Dergisi* 5 (2015) :78.

6 Two of the original manuscripts (menkûlun minh) used by him during the *istinsah* process are author's copies.

type of authorship created from selected portions of different parts of a book. [7] Who did Ali b. Ahmed have these copies copied for in Rhodes? In Ali b. Ahmed's *istinsah* notes, as is common in the general tendency of such works, there is no explicit information regarding this matter. The *müstensih* Ali b. Ahmed bestowed a specific title to the *mecmua* and collated some copies, adding collation notes to them. More significantly, he centered[8] his own life story, along with his entire social circle, in the *istinsah* notes. These actions suggest that he prepared this *mecmua* for personal use. The works in the *mecmua* are generally not madrasa books. Therefore, if the *müstensih* prepared these copies for himself, it must have been for his own reading notes rather than for the purpose of sharing them with someone else. Moreover, the fact that these works are compiled into a single *mecmua* raises the possibility that the *müstensih* copied them at the request of an individual. Alternatively, they may have been intended as a gift for a resident of Rhodes. An additional factor that strengthens this possibility is Ali b. Ahmed's mention of the copy owner (malik) in the zahriye of the twelfth work (241a) in the *mecmua*. On this folio, Ali b. Ahmed mentions God and Abdullah b. Es'ad Yâfiî (d. 768/1367), the author of the copied work and the founder of the Yâfi'iyye branch of the Qadiriyya Sufi Order, to which he had also belonged. He prays that all Muslims may gain insight from Yâfiî's wisdom. Additionally, through this occasion, he includes four more groups in his prayer: the scribe of the copy, the owner of the copy, its future readers, and those who review or closely examine it. It is clear that the scribe of the copy is the same person. If we consider that the owner of the copy is also him, it follows naturally that he would also be the future reader and the one who reviews or closely examines the copy. In other words, he included himself in the prayer in four different roles. This possibility is weaker than the one where "*malik*" refers to someone else.[9] Later in the prayer, the *müstensih* again mentions the *malik*. At the end of the prayer, he also prays for those who offer prayers for both the scribe and the *malik*. It is evident from the context that Ali b. Ahmed likely distinguishes between *malik* and *scribe*. His making of the *mecmua* for someone else could suggest that he intertwines his personal narrative through these copies. By doing so, he presents his life story to the influential figures on the island and indirectly requests assistance from them. Indeed, the intellectual history of the Ottoman Empire provides several similar examples. For instance, Ahmet Pasha (d. 1497), a century before Ali b. Ahmed, presented an eulogy on "*Kerem*" to Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, who was the reigning sultan at the time. This eulogy, presented from the Yedikule Dungeons, led to his amnesty.[10]

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7 In this context, the dictionary definition of *iltikât,* like many terms, has been narrowed down once it became a technical term. While the dictionary meaning refers to gathering from different places, here it specifically means collection from different parts of a single book, rather than from different books. It is not clear from Ali b. Ahmed's statements whether he perceives a difference between *iltikât* and *muhtârât*. Abdulmuhsin b. Muhammed indicates that, in *Al-Futûhâtu'l-Mekkiye*, he selects passages based on his heart's desire to construct a new work. It appears that he does not distinguish between *iltikât* and *intihâb*. Abdulmuhsin b. Muhammed, in his authorship note, requests readers to approach potential errors in the work with leniency. He refers to his own discretion in the text as *iltikât* ve *intihâb* (as intihabe), indicating that the selections and arrangements within the work are based on his personal discretion. (Abdulmuhsin b. Muhammed, *Muntehab mine'l-Futûhâti'l-Mekkiye*, Süleymaniye, Ayasofya, 2099, 181a)

8 Indeed, in these manuscripts, the objects of the prayers are not, as with hundreds of other *müstensihs,* other Muslims, scholars, cities, or places. Rather, they focus solely on himself along with his parents, children, relatives, loved ones, and even his enemies.

9 The *malik* mentioned by the *müstensih* could refer to either the current owner or future owners of the *mecmua*. In a close sense, *malik* denotes the present owner, while in a broader sense, it includes anyone who may possess the manuscript in the future. In this case, who is the current *malik* of the *mecmua*? It could be either the *müstensih* himself or another individual. Assuming that the scribe is the *müstensih* himself, we must reconsider a complicated situation. This would imply that the *müstensih* identifies himself in four different roles: the scribe, the *malik*, the reader, and the reviewer.

10 Zehra Göre, "Kerem Kasidelerine Dair," *Ankara Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi* 39 (2009): 921.

It is possible that the exile in Rhodes, being somehow aware of the aforementioned situation, believed that amnesty could be attained through the copies and the *istinsah* notes contained within them.

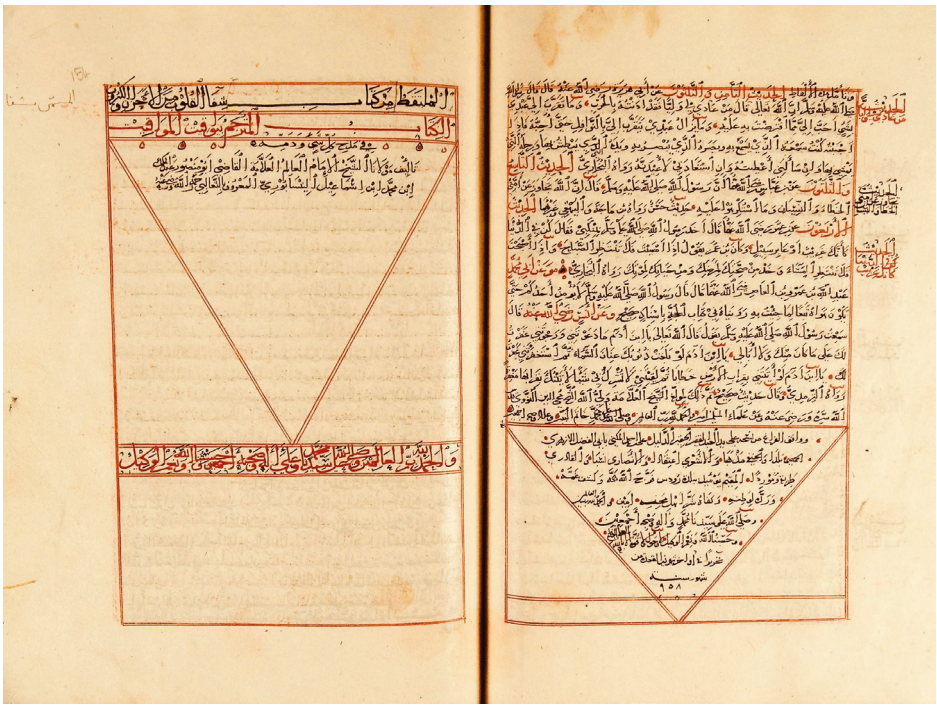
Who owned the originals that he copied? If the new copies were made at the request of someone else or intended as a gift, it can be said that the original manuscripts belonged to Ali b. Ahmed. If this assumption is accurate, it implies that Ali b. Ahmed must have used the copies he brought with him to Rhodes for copying, in addition to reading and reviewing them as the original text. If the new copies were copied for his own use, it can be argued that the original copies do not belong to him. This is because, considering he likely expected or hoped to stay on the island for a short period, it would make little sense for him to copy for himself from the ones he already possessed. If Ali b. Ahmed did not bring these original copies with him from Homs, how should we interpret the presence of twelve copies on this island? These include the author's copy of Nevewi's (d. 1278) *al-Erbaʿîn* and *Imâdî's Mîzânu's-sharî'a'*. The island had come under Muslim (Ottoman) rule only thirty years earlier, in 1522. It seems improbable that these copies were associated with the madrasa established by Suleiman I (the Magnificent) following the island's recent incorporation into Ottoman control. As noted earlier, these works do not possess the attributes of standard educational materials. These copies might have belonged to an Islamic monastery on the island, a resident, or perhaps a kadi, a soldier who ended up there after the island's conquest, and were likely borrowed by Ali b. Ahmed for *istinsah*. It is difficult to draw definitive conclusions based solely on the existing *istinsah* notes. It is likely that more precise answers to these questions can likely be obtained through further research, particularly by examining archive documents and sharia registries related to the intellectual history of Rhodes.

Ali b. Ahmed does not mention any reason for his presence in Rhodes in these *istinsah* notes. His persistent desire to return to his homeland and reunite with his family, children, relatives, and friends in Homs, his bitter criticism of the instigators of discord, and his seeking refuge in God from their malicious schemes suggest that his exile in Rhodes was due to these reasons. Indeed, Rhodes was one of the places used for exile during the Ottoman Empire, and a century later, the renowned Sufi Niyazi Mısri (d. 1694) would also find himself exiled to this island. The island would continue to be used as a place of exile until the 19th century.

There is no explicit information regarding Ali b. Ahmed's activities while in Homs. In light of this, his engagement in writing and copying, along with comparing the copies he made, indicates that he was likely a scholar. The title '*Ezherîan'* (Al-Azhar) he used in various works confirms this situation. Nevertheless, it is also possible to think that one of the titles he used in the *istinsah* notes may reflect his profession. Accordingly, Ali b. Ahmed refers to himself as '*al-Khalidi in service*' in three different works. In the first work, he identifies himself as 'al-Qadirî in the Sufi order, al-Khalidî in service'[11]; in the second work, 'al-Hanafî in Hanafî madhhab, al-Khalidî in service'[12]; and in the third work, 'al-Ansarî in lineage, al-Khalidî in service'.[13] The meaning of the first parts of these works is quite clear: he is affiliated with the Qadiriyya Sufi Order and follows the Hanafî madhhab in legal matters. His family origins trace back to the Ansar among the Prophet's companions (sahaba). Could 'al-Khalidi in service' be related to this? It is unlikely that 'al-Khalidi' refers to affiliation with the Khalidi Sufi order, as the works date back to the mid-16th century. Another indication that the term does not imply

11 Ali b. Ahmed, Süleymaniye, Şehid Pasha Ali, 02705/001, 108a.
12 Ali b. Ahmed, Süleymaniye, Şehid Pasha Ali, 02705/004, 144b.
13 Ali b. Ahmed, Süleymaniye, Şehid Pasha Ali, 02705/011, 240a.

a Sufic connotation is that in the first work, he states that he is already affiliated with the Qadiriyya before mentioning the Khalidi affiliation. This expression may be a reference to his profession. It could also be connected to Halid b. Velid, whose grave is located in Homs, and the *müstensih* might be alluding to his role as the tomb caretaker.[14] Yet, it is difficult to draw any conclusions based on the limited available information. The *müstensih*, who integrates the consequences into the *istinsah* notes, uses two methods for this. The first method is explicitness, while the second is allegory. Let us first focus on the direct account of the story as told by the *müstensih*, Ali b. Ahmed.



