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‘Alī Şīr Nevāyī’s Letter of Recommendation for the émigré poet Başīrī

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Context

This micro-edition article explores one of three letters associated with the émigré poet Başıri (d. 1534–35). The letter presented here is a recommendation letter written by ‘Alī Şir Nevāyī (1441–1501) in support of Başıri, who navigated between the cultural spheres of Herat and Istanbul. By presenting and contextualizing this letter, the study highlights the critical role of correspondence in shaping reputations and facilitating intellectual and cultural mobility.

These letters were appended to the *Menâziru’l-inşâ*’ between folios 149b and 152a.¹ The manuscript is a treatise on “the art of letter writing”, composed in Persian and written in *Nesta’lîk*, cataloged in the Süleymaniye Library’s Fatih Collection (no. 04020).² The manuscript’s metadata in the database attributes the authorship to Maḥmūd b. Muḥammed el-Geylânî al-Hindî (d. 1483) and the scribal (*müstensih*) role to Muḥammed b. Aḥmed. In addition, the information on folio 2a suggests that the work may have been written in the orthography of Mevlânâ Bâsiri: “*Molla Bâsiri ḥaṭṭıyladur.*” Furthermore, a comparative analysis reveals that the handwriting in the three appended letters does not differ from that of the main text. For this reason, the note recorded at the beginning of the text should be regarded as a critical piece of information that warrants careful examination in further studies.

Başıri’s full name is recorded as Meḥmed bin Aḥmed b. Ebu’l-Me’âlî el-Murtażâ.³ Although his exact date of birth and birthplace⁴ remain unknown, certain details can be

¹ The remaining letters, along with the letter located in Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Çorlulu Ali Paşa (no. 231484) 14a, and the texts found in 15a, are currently being prepared for publication. These texts provide valuable insights into Bâsiri’s connections with the Herat-Istanbul intellectual and cultural milieu.

² Hâce-i Cihân, Maḥmūd b. Muhammed el-Geylânî el-Hindî. *Menâziru’l-İnşâ*. İstanbul: 04020. <https://portal.yek.gov.tr/works/detail/242399>

³ Çavuşoğlu, Meḥmed. “Başıri.” *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. 1992. Accessed 19 December, 2024. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/basiri>

⁴ Regarding his birthplace, Sehî Beg (d. 1548), in his *tezkiye* (biographical dictionary) *Heşt Behişt*, edited by H. İpekten and G. Kut (Ankara, 2017), identified Başıri as originally being from ‘Acem. (152) In contrast, Laṭîfî (d.1582) in the *Tezkiretü’ş-şu’arâ’ ve Tabşiratü’n-nuzamâ* edited by Rıdvan Canım (Ankara, 2000) offered a more specific account in which he stated that Başıri hailed from Baghdad. (148) Differing from both Sehî Beg and Laṭîfî, ‘Aşık Çelebi (d. 1572), in his *Meşâ’irü’ş-şu’arâ’*, edited by Filiz Kılıç (Ankara, 2018), asserted that Başıri was from Khorasan. (180)

gleaned from Sehī Beg's (d.1548) account of his arrival in Istanbul.⁵ According to Sehī Beg, "He was in the service of Uğurluoğlu Mehemmed Emīr. When Uğurluoğlu traveled to 'Acem and assumed rulership there, he sent Başıri to Sultan Bāyezīd as an envoy. Upon his arrival in Rūm, Uğurluoğlu encountered unforeseen circumstances that prevented [Başıri] from returning to 'Acem. Consequently, he settled in Istanbul, where he eventually married."⁶ This passage not only situates Başıri within the broader context of political and cultural exchanges but also provides a glimpse into the factors that influenced his relocation and subsequent integration into Rūmī cultural milieu.

Başıri's patron Aḥmed Göde (d.1497), who was raised in İstanbul, was a member of the Aqqoyunlu dynasty. Aside from Sehī Beg's account, it is also possible that Başıri independently traveled to Istanbul to join Aḥmed Göde's circle, without ever serving in any formal envoy role. Regardless of the specific circumstances surrounding his relocation, Başıri appears to have ultimately settled in Istanbul, particularly after the death of his patron, Uğurluoğlu Aḥmed Göde, in 1497. Following this turning point, Başıri secured the patronage of prominent figures such as Tācīzāde Ca'fer Çelebi (1452-1515), Mü'eyyedzāde 'Abdurrahmān Çelebi (1456-1516), and İskender Çelebi (d.1535). These connections seem to have ensured his continued engagement within Istanbul's vibrant literary and cultural milieu.⁷

Başıri appears to have spent a significant portion of his life in Istanbul, where he cultivated relationships with prominent Rūmī poets and honed his craft in composing poetry in Ottoman-Turkish (*Türki*): Despite his integration into the literary scene of Rūm, Sehī Beg felt the need to justify Başıri's inclusion in his *tezkiire*, framing it as evidence of Başıri's embrace of a Rūmī identity.⁸ Similarly, Laṭīfi (1490/91-1582) remarked

⁵ This study will only examine the *tezkiire*s of Sehī Beg, Laṭīfi, and Aşık Çelebi. The rationale behind this selection is to limit the analysis to the biographers who were chronologically closest to Bāsirī's lifetime, thereby maintaining historical proximity while preventing an unwarranted expansion of the study's scope.

⁶ "Uğurluoğlu Mehemmed Emīr-zānuñ hizmetinde olurdu. Uğurluoğlu 'Aceme varup pādişāh olduğda merhūm Sultān Bāyezīde elçilik tārīkı ile gönderdi. Bunda Rūma geldükde ol esnāda Uğurluoğlu vākı'aya uğrayup diyār-ı 'Aceme gitmek müyesser olmayup bunda İstanbulda te'ehhül eyleyüp kaldı." (Sehī Beg, ed. H. İpekten and G. Kut, 152).

⁷ Çavuşoğlu "Başıri.", Sohrweide "Dichter und Gelehrte" 282-283.

⁸ Sehī Beg, 152.

on the profound influence the stylistic traditions of *Rūmī* poets had on Baṣīrī, highlighting his exceptional skill in composing and reciting poetry in *Türki*.⁹ In contrast, ‘Āşık Çelebi (1520-1572) presented Baṣīrī as a respected poet of Herat, emphasizing his prominence by noting that he was esteemed enough to be mentioned in ‘Alī Şīr Nevāyī’s *Mecālisü’n-nefā’is*.¹⁰ In addition to that, before recounting anecdotes from Baṣīrī’s life or providing excerpts from his works, ‘Āşık Çelebi draws attention to the following depiction: “His charm was at ease among the prosperous, and he was the delight of every banquet, his words mixed together like milk and sweetness. He cursed the affluent yet wore their robes with ease. He masked poison in humor, leading dignitaries to drink it [willingly] while partaking in their feasts.”¹¹ Through this vivid characterization, ‘Āşık Çelebi implies that the notables of the period played a significant role in supporting Baṣīrī and securing his enduring place within the cultural legacy of *Rūm*.

‘Āşık Çelebi presents Baṣīrī as a figure deeply connected to the Timurid court of Hüseyin Baykara (1438-1506), where he not only served the court but also interacted with leading cultural and intellectual figures of the period. Among these were the renowned poet and mystic ‘Abdurrahmān Cāmī (1414-1492) and his student, patron, and vizier, ‘Alī Şīr Nevāyī—both of whom were instrumental in shaping the literary and intellectual currents of their era. Notably, ‘Abdurrahmān Cāmī was held in high regard by the Ottoman court. During the reign of Meḥmed II, considerable efforts were made to invite Cāmī to the Ottoman Empire, including the provision of an annual stipend of 1,000 flo-

⁹ Laṭīfī, 148.

¹⁰ This information provided by ‘Āşık Çelebi, has been refuted both by Hanna Sohrweide and Mehmet Çavuşoğlu. Çavuşoğlu “Basîrî.” Hanna Sohrweide: “Dichter und Gelehrte” 282. The mentioned *tez-kire* belongs to Qazvīnī, not to ‘Alī Şīr Nevāyī. The Persian translation of *Mecālisü’n-nefā’is* titled *Terceme-i Mecālisü’n-nefā’is*, completed by Muḥammed b. Mübārek Şāh el-Qazvīnī between 1521 and 1523 in Istanbul, was presented to Selim I. In this translation, Qazvīnī stated that “Mevlānā Baṣīrī, from ‘Acem, is a famous poet and he is full of the virtues of knowledge and contentment. He is satisfied with the world and he does not go around the houses of the masters of the world.” He will not be a slave to inferior people for the sake of two loaves of bread. Süleymaniye Library, Esad Efendi Collection no. 03877, 179b: مولانا بصیری عجمی شاعری مشهورست و جامع فضیلة علم و قناعتست چه از دنیا بکفافی قناعت کرده و کرد در خانه ارباب دنیا نمیگردد و بجهة دو نان بنده دونان نمیشود و شعر خوب میگوید و این از جمله اشعار اوس I extend my heartfelt gratitude to İbrahim Shafiei for his invaluable assistance.

¹¹ “Aşhāb-ı devlet ile laṭīfesi barışur ve her meclisün nemegi olup sözleri şīr ü şeker gibi qarışurdu. Erbāb-ı devleti ũnadur, yine kaftānların giyer ve a’yān-ı cāh u rütbete laṭīfe yüzinden zehrler içürür, yine ni’metlerin yirdi.” (ed. Filiz Kılıç, 180)

rins.¹² This engagement with the Ottomans gained further significance during the reign of Bāyezīd II, a period coinciding with Başīrī's arrival in Ottoman territories. During this period, Başīrī was portrayed as someone who arrived from Baykarā's court in Herat and facilitated the circulation of Cāmī's poetry. Such a depiction would have undoubtedly contributed to his gaining a prominent position within the literary world and among the *Rūmī* elite.¹³

'Alī Şīr Nevāyī's poetic legacy is of enduring importance, especially the profound impact of his work on *Rūmī* literary traditions.¹⁴ The works of 'Alī Şīr Nevāyī began to gain prominence and circulate more widely during the reign of Bāyezīd II.¹⁵ The two *tezkiye* authors mentioned above seem to portray Başīrī, who was present in Istanbul during a period aligning with the dissemination of the *dīvāns*, as a key figure in initiating and facilitating its circulation. Laṭīfī also mentions that Başīrī carried 'Alī Şīr Nevāyī's letter of recommendation in addition to the works he brought with him. Although the authenticity of this letter cannot be definitively verified, it is evident that both of the *dīvāns* Başīrī brought with him and the letter of recommendation he personally received from 'Alī Şīr Nevāyī held symbolic function: Hüseyn Baykara's court was highly admired and emulated, and it can be inferred that the *dīvāns* and the letter must have played a significant role in his acceptance within the court and literary circles.

It remains unclear whether Başīrī's favor at the Ottoman court arose from his association with Aḥmed Göde, the influence of his recommendation letter from 'Alī Şīr

¹² Hamid Algar. "Jami and Ottomans," d'Hubert, Thibaut, and Alexandre Papas, eds. *Jāmī in Regional Contexts*, (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 01 Jan. 2018)
doi: <https://doi-org.uaccess.univie.ac.at/10.1163/9789004386600>: 77.

¹³ *Ibid.* 83-84.

¹⁴ See Köprülü, Mehmet Fuat. "Ali Şīr Nevâî ve Te'sirleri". *Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Hakkında Araştırmalar*. İstanbul: Kanaat Kitabevi, 1934: 257-266; Kleinmichel, Sigrid. "Mir Aliser Navâ'î und Ahmed Pasa". *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 17, (1999): 77- 211. Kurnaz, Cemal. "Osmanlı Şairlerinin Nevâyî Referansı". *Türk Dili: Dil ve Edebiyat Dergisi*, Ankara: TDK Yay. Sayı 617, (2003): 509-513; Sertkaya, Osman Fikri. "Osmanlı Şairlerinde Ali Şīr Nevayî Tarzı ve Nevayî'ye Anadolu'da Yazılan Nazireler". *Ali Şīr Nevâyî'nin 560. Doğum, 500. Ölüm Yılı Dönümlerini Anma Toplantısı Bildirileri*. Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 2004: 129-140; Çavuşoğlu, Mehmet. "Kanunî Devrinin Sonuna Kadar Anadolu'da Nevâyî Tesiri Üzerine Notlar". *Gazi Türkiyat Dergisi*. Bahar, Sayı: 8, (2011): 23-37.

¹⁵ Eleazar Birnbaum, "The Ottomans and Chagatay Literature ", *Central Asiatic Journal*, C. XX, (1976): 157-190.

Nevāyī, or his pivotal role in introducing the poetry of ‘Abdurrahmān Cāmī and ‘Alī Şīr Nevāyī into *Rūmī* literary circles. What is evident, however, is that Başırī’s presence marked a confluence of Chagatai and ‘*Acemī*’ poetic traditions with the burgeoning *Rūmī* literary culture, shaping its trajectory in subtle but significant ways. His ability to bridge these intellectual and artistic worlds seems to have ensured that his legacy endured, even as the specific dynamics of his rise at court remain obscured by history.

Transcription

Şūret-i nāme-i Nevāyī ki ez haṭṭ-ı şerīfeş naḳl şode

*erbāb-ı başiretğa rüşen ü mübeyyen bolğay kim aşhāb-ı nazmniñ çeşm-i başırı yār-ı enīs
Mevlānā Başırī bu diyārğa kilüb aḳrān u emşāldin münferid bolub maḥlaşı tig fazlı vuzūh
taptı ol ecildin bizğa lāzım boldı kim āḥar fāzılığa bir nāme yibarub Mevlānā-i müşārün-
ileyh nāmığa bir mu ‘ammā ḥāṭırğa ḥuṭūr ḳılgay*

Elā közleri ‘ayn-ı vefā-yı yār

Közümniñ üstığa baş [sic] kim yeri bar¹⁶

V’allāhu başırın bi- ‘ibādihī¹⁷ ve Hüve’l- ‘alimü’l-ḥabīr bi-l-icābeti cedīr.

keşirü’ t-taḳsīr

‘Alī Şīr

Translation

Copy of Nevāyī’s letter, compiled from his esteemed and noble autograph.

