

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.



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Marginal notes
Σημειώσεις στο Περιθώριο

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