Ali b. Ahmed, Süleymaniye Library, Şehit Ali Paşa Collection 2705, 153b

The language of the *istinsah* notes: A tense *müstensih* condemned to Rhodes

The first copy made by Ali b. Ahmed, listed in the existing catalog, is the *Mecma'u'l* Âmâk, registered under the name of Ibnu'n-Nehhâs (d. 1411).[15] In the *istinsah* notes dated May 25, 1551, he first asks God to forgive him and his parents and then to relieve him of his sadness and grief.[16] He states that he is from Homs, although he was in Rhodes at the time, using the word *nezîl*, which means 'guest' in the dictionary. Thus, the *müstensih* seems to indicate that he was temporarily residing on this island. Indeed, his use of the word *yevmeizin*, meaning 'for the time being' or 'currently,' further

14 This possibility was raised by Mr. Ahmet Turan Arslan during our discussion on these works.

15 The title of the work is *Mecma'u'l* Âmâk, but the author is not Ibnu'n-Nehhâs, as will be discussed later.

16 Süleymaniye Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/1, 108a.

supports this suggestion (*Vehuve nezîlun bi-Beldet-i Rodos yevmeizin*). Therefore, we have a sorrowful *müstensih*-author who is either temporarily in Rhodes, or believes he is, or hopes to be. It is difficult to understand what caused his sadness in this first manuscript. Exactly thirty-three days after the first *müstensih*-author statement (June 28, 1551), he appears once again in Rhodes, expressing a sorrowful condition. In this entry, the *müstensih* employs different verbs to convey his wish to be relieved from grief and sorrow. In this work, he implores God for a return to his homeland. Although the *müstensih* does not specify which place he refers to as his homeland, his earlier mention of being from Homs suggests that this is where he wishes to return. Ali b. Ahmed's desire is not only to return to his homeland but also to reunite with his two children, whom he longs to embrace.[17]

Is Ali b. Ahmed in Rhodes due to a task while being away from his homeland? The curses (malediction/bad wishes) he uses in the same record prevent us from providing a favourable reply to this question. In this *istinsah* note, he refers to those he calls instigators of discord and wishes for them to be a bit shell-shocked. By using the pronoun referring to those who are returning to Homs, he indicates that these instigators of discord are not from Rhodes, but rather from his own homeland, Homs. Based on these two records, it can be concluded that the *müstensih* perceived his exile to Rhodes in May and June of 1551 as a result of the scheming of certain instigators of discord from his homeland. This suggests that his exile was likely a consequence of their actions. On the other hand, Ali b. Ahmed initially believed that this compulsory residence would come to an end in a very short period, yet he gradually seems to have abandoned this expectation. In this second work, the Ali b. Ahmed who was a guest (*nezîl*) in Rhodes has become a resident (*mukîm*) there (*el-mukîm yevmeizin bi-beldeti Rodos*).[18] In the third manuscript dated July 3, 1551, found in the same *mecmua*, he again prays for the end of his grief and sorrow and for his return to his homeland. The instigators of discord mentioned in this work are also described as people who endure hardship, and he seeks refuge in God from their evilness. On the other hand, by implying that he does not fear their evilness, he differs from the previous work. He expresses his trust in God after the Hamdalah and Salwalah, saying "Allah alone is sufficient as an aid for us, and He is the best Protector".[19]

In this work, when mentioning those he longs for, he refers to his children in the plural form, unlike in the other two works, where he used the tesniye (dual) form. Possibly, while on the island where he arrived just three months prior, he received news of the birth of another child in Homs or recalled a child he had previously forgotten to mention. This possibility indicates that letters were exchanged between Homs and Rhodes. In this manuscript by Ali b. Ahmed, two additional groups of people come into focus alongside his children: those who love the unhappy *müstensih* in Rhodes (Muhibbihî) and his friends (Ve asdikâihî). He shows particular importance to those who love him, as he includes them again in his prayers, using a different term after mentioning his friends (Muveddihî). It is clear that the term 'loved ones' does not refer to his friends, as they are already mentioned separately in the same work. The term likely does not refer to relatives either, as the author explicitly mentions them when necessary, as seen in the copy note of work number eleven in this *mecmua*. Could there be a specific reason why the author mentions those who loved him in three different ways within the copy note? Perhaps he was an opinion leader with the ability of representation in Homs, indicating that his followers remained a priority for him even during his exile.

17 Süleymaniye, Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/2, 122a.

18 Ali b. Ahmed will use the term "*mukim*" instead of "*nezîl*" in all works from this point onward, except for one.

19 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/003, 124a.

Ali b. Ahmed, who indicates in the *istinsah* notes that he is a Sufi, seems not to have been involved in transcribing during the Sacred Months. This is suggested by the fact that the date of the next 'nusha-i mubârek' (blessed copy) of the manuscript is November 1, 1551 (2 Dhu'l-Qi'dah 958).[20] In contrast, there is no change in the copywork. In this entry, the author continues to speak at length about himself, expressing his wish for the bliss of his heart and his anticipation of returning to his homeland. He seeks refuge in God from the evilness of the instigators of discord: May Allah give him inner peace, relieve him from grief, forgive his mistakes, return him to his homeland, protect him from the evil of those who endure hardship, and reward him with paradise.[21] Yet, this time, we can say that the author begins to distract himself from the monotony and perhaps the tedium of the work by writing two different rubais around the manuscript. The first of these rubais is about showing tolerance to the *müstensih* in case a flaw is found in the copy. The second rubai, as would be expected from the reluctant resident of Rhodes, addresses the plea of a weak and helpless person seeking refuge in God. He expresses, almost implying solitude, his longing for God's closeness: "I came weak and helpless, O God, make me close to You, O God!" On the same day (November 1, 1551), in another copy he made from the author's original, he once again bemoans his condition. He seeks refuge in God from the instigators of discord and those enduring hardship and expresses his longing to return to his homeland.[22]

The *müstensih* continues to describe his situation in the subsequent istinsah note and, here again, speaks at length about the recitations intended to remove difficulties and hardships. Unlike the previous works, Ali b. Ahmed, who copied Imam Nawawi's (d. 1278) *al-Arba'in*, does not provide a specific date of copying in this entry (*late Dhu al-Qa'dah 958* / November 20-29, 1551).[23] The more important point is that the copy he primarily used for *istinsah*, as mentioned above, was the original (author's) copy. Ten days later (November 30 – December 9, 1551), in the seventh manuscript written by Ali b. Ahmed, he again seeks refuge in God from the instigators of discord and those enduring hardship. This time, while mentioning himself, he writes the name of his grandfather as well as his father: Ali b. Ahmed b. Zuhra.[24]

The *müstensih* Ali b. Ahmed's longing for his homeland and family seems to be unending. Approximately twenty days after the previous work (December 25, 1551), in the eighth manuscript he wrote, he repeats his longing for the relief of his sorrow and his desire to return to his homeland. It is important to note that in this instance, we understand that the person named Zuhra, mentioned in the previous manuscript, is not the *müstensih*'s grandfather, but his father's grandfather. As a result, the *müstensih*'s grandfather's name is also Ali: Ali b. Ahmed b. Ali b. Zuhra.[25]

The ninth copy lacks an entry, and thus the date of copy is not provided.[26] The copies in the *mecmua* are arranged chronologically. Based on this order, it is likely that this particular copy was penned between December 25-28, 1551. This is because the date of the copy for the previous manuscript (22705/008) is December 25, while the date of the next copy (2705/010) is December 28 or earlier. Thus, the *müstensih* may have made this copy on December 25, the same day he completed

20 The previous work is from the Dhu'l-Hijjah of the same year. There are no copies written in the *mecmua* for the months of Rajab, Sha'ban, Ramadan, or Shawwal.

21 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/004, 144b.

22 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/005, 149b.

23 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/006, 153b.

24 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/007, 167a.

25 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/008, 170a.

26 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/009, 176b-177a.

the previous one, or on December 28, the date of the next copy. Furthermore, it is possible that the next copy (2705/10) was made on the same day. Along with these possibilities, the probability that the copy was made on one of the dates, December 26-27, 1551, is higher.

The tenth work is one of Ali b. Ahmed's compilations (*mültekat*). When the copy[27] was made on one of the days between December 26, 27, or 28 in 1551, other individuals also attracted the attention of the *müstensih*, Ali b. Ahmed.[28] In the *istinsah* notes he previously wrote (for example, on July 3, 1551), he sought refuge in God from the evilness of the instigators of discord; in this work, they have now become his enemies (*e'dâ'ihi*). Perhaps even while in exile, the *müstensih* continued to face those he referred to as 'my enemies,' or it is possible that Ali b. Ahmed became convinced that those he had previously considered mere instigators of discord had now become his enemies. His preference for the plural form (enemies instead of enemy) can be inferred from the fact that he was involved in a conflict with a group in Homs. Regardless of the circumstances, these instigators of discord have not been able to discourage Ali b. Ahmed, as he repeats the hardships he previously endured and even adds to it: 'There is no power and no strength other than by Allah'. The figure of the 'enemy' must be a common motif for those who have been exiled. Indeed, a century after Ali b. Ahmed, Niyazi Mısri (d. 1694), another enlightened figüre at Al-Azhar (*Ezherîan*), who was exiled to the same island, mentions enemies in his journals. Similarly, Carullah Efendi, who was exiled to Gevgelija, refers to his enemies in the mentioned margin notes.[29] On the other hand, Ali b. Ahmed's mention of enemies in Homs suggests that he may have been a victim of a local power struggle in the region. Indeed, the rivalry among the ulema, of which Ali b. Ahmed was likely a part, was a common situation in the Ottoman territories for a century. eş-Şakâiku'n-Nu'mâniye and its appendages include dozens of stories that focus on such struggles. For instance, Mullah Lutfi (d. 1495), one of the 15th-century Ottoman scholars sentenced to death as a victim of ulema rivalry, cited those who envied him as the *sebeb-i telif* (reason for the compiling) of his Hajj pamphlet. Accordingly, Sultan Bayezid II ordered Mullah Lutfi to review the tafsir (interpretation) of the verses of Hajj for discussion in his presence on a religious holiday. After reviewing the tafsirs, he entered into a dispute with certain individuals, whose names he did not mention, regarding these verses in front of the sultan. According to Mullah Lutfi, those who debated were shallow-minded, bigoted, and instigators of discord. It remains unclear who ultimately prevailed in the debate. Therefore, Mullah Lutfi wrote this book to distinguish between right and wrong. In Mullah Lutfi's view, the individuals with whom he disputed in the presence of the sultan were those who could not tolerate what God had granted him.[30] Ali b. Ahmed, who identifies himself as an Ezherian, refers to these individuals as 'my enemies' in Homs. They may indeed be his adversaries.

Ali b. Ahmed worked another copy by 29 December 1551, just four days after his previous work. We observe that his sadness and sorrow have not diminished but rather intensified. This time, the longing extends not only to the children, loved ones, and friends who were previously mentioned but also to relatives, with a strong desire to reunite and embrace them as soon as possible. In the

27 He has written the date of copy as the end of Dhu'l-Hijjah 958, which could be any day between December 20 and 28. Yet, the date given by Ali b. Ahmet for the eighth copy is 26 Dhu'l-Hijjah 958. The *mecmua* follows a chronological order. This must be at least a day after 26 Dhu'l-Hijjah. The month of Dhu'l-Hijjah in the year 958 had 29 days. This date must be one of the days between the 27th, 28th, or 29th (December 26, 27, or 28, 1551).

28 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/10, 235a.