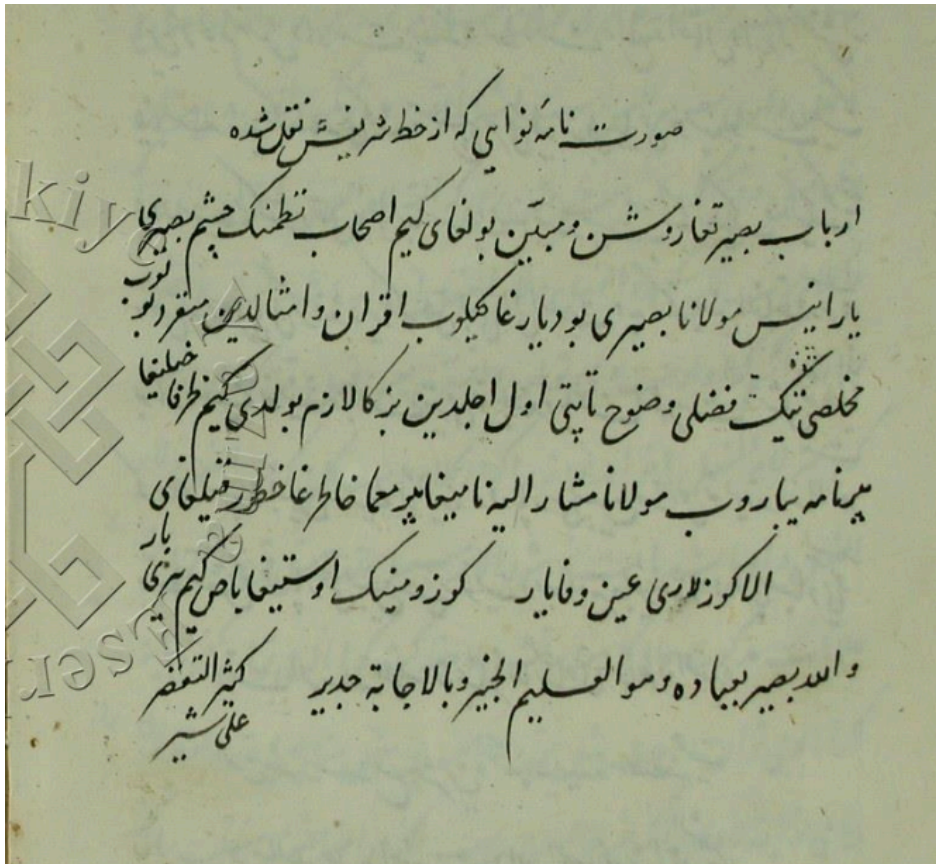
It should be apparent and evident to men of perspicacity that Mevlānā Başırī, the clairvoyant eye of poets and a trusted companion, arrived in this realm and he distinguished himself from his peers and equals, and the virtue of his pen-name became manifest. Thus, it became necessary for us to send a letter to the [an]other esteemed [ones] with a *mu ‘ammā* [riddle] that lingers in the mind for the sake of the aforementioned *Mevlānā*.

¹⁶ This *beyt* (couplet) is composed in the *hezec* meter (*mefāilün mefāilün feülün*). While the second hemistich fully conforms to this meter, the word “vefā” in the first *mısrā’* is considered problematic.

¹⁷ The Quranic Arabic Corpus. "Translation of Quran 3:15." Accessed January 30, 2025. <https://corpus.quran.com/translation.jsp?chapter=3&verse=15>.

His hazel-eyes are the wellspring of fidelity, the friend,
 He has a well-welcomed place, like my head¹⁸ resting upon my eyes.¹⁹
 And God sees His servants, and He is All-Knowing and Acquainted and His Worthiness
 is the answer.
 'Alī Şīr, the one full of flaws.

Facsimile



Bibliography

¹⁸ The word "baş" in the text has been interpreted as "baş".

¹⁹ An expression is referenced here: the Turkish version is "başımın üstünde yeri var," while the English equivalent is "the door is always open."

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Laţîfî: *Latîfî. Tezkiretü'ş-Şu'arâ ve Tabsîratü'n Nuzamâ (İnceleme-Metin)*. Ed. Rıdvan Canım. Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2000.

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The Quranic Arabic Corpus. "Translation of Quran 3:15." Accessed January 30, 2025. <https://corpus.quran.com/translation.jsp?chapter=3&verse=15>.

Süleymaniye Library, Esad Efendi Collection no. 03877

Gathering at Night: Yaḥyā Efendī's Letter of Invitation

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Context

Limited information is available on how the Ottomans exchanged letters within the same city. In this regard, the following letter serves as an example of how Ottoman elites arranged their meetings.

The letter in question is included in the manuscript registered under the number 2866 in the Şehid Ali Paşa Collection of the Süleymaniye Library. This collection mostly contains fatwas from the 16th and 17th centuries, with occasional examples of letters. The significance of these letters lies in the fact that they are autographs, providing direct insight into the correspondence between the ‘*ulemā*’ of the period. Yaḥyā’s letter, in particular, is unique in this regard, as no other known example of it exists.

The letter in question concerns a certain qadi of Aleppo named Yahya, who invited the Grand Mufti, along with Es‘ad Efendī, Kātib-zāde Efendī, and ‘Azīz Efendī, to his residence. To assess the letter within its historical context, it is first necessary to identify these individuals.

I argue that this letter may have been written by Zekeriyā-zāde Yaḥyā Efendī (b. 1644) immediately after his appointment to Aleppo as judge but before he physically left Istanbul. The following considerations support this argument: first, the manuscript predominantly contains fatwas and letters from individuals active in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.¹ Second, Zekeriyā-zāde Yaḥyā Efendī was born in Istanbul and spent his career working in various madrasas in Istanbul until 1596, when he was appointed qadi of Aleppo in April 1596.² Given this context, it seems reasonable to focus on individuals named Yaḥyā who served as qadis of Aleppo during the period in which the manuscript was compiled, rather than the numerous other figures with the same name in Ottoman history.

In this case, two individuals emerge: Bostān-zāde Yaḥyā Efendī (b. 1639) and Zekeriyā-zāde Yaḥyā Efendī (b. 1644). Both were descendants of prominent scholarly

¹ Unfortunately, there is no colophon record in the manuscript.

² Şeyhi Mehmed Efendi, *Vekāyi’u’l-Fuzalâ I-IV*, 441 and Uşşâkîzâde İbrâhîm Hasîb Efendi, *Zeyl-i Şakâ’ik*, 326.

families from Istanbul and belonged to the same social circle. However, by the time Bostān-zāde Yaḥyā Efendi served as qadi of Aleppo (c. 1601),³ Kātib-zāde [Zeynī] Efendī—one of the figures mentioned in the letter—had already been appointed qadi of Medina and had previously served as qadi of Mecca.⁴ Therefore, it is highly unlikely that Bostān-zāde Yaḥyā Efendi and Kātib-zāde Efendī were in the same city in 1601. Moreover, no other Kātib-zāde in this period appears to have had any connection to Bostān-zāde Yaḥyā Efendī.

Regarding the other individuals mentioned in the letter, I suggest that Es‘ad and ‘Azīz *efendis* may have been the brothers Es‘ad Efendī (d. 1625) and ‘Azīz Efendī (d. 1618), who were known as *Hocā-zādes* (the sons of Sa‘ade’d-dīn Efendī (d. 1599), a renowned scholar of the period).

Let us accept that the letter was written in 1596; Es‘ad Efendī briefly served as a muderris, qadi, and *kāḍī-‘asker* between Istanbul and Edirne in this year. ‘Azīz Efendī, on the other hand, was a muderris in the madrasas of Istanbul at that time.⁵

Kātib-zāde [Zeynī] Efendī was serving as a muderris at the Vefa Mosque in Istanbul during this period. His career trajectory closely paralleled that of Zekeriyā-zāde Yaḥyā Efendī, as both followed similar paths as muderris. Before Yahya was appointed qadi of Aleppo in April 1596, he had served as a muderris at the Valide Atik, where his immediate predecessor was Kātib-zāde Efendī.⁶ This career overlap provides strong grounds to suggest that the two were acquainted.

If these identifications are correct, then the unnamed grand mufti mentioned in the letter must have been Bostān-zāde Meḥmed Efendī (b. 1598), who held this position at the time.⁷

³ Şeyhi Mehmed Efendi, *Vekâyi’u’l-Fuzalâ I-IV*, 286-287.

⁴ Nev’î-zāde Atayî. *Hadâ’îku’l-Hakâ’ik Fî Tekmîleti’ş-Şakâ’ik*, 1226-1227.

⁵ Ibid, 1582-1583.

⁶ Nev’î-zāde Atayî. *Hadâ’îku’l-Hakâ’ik Fî Tekmîleti’ş-Şakâ’ik*, 1226-1227.

⁷ Mehmet İpşirli, "Bostanzāde Mehmed Efendi", *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/bostanzade-mehmed-efendi> (accessed: 31.01.2025).

Finally, there is no available data on the recipient of the letter. However, given the other individuals mentioned in the letter, the recipient was likely a member of the Ottoman elite.

As for the significance of this brief letter, first, it highlights the social relationships among the individuals mentioned, demonstrating that they were at least close enough to gather at Yaḥyā Efendī's residence. Second, it provides insight into how the Ottoman elite in Istanbul communicated within the city, employing such short letters as informal 'invitations' to arrange meetings.

Transcription

Benüm sulṭānum

bu gice şeyḥü'l-islām ḥazretleri ve Es'ad Efendī ve 'Azīz Efendī ve Kātib-zāde Efendī muḥliṣ-ḥāneyi teṣrīf ideceklerdür cā'iz ise teṣrīf buyrıla ve'd-du'ā mine'l-muḥliṣ el-faḳīr Yaḥyā el-kādı bi-medīneti Ḥaleb⁸

Translation

My sire,

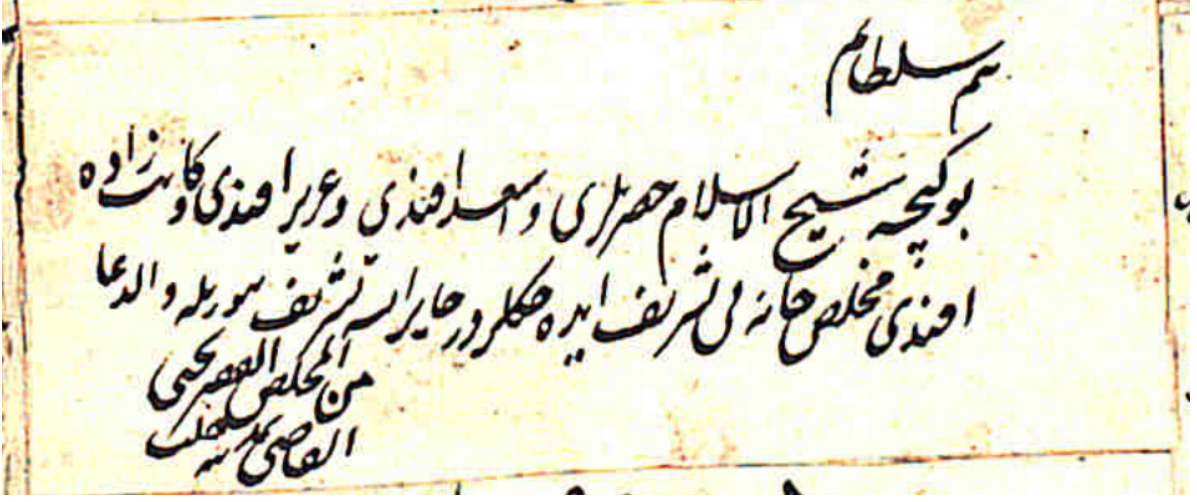
the exalted Grand Mufti, Es'ad Efendī, 'Azīz Efendī, and Kātib-zāde Efendī will honor by visiting [my] humble abode. If it is possible, you should honor by attending us. And my prayers [are for you].

Your humble servant Yaḥyā

the judge of the city of Aleppo

⁸ *Mecmua*, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Şehid Ali Paşa Koleksiyonu, 2866, 215. As the manuscript in question lacks pagination, I here provide the number assigned to the page containing the letter. This pagination does not distinguish between the recto and verso sides of the folio.

Facsimile



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Endowment Record in Manuscript of the Rüstem Pasha Madrasa

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Context

The full-page endowment (*waqf*) record transcribed below was written on the last pages of the manuscripts endowed by Rüstem Pasha to his madrasa in Istanbul's Cağaloğlu district. In Ottoman manuscripts, records indicating that books were endowed were typically written on the first (*zahrîyye*) pages and in much shorter forms. These records would usually include critical information, such as who endowed the books and to where. However, this endowment record from the Rüstem Paşa Medresesi is a rare example of its kind. The record on the manuscripts includes long prayer statements and detailed conditions that are more commonly seen in endowment deeds (*vaqfiyye*).

According to the endowment deed,¹ Rüstem Pasha donated a total of 150 volumes to the madrasa. Today, 13 of these manuscripts are missing. However, with later additions the current number has reached 186.² The long endowment record appears in 137 manuscripts in the collection that were initially donated by Rüstem Pasha.

The endowment record appears to have been written consecutively and by the same hand. It was likely composed by the trustee (*mütevelli*) of the foundation or a scribe, as seen in similar donation examples. Additionally, occasional strikethroughs of incorrect words and changes at the word level suggest that the writing process may not have been particularly meticulous.

In the endowment record, standard elements such as praises (*hamdele*), prayers (*şalvele*), the name of the founder, and the location of the endowment are documented in greater detail compared to the typical foundation records commonly found in Ottoman manuscripts. For example, while Rüstem Pasha is described as a friend of knowledge and scholars, the record also includes hadiths highlighting the virtues of knowledge and scholars. It further references the Islamic principles that underpin the culture of endowments. In Islamic tradition, three deeds continue to benefit a person after their death, one of which is perpetual charity. Since establishing an endowment is

¹ Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivleri (VGMA), defter 635/2, p. 160.

² Elif Derin, "Establishment and Continuity of the Rüstem Pasha Madrasa Library", *Kadim* 7 (April 2024), 1-19.

considered a form of perpetual charity, Rüstem Pasha's motivation for founding this endowment was to leave behind a lasting legacy of good deeds after his death.