29 According to Carullah Efendi, just as with the enemies of Ali b. Ahmed, Kethüda Melun is evil and the vizier is cruel.

30 Mullah Lutfi, *Risâletü'l-Hacc*, Süleymaniye Ktp. Şehid Ali Pasha, 2844, 42b.

same work, there is someone we do not typically see in the records, namely his mother. In this work, he expresses his desire to reunite and embrace her as soon as possible.[31] One of the notable aspects of this work is the information provided about the number of his children. Ali b. Ahmed refers to his children in the tesniye (dual) form in May-June 1551, in the plural form on 3 July 1551, and again in the dual form after a period of six months in this work. Perhaps this time, he received the news of the death of one of his children in Homs, or it is possible that, despite actually having two children, he mistakenly referred to them in the plural form in the previous work.

Ali b. Ahmed does not include a copy of the work in the twelfth manuscript, similar to the ninth copy. Nevertheless, in the Zahriye (241a), as previously mentioned, he provides the imprints of the work and prays for some individuals at this time. Among those, he prays for himself as well (*kâtibihî*). In the same passage, he indirectly prays for himself again by referring to those who will pray for the scribe of the copy, meaning himself.[32] Ali b. Ahmed does not add an *istinsah* note in the twelfth manuscript. As noted, he alludes to himself both directly and indirectly, suggesting that he at least did not want to be forgotten in the prayers.

Rhodes has now become an unbearable place for him, a place he needs to leave and return to his homeland as soon as possible. Here, he feels troubled, anxious, and is overwhelmed by grief and sorrow. As seen in the manuscript, he constantly prays to God to return him to his homeland. He remains in Rhodes grudgingly and by force, making his presence known while constructing a detailed self-portrait, as though he does not wish to be forgotten. In the *istinsah* notes, he uses two types of adjectives for himself. The first group consists of anonymous adjectives such as 'Abd,' 'fakîr,' 'hakir,' 'zelîl,' 'efkari 'ibâdillâh (the poorest servant of God),' 'ahvecihim ilâ rahmetillâh (the servant most in need of God's mercy),' 'efkari'l-verâ (the weakest being in the universe),' and 'el-mu'terif bi'l-'aczi ve't-taksîr' (the one who confesses his feebleness and deficiency). Yet, these adjectives neither remove the mystery surrounding him nor do they help us recognize him. Moreover, they are common adjectives used by other *müstensihs* as well. Therefore, it is not possible to conduct any analysis about Ali b. Ahmed based on these works. The adjectives in the second group are specifically intended to describe Ali b. Ahmed. He is named Ali; his father's name is Ahmet, his grandfather's name is also Ali, and his great-grandfather's name is Zuhre. He is known by the title Ebu'l-Fazl, with origins tracing back to the Sahaba, specifically the Ansar. His scholarly background is from Al-Azhar, and his homeland is Homs. Theologically, he adheres to the Ash'ari madhhab, adheres to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence in practice, is initiated into the Qadiri Sufi Order, and is affiliated with the Khalidi Order in service. The *müstensih* repeats this lengthy introduction in many of the copies within the *mecmua*. In the eleventh copy, found within the same manuscript, he presents himself almost as a series of adjectives in this istinsah notes. This time, we are presented with eleven adjectives, a byname, and a proper noun. His children, relatives, and even his grief and sorrow are related to him, but they are not included in the mentioned count. Refusing to be a resident of the island, he centers himself, expressing his desire not to fade into oblivion.

Furthermore, Ali b. Ahmed conveys his response not merely through writing but at times, through silence. In the *istinsah* notes of Ottoman *müstensihs*, when mentioning the town or city where they copied, it is customary to add a positive adjective or pray for that place. For instance, three *müstensihs* who copied in three different locations in the same year as Ali b. Ahmed would

31 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/11, 240a. *"...Ve cema'a* şemlehû *bi-veledeyhi ve ekâribehû ve men yelûdu fîhi..."*

32 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/12, 241a. "...Nefe'allahu bi-bereketihî ve bereketi 'ulûmihî el-müslimîne ecma'în ve kâtibihî ve kâri'ihî ve mâlikihî ve'n-nâziri fîhi ve men nazara fîhi ve de'â li-kâtibi ve mağfirihî bi-'l-mağfireti ve'r-rahmeti..."

exercise such discretion. In the first manuscript, Abid b. Hajj Sinan, who copied in Mecca, refers to Constantinople as *al-mahmiyaa* (June-July 1551).[33] In the second, Muhammed b. Isa Bosnevi, in his work, refers to Mecca as al-musharafa and al-mu'azzama (April 1551).[34] Meanwhile, in the third manuscript, Mustafa b. Abdullah b. Mustafa, in his text of the city of Akkerman, prays, 'Oh Allah, protect the people of this city from all calamities in both this world and the Hereafter!' (July 1551).[35] Although Ali b. Ahmed mentions the name of Rhodes ten times in his works, he never assigns a single positive adjective to the island. Each time, he merely invokes the name of the island, as if suggesting it oppressed his spirit: Rhodes. It is not uncommon for *müstensihs* to refrain from praying for the places where they worked, and Ali b. Ahmed's approach can be attributed to this custom. The fact that he mentions the name of Rhodes ten times in the same *mecmua* without offering anything positive about it suggests the island represents a place he did not wish to be at.

Words imploring for amnesty

Ali b. Ahmed's headings for both the manuscript and the original works are noteworthy, as they reflect his state of mind and soul. Indeed, in the headings he gave to this manuscript, he uses the word 'Rhodes' in the zahriye (1a), but more importantly, it is the adjective he employs for Rhodes that stands out. Ali b. Ahmed deems it appropriate to give the *mecmua* the title *Mecmû'u'l-âmâki'l-multekat* fî *beldeti Rodos dâri'l-firâk*, as mentioned above. The adjective "*dâru'l-firâk*" (land of exile) used for Rhodes accurately reflects the situation of the *müstensih* sent from Homs to Rhodes. Furthermore, it is highly likely that the *müstensih*'s use of "*firâk*" also alludes to the literary genre of *firâkname*. The term *firâkname* refers to a genre used for works that express the author's separation from their homeland or a beloved person.[36] What is even more intriguing than the *müstensih*'s wordplay is the prayer after giving these headings to the manuscript. In the zahriye (1a), the prayerful passage written immediately beneath the title of the work is as follows: *Mecmû'u'l-âmâki'l-multekat* fî *beldeti Rodos dâri'l-firâk, Allahumme munne bi't-telâki ve'l-ıtlâk*. "*Telâk*" is defined in the dictionary as 'aspiration,' and its choice is clear: the *müstensih* aspires to reunite with his loved ones. The next work, "ıtlak," is undoubtedly used with a specific purpose, as it refers to setting free or the release of an exiled person in the dictionary. In the relevant documents, the issues of exile and amnesty are discussed under the '*nefy u itlâk orders*',[37] while his amnesty request is referred to as '*af u ıtlak*'.[38] Thus, the *müstensih* Ali b. Ahmed, on the very first page of the *mecmua*, indirectly conveys that Rhodes is a land of exile/farewell (*dâru'l-firâk*) for him. He prays to God to set him free (ıtlak) and return him to his homeland. Furthermore, he asks to be reunited with his loved ones (*Telâk*). Similar prayer/hope will be expressed a century later by another exile on the island of Lemnos (Niyazi Mısri):

Haps içün geldi gelür ıtlâk içün fermân bana
Evveli kahr, âhiri ihsân ider sultân bana.[39]

33 Âbid b. Hâcc Sinan, Süleymaniye, Şehzade Mehmet, 29, 77a

34 Muhammed b. İsa Bosnevî, Süleymaniye, Yazma Bağışlar, 431, 110b

35 Mustafa b. Abdullah b. Mustafa, Manisa İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 2574, 15b

36 Orhan Kemal Tavukçu, "Türk Edebiyatında Firâk-nâme Adlı Eserler," *Türk Kültürü İncelemeleri Dergisi* 10 (2004): 90.

37 Güneş, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Sürgün Cezası," 50.

38 Güneş, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Sürgün Cezası," 51.

39 Hasan Kavruk, "Hatıraları Işığında Niyâzî-i Mısrî," *Ankara Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi* 39 (2009): 406.

At the end of the same prayer in the zahriye, Ali b. Ahmed finishes it by invoking the names of God: al-Fattah, al-'Alim, ar-Rahim, and ar-Razzaq: *Mecmû'u'l-âmâki'l-multekat* fî *beldeti Rodos dâri'l-firâk, Allahumme munne bi't-telâki ve'l-ıtlâk,* Yâ Fettâh Ya 'Alîm Yâ Rezzâk. Undoubtedly, the *müstensih* pays attention to the harmony of the words when constructing each of the three groups: the heading of the work, the prayer passage, and God's attributes (...Dâru'l-firâk, ... Itlâk... Rezzâk), since what is truly significant is that the chosen names of God are deeply related to his situation. The *müstensih* invokes the name al-Fattah (the Opener, who unlocks doors and offers assistance) to plead with God to open the gates of freedom, seeking release from the prison-like island of Rhodes and a return to Homs. He seems to use the name al-Alim (the All-knowing) to convey that, although the authorities in both Homs and Rhodes fail to recognize or appreciate his innocence, God is fully aware of his true circumstances. Through these names, the *müstensih* calls upon divine justice and mercy. The doors he wishes to open might be the gates of the Rhodes Fortress. In that case, there might also be a possibility of his defenses failing. Indeed, in later documents, there will be references to individuals who were to serve as fortress defenders in the Rhodes Castle. For example, in a late hatt-ı humayun, Sultan Mahmud II orders that a Moralist zimmi/non-Muslim named Istimaki be assigned as a fortress defender in Rhodes. "I was pleased to hear of the capture of this infidel. Let a decree be issued for his improvement in the Fortress of Rhodes, and may a designated envoy depart from here to execute the order, binding him in chains and delivering him to the Fortress of Rhodes."[40] The name er-Rahim used in the prayer by Ali b. Ahmed is a plea for mercy, asking God to alleviate his situation, as God is aware of his plight. In these pleas, Ali b. Ahmed likely considers not only himself but also the family he left behind in Homs. This is reflected in his invocation of the name er-Rezzak, calling upon God as the Provider. Thus, he seeks God's assistance for both himself, believing that his arrival on this island was due to a conspiracy, and for the family he left behind in Homs.

On the other hand, the titles of the works copied by this unwilling guest seeking his freedom are intriguingly related to his own situation within the *mecmua*. This may be nothing more than an innocent synchronicity. Yet, considering the *müstensih*'s wordplay, which subtly reflects his own situation, it seems likely that there is more at work than mere coincidence. As mentioned above, Ali b. Ahmed is the *müstensih* of eight out of the twelve works in the mentioned *mecmua*, while he is both the *müstensih* and the author of the remaining four works. He is the author of these works, which he created by selecting from other works. In this process, he preferred the term 'multekât' (affiliation) over 'muhtârât,' which carries a similar meaning. The title of the first work from which he compiled selections is *Meşâru'leşvâk ilâ mesâri'l-'uşşâk ve musîri'l-garâmi ilâ dâri's-selâm.* The words used in this title are not at all foreign to the situation he is in, such as 'şevk' (plural: eşvâk), meaning longing, yearning, or nostalgia; 'aşk' (plural: uşşâk), meaning love; 'garâm,' which also refers to a type of love; and 'dâru's-selâm,' meaning the land of peace. All these words seem to represent another expression of his desire to move from Rhodes, the 'dâru'l-firâk' (the land of separation), to Homs, the 'dâru's-selâm' (the land of peace). The titles of the works included in Ali b. Ahmed's *mecmua* is not limited to these allusions to his own situation. In fact, another work he includes is '*Shifâu'l-kulûb mine'l-ahzuni ve'lkurûb'd,*' which he attributes to Abu Mansur al-Sa'alabi (d. 1038) as the author. The meaning of the title, 'The One That Leads Hearts from Grief and Sorrow to Bliss,' seems to have been specifically chosen for the purpose of compiling selections (iltikât). It is well known that in nearly all of the manuscripts in Ali b. Ahmed's *mecmua*, he implores God to free him from this grief and sorrow as soon as possible. His final work, from which he compiled selections, is titled *Muhtasaru'l-kelâm fî tekallubâti havâdisi'l-eyyâm*, meaning 'The essence of the constant change of events in time.' From

40 Köksal, "Osmanlı Hukukunda Bir Ceza Olarak Sürgün," 330

another perspective, this title conveys the following: Yesterday, the *müstensih*, who likely enjoyed a prestigious life in Homs, is today a prisoner in Rhodes. Yet, the way tomorrow will unfold remains unpredictable. Another work that Ali b. Ahmed meticulously compiled is *Reyâhînu'l-murtâhîn*, where the first word (Reyâhîn) means basil, and the second word (Murtahîn) refers to a person with inner peace. Peace is a constant theme in all his manuscripts. The word basil was likely chosen deliberately as the basil flower, much like the *müstensih* Ali b. Ahmed, does not thrive in solitude. It is sensitive and requires constant care. In this way, the *müstensih* seems to subtly express his desire not to be forgotten and abandoned in isolation on this island.

As a result of being kept out of view in Rhodes, Ali b. Ahmed is deprived of the attention he seeks in the catalog of manuscripts. His works, much like him, have been subjected to the same neglect in the catalogs. None of the works authored by him in this manuscript are attributed to him in the Süleymaniye Şehid Ali Pasha Catalog, and the catalogs reflect his obscurity on this island. For example, the title of the first work in the manuscript is recorded in the catalog as *Mecma'ul-'amâk*, with the author listed as Ibn al-Nahhas. It should be noted that the actual title of this work, which discusses the virtues of jihad, is neither *Mecma'u'l-Âmâk* nor is the author Ibn al-Nahhas. In the zahriye of the copy, the name Ibn al-Nahhas is written by the *müstensih*, Ali b. Ahmed. He does not write this to indicate that Ibn al-Nahhas is the author of this work; rather, he writes it to show that he has compiled selections from Ibn al- Nahhas's work *Meşâri'ul-'eşvâk ilâ mesâri'l-'uşşâk*. Ali b. Ahmed explicitly highlights this by referring to it as *el-Multekat min kitâbi Meşâri'l-'eşvâk ilâ mesâri'l-'uşşâk*. Consequently, the title of the work should be *el-Multekat min kitâbi Meşâri'l-'eşvâk ilâ mesâri'l-'uşşâk*, not *Mecma'ul-âmâk,* as it is written in the catalog. Indeed, as if anticipating that a mistake would be made, Ali b. Ahmed reiterates in the authorship note that the title of the work is exactly as stated. The work written in the catalog as *Mecmû'ul-âmâk* (not *Mecma'ul-âmâk* as written in the catalog) and mentioned in the zahriye of the copy (1a) is a rare example of a proper noun given to the *mecmua* by the *müstensih*, Ali b. Ahmed. The complete title of the manuscript is, as mentioned above, *Mecmû'u'l-âmâk el-Multekat* fî *Beldet-i Rodos dâri'l-firâk*. In this instance, Ali b. Ahmed is not only the *müstensih* of this *mecmua* but also its author. This implies that we are encountering a new work, about which we have no information in the catalog, and that it exists in the author's manuscript.

The circumstances surrounding the first work in the *mecmua* is similarly applicable to the second work. This work, too, was compiled by Ali b. Ahmed through *iltikât*, and, like the first work, it has been attributed to the author (Rakkî İbrahim b. Ahmed) from whom selections were compiled. Ali b. Ahmed, on the other hand, states in the zahriye (109a) that the work is a compilation (multekat): "*el-Multekat min kitâbi Reyâhini'l-Murtâhîn...*" This, like the previous copy, indicates that we are confronted with a new work written in the author's (Ali b. Ahmed's) handwriting. The author of the seventh copy of the *mecmua* is also Ali b. Ahmed, and the method remains the same, iltikât. Here, he compiles selections from the work Şifâu'l-Kulûb *mine'l-ehzuni ve'l-kurûb* by Ebu Mansûr es-Se'âlebî, but in the catalog, the work is attributed to Se'âlebî. Thus, it is a work written in the handwriting of a third author, though it is not written as a manuscript in the same *mecmua*.[41] The tenth work in the *mecmua* was also created by Ali b. Ahmed, but again, his name does not appear in the *istinsah* notes. Indeed, like the other "*el-mültekat*" in the *mecmua*, this work is attributed not to Ali b. Ahmed, but to the author (Zeynuddin Halid b. Abdullah Ezherî, d. 1499) of the work from which the selections were compiled. As evidenced, even the catalogs prepared five centuries later remain indifferent to his exile in Rhodes, and despite all his anguish, it could not be forgotten. They miswrite the titles

41 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/007, 167a

of works and attribute their own authorship to others. Moreover, the indifference is not confined to these inaccuracies. As mentioned above, Ali b. Ahmed is the *müstensih* of all the works in the *mecmua*, naturally including the four works written in the author's handwriting, as they are his own compositions, yet the catalog lists him as the *müstensih* of only seven of them.[42]

All the data regarding the personal narrative of the *müstensih* Ali b. Ahmed is found solely in the work he copied. His *istinsah* notes contribute to our understanding of his biography, even if we know nothing else about him. Based solely on these copies, we can summarize the information we have about him as follows: His name is Ali. His father's name is Ahmed, his grandfather's name is Ali, and his great-grandfather's name is Zuhre. His hometown is Homs. He must have stayed in Homs for many years, as in addition to the Humsi nisbah, he also indicates in seven separate works that Homs is his homeland. His scholarly background is from Al-Azhar. The family's origins trace back to the Sahaba, specifically the Ansar. In belief, he follows the Ash'ari madhhab, and in practice, the Hannafi madhhab. He is a Sufi, with a temperament aligned with the Qadiri order. In service, he is referred to as Khalidi, a title likely related to his profession. It is certain that he is well-educated, with at least four of his own authorship (works authored through affiliation in the *mecmua*), and he is prolific, having copied at least twelve copies in one year, four of which are his own authorship. He possesses a literary taste, as he carefully selects the words he uses. He has been married at least once and is likely still married. He has at least three children. Currently, he is in Rhodes, most likely in exile. We have no information about whom he is in contact with there, but he must have led a prestigious life in Homs. This is evident as he mentions missing his children, relatives, friends, and especially those who love him. Additionally, in seven of his manuscripts, he states that he is identified as Ebu'l-Fazl. In Islamic literature, patronymics are generally attributed to children. It should be noted that in some cases authors also use a patronymic to signify a personal trait. Thus, the title Ebu'l-Fazl might mean 'father of Fazl,' but it could also be used to signify 'a virtuous person'.[43] He is likely referring to the second meaning of Ebu'l-Fazl. Ali b. Ahmed introduces himself as 'Ali b. Ahmed' and not as 'the one whose patronymic is Ebu'l-Fazl,' but rather as 'the one titled Ebu'l-Fazl.' This indicates that he is a well-respected and esteemed character in the town where he resides. Another group around Ali b. Ahmed consists of his enemies. It is difficult to determine the nature of their enmity, but it is certain that as a result of their efforts (or as Ali b. Ahmed believed), he was exiled to Rhodes. He refers to these people as instigators of discord. He was in Rhodes between May 22 and December 29, 1551[44], but there is no information in the available copies about when he arrived there. It is possible to infer that he arrived on the island around the date of this copy, May 22, 1551, based on the use of the word 'nezil' (guest) in the first copy of the *mecmua*. Given that he had the ability to author works and considering his social status and the enemies he had made, he could not have been very young. Additionally, it should be noted that he had at least three children. It is unlikely that he is very old, as it is probable that a new child was born in Homs three months after his arrival on the island. He is not an indifferent person; he constantly and longingly remembers his friends, relatives, children, and loved ones, misses them, and wishes to embrace them. His mood is tense; he is not happy to be in Rhodes, feels suffocated there, and longs to return to Homs as soon

42 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/4/5/6/7/8/9/11. As for the place of copying, only eight of them are stated as being in Rhodes (Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/1/2/4/6/8/10/11/12), there is no mention of copying location for the others.

43 There are other individuals known as Ebu'l-Fazl. For instance, Abbas, the son of Ali b. Abi Talib, is referred to as Ebu'l-Fazl due to his virtues. Similarly, during the reign of Akbar Shah, the scholar and statesman Ibn Mubarak al-'Allami was known as Ebu'l-Fazl, while his brother was known as Ebu'l-Feyz. Enver Korukçu, "Ebü'l-Fazl el-Allâmî," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, 10: 313

44 The earliest and latest dates of telif-istinsah in the *mecmua*.

as possible. There is no information on how long he has been here or when his sentence will end, but it is very clear from the *istinsah* notes that he is in a state of expectation, as the works do not depict a profile resigned to his fate or waiting for his sentence to end. This allows us to speculate on the duration of the exile sentence. Tuğba Akıllı Acar, who studied the Exile and Release Book in the Ottoman Archives of the Prime Minister's Office, reports that out of 164 exile sentences recorded, 54 did not specify any duration.[45] Thus, it seems that no definite duration was specified for Ali b. Ahmed's exile in Rhodes, as he expresses his anticipation for release in each of the copies he wrote, approximately every fifteen days.

We currently have no information on whether Ali b. Ahmed, who bemoans his condition, has formally submitted his amnesty request. As noted in the relevant literature, there are instances where exiles have received a favourable reply to their amnesty requests. Such requests can be initiated by the exiles themselves or by their families or loved ones. For instance, the scribe of Haram al-Sharif, Hafız Ibrahim, who was exiled to Rhodes, had an amnesty request submitted on his behalf by his mother, wife, and two daughters residing in Medina.[46] Another exile, like Ali b. Ahmed, who tirelessly awaits the path of amnesty, is Mehmet Nuri. Mehmet Nuri, in his petition to the Sultan, states that his sick mother and children remaining in Âsitâne are in a dire situation. Therefore, he requests his amnesty for the grace of God, the spiritual well-being of the Prophet, and the buying of trouble of the Sultan and the Shehzadi: "This is the petition of your servant in the presence of your serene highness, seeking your compassion... That this rebellious, guilty, and sinful servant of yours, appealing for mercy for his faults, be granted release from the mentioned town and rejoiced by the decree granting freedom, which I have been awaiting day and night, through your showing of mercy..." [47]

It is unknown whether Ali b. Ahmed's relatives, like those of Mehmet Nuri, made any attempts to secure his amnesty. Nevertheless, it is certain that even if such attempts were made, they did not yield any results over the course of seven months.