The subsequent part of the record outlines the conditions of the endowment, which are described as thoroughly as in an endowment deed. The manuscripts were donated for the use of scholars and students and were to be placed in the lecture room (*dershâne*) of Rüstem Pasha's madrasa which was built in Constantinople, on the strict condition that they should never be removed from there. Interestingly, instead of directly stating "lecture room," the term "a room (*beyt*) referred to as the lecture room" is used, raising questions about the use of the term *dershâne* at that time. After emphasizing that neither the manuscripts nor any of their parts must be removed from the lecture room, the record reiterates that even when the manuscripts require repair, they cannot be taken out of the madrasa. According to the endowment record, the book-binder must be brought to the madrasa under the supervision of the teacher (*müderriş*) and trustee (*mütevelli*), and repairs must be carried out there. Furthermore, the manuscripts cannot be removed for copying (*istinsâh*) or study (*muṭalâ'a*), and the book custodian (*ḥāfız-ı kütüb*) must not leave the lecture room during such activities. The record concludes with a warning of divine punishment for those who fail to adhere to the endowment conditions or attempt to alter them.

As previously mentioned, it is unusual for such a detailed record to be written on manuscripts. This raises the question as to why Rüstem Pasha included a donation record of this nature on the manuscripts he endowed. Nev'izâde Atâî (d. 1635) notes in his work that Rüstem Pasha appointed a *müderriş* to the madrasa in 1547 with a salary of fifty *ağçes*.³ Meanwhile, the inscription on the madrasa building states that it was built in 957 AH (1550 CE).⁴ Rüstem Pasha's comprehensive endowment deeds were prepared in 1561 and 1562. Since the record written on the manuscripts does not include a date, the exact time when the manuscripts were placed in the madrasa

³ Nev'izâde Atâî, *Hadâ'iku'l-Hakâ'ik Fi Tekmileti's-Şakâ'ik* (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2007), 567.

⁴ Mübahat Kütükoğlu, XX. Asra Erişen İstanbul Medreseleri (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2000), 60.

remains unclear. Based on other examples in Ottoman history, it is possible that education began in a different location before the madrasa building was completed. In any case, it is understood that the official endowment deed had not yet been prepared when teaching began in the madrasa. Since the endowment deed had not been registered, Rüstem Pasha or the foundation officials must have found it appropriate to record the conditions directly in the endowed manuscripts.

Transcription

- [1] *Al-ḥamdu li-llāhi alladhī faḍḍala al-insāna bi-faḍā`ili l-`ulūmi wa-maḥāsini l-a`māli wa-l-ṣalātu `alā*
- [2] *sayyidinā Muḥammadin alladhī ursila ilaynā li-bayāni ṭarīqati l-ḥaqqi wa-aḥāsini al-af`āli wa-`alā ālihi wa-aṣḥābihi*
- [3] *al-mujāhidīna li-i`lā`i l-dīni fī al-ghadwi wa-l-iṣāli `ammā ba`du fa-inna l-nabīya ṣalla-llāhu `alayhi*
- [4] *wa-sallama lammā qāla fī bayāni faḍīlati l-`ilmi faḍlu l-`ilmi khayrun min faḍli l-`ibādati wa-fī bayāni*
- [5] *faḍīlati-l-`ulamā`i faḍlu l-`ālimi `ala-l-`ābidi ka-faḍli `alā adnākum wa-fī ḥadītin ākhara inna*
- [6] *l-`ulamā`a warathatu l-anbiyā`i ilḥ kāna ṣāḥibu al-khayrāti wa-l-ḥasanāti ḥaḍratu Rustam Pāshā – yassarahu llāhu*
- [7] *fī l-dunyā wa-l-ākhirati mā yashā`u – muḥibban li-l-`ilmi wa-l-`ulamā`i wa-arāda l-dalālata `alā ṭalabi l-`ilmi*
- [8] *wa-l-ishtighāli bihi ṭāliban li-l-thawābi mithla ajri `āmilīhi `alā muqtaḍā l-ḥadīthi l-sharīfi*
- [9] *wa-huwa l-dāllu `alā al-khayri ka-fā`ilihi wa-qāṣada an yataṣaddaqa li-l-`ulamā`i wa-l-ṭālibīna li-l-`ilmi*
- [10] *ṣadaqatan jāriyatan wa-ḥasanatan ghayra munqaṭi`atin `alā muqtaḍā ḥadīthi l-nabiyyi l-mukarrami ṣalla*

- [11] *-llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama idhā māta bnu ‘ādama nqaṭa‘a ‘amaluhu illā ‘an thalāthatin waladin ṣālihin yad‘ū lahu wa-‘ilmin*
- [12] *yantafi‘u bihi wa-ṣadaqatin jāriyatīn wa-inna-l-mu‘minīna fī zill-i ṣadaqātihim fa-waqafa hādha l-kitāba li-l-muḥtājīna*
- [13] *min al-‘ulamā‘i wa-l-ṭālibīna li-l-‘ilmi wa-sharṭu an yuḍ‘a fī baytin yusammā bi-l-darskhāna fī madrasatin*
- [14] *banāhā wāqifu l-mazbūri fī baldat Qusṭanṭīniyya wa-lā yakhruj al-kitābu l-madhkūru wa-lā ba‘du*
- [15] *ajzā‘ihi ‘ani l-bayti l-madhkūri abadan wa-in ihtāja l-kitābu l-madhkūru ilā l-tar-mīmi yuḥaḍḍiru l-mujallidu*
- [16] *bi-ma‘rifati l-mudarrisi wa-l-mutawallī ilā l-bayti l-madhkūri wa-yurammimuhu ḥattā yuḥfaẓa bi-maḥḍari ḥāfiẓi l-kutubi*
- [17] *wa-sharṭu ayḍan an yaḥḍura yatawaqqafa ḥāfiẓi l-kutubi kulla yawmin mina l-ṣubḥ ilā l-zuhri*
- [18] *fī l-madrasati l-madhkūrati wa-lā yaghību ‘anhā li-itmāmi marāmi l-muḥtājīna wa-fī waqti ntisākhi*
- [19] *aḥadi l-muḥtājīna l-madhkūrīna l-kitāba l-mazbūra aw muṭāla‘atihi iyyāhu lā yaghību ḥāfiẓi l-kutub*
- [20] *‘ani l-bayti l-madhkūri bal yaḥḍuru fīhi ḥattā yaqḍiya-l-muḥtāju l-madhkūru ḥājatahu wa-ba‘da itmāmi ḥājatīhi*
- [21] *aḥazzuhu ḥāfiẓi l-kutubi wa-yahfaẓuhu fī mawḍi‘ihi lladhī ‘uyyina li-l-ḥifẓi fīhi wa-sharṭu ayḍan*
- [22] *an yakūna ḥāfiẓi l-kutubi min ahli l-‘ilmi qādiran ‘alā muṭāla‘atihi hādha l-kitāba wa-qad raw‘ā fīhi*
- [23] *mā lā budda minhu fī kawni waqfi l-manqūlāti waqfan bi-l-ittifāqi wa-ba‘da murā‘āti mā lā*
- [24] *budda minhu l-madhkūru kāna hādha l-kitābu waqfan ṣaḥīḥan shar‘iyyan bi-l-ittifāqi fa-lā yaḥillu li-aḥadin yu‘minu*
- [25] *bi-llāhi wa-l-yawmi l-ākhirī an yatabaddalahu fa-man baddalahu ba‘da mā sami‘ahu fa-innamā ithmuhu ‘ala lladhīna yubaddilūnahu*

[26] *Inna llāha samī'un 'alīmun wa man ta'addā fa-khālaḥa fī shay'in min waḍa'ahu fa-huwa zālimun allā la'natu llāhi*

[27] *'alā l-zālimīna*⁵

Translation

Praise be to Allah, who distinguished mankind with the virtues of knowledge and the merits of good deeds. Blessings and peace be upon our master Muhammad, who was sent to us to clarify the path of truth and the most excellent actions, as well as upon his family and companions, who strive to elevate the faith day and night.

As to what follows; the Prophet – peace and blessings of Allah be upon him – when speaking about the virtue of knowledge, said: “The virtue of knowledge is greater than the virtue of worship.” Regarding the virtue of scholars, he said: “The superiority of the scholar over the worshipper is like my superiority over the least of you.” In another hadith, he stated: “Scholars are the heirs of the Prophets.” Inspired by this, the esteemed Rüstem Pasha – may Allah make his path easy in this world and the hereafter as He wills – a friend of knowledge and scholars, sought to guide toward the pursuit of knowledge and engagement with it, aspiring to gain rewards akin to the doer of these deeds, in accordance with the noble hadith: “The one who guides to goodness is like the one who performs it.”

He aimed to offer perpetual charity (*ṣadaqatun jāriyatun*) and unending good deeds by dedicating this act to scholars and students of knowledge, in line with the noble hadith of the Prophet – peace and blessings be upon him –: “When a human dies, his deeds cease except for three: a righteous child who prays for him, beneficial knowledge, and perpetual charity.” Indeed, the believers will be sheltered under the shade of their charities.

Therefore, this book is endowed for the needy among the scholars and students of knowledge. It is stipulated that it shall be placed in a room called “*dershāne*” (lecture

⁵ SüleymaniyeYazma Eser Kütüphanesi, Rüstem Paşa 54, 235b.

room) within a madrasa built by him in the city of Constantinople, and that the book or any of its parts shall never be removed from this house.

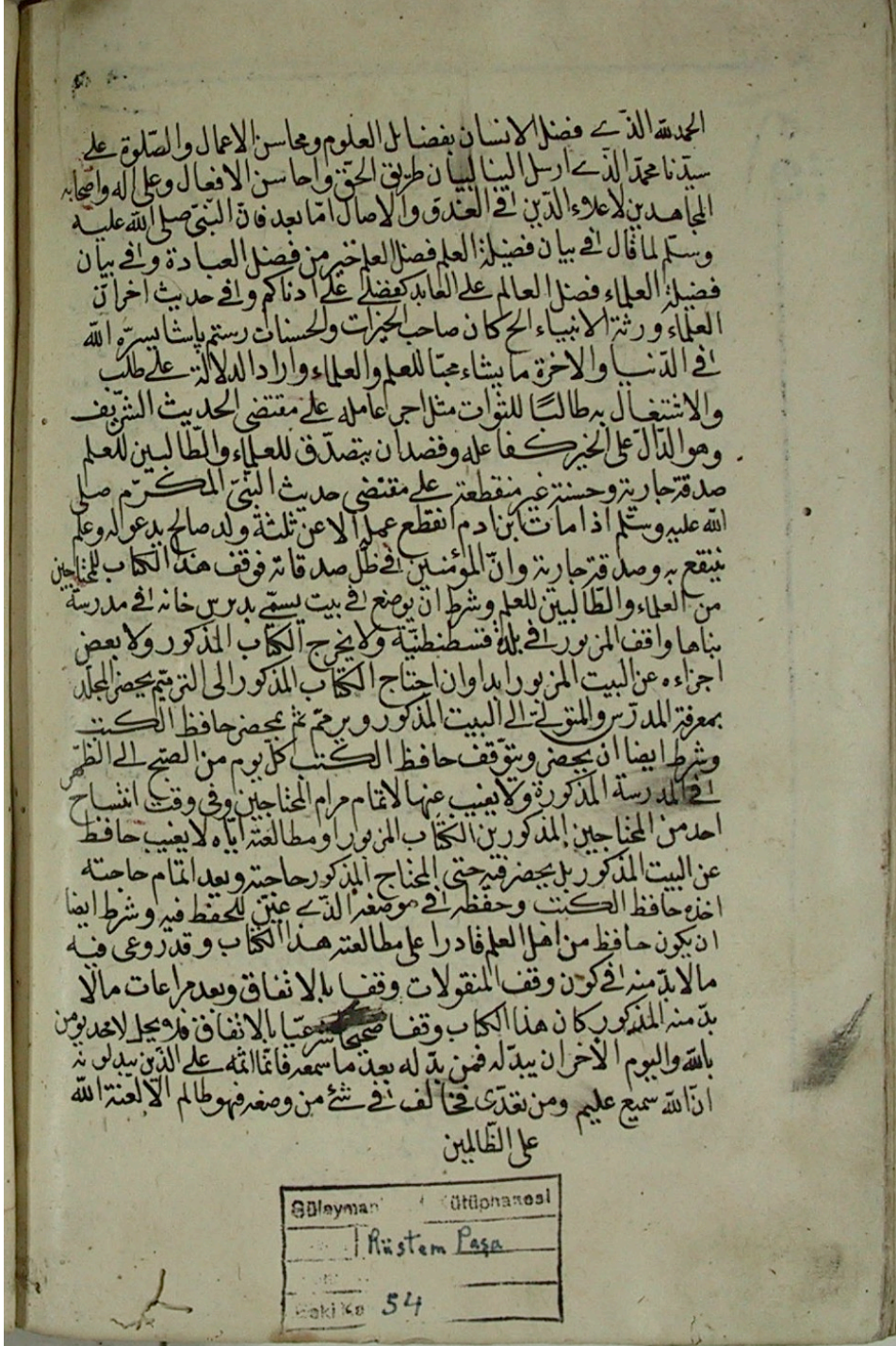
If the aforementioned book requires repair, the binder shall be summoned by the knowledge of the teacher and the trustee of the said house to repair it in the presence of the book custodian. It is also stipulated that the book custodian shall be present every day from morning until noon in the aforementioned madrasa and shall not be absent, ensuring the needs of the beneficiaries are fulfilled.

When one of the aforementioned needy individuals copies or reads the book, the custodian shall not leave the room but remain present until the person has fulfilled their need. Afterward, the custodian shall return the book to its designated storage location appointed for its safekeeping.

It is also stipulated that the custodian of the books shall be a person of knowledge capable of studying this book. The legal requirements for the endowment of movable assets have been observed, making this endowment valid and in accordance with Islamic law.

It is not permissible for anyone who believes in Allah and Judgement Day to alter it. Whoever changes it after hearing this, the sin shall rest upon those who make such changes. Indeed, Allah is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. Whoever transgresses and opposes any part of this stipulation is a wrongdoer, and upon the wrongdoers is the curse of Allah.

Facsimile



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‘Arzuḥāl For Change: A Collective Voicing from Jerusalem Against Esteryadi Efendi

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* I developed this article while serving as the Khalidi Library Research Fellow at IPS in Beirut (March
2024–December 2024).

Context

Preserved at the Beirut library of the Institute for Palestine Studies, the large document (51.7 x 75.5 cm) herein described belongs to a newly acquired pristine special collection of around 240 items pertaining to the ‘Alamī family.¹ The document exhibits a petition (*‘arzuḥāl*) featuring (1) a concise central text outlining the petition subject, (2) with signatures surrounding it on the right, left, and below. The core text is gracefully written and in a sizable font, while the signatures include names paired with personal stamps, along with a brief description of the individual’s role.