Conclusion

It is evident that marginal notes are not merely gray areas that provide the imprints of the copy and the name of the *müstensih*. These works appear to be based on personal stories. Ali b. Ahmed also utilizes the manuscripts he made in Rhodes to convey aspects of his inner world to the reader, thus using these works and devoting them to a different purpose. The manuscripts he wrote here could serve as a source for researchers studying the history of emotions in Ottoman history. The words used or omitted by Ali b. Ahmed in these *istinsah* notes (and in some other parts of the *mecmua*) occasionally form part of his style. These works are longer and more subjective compared to other *istinsah* notes. In these works, he uses the copies he made in Rhodes as a means to bemoan his condition and complain to the readers. Based on the available information, we do not know whether Ali b. Ahmed escaped from Rhodes or, if he did, when he returned to his beloved city of Homs. It is possible that he never escaped from Rhodes and lies beneath one of the unnamed tombstones at the Murad Reis Tekke in Rhodes today. Nevertheless, these works highlight the necessity of utilizing manuscript elements more extensively in historical research. This undoubtedly begins with the preparation of a treasure trove catalog for tens of thousands of works.

45 There are five registers with this name. Acar has prepared a master's thesis on the first hundred pages of the third register. Tuğba Akıllı Acar, "3 Nolu Nefy Itlâk Defteri'nin (S. 1-100) Transkripsiyonu ve Değerlendirilmesi," (Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Gaziosmanpasha Üniversitesi, 2006), 338.

46 Köksal, "Osmanlı Hukukunda Bir Ceza Olarak Sürgün," 314.

47 Köksal, "Osmanlı Hukukunda Bir Ceza Olarak Sürgün," 304.

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48 In the catalog, it is written under the name of İbnu'n-Nehhâs, Muhyiddin Ahmed b. İbrahim Dımeşkî; yet, the correct attribution should be as stated above.

49 In the catalog, it is written under the name of Rakkî, İbrahim b. Ahmet; yet, the correct attribution should be as stated above.

50 In the catalog, it is written under the name of Sa'âlebî, Abdulmelik b. Muhammed b. İsmail Nîsâbûrî; yet the correct attribution should be as stated above.

51 In the catalog, it is written under the name of al-Azhari (Ezherî), Zeynuddîn Halid b. Abdullah Cercâvî.

Epilogue

On *Muhabbet*



Cengiz Aktar is a political science scholar, writer and columnist renowned for his expertise in European integration, politics of memory and migration policies. He completed his secondary education at Lycée de Galatasaray in Istanbul and earned a doctorate in economic epistemology from the University of Paris-Sorbonne. Dr Aktar worked for the United Nations and with the European Union on migration and asylum policies. Between 1994 and 1999, he led the United Nations Mission in Slovenia. Transitioning to academia in 2000, he thought at various universities and maintained his popular columns on daily newspapers. Dr Aktar is an adjunct professor of political science at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. His research focuses on the Westernization of the Ottoman Empire, EU's enlargement and regional policies, and the politics of memory. Aktar is a well known advocate for Turkey's integration into the European Union and has authored numerous publications on the subject. Beyond his academic and professional endeavors, Aktar is recognized for his commitment to human rights and confronting historical injustices including past atrocities and promoting reconciliation. Aktar's multifaceted career encompasses significant contributions to international organizations, academia, journalism, and civil society, positioning him as a leading voice in discussions on Turkey's political landscape and its role in global affairs. Books he authored, co-authored, edited and co-edited include *L'occidentalisation de la Turquie,* L'Harmattan, 1986; *Avrupa Birliği'nin Genişleme Süreci*, İletişim, 2002; *Avrupa Okumaları,* Kanat Kitap, 2003; *Lettres aux turco-sceptiques: La Turquie et l'Union européenne,* Actes Sud, 2004; *L'Appel au pardon*, CNRS Editions, 2010; *Tarihi, Siyasi, Dini ve Hukuki Açıdan Ekümenik Patrikhane,* İletişim, 2011; *Les restes de l'épée - Les Arméniens cachés et islamisés de Turquie,* Thaddée, 2012; *Ademimerkeziyet Elkitabı*, İletişim, 2014; *Catışma Çözümleri ve Barış*, İletişim, 2014; *The Future of Religious Minorities in the Middle East*, Lexington Books, 2017; *The Turkish Malaise - A Critical Essay*, Transnational Press, 2021.

"I am no historian, yet I know that there can be no tomorrow without knowing yesterday. In this way, it was a privilege to be part of this corpus, which draws attention to the importance of learning and understanding every aspect of the common past, joys, pains, pangs, resentments, in a word, every aspect of History, and which builds upon a vanguard posture affirming that the muhabbet berated by national narratives can be overcome through muhabbet again.

In the final analysis, everything is political in its noble sense. History and the national narratives cannot be independent of politics; that's why we talk about the lack of muhabbet and revisiting muhabbet."

Cengiz Aktar

On *Muhabbet*

The roots of the word are Arabic. In Turkish, it has two meanings—the more commonly known is being engaged in a friendly conversation; the more infrequent meaning is affection. Both meanings of *muhabbet* faithfully reflect the essence of this book…

In reality, the relationship between the two peoples living in the Aegean Sea is habitually described using negative clichés. At best, there is the familiar saying: "*The people are good, but politics is bad.*" Beyond this, the memories and narratives of the two painful nation-building processes have left their deep marks on the relationship.

I have long believed that the antidote to the "inexorable" poison of nation building is an awareness of the deeply interweaved history of the two people. And for such awareness, I believe in the necessity of a learning rooted in objective knowledge and data, as free from national narratives as possible. This is precisely the purpose of our book!

In the few pages that make up my share, let me illustrate the deficiency of mutual *muhabbet* with examples from both countries, starting with Greece.

About twenty years ago, during a visit centered on friendship, I had the opportunity to tour the Museum of Byzantine Civilisation in Thessaloniki. There, a historical chronology caught my attention: In the information provided, the history of Hellenism seemed to come to a halt in 1453, the year of the fall or conquest of Constantinople, only to resume with the Greek Revolution or the Morea Uprising as the Ottoman regime named it, in the early 1800s.

I am not a historian, yet I found it strange that such a historical parenthesis was presented as a natural fact in a serious, pedagogical, and public institution like a museum. Over time, as I read more, I realized that this parenthesis was not a coincidence but rather one of the fundamental building blocks of the Greek national narrative.

Nevertheless, acknowledging the soreness caused by the centuries in which today's Greek lands and the Greek population of Anatolia lived under the rule of another religion and another people is one thing—scientifically ignoring this period altogether is something entirely different.

Centuries in parenthesis

Is it not undeniable, whether we like it or not, that during the "centuries in parenthesis" the center of gravity of the Orthodox, Hellenic, Greek, Byzantine or Rum world—however we choose to define it—remained firmly rooted in Constantinople, growing in strength, and that through the Ottomans, who in many ways inherited the Byzantine legacy, this influence extended across the entire Ottoman geography?

Let us take a look at the period preceding the parenthesis that began in 1453. Emperor Manuel II Palaeologos repeatedly sought help from Catholic Rome in the face of Ottoman attacks, but he was always turned down due to religious dogma. Finally, fourteen years before the fall of the city, in 1438, a religious council was convened in Ferrara.

The Eastern and Western Churches had split in 1054, and the schism became one of the justifications for the Sack of Constantinople by the Latin Crusader armies in 1204. Historians argue that the events of 1204 were one of the key factors leading to Byzantium's eventual downfall. Indeed, of the vast Empire, a mere 40.000 people remained in the city under attack in 1453.

Confident in its power, Rome imposed a reunification at the Council of Ferrara, effectively annulling the schism of 1054 and forcing Byzantium—regarded as the *Second Rome*—into submission.

In Constantinople, however, fierce opposition arose against reunification of the two historic denominations of Christianity, led by Georgios Kourtesios, the future Ecumenical Patriarch. According to the chronicler Doukas, the opposition was summed up in a statement by the last Grand Duke, Loukas Notaras, as he stood before the besieged city walls: "*I would rather see a Turkish turban in the midst of the City [i.e., Constantinople] than the Latin mitre"*

Indeed, to Catholic Rome and the other powers of Europe, Orthodox Byzantium was just as much an *Other* as the Ottoman Empire. The dominance of Catholic rule over Orthodox lands was no coincidence—the Greek language even has specific terms for it: *francocracy, latinocracy, venetocracy*. But unlike Emperor Manuel II, the Great Church—the Ecumenical Patriarchate—prioritized not the survival of the Byzantine state but the continuity of the Orthodox faith.

Following the conquest, in 1454, Kourtesios was appointed by Mehmed II as Patriarch Gennadios II, marking the end of Catholic rule over Byzantine lands. Catholic dominance was replaced by *Turkokratia*, or Turkish rule, although historians note that this designation was not in use before the revolutionary era.

In a similar vein, after Constantinople changed hands—particularly during the rise of the Ottoman Empire—Catholic Europe began to portray the pre-1453 period as a *lost paradise*. By the early 19th century, this perception had become one of the foundational myths of Greek national identity.

In other words, the breakdown of *muhabbet* did not actually begin in 1453 but rather in the early 1800s. It was the national narrative that formalized the *parenthesis* and national history that reinforced it. Since then, the lack of *muhabbet* has persisted through deeply ingrained clichés. A striking example is the myth perpetuated by the national narrative that Orthodox worship and Greek-language education were banned during the *parenthesis* period. However, unlike the British and French empires, the Ottoman Empire did not attempt to erase the faith, language, or culture of the peoples under its rule in favor of its own. On the contrary, it was forbidden for these communities to resemble the ruling Muslim population in any way.

The wound that never healed

Now, let us turn to Turkey and the entrenched perceptions regarding Greece. The key dates are the early 1800s, 1912, and 1919—corresponding to the Greek War of Independence, the First Balkan War, and the Greek army's landing in Izmir, respectively.

Greece was the first nation-state to break away from the Ottoman Empire. For the struggling Ottoman state, facing severe internal and external crises, the rupture was a profound and lasting shock—a wound that never fully healed. In other words, the Greek Revolution was the true starting point of *muhabbetsizlik*, (meaning lack of *muhabbet)* or estrangement, for Turkey as well.

It is noteworthy that the apprehension developed into a mixture of belittlement and indifference. Historians specializing in the 19th century remind us that there are still 50,000 archival documents in Turkey related to the Greek Revolution between 1812 and 1828 that have yet to be thoroughly studied. Academic readings on this subject are scarce and have only recently begun.

Another striking example is Ahmet Vefik Pasha's *Fezleke-i Tarih-i Osmânî* (1869), which was used as a textbook in the Ottoman Empire. In this work, there is hardly any noteworthy mention of the Greek uprising, independence, or state.

The First Balkan War, which led Greece to its current borders (excluding the Dodecanese), caused a new trauma, much like a century earlier. The year 1912, which marked the Ottoman Empire's forced withdrawal from the Balkans, was a wide-ranging disaster with lasting negative consequences for the Empire's remaining territories. In the following years, emerging national organizations

and narratives in the Empire burned with the desire to take revenge for 1912 on the non-Muslim populations still residing in Anatolia. The role of the retaliation in the genocides, pogroms, and forced resettlements of the Ottoman Empire's final years is far from being minor.

Then came 1919, with the occupation of Izmir and the Aegean hinterland, which represented an even greater humiliation than those of a century and even five years earlier. In Turkey, the perception was that a former *millet-i mahkûme* (subject *millet*) was now laying claim to the land of the *millet-i hâkime* (ruling *millet*). The defeat of the Greek army and the end of the occupation paved the way for new traumas, culminating in a population exchange based on religious identity. The exchange, which meant the end of Anatolian Rum/Greek culture, significantly contributed to the nationalization processes of both countries. However, it also deepened the estrangement and *muhabbetsizlik*. The population exchange was a political decision that treated people as mere objects, stripping them of the human dimension. It remains a profound societal tragedy, with its effects still felt in every *mübadil* (exchangee) family.

It is undeniable that the nation-building process is one that almost forbids, or at the very least undermines the *muhabbet*. Before the era of nationalism, different communities in both countries lived together or co-existed side by side. With the rise of nationalism, however, they suddenly developed a mindset that excluded the other. Over time, the exclusion extended to the entire polity, including both the state and society. The resulting *muhabbetsizlik*, the coldness and the distance, led to indifference, indifference led to ignorance, ignorance led to fear, and fear led to hostility.

As anyone closely observing the two countries knows, relations on the diplomatic front have long been tense. The turning point for this period was the 1974 Cyprus military operation or the occupation of northern Cyprus. Since 1974, the already strained bilateral relations have evolved into a much more conflict-prone climate over the past fifty years. Within this context, Athens' ambiguous stance in 2004, driven by national momentum, regarding the Annan Plan—which could have paved the way for a federal solution in Cyprus and, consequently, facilitated Turkey's path to the European Union—was not insignificant.

More recently, the Aegean Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean have become a primary area of interest for Ankara in the context of its search for fossil fuels. It is clear that the quest is driven by a desire for regional power and influence.

The so-called exploratory talks between the two countries, ongoing since 2002, were unilaterally halted by Ankara after the crisis of the Turkish officers who sought asylum in Greece following the failed coup attempt on July 15, 2016. Although these negotiations now seem to have resumed, lasting peace still appears to be a distant prospect.

Before the termination of these talks, the summer of 2015 saw a massive refugee crisis. There is a possibility that Ankara actively encouraged this large-scale migration.

Then, in 2019, under the "Blue Homeland" (*Mavi Vatan*) doctrine—fabricated by far-right opposition figures and later adopted by the government—Turkey signed a controversial maritime jurisdiction agreement with Libya. The agreement, which disregards the landmass of the island of Crete, was an unprecedented move in international marine relations.

Similarly, in the same context, the Kemalist opposition introduced the claim that several Aegean islands were "occupied by Greece," a notion that was eventually accepted by the ruling establishment.

Meanwhile, Ankara continued its threats to release refugees, conducted military overflights over Greek islands, and carried out naval drills and fossil fuel exploration activities without pause.

Faced with these hybrid threats, Athens began taking defensive measures. Contrary to what many in Turkey believe, these efforts did not begin under the Mitsotakis government but rather during the left-leaning Tsipras government.

Greece established a new security and defense architecture, signing a Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement with the United States, a Strategic Partnership Agreement in the Military and Defense Industry with France, and started developing defense and energy-related facilities in Alexandroupoli in partnership with the U.S. Additionally, NATO's reinforced base in Souda Bay, Crete, further bolstered Greece's strategic position.

Let us now examine the rhetorical aspect. The security threat posed by Ankara to Athens is perhaps more significant now than even in 1974. Yet, despite this, Turkish commentators have largely refrained from seeing these developments as a direct threat from Ankara. Instead, they have framed them within the two-century-old rivalry, competition, and hostility between the two nations.

Commentators who view international relations almost exclusively through a power dynamic lens have flocked to television screens and newspaper columns. They have begun speaking of Turkey's chronic victimhood and its eternal "legitimate security concerns."

Listening to them one would think that Greece is about to attack Turkey. The public, including the opposition, seems to have embraced Ankara's vengeful rhetoric of "*We may come suddenly one night.*"

If we analyze the issue in the context of international relations, first and foremost, whether in interpersonal relationships or international affairs, one side is never entirely right while the other is entirely wrong.

The issue of the Greek islands right across Turkey and their continental shelves has been a persistent headache—since 1947 for the Dodecanese and since 1923 for the others. Numerous attempts at a solution have been made, but all have failed. The missed opportunities are countless.

Is there a cure and if yes how?

Nevertheless, it is clear and undeniable that the solution is not a military one. There are many serious experts on both sides regarding the delimitation of the continental shelf, territorial waters, and airspace. Almost all reasonable proposals are well known. What is needed is an *ad hoc* agreement tailored to the Aegean, guided by international treaties and, if necessary, international arbitration, while taking examples from similar cases worldwide. However, it is also evident that the two sides are far from a constructive dialogue.

From a societal perspective, those who are familiar with both countries—or think they are—often emphasize their similarities.

For decades, we have heard the cliché: "The people are good, but politics is bad." There have been joint concerts, ouzo/rakı gatherings, and friendship meetings. Yet, nothing substantial has come out of these efforts. Why is that?

Perhaps for two fundamental reasons…

First, without addressing the shared yet deeply intertwined painful history, no new and healthy relationship can be built. Without understanding the past, there can be no future.

For instance, in 2022, Greece widely commemorated the Asia Minor Catastrophe, which marked the end of Anatolian Hellenism—a consequence of political and military mistakes made a century ago. Every Greek family has a relative, close or distant, with roots in Asia Minor/Anatolia.

In Turkey, however, 1922 was remembered with the taunt, "We threw them into the sea, and we can do it again!" The vast majority remained unaware that those who were forced into the sea were their neighbors, citizens of their state. Even fewer recognized the civilizational loss that resulted from their departure.

Out of the 16 million people living in the lands that correspond to modern Turkey in 1914-15, three

million non-Muslims were eliminated through various means. How many people today realize the extent to which the country was left barren as a result?

Secondly, the idea of "great similarities" between peoples is quite problematic.

Politically speaking, unlike Turkey, the Greek government does not engage in war rhetoric to win nationalist votes, nor does the public cheer them on for doing so. This "comfortable" illusion, quite common among certain leftist and democratic circles in Turkey, will be addressed below. In Greece, on the other hand, apart from a small minority, there is a consensus across the political spectrum—from left to right—on taking the necessary political, diplomatic, and military measures to protect the country against threats from Ankara.

Turkey's western neighbor, both its politicians and its people, is not a country obsessed with establishing regional dominance or pursuing dreams of becoming a global power. Rather, Greece is a country that enjoys life, has endured countless hardships since the 1820s, is at peace with itself as much as possible, and is generally opposed to violence and inclined toward amicability, as many visitors from Turkey know.

However, recent developments are increasingly interpreted by both pro-government and opposition politicians and commentators in Turkey as a security threat from Greece. This, in turn, legitimizes calls for preemptive action as a form of self-defense. The reason behind this perception is rather fantastical: Turkey's ruling establishment remains fixated on the outdated expansionist doctrine of the "Megali Idea" from Greece's independence era, convinced that Greece is still obsessed with territorial extension at Turkey's expense.

Due to a chronic lack of serious academic insight about modern Greece, discussions on the topic in Turkey are often dominated by retired diplomats, some of whom have served in Athens but remain trapped within institutional biases and unable to think critically.

Indeed, Turkey does not have a single academic institution dedicated to Modern Greek Studies. As for Byzantium, although two academic centers have existed for a decade with great difficulty, there is still no Byzantine Institute in the old capital on a scale worthy of the empire's glory. There are dispersed research and expertise through the personal efforts of some academics. This is true not only for Greece but also for Turkey's entire neighboring geography, with the exception of Europe. The issue is not merely a result of academia's decline in Turkey but points to a deep structural void. *Kütüphanede Muhabbet*, Conversation in the Library was initiated precisely to fill this gap with knowledge.

Because of this sustained shortfall in knowledge and analysis, people in Turkey largely overlook Greece's transformation after 1974, its transition to democracy (Μεταπολίτευση), and its path to European Union membership. As a result, they fail to accurately assess contemporary Greece. For example, in Turkey, few understand why, despite the severe economic and financial crisis that began in 2011—an environment highly conducive to the rise of right-wing populism—the far-right in Greece never became a serious political alternative.

The fundamental principles in foreign relations of self-respecting democracies are dialogue, negotiation, and respect for international law—a kind of *muhabbet* ethics. The foundation of these lies on a knowledge-based societal understanding, which goes beyond monolithic national narratives to acknowledge a shared, if not hybrid, history. And there is the commencement of the politics of memory.

Let us conclude as we began—with our book. This rich collection, filled with the dedicated work of expert researchers grounded in objective knowledge will hopefully give rise to new sprouts and, in time, strong trees in this fertile yet untapped land.

Who knows? Perhaps one day, this book in your hands will be recognized as one of the early milestones of a common history textbook—just as the Germans and the French have managed to produce for their schools.

Takrizât

In the literary and intellectual traditions of Arabic and Ottoman manuscript cultures, ***takrizât*** (Arabic: *taqrīẓāt*, singular: *taqrīẓ*) take a distinctive space as paratextual expressions of scholarly approval and social endorsement. More than ornamental praise, these texts served critical functions in legitimizing, disseminating and embedding manuscripts within the scholarly networks of their time.

In the manuscript culture, ***takrizât*** referred to not so uncommon, brief, often stylistically elevated, refined genre of laudatory commentary penned by respected scholars, jurists, poets, or Sufi masters to praise a work.

Functionally, ***takrizât*** operated as early forms of scholarly validation. Much like modern academic prefaces, reviews, or endorsement blurbs, they affirmed the intellectual value of a text within an established epistemic community. In a time when authorship, readership, and authority were deeply communal and relational, such endorsements were integral to a text's reception and its circulation across madrasas, tekkes, libraries, and private collections. A single ***takriz*** by a prominent figure could grant a manuscript considerable prestige, inviting further readership and replication. ***Takrizât*** also reflected the collaborative ethos of manuscript production. These clusters of voices transformed the manuscript into a social document—attesting not only to the labor of the author but to a wider intellectual community's engagement with the work. As such, ***takrizât*** were not merely marginalia or prefatory ornaments—they were documentary traces of the manuscript world's communal dynamics and systems of trust.



Dominique Eddé is a Franco-Lebanese writer born in Beirut. A trained historian, she pursued studies in Beirut and at the Université Paris Sorbonne, where she was supervised by Dominique Chevallier. A novelist, essayist, and cultural thinker, she writes primarily in French and is known for her richly layered prose, political insight, and philosophical depth. Her work often explores themes of memory, exile, identity, and the entanglements of East and West.