The absence of a date on the document in question is notable. Nevertheless, information gleaned from the biography of Esteryadi Efendi, the central figure targeted in the petition, provides evidence for dating it to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.

Esteryadi Efendi (d. 1907) was a member of the local Greek community in Jerusalem, who appears to have initiated his career as a translator for the government in Jerusalem, then in Beirut, before assuming a lengthy tenure in the Jerusalem Sandjak/*livâ* Administrative Council. It is on record that he was awarded the fourth class Ottoman badge (*Dördüncü Osmânî Nişânı*).²

When compared to the documents in the Ottoman Archives that present Esteryadi Efendi, this engaging petition further demonstrates the value of diversifying our historical understanding beyond official sources. It exemplifies how the range of voices in the public arena enriches the otherwise monotonous administrative accounts. With the purpose of objecting to his installment as head of the city’s municipal council, this

¹ For an exhaustive examination of the material it presents, see Mariam El Ali, “Mapping Ottoman Jerusalem: A Preliminary Catalogue of Documents from Mūsā al-‘Alamī Collection at IPS Beirut Library” (forthcoming).

² To formulate this short biography I consulted documents from the Ottoman Archives. Fifty-six in total, they depict many milestones in Esteryadi Efendi’s life and career in Jerusalem. The detailed scrutiny of all of them is beyond the range of this article. I express my deep gratitude to Professor Edhem Eldem for sharing them with me. These include *Osmanlı Arşivi*, ŞD.00058.00036.003; BEO.000404.030300.002; DH.MKT.02056.00050.001; HR.MKT.00557.00091.001; HR.MKT.00792.00016.001; HR.MKT.00792.00016.003.

petition offers a remarkably harsh depiction of Esteryadi Efendi that no official document could match.

Reflecting a diverse array of the city's social hierarchy, the petition voices the objections of one hundred fifteen Jerusalemites from a wide range of wealth, job, religion, and family backgrounds —of which nine are 'Alamīs. The text provides insights into people's biases, their local identity, and their methods of expressing their ties to the central government, among other features. What emerges is a collective social representation of Ottoman Jerusalem, proving to be more vivid than many individual histories.

Transcription

'Uṭūfetlü Efendim Ḥazretleri

Al-ma 'rūḍ lā yakhfā 'alā al- 'ilm al- 'ālī anna dawlatanā al- 'aliyya al-abadiyyat al-dawām qad assasat qawānīn wa-nizāmāt saniyya wa-ja 'alathā madāran li-tamshiyat aḥkāmihā al- 'ādila fī kāffat al-ijrā 'āt al-mukhtaṣṣa bi-sukkān mamālikihā al-maḥrūsa al-shāhāniyya al-mustazillīn taḥt zill janāḥihā al-sāmī wa-min jumlat rafatihā [ra 'fatihā]³ wa-madd nazarihā al- 'ālī li-rāḥat al-ahālī bi- 'ayn al-shafaqa wa-l-raḥma qad awjadat al-dawā 'ir al-baladiyya fī al-mudun wa-l-qaṣabāt li-l-nazar fī ṣawāliḥ al- 'ibād wa-ḥawāyij al-fuqarā [al-fuqarā'] wa-l-ta 'ammul fī ḥuṣūl al-umūr al-nāfi 'a al- 'umūmiyya wa-ijrā ' al-tanzīmāt al-waṭaniyya ḥasbamā huwa muṣarraḥ [bih] fī ta 'līmātihā al-makhṣūṣa wa-an yakūn ra 'isuhā min ashraf wa-mu 'tabarīn [mu 'tabarī] al-balda dhū [dhā] ḥaythiyya wa-tharwa wa-istiḳāma wa-dirāya kamā yu 'ayyid dhālik mufād al-amrayn al-sāmiyayn al-ṣādirayn aḥaduhumā bi-qaṭ ' ma 'āsh al-riyāsa al-madhkūra muqaddaman wa-l-thānī bi-ṣarf al-ma 'āsh al-madhkūr mu 'akhkharan al-ladhī [al-ladhayn] min muṭāla 'atihimā yattaḍīḥ li-ma 'ālikum 'adam jawāz wujud ra 'isan ajnabiyyan [ra 'īs ajnabī] wa-bi-mā anna al-ra 'īs al-mawjūd al- 'ān al-ladhī huwa Esteryadi Efendi bi-muqtaḍā al-ta 'līmāt wa-mithāl al-

³ The text illustrates a modern standard Arabic that is influenced by colloquial expressions, which I have preserved intact. Nonetheless, I have included grammatical and orthographic corrections in brackets, ensuring that these were kept to a minimum.

amrayn al-mushār ilayhimā lā yajūz istikhdāmuh bi-hādhih [fī hādhih] al-riyāsa min awjuh minha **awwalan** [kawn] wujūdih ajnabiyyan **wa-thāniyan** lā yafham al-lugha al-‘arabiyya **thālithan** lam yakun min aṣḥāb al-tharwa wa-l-istiqāma **rābi‘an** lā yaltafit li-‘umūr [ilā ‘umūr] waḥḥat al-wājib ‘ifā’ihā [‘ifā’uhā] ‘alayh dhimmatan al-ladhī [al-latī] minhā al-naẓar li-maṣāliḥ al-balda wa-manāfi‘ al-‘umūm wa-mā shākal dhālik **khāmisān** tasalluṭuh ‘alā al-fuqarā’ wa-l-aḍ‘āf [ḍu‘afā’] bi-l-ḍarb fī al-aziqqa wa-l-aswāq wa-l-sabb wa-l-shatm wa-taḥqīr aṣḥāb al-da‘āwī [al-da‘āwā] min dūn murā‘āt aḥādīn mā khilāfan li-l-riḍā’ al-‘ālī wa-ghayrat ‘uṭūfatikum **sādisān** annah awwalan ḥīnamā kān turjumānan li-l-ḥukūma bi-hādhih al-balda sār ‘azluh wa-ib‘āduh min ‘adam istiḳāmatih wa-iḍrārih li-l-‘ibād [bi-l-‘ibād] fa-murā‘atan li-qawānīn wa-nizāmāt wa-awāmir dawlatinā al-‘aliyya wa-raḥmatan li-fuqarā’ [bī-fuqarā’] wa-aḍ‘āf [ḍu‘afā’] hādhih al-bayt al-muqaddas nastarḥim min marāḥim wa-shafaqat ‘uṭūfatikum takhlīṣanā min takabbur wa-tajabbur wa-adhiyyat wa-ḍarar hādhih al-rajul bi-‘azlih min hādhih al-riyāsa wa-ta‘yīn man yakūn [takūn] fih al-layāqa wa-l-istiḳāma min ashraf wa-mu‘tabarīn [mu‘tabarī] baldatinā min dhawī al-tharwa wa-l-ḥaythiyya al-ladhīn yurā‘ūn jānib al-bārī wa-yuḥāfiẓūn ‘alā nāmūs dawlatinā al-‘aliyya wa-yanẓurūn li-rāḥat fuqarā’ inā wa-yas‘awn fī tanzīm baldatinā al-musharrafā wa-l-naf‘ al-‘umūmī waḥḥat li-l-ta‘līmāt al-mushār ilayhā wa-bi-mā anna dawlatanā al-muẓaffara qad manaḥat li-‘umūm [‘umūm] ra‘iyyatihā wa-tabī‘atihā al-iṣḡhā’ li-tashakkiyātihim ‘ammā [mimmā] yaḥill bihim [min] mithl hākadhā umūr munāfiya [li-l-riḍā’]⁴ wa-muḍirra bi-ahl al-waṭan wa-bi-kull ḥurriya tajāsarnā bi-taqdīm [‘alā taqdīm] hādhih al-maḥḍar al-‘umūmī li-a‘tāb ‘uṭūfatikum naskhatan ‘ulā wa-bih [kunnā] mustarḥimīn shafaqatan wa-raḥmatan wa-iḥsānan wa-minnatan ‘alā fuqarā’ hādhih al-bayt al-muqaddas al-ladhī ‘azzamah Allāh ta‘ālā bi-inqādhinā min tajabburāt al-madhkūr wa-ijrā’ ijāb mā taḍammanah ‘arḍuḥālinā hādhih kamā huwa min shiyam ma‘ālīkum raf‘ al-mazālim wa-daf‘ al-ta‘addiyāt al-munāfiya li-riḍā’ Allāh wa-rasūlih al-a‘ẓam ṣallā Allāh ‘alayh wa-sallam wa-waliyy ni‘matinā al-dawla al-‘aliyya ayyad Allāh ta‘ālā sarīr salṭanatihā al-saniyya maḥfūfatan bi-l-‘izz wa-l-iqbāl wa-l-naṣr wa-l-ijlāl ilā ākhir al-dawarān āmin.

⁴ See “al-munāfiya li-riḍā’ Allāh...” below.

Translation

Your Excellency,

Your Esteemed Authority is no doubt aware that our everlasting and glorious State has established exalted laws and regulations, and has instituted them as the cornerstone for the execution of its just decrees on every procedure pertaining to the inhabitants of its protected Shāhāniyya territories, who abide under the shadow of its soaring wing. In its demonstration of empathy and prioritization of public well-being, it has implemented municipal councils in cities and towns to monitor the interests of the populace, cater to the needs of the impoverished, assure favorable developments in the civic realm, and enforce national laws as prescribed in its directives.

It is further mandated that the council head must be a prominent figure of noble descent and substantial wealth, reputable for his integrity and knowledge, as is affirmed by the provisions of two imperial decrees. The first pertains to halting the advance salary payment of the council head, while the second points to the disbursement of the said salary in arrears, and your grace will observe from the assessment of both that it is prohibited for a foreign individual to assume this position. Hence, Esteryadi Efendi, who currently heads the Jerusalem council, and by virtue of these instructions set forth in the aforementioned decrees, is not suitable for this headship owing to several considerations.

First, he is a foreigner. **Second**, he does not understand the Arabic language. **Third**, he lacks the necessary wealth and integrity. **Fourth**, he disregards the duties required by his role, which involve tending to the needs of the city and promoting the common good, among other responsibilities. **Fifth**, through his actions of physically assaulting the poor and weak in public spaces and markets, as well as verbally abusing litigants without any regard for others, he has been oppressing the weak and disadvantaged, in clear opposition to the satisfaction of the higher authority and your grace's ardor. **Sixth**, when he previously served as an interpreter for the government in this city, he was dismissed and sent away due to his lack of integrity and the harm he caused to the people.

Therefore, and in consideration of the relevant national laws and regulations, and out of compassion for the poor and weak of this sacred place, we humbly implore your grace's

mercy and compassion to relieve us from the tyranny, arrogance, and harm caused by this man by dismissing him from this position; and replacing him with someone who is fit and straight, from among the nobles and respected individuals of our city, who possess wealth and standing, who will honor the Almighty, uphold the dignity of our exalted state, care for the comfort of our poor, and strive for the organization of our honored city and general welfare, in accordance with the aforementioned instructions. As our victorious state has granted all its subjects the right to freely voice their grievances on adverse incidents, we have dared to submit this public petition to your noble attention, humbly seeking your grace, compassion, kindness, and favor upon the poor of this sacred place, which God Almighty has sanctified, by saving us from the tyranny of the aforementioned individual, and by favorably addressing the entreaties articulated in this petition. This is in accordance with your Excellency's customary practice of eradicating injustices and averting transgressions that are contrary to the will of God and His Messenger, peace be upon him, and our benefactor, the exalted state, may God Almighty protect its glorious throne, may it be embraced by honor, prosperity, victory, and reverence until the end of time. Amen.

[Signatures]⁵

[Below the text]	
[Line 1]	
<i>al-dā</i> ⁶ [the claimant]	
<i>Shams al-Dīn al-Jamā'ī</i>	<i>aḥad a'immat al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i> [an <i>imām</i> of <i>al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i>]
<i>Muḥammad Nūr</i>	<i>aḥad khadamat al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i> [a servant of <i>al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i>]

⁵ It is important to recognize that the following table does not reflect the true layout of the signatures as they appear in the original text where the separation between names and occupations is not consistently clear, leading to instances where they actually blend, and occupations may even come before the names. At times, stamps completely substitute for names too.

Alternatively, to promote clarity, the table's first column is allocated for names, while the second column specifies their corresponding occupations. In instances where neither a name (in written form) nor a profession appears in the original text, a dash is utilized.

⁶ This term appears before every name, yet I have only noted its first mention.

<i>Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn al-Dāwūdī al-Dajānī</i>	<i>khādim al- 'ilm⁷ bi-dār sayyidinā Dāwūd</i> [servant of (religious) knowledge in the Sanctuary of (the) Prophet <i>Dāwūd</i> (David)]
<i>Tāj al-Dīn al- Jamā 'ī</i>	<i>khaṭīb al-Masjid al-Aqṣā</i> [<i>al-Aqṣā</i> Mosque preacher]
<i>Badr al-Dīn al- Jamā 'ī</i>	<i>khaṭīb al-Masjid al-Aqṣā</i> [<i>al-Aqṣā</i> Mosque preacher]
[Line 2]	
<i>'Abd al-Mu 'ṭī Kamāl</i>	<i>aḥad ahālī al-Quds</i> [a resident of Jerusalem]
<i>Aḥmad Kamāl</i>	<i>aḥad ahālī al-Quds</i> [a resident of Jerusalem]
<i>'Abd al-Muḥsin</i>	<i>aḥad tujjār al-Quds</i> [a merchant of Jerusalem]
<i>Salīm al-Nashāshībī</i>	<i>aḥad [al-]tujjār</i> [a merchant]
<i>'Abd al-Qādir al- 'Alamī</i>	
<i>Muḥammad Shākir Abū Fiḍḍa</i>	<i>khādim al- 'ilm bi-l-Ḥaram al-Qudsī</i> [servant of (religious) knowledge in <i>al-Ḥaram al-Qudsī</i>]
<i>Sulaymān al-Ṣāliḥ</i>	<i>aḥad a 'immat al-Masjid al-Aqṣā</i> [an <i>imām</i> of <i>al-Aqṣā</i> Mosque]
<i>Rashīd Amīn al- 'Alamī</i>	<i>khādim al-sādāt al-ṣūfiyya</i> [servant of <i>al-sādāt al-ṣūfiyya</i>]
[Line 3]	
<i>Ḥasan Ḥusayn al-Dāwūdī</i>	<i>a 'zā maḥalliyyat Bāb al- 'Āmūd</i> [member of the local council of <i>Bāb al- 'Āmūd</i>]
<i>'Abdallāh Qarjūlī</i>	<i>aḥad ikhtiyāriyyat maḥallat Bāb Ḥiṭṭa</i> [one (member) in the mayoral council of <i>Bāb Ḥiṭṭa</i>]
_____	<i>a 'zā majlis ikhtiyāriyyat maḥallat Bāb Ḥiṭṭa</i> [member in the mayoral council of <i>Bāb Ḥiṭṭa</i>]
_____	<i>a 'zā ikhtiyāriyyat maḥallat Bāb Ḥiṭṭa</i>

⁷ Although this terminology may allude to *shaykhs* or instructors of religious sciences, it is recognized as a modesty phrase that finds relevance in diverse contexts.