Eddé has authored numerous novels, essays, and literary portraits, including *Lettre posthume* published in 1989. Subsequent works include *Pourquoi il fait si sombre?* (1998), *Cerfvolant* (2003—translated into English as *Kite*), *La lettre et la mort* (an interview with André Green), *Le crime de Jean Genet*, and *Kamal Jann* (translated by Ros Schwartz), as well as an essay, *Edward Said : le roman de sa pensée*, which was published in 2017 by La Fabrique. Eddé's most recent novel *Le Palais Mawal* was released by Albin Michel in 2024.

As a public intellectual, Dominique Eddé has regularly contributed political essays to the international press, particularly on the Middle East, identity, and resistance. She delivered the opening lecture at the Institut du Monde Arabe in March 2025 for the "History Days" congress, urging us to remain humane before heroic.

"This book is more than a book. It is a living, breathing space—a site of encounters shaped by the voices of some seventy authors. At its center stands a library, founded around a fountain on the island of Rhodes in 1793 by Hafız Ahmed Agha, and preserved through time—first by his wife Saliha Hanım and his son Ahmed Fethi Pasha, and then, generation after generation, by their descendants.

Within its thick stone walls, nearly two thousand manuscript volumes have been sheltered and safeguarded to this day. Bound in leather and stored in numbered cardboard cases, these works have endured the passage of time with remarkable resilience.

At the heart lies the genealogy and destiny of an Ottoman—and later Turkish— family. The narrative expands outward: from intimate family memory to collective history, interweaving scholarly archives with private ones. As the pages unfold, a world in motion emerges—through shifting power structures and intercommunal ruptures—culminating in a devastating moment in the Chios Massacre of 1822 and continuing toward the Bosporus.

This world is restored like an old ancestral house—by a team of craftspeople whose roles and skills complement one another. Some rebuild the structure, piece by piece, placing it back into the broader story of war and peace. Others trace its fault lines, animate its silences with hypotheses, and move delicately through the terrain of perhaps... perhaps not.

Tarık Tüten, the great-great-great-grandson of Hafız Ahmed Agha, while assuming the responsibility of the Foundation, has conceived this work as a series of thoughtful exchanges—between scholars and enthusiasts, erudition and intuition. He has taken on the role of conductor, with the precision of the engineer he is and an innate sensibility for respect, harmony, and friendship.

One enters this book as one would step into the idyllic courtyard of the library—lingering in places, taking in the expanse of the gardenscape through the smallest detail, watching the past gradually flow into the present and cast new light upon it.

What emerges is a theatrical atmosphere, where we glimpse both the behind-the-scenes labor and the final performance. This book is a vivid illustration of what khatim—the Arabic word for "completion" or "seal"—can mean as a union of rigor and humility, craftsmanship and permanence. It is a model of resistance in a time marked by violent transformations and collective helplessness.

Having had the privilege of being close to his mother, Leylâ Tüten, who passed away during the making of this volume, I would like to evoke her presence here, which quietly permeates the pages of this book.

Until her final days—approaching the age of one hundred—she remained endlessly curious, eager to keep learning. Less conscious of what she already knew than of what she might still discover, she embodied a rare and generous form of intelligence.

She possessed, more than anyone I have known, that deep refinement which lies in never being self-satisfied—in continually listening, observing, learning. A mélomane, a polyglot, and open to all cultures and disciplines, she embodied the very best of both Asia and Europe.

Behind her delicate creations—sculptures, paintings—was an artist who quietly stepped aside, allowing the work to speak. She knew how to balance gravity with lightness, lucidity with harmony, know-how with know-what.

All these qualities—passed down to her son—are present throughout this book. The destiny of this remarkable family is revealed slowly, page by page, like a silver-gelatin photograph coming into focus, just before the blacks and greys settle into their final depth.

I can only imagine the quiet emotion she might have felt—her admiration, free of pride—for a work so aptly named. Muhabbet was the word we used in Arabic, our mutual friend Dina Haidar and I, everytime we visited her: a word evoking affection, intimacy, and meaningful conversation.

From Şemsinur, the former slave who became the first wife of Ahmed Fethi Pasha, and then to their descendants—Güzîde, Saîde, Sâmiha, and her daughter Leylâ, whom I have just recalled—this book gives women a space that official history so rarely allows. It is no small achievement.

The fictional portrait of Şemsinur, written by Nektaria Anastasiadou, ends with the image of a balcony. And it is precisely this space—perched between inside and out—that best captures the temporal and spatial dimensions offered to the reader by this book. A sheltered, elevated place, open to the breeze. A time apart, where the ticking of the clock is suspended, where conversation flows, and the past moves gently into the present and back again.

In the troubled history and geography of this region, islands—whether Greek or Turkish— occupy a central place. Here too, they appear as balconies from which the world is observed, as guardians of the rûh, the soul, as the word is known in both Arabic and Turkish.

What better way to preserve the soul of a book than through the presence of the hands that once traced its words in ink? And what more fitting tribute to those hands than to breathe life back into their time—while honoring the mystery that time still holds?"

Christine Philliou is Professor of History at the University of California, Berkeley, where she chairs the Department of Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures and directs the Modern Greek and Hellenic Studies Program as well as the Turkish, Ottoman and Post-Ottoman Studies (TOPOS) Program, both of which she founded. Her book, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (2010) shed light on the Greek Orthodox Christian elite of Phanariots and their role in Ottoman governance at the turn of the nineteenth century, in the age of the Greek War of Independence and on the eve of the Tanzimat Reforms. In *Turkey: A Past Against History* (2021), she turned to the closing decades of Ottoman history and the transformation to Republican Turkey and traces the history of the concept of *muhalefet*, meaning both opposition and dissent. This she did through the life and works of Refik Halid Karay, a perennial claimant to the status of *muhalif* who spanned the fall of the Ottoman Sultanate and the construction of the Republic. In both books, she applies a post-national lens to the key eras and origin stories of the Greek and the Turkish nation-states, showing us that there is so much more to the historical experience of Greeks and Turks than their national histories would allow for. More recently, she founded the İstanΠόλις digital collaborative (istanpolis.org), where she and a team of scholars conduct granular analysis of neighborhood-level communities in Ottoman Constantinople/Istanbul between the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence and the end of the Ottoman era (1821-1923). She is a winner of the Sakıp Sabancı Prize, recipient of numerous grants such as a National Endowment for the Humanities Collaborative grant, and publishes widely in academic and popular journals.

"This collection is nothing less than a portal into a forgotten world, leading the reader into a dazzling history and a new kind of imagination for Ottoman, Greek and Turkish history. In one sense, the contributions revolve around an actual library–that founded by Hafız Ahmed Ağa and Ahmed Fethi Paşa in Rhodes–which is already interesting as a relic of the Ottoman past in Rhodes, now finding itself in the modern state of Greece. But it is much more than an interesting study of an Ottoman library stranded on a post-Ottoman island. It offers us a series of lenses, or overlapping vistas, onto the lives and careers of the library's founders, often provided by their descendants as well as by scholars from a range of specializations. It provides broader contextualization of reading, libraries, and political economy of power in the post-classical Ottoman Empire; offers a focus on one woman who had a fateful relationship to the library, its founders, and the islands of Chios and Rhodes as well as neighborhoods such as Eyüp in the Ottoman capital; and detailed considerations of the contents and built structures and spaces of use in the library.

The second volume offers a different kind of wide-angle lens and offers us yet another string of scholarly pearls on the history of Rhodes in the longue durée, from antiquity through the ages and empires that bring us through the Ottoman and Italian eras, and ultimately the Greek present. Each snapshot is as careful, empirically rigorous and thought-provoking as the whole collection is staggering in depth and range. This is a portal onto a dynamic and complex world of people, and manuscripts, and homes and islands, all centered around a microhistory of a library and its founders.

Beyond the specific contribution of this collection to scholarship, which is tremendous, we cannot ignore its contribution, which is perhaps even greater, to Greek and Turkish societies. This is a model of post-national history, attuned to all of the conflicts, contradictions, and meandering lines of interconnection between the supposedly separate Greek and Turkish nations. Muhabbet–conversation, chat, affection–and its not quite exact counterpart of συζήτηση–discussion–together capture both the allure and the challenge of merging Greek and Turkish perceptions of the Ottoman past. And what more beautiful case study of the shared and complex Ottoman heritage of Greeks and Turks than a library?

I congratulate Tarık Tüten for this monumental achievement and for fostering the inspiration that bursts forth from these pages!"

Molly Greene studies the history of the Mediterranean Basin, the Ottoman Empire, and the Greek world. Her interests include the social and economic history of the Ottoman Empire, the experience of Greeks under Ottoman rule and the early modern Mediterranean. After earning a B.A. in political science at Tufts University (1981), Professor Greene spent several years living in Greece and then completed a Ph.D. in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton (1993), where she studied Ottoman history. Upon graduating she joined the Princeton faculty with a joint appointment in the History Department and the Program in Hellenic Studies. Her first book, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (2000), examines the transition from Venetian to Ottoman rule on the island of Crete, which the Ottomans conquered in 1669. Challenging the assumption of a radical rupture with the arrival of the Ottomans, Greene shows that the population of Crete had been drawn into the Ottoman world long before the conquest and that important continuities linked the Venetian and the Ottoman periods. Her second book, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants: A Maritime History of Mediterranean 1450-1700,* was published in 2010 and was a co-winner of the Runciman Award for that year, given for the best book in English on any aspect of Hellenism. At the center of the book is the relationship between Catholic piracy and Greek commerce in the early modern Mediterranean. In 2015 she published *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, 1453-1768: The Ottoman Empire,* part of a multi-volume series on the history of the Greek people from antiquity until the present day.

*"**Conversation in the Library** or **Kütüphanede Muhabbet** is a highly original contribution not only to academic research but also to academic community. **Muhabbet**, which I think is best translated as convivial conversation, was a key concept in Ottoman structures of sociability. Fittingly, then, these two volumes bring together over sixty scholars to introduce to the world the extraordinary manuscript library of Hafız Ahmed Ağa, as well as the history of Rhodes in its medieval, Ottoman, colonial and Greek contexts. Hafız Ahmed Ağa was a native of Rhodes who inaugurated his library in 1793. The library is the only Ottoman library – whether in Turkey or abroad - which is still in the possession of the founder's family. Tarik Tuten, who is the seventh generation of the family, is a resident of both Istanbul and the Dodecanese and is the current custodian of the library. He has been instrumental in the production of these two volumes as well as reviving the lost art of **Muhabbet** by bringing so many scholars – from Greece, Turkey and elsewhere – together. From a deep dive into Ottoman libraries and manuscripts to broad reflections on how Rhodiots, and Dodecanese islanders more generally, have understood history, these two volumes bring to light a lost world whose repercussions are still with us today."*

Loukas Tsoukalis received his doctoral degree from the University of Oxford where he taught for many years. He returned home as Professor of European Integration at the University of Athens and was subsequently elected as the first holder of the Eleftherios Venizelos Chair at the European Institute of the London School of Economics. He was also for long head of the economics department at the College of Europe in Bruges. He has held visiting professorships at the European University Institute in Florence, King's College London, and the Kennedy School at Harvard University. He has advised former presidents of the European Commission and the European Council. He is now Professor at the Paris School of International Affairs (Sciences Po), Emeritus Professor of the University of Athens, and President of the board of the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), Greece's leading think tank. Author of many articles and books translated into several European languages. In 2021, Oxford University Press published a Festschrift in his honour with contributions by leading personalities from academia and politics across Europe. His latest book *Europe's Coming of Age* was published by Polity Press in 2023.