	[member of the mayoral council of <i>Bāb Hittā</i>]
<i>Bakr al-Nashāshībī</i>	<i>aḥad tujjār al-Quds</i> [a merchant of Jerusalem]
<i>Sulaymān</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
[Line 4]	
<i>al-sayyid ‘Uthmān Ghūsha</i>	<i>qaṣṣāb bāshī bi-l-Quds</i> [butcher in Jerusalem]
<i>Ḥusayn Sharaf</i>	<i>a ‘zā ikhtiyāriyyat maḥallat al-Wād</i> [member of the mayoral council of <i>al-Wād</i>]
_____	<i>a ‘zā ikhtiyāriyyat maḥallat al-Wād bi-l-Quds</i> [member of the mayoral council of <i>al-Wād</i> in Jerusalem]
_____	<i>aḥad majlis ikhtiyāriyyat maḥallat al-Wād [Wād] bi-l-Quds</i> [one (member) of the mayoral council of <i>al-Wād</i> in Jerusalem]
_____	<i>mukhtār maḥallat al-Wād</i> [mayor of <i>al-Wād</i>]
_____	<i>a ‘zā ikhtiyāriyyat maḥalliyyat Bāb al-‘Āmūd</i> [member of the mayoral council of <i>Bāb al-‘Āmūd</i>]
_____	<i>mukhtār maḥalliyyat Bāb al-‘Āmūd</i> [mayor of <i>Bāb al-‘Āmūd</i>]
[Line 5]	
<i>‘Abd Wahba</i>	<i>aḥad al-khuḍarjiyyīn bi-l-Quds al-Sharīf</i> [a greengrocer in Jerusalem]
<i>Muṣṭafā al-Ṣāhib</i>	<i>aḥad al-baqqāla bi-l-Quds</i> [a grocer in Jerusalem]
<i>Ismā ‘il Tzīz</i>	<i>aḥad al-baqqāla bi-l-Quds</i> [a grocer in Jerusalem]
<i>Amīn al-Sharfā</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Ḥasan Nūr al-Dīn</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>‘Alī al-Jā ‘unī</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
[Line 6]	
<i>al-sayyid Muḥammad ‘Akka</i>	<i>ḥalawanjī bi-l-Quds</i> [pastry-cook in Jerusalem]
<i>Muḥammad Islāmbūlī</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i>

	[a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Dāwūd Ghūsha</i>	<i>qaṣṣāb bi-l-Quds</i> [butcher in Jerusalem]
<i>al-sayyid Ibrāhīm</i>	<i>qaṣṣāb bi-l-Quds</i> [butcher in Jerusalem]
<i>Mahmūd al-Bashītī</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
' <i>Abd al-Laṭīf</i>	<i>faṭāyri bi-l-Quds</i> [faṭāyir ⁸ maker in Jerusalem]
[Right]	
[Line 1]	
<i>Yūsuf As 'ad</i>	<i>al-imām bi-l-Masjid al-Aqṣā al-Sharīf wa-l-mudarris bihi 'alā al-dawām</i> [imām and teacher in <i>al-Aqṣā</i> Mosque]
' <i>Abd al-Salām Ṭāhā</i>	<i>turbadār [Türbedâr] sayyidinā Dāwūd 'alayh al-salām wa-l-mudarris bi-l-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i> [tomb keeper [in the Sanctuary] of (the) Prophet <i>Dāwūd</i> (David) and teacher in <i>al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i>]
<i>Muḥammad 'Alī</i>	<i>al-mu 'adhdhin bi-l-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i> [the caller to prayer in <i>al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i>]
<i>Mūsā 'Arafāt</i>	<i>aḥad tujjār al-Quds</i> [a merchant of Jerusalem]
' <i>Umar al-Daqqāq</i>	<i>khādim al-Ṣakhra al-Sharīfa</i> [servant of <i>al-Ṣakhra al-Sharīfa</i>]
<i>Sharaf al-Dīn al-Khalīlī</i>	<i>aḥad tujjār al-Quds</i> [a merchant of Jerusalem]
<i>Mūsā Jārallāh</i>	<i>aḥad ahālī al-Quds al-Sharīf</i> [a resident of Jerusalem]
<i>Ḥasan al-Hānī</i>	<i>aḥad al-'ulamā' mudarris bi-l-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i> [one of the 'ulamā' teachers in <i>al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i>]
<i>al-sayyid Jā 'unizāde Ṣāliḥ 'Umar</i>	_____
<i>Qusṭandī Jirjus Masṭūrī</i>	_____
<i>Mikhā 'il Jays al-Khūrī</i>	_____
' <i>Īsā al-Dabghī</i>	<i>min al-Rūm</i> [lit. "of the Romans", i.e. Greek Orthodox, Christian]

⁸ *Faṭāyir* is a popular sweet treat in *Bilād al-Shām*, and is typically prepared in the month of *Ramaḍān*.

<i>Isrāfīl</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
<i>Jrays Qusṭandī al-Khūrī</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
[Line 2]	
<i>Ibrāhīm Ḥasaballāh</i> [?]	<i>khādīm al-‘ilm al-sharīf</i> [servant of (religious) knowledge]
<i>Muṣṭafā Ṣālīḥ al-‘Alamī</i>	_____
<i>Mūsā bik</i> [Bey] <i>al-‘Alamī</i>	<i>min ahālī al-Quds al-Sharīf</i> [a resident of Jerusalem]
<i>Ḥasan al-Khaṭīb</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār al-Quds</i> [a merchant of Jerusalem]
<i>Muḥyī al-dīn al-Jamā‘ī</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār al-Quds</i> [a merchant of Jerusalem]
<i>Ḥusayn ‘Abd al-Mu‘ṭī al-Muhtadī</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Salmān Wahbī</i>	<i>min ahālī al-Quds al-Sharīf</i> [a resident of Jerusalem]
<i>al-shaykh ‘Uthmān al-Danaf</i> [...] ?	<i>khādīm Ṣakhrat Allāh al-Musharrafa</i> [servant of Ṣakhrat Allāh]
<i>‘Abd al-Muḥsin ‘Ārif</i>	_____
<i>Ṣālīḥ Abū Ḥumayd</i>	<i>Guncude khazracı</i> [?] <i>der Kudüs Şerif</i> [greengrocer [?]]
<i>Ilyās Şuş</i>	<i>min tā‘ifat al-Rūm</i> [from the Roman community]
<i>‘Īsā Jirjus Mastūrī</i>	<i>min al-Rūm</i> [from the Romans]
<i>Rashīd Khayr</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
<i>Qusṭandī Shammūt</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
[Line 3]	
<i>Zayn al-Dīn Ṭahbūb</i>	_____
<i>Ibrāhīm Ḥujayj</i>	_____
<i>al-sayyid ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Jā‘unī</i>	_____
<i>‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-Jā‘unī</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Ibrāhīm al-Man‘</i>	<i>khādīm al-‘ilm al-sharīf</i> [servant of (religious) knowledge]
<i>al-sayyid Ḥasan Ṣādiq</i> ⁹	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i>

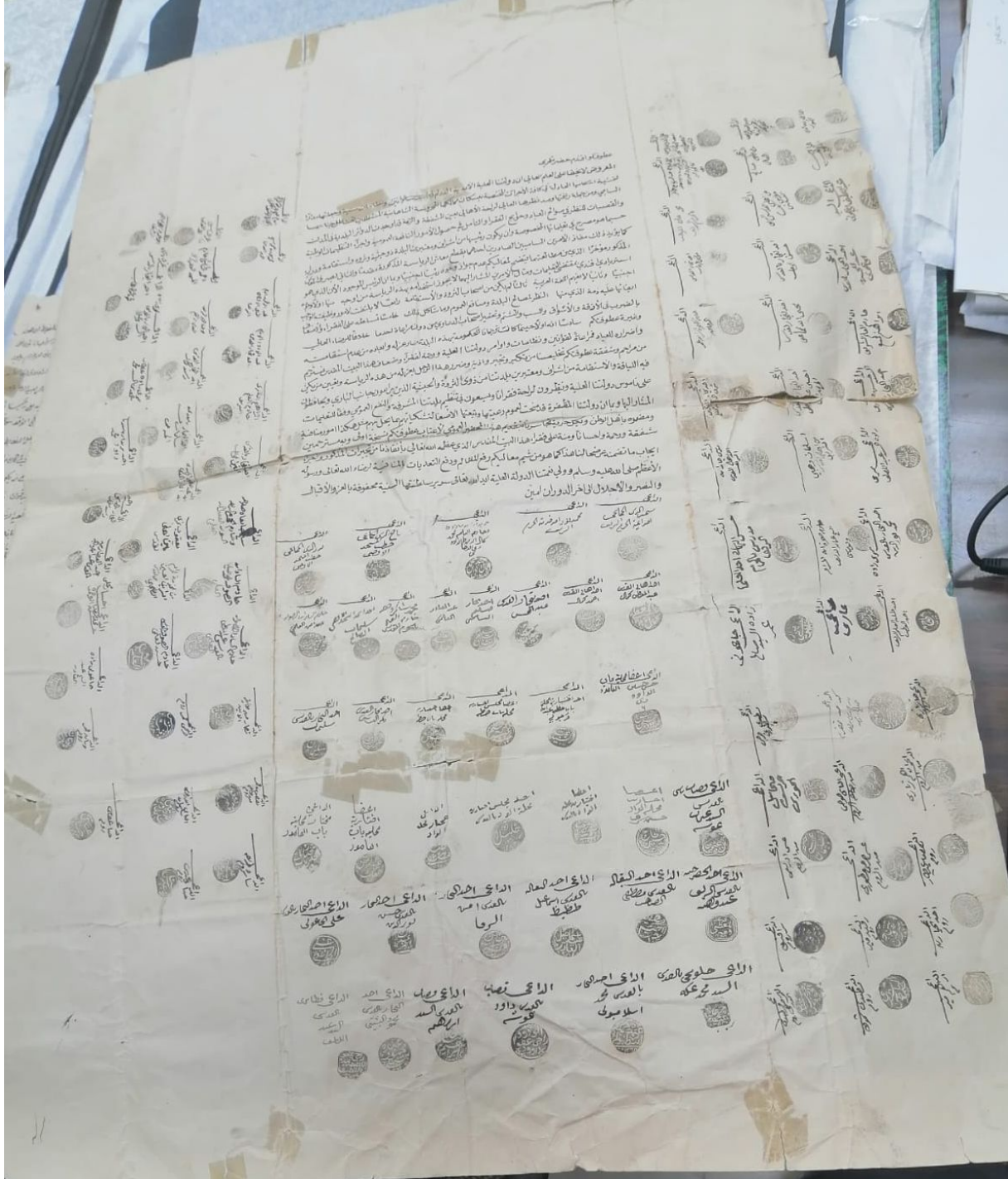
⁹ The family name remains uncertain due to the document’s damage, which obscures the clarity of the word.

	[a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Nimrīzāde al-sayyid 'Abd al-Laṭīf</i>	
<i>Nimrīzāde Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Aḥmad al-Quṭb</i>	<i>aḥad ṭalabat al- 'ilm al-sharīf</i> [a seeker of knowledge = student]
<i>Ḥannā Zanānīrī</i>	<i>min al-Rūm</i> [from the Romans]
<i>Ibrāhīm Zanānīrī</i>	<i>min al-Rūm</i> [from the Romans]
<i>Ya 'qūb Bīṭār</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
<i>aḥad al-khayārna</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
<i>Ibrāhīm Khayr</i>	
[Left]	
[Line 1]	
<i>Bshāra Zarīfa</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
<i>Ya 'qūb Qamar</i>	<i>min ṭā'ifat [al-]Rūm</i> [from the Roman community]
<i>Naṣṣār</i>	<i>min ṭā'ifat al-Arman</i> [from the Armenian community]
<i>'Abd al-Mu'ṭī al-'Alamī</i>	<i>khādim al-sādāt al-ṣūfiyya bi-l-Quds</i> [servant of <i>al-sādāt al-ṣūfiyya</i> in Jerusalem]
<i>Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-'Alamī</i>	<i>khādim al-sādāt al-ṣūfiyya</i> [servant of <i>al-sādāt al-ṣūfiyya</i>]
<i>Aḥmad al-'Alamī</i>	<i>shaykh Khānqāh Ṣalāḥiyya wa-khādim al-ḥujra al-sharīfa al-nūniyya [?] al-faqīr</i> [shaykh of <i>Khānqāh Ṣalāḥiyya</i> and servant of <i>al-ḥujra al-sharīfa</i>]
<i>Amīn al-Khaṭīb</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Ibrāhīm al-Budayrī</i>	<i>khādim al- 'ilm al-sharīf</i> [servant of (religious) knowledge]
<i>'Abd al-Wadūd al-Imām</i>	<i>aḥad tujjār al-Quds</i> [a merchant of Jerusalem]
<i>'Abd al-Raḥmān</i>	<i>imām al-Masjid al-Aqṣā al-Sharīf</i> [imām of <i>al-Aqṣā</i> Mosque]
<i>Muḥammad Shaḥāda 'Alamī</i>	<i>shaykh al-Ḥaram al-Qudsī</i> [shaykh of <i>al-Ḥaram al-Qudsī</i>]
<i>al-Ḥājj Yūsuf al-Khālīdī</i>	<i>imām Ṣakhrat Allāh al-Musharrafa</i> [imām of <i>Ṣakhra</i>]

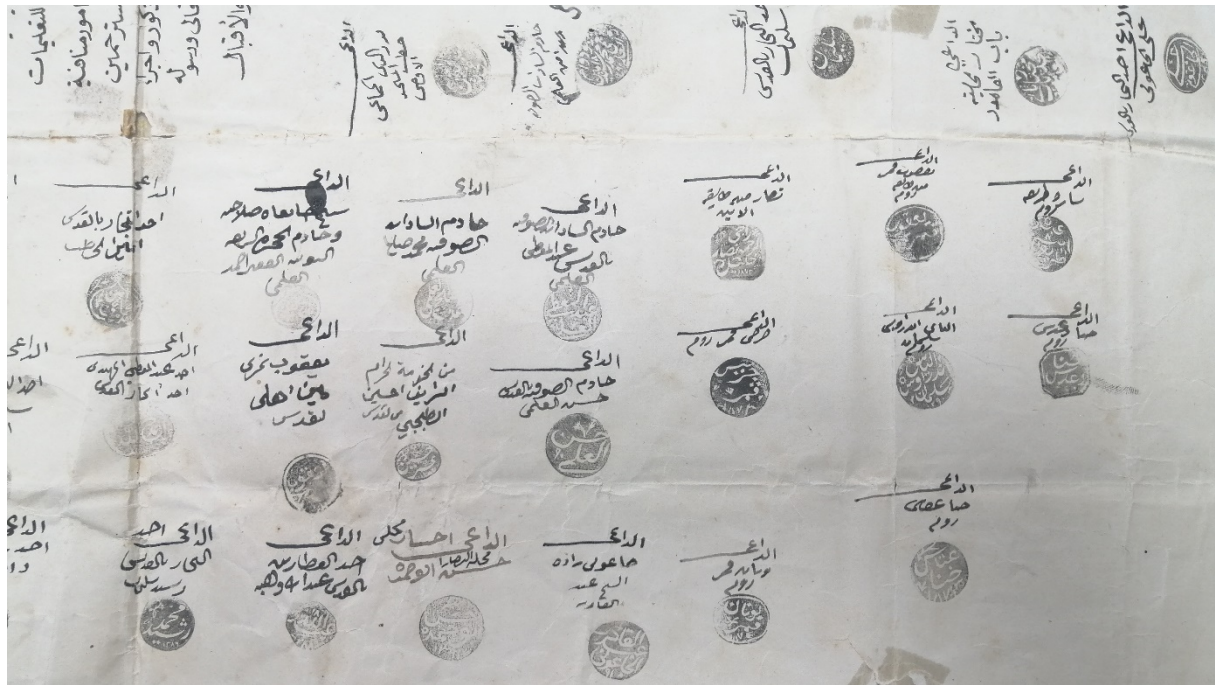
[Line 2]	
<i>Ḥannā Da ‘das</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
<i>Ilyās Andrāwus Sulaymān</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
<i>Jirjus Qamar</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
<i>Ḥasan al- ‘Alamī</i>	<i>khādim al-ṣūfiyyā bi-l-Quds</i> [servant of <i>Ṣūfis</i> in Jerusalem]
<i>Ḥusayn al-Ṭabajī</i>	<i>min khadamat al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf min al-Quds</i> [a servant of <i>al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i> from Jerusalem]
<i>Ya ‘qūb Nimrī</i>	<i>min ahālī al-Quds</i> [a resident of Jerusalem]
<i>Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mu ‘ṭī al-Muhtadī</i>	<i>aḥad tujjār al-Quds</i> [a merchant of Jerusalem]
<i>Sulaymān Ḥasan al-Jaras</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Rashīd Kamāl</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār [bi-]al-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Ibrāhīm</i>	<i>mu ‘adhdhin al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf al-Qudsī</i> [caller to prayer of <i>al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf</i>]
<i>Aḥmad al-Nashāshībī</i>	<i>khādim al-Masjid al-Aqṣā al-Sharīf</i> [servant of <i>al-Aqṣā</i> Mosque]
<i>‘Umar al-Nashāshībī</i>	<i>khādim al-Masjid al-Aqṣā</i> [servant of <i>al-Aqṣā</i> Mosque]
[Line 3]	
<i>Ḥannā ‘Abbās</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
<i>Yūnān Qamar</i>	<i>Rūm</i> [Romans]
<i>Jā ‘ūnizāde al-shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir</i>	_____
<i>Ḥasan Abū Jamra</i>	<i>majlis ikhtiyār maḥallat al-Naṣārā</i> [mayoral council of <i>maḥallat al-Naṣārā</i>]
<i>‘Abdallāh Wahba</i>	<i>aḥad al- ‘aṭṭārīn bi-l-Quds</i> [a perfumer in Jerusalem]
<i>Rashīd Sulaymān</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Muḥammad</i>	<i>aḥad turbadāriyyat sayyidinā Dāwūd</i> [a tomb keeper (in the Sanctuary) of (the) Prophet <i>Dāwūd</i>]
<i>al-sayyid Muḥammad Nimrīzāde</i>	<i>‘aṭṭār bi-l-Quds</i> [perfumer in Jerusalem]

<i>al-sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alī Nimrīzāde</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
<i>Maḥmūd ‘Abd al-Wahhāb Nimrīzāde</i>	<i>aḥad al-tujjār bi-l-Quds</i> [a merchant in Jerusalem]
_____	<i>aḥad khadamat al-Masjid al-Aqṣā al-Sharīf</i> [a servant of <i>al-Aqṣā</i> Mosque]

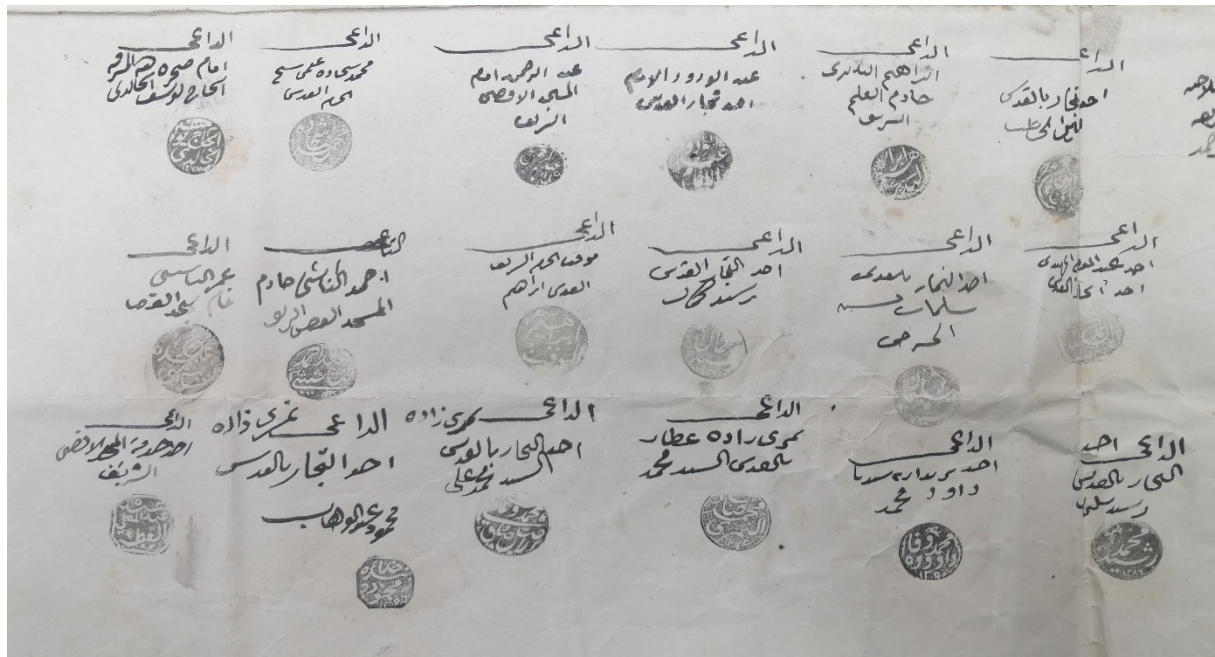
Facsimile



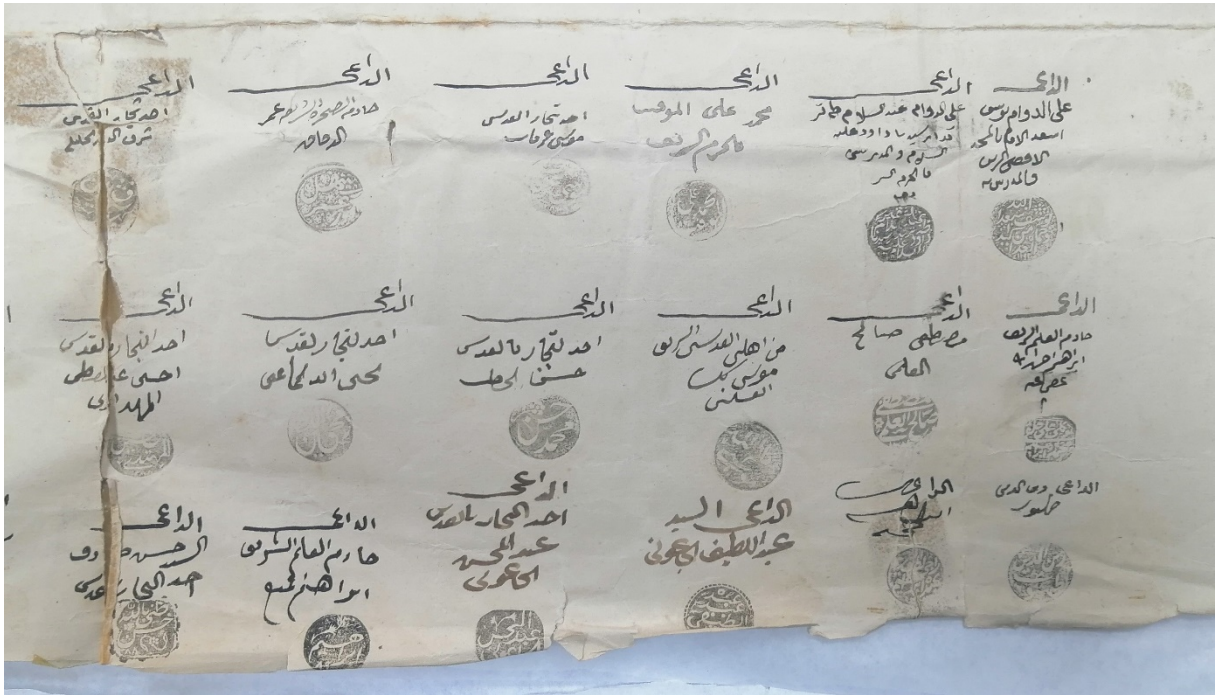
Detail 2



Detail 3



Detail 4



Detail 5



19th Century Ottoman Archery Records Among Leiden Miscellanea

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Context

The following manuscript is part of a 19th-century notebook housed in Leiden University Library's Oriental Collections (Cod. Or. 12.418), and brought to the Netherlands by Franz Taeschner (1888-1967).¹ Below, we share the folios 16R and 27V containing Sultan Maḥmūd II's (r. 1808-1839) archery records shot on *Ekşi Menzili/Menzil-i Ekşi* (abbr. *Erkekli ve Dişili*, Tr. 'with male and female') in *Oḳmeydānı* (Archery Field), bordering Istanbul.² The section on the sultan's archery records comprises nine pages of the more extensive notebook concerning various subjects.³ The archery section begins with *b[i-smi]h[u]*, (in His [God's] name),⁴ and presents the name and location of the range (*menzil*); wind directions (*hevā*); a list of the names of the (former) record holders; and their corresponding scores measured in *gez* 'aded (a cubit, approximately 60 cm).⁵ The word 'aded (amount) is shaped like an arrow flying through the sky: the two *dāls* (ﺩ) form the feathers of the arrow while the 'ayn (ع) is shaped like an arrowhead. The 'ayn and *dāls* are connected by a long line, representing the shaft (see the Facsimile).

Maḥmūd appears eighteen times in the notebook, of which seventeen are by name and once as *def'a* (repeated). Most of his records are mentioned twice; some in the context of a sole record or only with one preceding archer (10 times), others in more extensive overviews of previous record-holders on a specific track (8 times).⁶ His most extensive title is *Ḥazret-i Sulṭān Maḥmūd Ḥan-i Ġāzī-i 'Adlī-i 'Adālet-kār Efendimiz* (His Majesty Sultan Mahmud Khan Gazi, the Just, the Righteous, our Master).⁷ The sultan's

¹ We thank Hans Theunissen for sharing this source with us and the discussions we had regarding its context. All errors belong to us. See Hans Theunissen, "Framing a Reformist Government," Leiden University Turkish Studies: Courses, accessed September 12, 2024, https://rise.articulate.com/share/GM3dwzWXv8UPPgvhRABXsRu_VJfsRLS#/.

² For the abbreviation, see Muştafa Kānī, *Telḥīs-i Resā'ilātü 'r-Rumāt*, İstanbul: Dārü 'ṭ-Ṭıbā'atü 'l-'Āmire, 1263 [1847], 246.

³ For more information on the entire miscellany, see Jan Schmidt, *Catalogue of Turkish Manuscripts in the Library of Leiden University and Other Collections in the Netherlands*, vol. 3 (Leiden: Leiden University Library, 2006), 252–57.

⁴ Cod. Or.12.418, fol 15V.

⁵ Şinasi Acar and Zafer Metin Ateş, "Gez Uzunluğu Ne Kadardı?" *Yapı* 330 (2009): 60-64.

⁶ This dual mention also occurs in Kānī. For the *Ekşi Menzili* example, see Kānī, *Telḥīs*, 124, 246-47.

⁷ Cod. Or. 12.418, fol 15V.

recurring title is *Ḥazret-i Sultān Maḥmūd Ḥan*, often combined with other appellations.⁸ The names of the other competing archers are given rather humbly, only accompanied by their titles such as *Ağa*, *Bey*, or nicknames signifying their occupations, family ties, physical features, etc. Some preceding records are anonymous and are noted as “first stone” (*Anaṭaşı*), “second [stone]” (*İkinci*), and so on. Stone refers to the pillars erected to commemorate the record-holder’s success on the spot where the arrow fell. Maḥmūd II consistently broke records and erected numerous obelisks.⁹

The anonymous author of the Leiden manuscript most likely copied the entries from the *Telhīs-i Resā’ilātü ‘r-Rumāt* (1836, printed in 1847) of Muṣṭafa Kānī Bey (d. 1850). Almost all notebook records are identical; this includes the lines next to some numbers, representing 0.5 *gez* (see the Facsimile). Judging by copying errors and eraser marks, it is plausible that it is a later copy of tournament records.¹⁰ We present eraser marks with a strikethrough in the transliteration and translation.