"An Ottoman foundation with a library in Rhodes that dates back to 1793 and houses a rich collection of old manuscripts. An island with a long history of invasions and foreign occupations, also periods of multiethnic peaceful coexistence. Two volumes containing contributions from scholars from very different backgrounds on a wide range of topics, all the way from the study of Ottoman manuscripts to the massacre of Chios and the Greek war of independence, the history of both the foundation and the library, multilingualism under the Ottoman empire and a Pasha writing poems in Greek, the long presence of the Knights of St John and their strong imprint on the island, Jewish and other communities, Italian rule until the end of the Second World War followed by Rhodes and the Dodecanese becoming part of Greece. All contributions to these two volumes draw inspiration from the rich and highly diverse legacy of Rhodes, of which the Hafiz Ahmed Ağa Library is part.

A seventh-generation custodian with great respect for the treasure he has inherited and a dream for the future. He opens the doors of the library and invites people in, aspiring to give new life to a historical monument by creating a welcoming space for scholarly work and cultural exchange. Tarik Tüten has been the driving force for this publication. He has brought many scholars together who ended up sharing his dream. The ***Conversation in the Library*** *is a generous offering to mutual understanding, dialogue and cooperation: a true gem."*

Konrad Hirschler is Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Hamburg and spokesperson of the Cluster of Excellence Understanding Written Artefacts. His research explores the cultural and social history of the pre-modern Middle East, with a focus on Arabic manuscript culture, libraries, reading practices, and historiography from the 12th to 16th centuries. He previously held academic posts at the University of Kiel, SOAS, and Freie Universität Berlin. His books include *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands and Medieval Damascus: Plurality and Diversity in an Arabic Library*. He is a section editor for the *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three* and was elected to the Hamburg Academy of Sciences in 2023.

"This is an unusual book in the best sense of the term. It is dedicated to a very special library, the Hafız Ahmed Agha Library on Rhodes, the only continuously functioning Ottoman library still managed by the endower's family. ***Conversation in the Library*** *demonstrates that writing a library's history can be much more than merely chronicling its books. Bringing together a fascinating range of authors, it offers numerous insights and reflections on what this library might have signified throughout its history up to the present day. This book invites the reader to explore the library from many perspectives, including individual biographies, imperial histories, buildings, and books. Lovingly produced and utterly captivating, it comes highly recommended for anyone interested in the entangled past and present of the Eastern Mediterranean."*

Soli Özel is a scholar of international politics, Turkish foreign policy, and comparative democratization. His research and teaching focus on global affairs, the Middle East, and the evolution of political Islam, with a particular interest in Turkey's place within shifting international orders. He holds a BA in Economics from Bennington College and an MA in International Relations from Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). He has taught at multiple academic institutions, including UC Santa Cruz, the University of Washington, Northwestern University, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Johns Hopkins SAIS, Boğaziçi University, and Istanbul Bilgi University. He has also served as a visiting lecturer at Harvard, Yale, Georgetown, and Tufts University. Soli Özel is a former Bernstein Fellow at Yale Law School's Schell Center for Human Rights and a Richard von Weizsäcker Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin. He has been affiliated with the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM) in Vienna as a Europe's Futures Fellow and has participated in research at the Institut Montaigne in Paris and the EU Institute for Strategic Studies. In addition to his academic work, Özel has contributed extensively to public discourse as a columnist and commentator. His writings have appeared in both Turkish and international media, including Foreign Policy, Journal of Democracy, Internationale Politik, and The International Spectator. Özel is a member of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) and he continues to engage in dialogues on diplomacy, democratic backsliding, and regional geopolitics, maintaining an active role in both scholarly and policy-making communities.

"What a comforting, warmly embracing and seductive title these two volumes have! ***Muhabbet*** *is a word that is so much more than its primary and superficial meaning of conversation. It is a word full of undertones and meanings that reflect the core, soul and audacity of this project too. Of course, it means conversation or an exchange between two persons, but this is no ordinary conversation. It is a sharing of views, feelings, thoughts that at its best is deep, meaningful and full of layers. This is why the closeness of a relation between two friends/individuals who are invested in one another is encouraged as in the expression "muhabbetiniz bol olsun" (may your* ***muhabbet*** *be deep and rich). Only intimates or close friends can truly have this kind of rapport or communication. The word also means affection and it exudes tenderness. The unearthing of such meanings or putting the accent on those is precisely what this book does. Tarık Tüten, the book's editor, is the seventh-generation custodian of a unique library that the cosmopolitan Mediterranean island of Rhodes with its rich history, once part of a cosmopolitan empire is lucky to host. If Tarık were not a friend, and had I not known the effort, dedication, patience and love that were invested in its production I would still be in awe of the two volumes that we as readers have in our hands.* ***Kütüphanede Muhabbet*** *is a treasure in more ways than one. Its very title along with its content, the* ***muhabbet*** *between its texts and authors and perspective puts to rest the clichés, prejudices, frozen dogmas or the distortions that reading history from nationalist perspectives entrap us in. We owe gratitude to Hafız Ahmet Ağa, all the men and women among his descendants for having safeguarded this treasure with deep* ***muhabbet*** *for all of us and future generations."*

Meclis-i Muhabbet

Comprising both the contributing authors of these volumes and the historical, intellectual, and cultural figures they have brought into the ***Conversation***, this list gestures toward a broader scholarly dialogue—one that stretches across time and discipline. Like the marginalia of Ottoman manuscripts, it reflects a spirit of reverence and inquiry, gathering a convivial community of minds. The ***Meclis-i Muhabbet*** invites the reader to wander not only through arguments and analyses, but also through the company we keep when we write, cite, and remember.

Names of the contributing authors are marked in color.

As Hafız Ahmed Ağa and Ahmed Fethi Paşa - the hosts of the ***Muhabbet*** - are the central figures discussed across the volumes, their names have been excluded from the *Meclis* to avoid redundancy.



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Derkenâr

In Ottoman bureaucratic and manuscript culture, the Persian-derived term ***derkenâr*** —literally "written on the side"—was more than a marginal note; it was a vital instrument of memory, continuity, and commentary. In the bureaucratic realm, it referred to annotations on state documents that recorded prior decisions, legal precedents, or financial conditions. These notes, often written in a finer script at the document's edge, linked new petitions to earlier rulings, allowing officials to act within the framework of institutional memory.

In the world of manuscripts, ***derkenâr*** became a space of intellectual exchange. Authors (*müellif*) drafted additions, corrections, or clarifications in the margins; scribes (*müstensih*) and readers contributed glosses or variant readings. These marginal notes rendered each manuscript unique, capturing the layered history of its transmission. Over time, a single text might accumulate generations of interpretive voices, turning the page into a '**conversation**' across eras.

While ***derkenâr*** has traditionally appeared as marginalia on inscribed pages, the empty pages that follow serve as stylized margins of ***Conversation in the Library – Kütüphanede Muhabbet***. These open spaces invite the reader not only to read, but to respond. Every ***derkenâr*** taken, every note inscribed, becomes part of the work's evolving life. In this way, each copy holds the potential to become singular—shaped by the hands and minds that engage with it.



Derkenâr
Marginal notes
Σημειώσεις στο Περιθώριο

Derkenâr
Marginal notes
Σημειώσεις στο Περιθώριο



Ketebe

In the manuscript tradition of the Ottoman Empire, the ***kitab*** (book) was not merely a vessel of textual content, but a carefully produced cultural artifact. Each manuscript bore the traces of its making—physical, intellectual, and devotional. Among these traces, the ***ketebe***, in this usage a quasi-colophon, stands as a distinct and revealing marker of a manuscript's completion. Typically situated at the end of a codex, the ***ketebe*** represents the scribe's formal statement, documenting both the act and the context of copying. Etymologically derived from the Semitic triliteral root K–T–B, which conveys meanings related to writing, inscribing, or recording, ***ketebe*** performs both practical and expressive functions. It generally includes the name of the copyist, the date, and occassionally the place of production. In some rare cases, it may reference the patron of the manuscript or the setting in which it was produced, such as an endowed library, a madrasa, a dervish lodge, or a palace workshop. Beyond these essential data, colophons often incorporate formulaic invocations reflecting the humility and piety commonly associated with scribal labor. While concise, the ***ketebe*** plays a critical role in contextualizing the manuscript as a historical object.

Through this paratext, the otherwise anonymous act of transmission acquires an authorial signature. The presence of personal remarks, poetic fragments, or expressions of physical or spiritual fatigue occasionally found in ***ketebe*** inscriptions also reveal the scribe's lived experience, rendering each manuscript unique. From a codicological perspective, the ***ketebe*** is of considerable value. It offers concrete information that enables scholars to date and localize manuscripts, reconstruct networks of scribes and patrons, and chart the movement of texts within the empire. The cumulative analysis of ***ketebe*** entries across collections opens pathways for understanding broader dynamics of manuscript production, including regional practices, affiliations with libraries, madrasas or waqfs, and stylistic conventions.



Printing & Binding

12.Matbaa

34396 Sarıyer - Istanbul

Text block

Goričane - Sora Matt - 90 gsm

Endpapers

Guarro Casas - Geltex - 161 K - 120 gsm

Hardcover

Thread-sewn

Manifattura del Seveso - Assuan 5024 fabric

Coated matte 200 gsm dust-jacket

Typface

Source Serif Variable by Frank Grießhammer

Avenir by Adrian Frutiger & Akira Kobayashi

Producer

TEREBINTHOS*

ISTANBUL - LEROS - RHODES

Publisher

TUTEN

34427 Ayaspaşa - Istanbul

Publisher certificate: 80898

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1st Edition
2025

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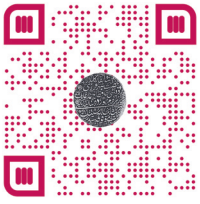


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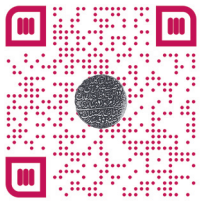


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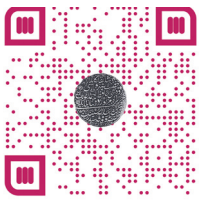
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Hafız Ahmed Agha Library
is a Special Member of



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The Hafız Ahmed Agha Library was declared a historical monument in 1948 by decree of the General Administration of the Dodecanese, as an integral component of the cultural heritage of the Old Town of Rhodes and as an asset meriting preservation. In 1960, the Ministry of Culture extended this protective framework through the designation of the entire Old Town as a historical monumental complex.

In 1988, the Medieval City of Rhodes was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Subsequently, in 2009, a ministerial decree classified the Old Town as an archaeological site under Article 14 of Archaeological Law 3028/2002, concerning the safeguarding of antiquities and cultural heritage. At present, its protection is regulated by Law 4858/2021, which consolidates and modernizes the national legislative framework for the protection of antiquities and cultural heritage.

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