Although we do not know the exact date and purpose of its authorship, the Leiden manuscript offers valuable information for those interested in the history of archery and sultanic legitimacy-building in the early 19th-century Ottoman court.

Maḥmūd II was initiated into the Archers’ *tekke* in Oḡmeydānı in 1818.¹¹ Around that time Ibrāhīm Pasha (d. 1848), the son of Meḥmed ‘Alī Pasha of Egypt (d. 1849), quelled the Wahhābī revolt and ended the Ottoman-Wahhābī War (1811-1818). The unpopular sultan seized the opportunity to capitalise on the rare surge of favourable popular sentiment; adopting the “blessed” title of *Ġāzī* (holy warrior) and increasingly participating in archery tournaments to showcase his pious-chivalric virtues.¹² The

⁸ The only exception is the *Menzil-i Ekşi* where *Ḥan* is omitted. *Ibid.*, fol 27V.

⁹ See M. Şinasi Acar, *İstanbul’un Son Nişantaşları* (İstanbul: Arkeoloji ve Sanat Yayınları, 2006).

¹⁰ For a copying error, see Cod. Or. 12.418, fol 16R.

¹¹ For information on the sultan’s initiation, see Ünsal Yücel, “Sultan Mahmut II. Devrinde Okçuluk” *Türk Etnografya Dergisi* 10 (1967): 94-95.

¹² The sultan had adopted this appellation after the reconquest of Mecca and Medina from the Wahhābīs in 1813 and reiterated it in 1818 after the execution of ‘Abdullah ibn Sa‘ūd. See BOA, *HAT* 1522/32 S. (29 May 1813 CE); Tayyazade Ata, *Osmanlı Saray Tarihi. Tarih-i Enderun*, ed. Mehmet Arslan, 5 vols. (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2010), III: 177-178 (originally published in 1874-77 CE), cited in Theunissen, “Framing.”

sultan's claim to holy victory, despite deploying Meḥmed 'Alī, was likely intended to downplay the latter's significance. Moreover, the Islamic symbolism innate in archery, as it was a *Sünnet* (Prophetic Tradition), played a significant role in this image-building campaign.¹³ The Leiden manuscript is useful in showcasing archery's role in this campaign: the sultan's appellations very often include *Ġāzī*, *'Adlī* (The Just), *'Adālet-kār* (The Righteous). The insistent invocations of *'Adlī* and *Adālet-kār* were likely responses to the widespread criticism among Muslims who accused the sultan of disregarding justice and the *ṣerī'at*.¹⁴ Frederick Anscombe writes that the sultan “stoked religious zeal to mobilize and motivate the Muslim soldiery during wars with Russia and in campaigns against Christian rebels.”¹⁵ Therefore, archery as performative Islamic propaganda may have helped mitigate the opposition and consolidate sultanic legitimacy.

Transcription

F16R

<i>Menzil-i Emīn Lodos Hevāsıyla Atılmışdır</i>		
<i>Gez</i> <i>'Aded</i>		
<i>۱۱۶۰</i>		

¹³ See Geyveli Hüseyin Efendi, *Kevserü'l-Hayat: Geyveli Hüseyin Efendi'nin Okçuluk Rehberi*, prep. Recep Selman Doğru, ed. Uğur Öztür (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2021). Originally published 1818.

¹⁴ For popular Muslim opposition toward Maḥmūd II, see Frederick Anscombe, “Islam and the Age of Ottoman Reform” *Past and Present* 208 (August 2010): 159-189.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 188.

<i>Ekşi Menzili Yıldız Havâsıyla Atılmışdır: Tâcir-zâde Meḥmed Emîn Aḡanıñdır</i>		
<i>Gez 'Aded</i>		
1190,5	[erased]	
0006	<i>Ḥazret-i Sultân Maḥmūd Ḥan-i Ğâzîniñdir</i>	<i>der-sene 1248</i>
1196,5		
0023	<i>Ḥazret-i Sultân Maḥmūd Ḥan-i Ğâzîniñdir</i>	<i>der-sene 1251</i>
1219,5		<i>fî 14 C[emâzî'l-]â[hîr]</i>

F27V

<i>Menzil-i Ekşi Yıldız Poyraziyladır</i>		
<i>Gez 'Aded</i>		
884	<i>Anaṭaşı</i>	
019,5	<i>İkinci</i>	
903,5		
156,5	<i>Üçüncü</i>	
1060		
0042,5	<i>Dördüncü</i>	
1102,5		
0010	<i>Pişgîrî Süleymân Aḡa</i>	

1112,5		
0010	<i>Küçük Hasan Ağa</i>	
1122,5		
0006	<i>Cebehāneci Seyyid ‘Osmān Ağa</i>	
1128,5		
0027,5	<i>Sü‘edā Beg Tābi ‘-i Ḥadīce Sulṭān</i>	
1156		
0022	<i>Ḥasan Ağa Ser-Taḥt-i Revānī-i Ḥāṣṣa</i>	
1178		
0013,5	<i>Tācir-zāde Meḥmed Emīn Ağa</i>	
1191,5		
0006	<i>Ḥazret-i Sulṭān Maḥmūd-i Ġāzī-i ‘Adālet-kār</i>	<i>Sene 1248 fī C[emāzī 'l-]e[vvel] 14</i>
1197,5		
0022	<i>Def‘a</i>	<i>der-sene 1251</i>
1219,5		

Translation

F16R

Was shot at the Range of Emin with a Southwest Wind		
Distance in Gez		
1160		

Shot at the Male-Female Range with a North Wind: Son of the Merchant Mehmed Emin Agha's		
Distance in Gez		
1190,5	[erased]	
0006	His Majesty Sultan Mahmud Khan the Gazi's	In the year [1832/33 CE]
1196,5		
0023	His Majesty Sultan Mahmud Khan the Gazi's	In the year [1835 on October 7 CE]
1219,5		

F27V

Male-Female Range with a North-Northeast Wind		
Distance in Gez		
884	First stone	
019,5	Second	
903		
156,5	Third	
1060		
0042,5	Fourth	
1102,5		
0010	Süleyman Agha, the Napkin-Attendant	
1112,5		
0010	Hasan Agha, the Smaller/Younger	
1122,5		
0006	Seyyid Osman Agha, the Quartermaster	
1128,5		
0027,5	Sü'eda Bey, Servant of Khadija Sultan	
1156		

Male-Female Range with a North-Northeast Wind		
Distance in Gez		
884	First stone	
019,5	Second	
903		
0022	Hasan Agha, the Chief of the Privy Palanquin	
1178		
0013,5	Son of the Merchant Mehmed Emin Agha	
1191,5		
0006	His Majesty Sultan Mahmud the Gazi the Righteous	The year [1832 on October 9 CE]
1197,5		
0022	Repeated [Mahmud II]	In the year [1835/36 CE]
1219,5		

Discussion

Ekşi Menzili/Menzil-i Ekşi is the same track but the record contains Turkish and Persian grammatical constructions and this interchangeability is a recurring phenomenon.¹⁶ Wind directions feature in all records. Enes Azbay cites archery documents that use *hevā*

¹⁶ Cod. Or.12.418, folios 16R, 27V. Another range that experiences this phenomenon is the *Emîn Menzili/Menzil-i Emîn*. *Ibid.*, 15V, 32R. For another example, see footnote 18.

in reference to the literal blowing of the wind.¹⁷ As it affects the trajectory of an arrow, the wind needs to be recorded. The sultan shot in a north wind (*Yıldız*) on the *Ekşi Menzili* and in a north-northeast wind (*Yıldız Poyrazı*) on the *Menzil-i Ekşi*.¹⁸ These winds have minor differences yet are in the same general direction. This correlation between ranges and winds is emblematic of all of Maḥmūd's records: every shot on a specific track is shot in a designated general direction.

While the winds and grammatical constructions of names show minor differences, a closer look at the distances and the years of records provide more insights into the track. On the *Ekşi Menzili* Maḥmūd shot two records, beating Tācir-zāde Meḥmed Emīn Ağa's 1190,5 gez by 6 gez, bringing the new record to 1196,5 in 1248 [1832-3 C.E.]. About three years later, on 14 C[emāzī 'l-]ā[ḥir] 1251 [October 7 1835 C.E.],¹⁹ the range was again visited by the *Ġāzī*, where he broke his previous record by 23 gez, bringing it to 1219,5. This folio solely contains the records of Maḥmūd and the previous record holder.²⁰

Similar observations can be made when scrutinising the folio containing the full list of range records on the *Menzil-i Ekşi*. Another notable variance is distance. According to the *Menzil-i Ekşi* entry, Tācir-zāde's record was 1191,5 (1 gez more than in his *Ekşi Menzili* mention). Again, Maḥmūd increased the record by 6 gez, bringing the total to 1197,5 on October 9, 1832 (C[emāzī 'l-]e[ḥir] 14, 1248).²¹ The year aligns with the record in the previous case, however, this time it is dated, although possibly incorrectly

¹⁷ Enes Azbay, "Osmanlı Türkçesi Okçuluk Terimlerine Bir Bakış: Yeni Yaklaşımlar, Yeni Yorumlar," *Türkbilig* 45 (2023): 63, 66, 70.

¹⁸ Cod. Or.12.418, folios 16R, 27V. Another case is the *'Abdullāh Efendi Menzili* where Maḥmūd shot with a southwest wind (*Lodos*). On the *Menzil-i 'Abdullāh Efendi* he shot with a west-southwest wind (*Baḫı Lodos*). *Ibid.*, 16V, 31V.

¹⁹ Although the lines next to the month *Cā* reads as *ā[ḥir]*, this is either a copying mistake, a wrong addition, or a reference that Maḥmūd held the last record on this range. Generally, the month *Cemāzī 'l-āḥir* is abbreviated as C. In contrast, Kānī dates the record to the month *Cemāzī 'l-evvel*. In that case, the date would be September 7, 1835. See Kānī, *Telḥīs*, 124, 247.

²⁰ Cod. Or.12.418, fol 16R.

²¹ This date is likely incorrectly copied, as it is the same date as Maḥmūd's 1251 shot, if we consider it to be dated in the month *Cemāzī 'l-evvel*, see footnote 23. In addition, Kānī does not include a date for this record shot, only the year 1248. See Kānī, *Telḥīs*, 124, 247. This corresponds with the other sources consulted, see footnote 24.

(see footnotes 23, 25). His improved record is not dated; only the year is given (1251/1834-35). This record was enhanced by 22 *gez* (1 less), bringing the total to 1219,5.²²

Considering the (almost) identical distances and directions on the same range, the folios refer to the same records. But why are there minor variances in *gez*? The author likely copied from Kānī's *Telḥīs*, where the records are given as 1190,5, improved by 6 to 1196,5 and again enhanced by 23, bringing the final score to 1219,5, both in the shortened record holder section and the more complete overview.²³ The same records from the printed version of the *Telḥīs* are recounted in Ünsal Yücel's book *Türk Okçuluğu* (*Turkish Archery*).²⁴ It is possible that the notebook's author wrongly copied the full-list overview from his singular record list, as Tācir-zāde's 1190,5 record could be hard to decipher. The o in this record dangles between the Arabic numerals 0 and 1 and thus could have been interpreted as 1191,5 (see the Fascimile). To get the correct outcome (1219,5), the copyist may have changed Maḥmūd's improved shot from 23 *gez* to 22. Another possibility is that the writer copied from one of Kānī's writings where the ink was blurred, resulting in the 23 resembling 22 and the o a 1. None of the sources consulted confirms the latter theory, however. Some dual recordings can still complement each other when critically interpreted, as shown by the specified dates and wind directions accompanying the *Ekşi Menzili/Menzil-i Ekşi* records, even though the scribbler may have incorrectly added a specified date to the sultan's 1248 A.H./1832-3 C.E. shot.

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²² Cod. Or.12.418, fol 27V.

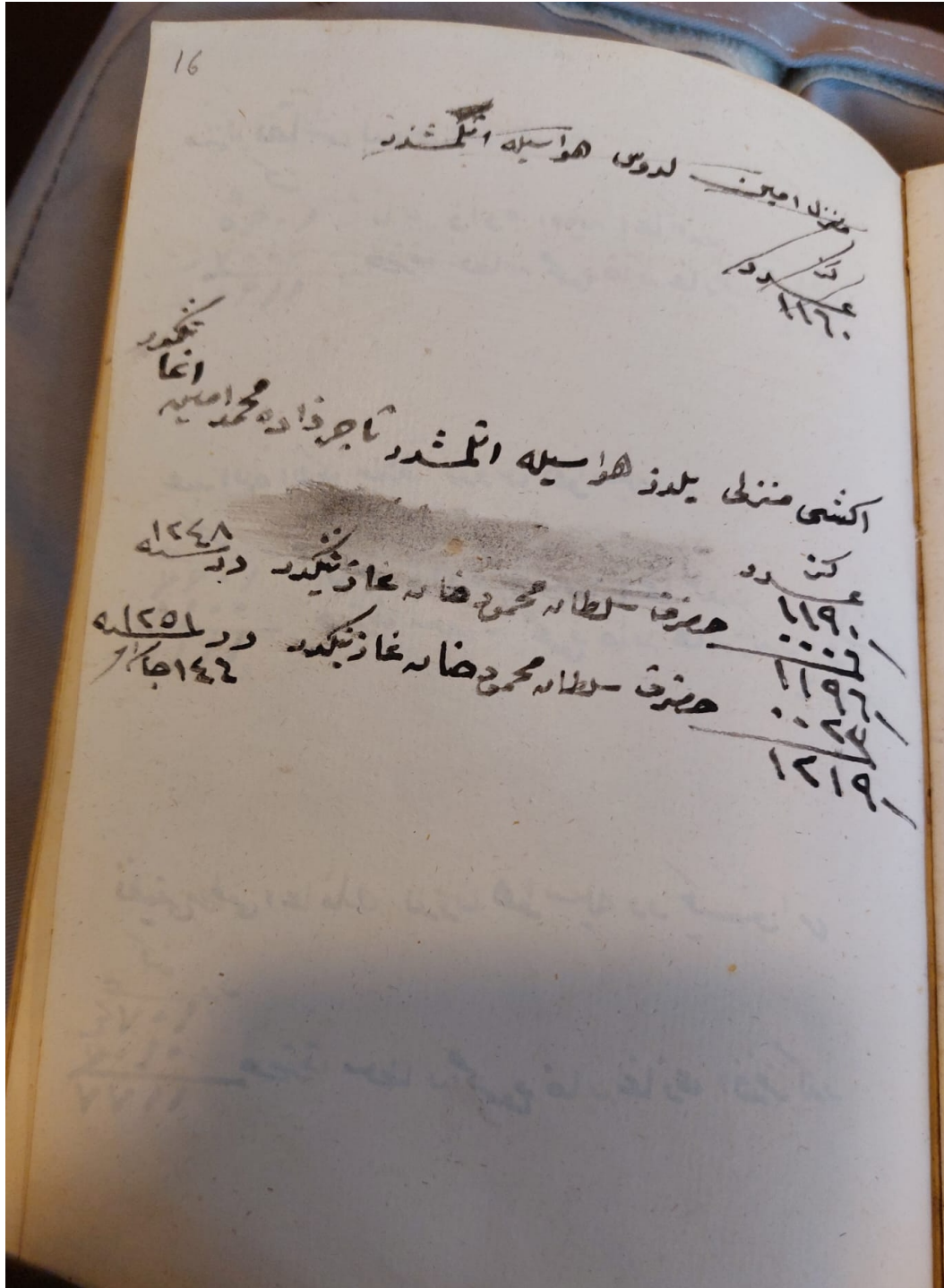
²³ Kānī, *Telḥīs*, 124, 246-47.

²⁴ For other ranges Yücel also consults an anonymous manuscript (İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, TY2694) but for *Ekşi Menzili* he solely consults the printed version of *Telḥīs*. See Ünsal Yücel, *Türk Okçuluğu* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Başkanlığı, 1999), 133-34, 203, 205. We compared TY 2694 with *Telḥīs* and the records are identical. We did the same for Kānī's recently-published *menzil-nāme*, resulting in the same finding. See Mustafa Kānî Efendi, *Risâle-i Menzilân-ı Meydân: Okmeydanı Menzilleri*, prep. Şükrü Seçkin Anık, ed. Uğur Öztürk (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2023), 116-19, 166-69.

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Facsimile

Fol. 16r



Fol. 27v

مزد اکشی بیدز پورازیه در

کرن	۸۸۴	در	۱۱۰۲
اناطاشی	۹۰۶	ایک	۱۱۰۲
اوججی	۱۵۲		۱۱۰۲
در دنجی	۱۰۴		۱۱۰۲
پیشکیری سلیمان اغا	۱۱۰۲		۱۱۰۲
کوبک حسن اغا	۱۱۰۲		۱۱۰۲
جبه خانه بی سید عثمان اغا	۱۱۰۲		۱۱۰۲
سعدا بک تاج خدیجه سلطان	۱۱۰۲		۱۱۰۲
حسن اغا سرختر وانی: خاصه	۱۱۰۲		۱۱۰۲
تاجرزاده محمد امیر اغا	۱۱۰۲		۱۱۰۲
حزق سلطان محمود غازی عدالتکار	۱۱۰۲		۱۱۰۲
دفعه	۱۱۰۲		۱۱۰۲
در	۱۱۰۲		۱۱۰۲
۱۲۵۱			۱۲۱۹

Play on Words: A Single Couplet Written on a *Tatbîk* Register*

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Context

The couplet presented here was written on the last page of a *Tatbik* Register catalogued in the *Meşihat* Archive under the general number 557.¹ *Tatbik* Registers² are registers that list state agents' or state-affiliated agents' names and their official seals. This type of register is specific to *kāzī* and *nā'ib* (judge and deputy judge) seals which are listed geographically. Such registers are kept in their relevant offices and are consulted upon the arrival of correspondence from judges. In order to authenticate the authorship of a document, a scribe would compare the seal on the document with the official copy of the judge's seal in the register. This process was initiated when the superior gave an order by writing "*taṭbik*" ("compare/authenticate") on the document. When the authentication was successful, the scribe noted it on the document by writing "*muṭabıkdur*" ("conforming, i.e., authentic/authenticated"). If the scribe couldn't authenticate the seal, he noted the forgery on the document as well.³ On a different page of this register, we also get to see a scribe practice writing the word "*muṭabıkdur*" for his job.⁴

Ottoman judges produced multiple documents in line with their duties, best known among these are *hüccet* and *i'lām* papers. The difference between these documents is discussed in the literature, but it is generally accepted that *hüccet* does not include the judicial decision whereas *i'lām* does.⁵ However, both of these documents include the judge's seal. The scribe who wrote the couplet on the register made use of these technical terms. He chose some words and terms that are intimately related to each other such as *hüccet* – *i'lām*, *hâtem* (seal) – *taṭbik*, *taḥkik* (examination) – *taṭbik*,

¹ MŞH, 557/72. The documents and registers belonging to this archive are also available on the Ottoman Archive's online page, see BOA, İSTM.MŞH.DFT1.d, 557/73. The couplet is positioned on the opposite end of a note related to the delivery of judicial documents.

² The term "Tatbik Registers" is sometimes translated as "Application Books". However, in this context "tatbik" does not mean an application but a comparison, see Şemseddin Sami, *Kamus-ı Türkî*, ed. Paşa Yavuzarslan (Türk Dil Kurumu, 2019), 1189.

³ Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili (Diplomatika)*, 4th ed., (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2018), 96.

⁴ MŞH, 557/65; BOA, İSTM.MŞH.DFT1.d, 557/66.

⁵ Even though this definition is widely accepted, it might not be true, see Ekrem Tak, *XVI-XVII. Yüzyıl Üsküdar Şer'iyye Sicilleri Diplomatik Bilimi Bakımından Bir İnceleme* (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2019), 188.

İslām – imān (faith) and created the poetic structure around them which is known as *tenāsüb* in literature.⁶ Moreover, he played with the meanings of the words. The words he chose, especially *hüccet* and *i'lām*, can be read in two different ways. If we read them as bureaucratic terms, the couplet depicts a document as if it were being processed in the Ottoman bureaucracy. However, it is more befitting to read the words with their original meanings, *hüccet* as proof and *i'lām* as communication/statement. Now the couplet depicts a devoted Muslim confessing his faith in God. The play on multiple meanings of a given word is known as *tevriye* or *ihām* in literature.⁷ Our playful scribe seems to have spent some time thinking and creating a couplet with the words he constantly encountered at work, presented below.

Transcription

[*mefā 'ilün –mefā 'ilün –mefā 'ilün –mefā 'ilün*]

Göñül 'arz eyle Haḳka hüccet-i İslāmuñı taḥkīk
Ola i'lām-ı dīnūñ ḥātem-i imān ile taṭbīk

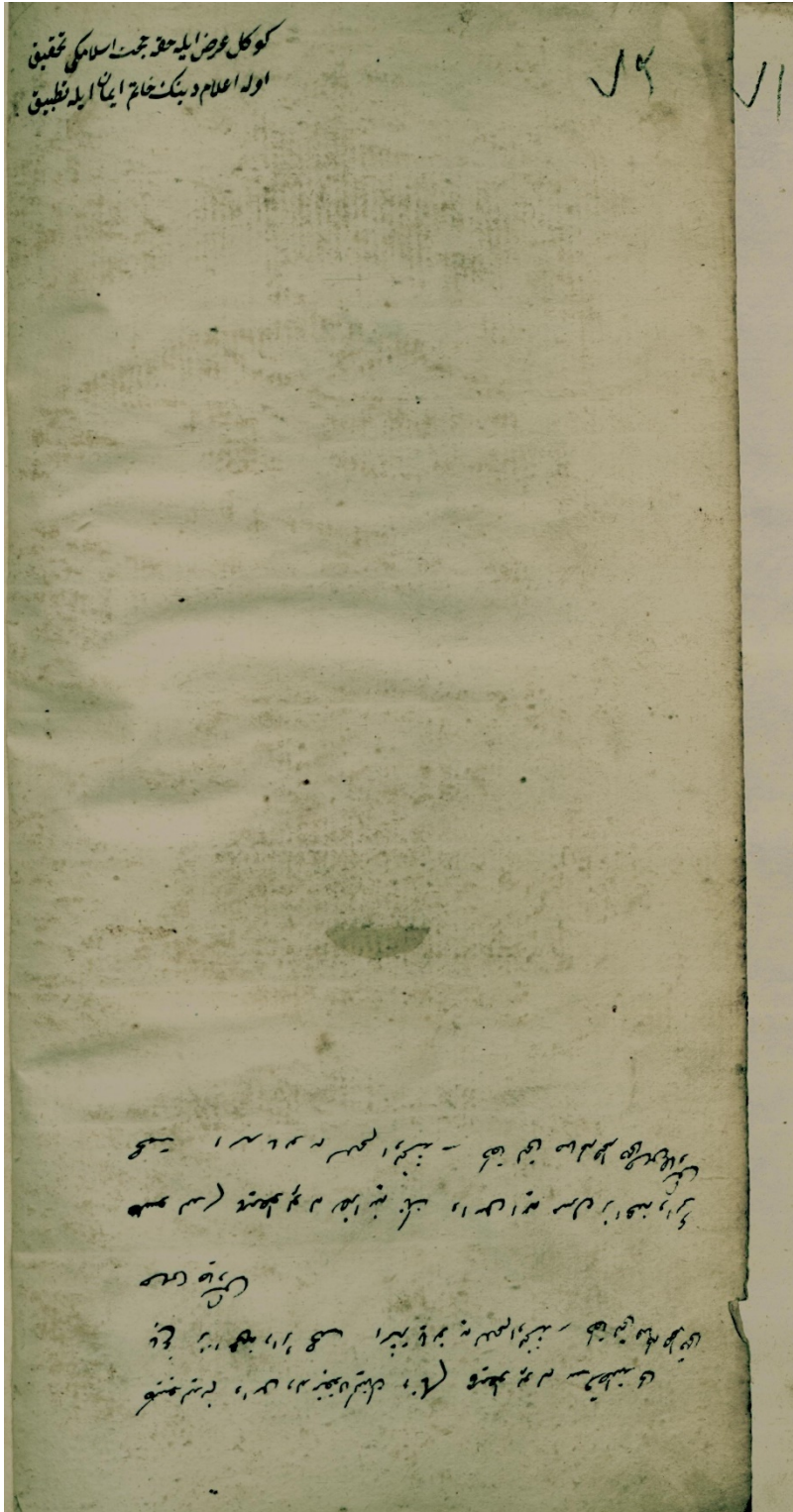
Translation

O heart present your proof of submission to God truthfully
 May your profession of creed be affirmed with the seal of faith

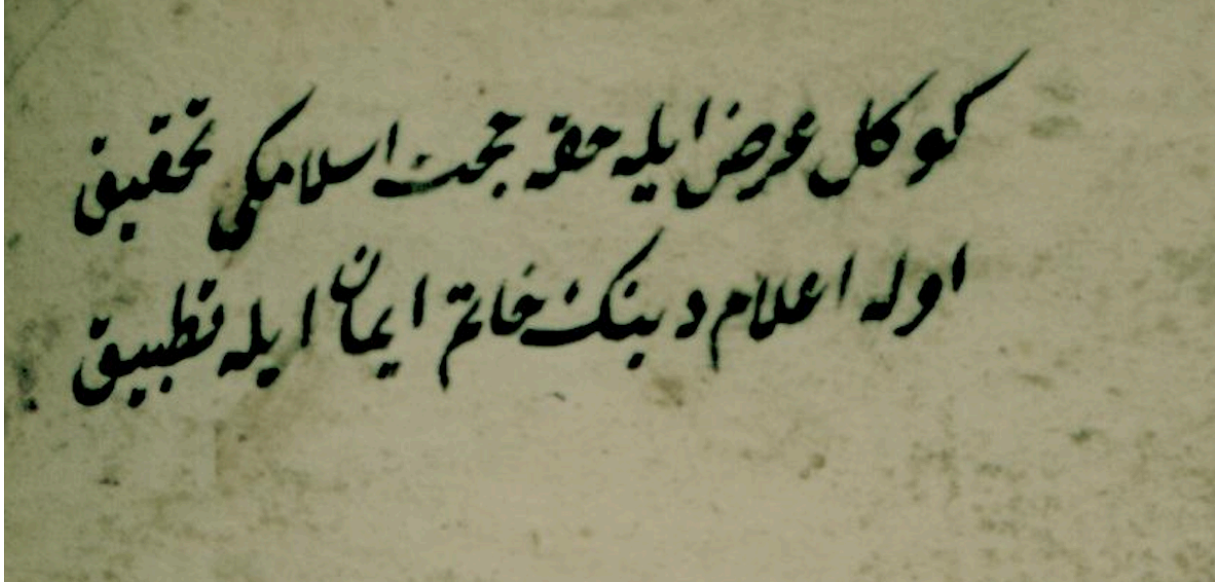
⁶ *Tenāsüb* is a rhetorical device in which a poet uses in a poem or couplet two or more words that are related in meaning other than through contrast, see Hasan Aktaş, *Klasik Türk Şiirinde Edebî Sanatlar* (Yort Savul Yayınları, n. d.), 232.

⁷ *Tevriye/ihām* is a rhetorical device in which a poet employs a word with a double meaning that can be understood either way. In general a poet would use *tevriye* to imply the hidden meaning of a word in a poem, see *Ibid.*, 104.

Facsimile



Detail



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Lovely Bosnian Lads: Mü' min-zāde Ḥasīb's Poem on the Youths of Sarajevo

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Context

In 1147/1735, Mü'min-zâde Ḥasīb was appointed qadi of Sarajevo, where he subsequently engaged with a wide range of individuals, including the general public, high-ranking officials, prominent poets, and scholars.¹ Through these interactions, he was able to gain invaluable insights into the local social context, language, and customs, and exert influence over the local community of poets. It is therefore unsurprising that a number of his poems can be found within several manuscripts, mainly autographs preserved in the Gazi Husrev-bey Library.

The poem presented here appears to have been written during an informal gathering, as a mere work of poetical exercise, amusement, or even as a delightful display of the author's skill. The dating in the manuscript, nr. 2012, a *Mecmū'a* compiled by the poet Meylî from Sarajevo, indicates that it was written in the Hijri year of 1148.² The poem is relatively brief, comprising only seven distichs, with the same rhyming syllable at the end of every second half-verse.³ Despite its brevity, the poem is evidently composed in a conventional style characteristic of the *Şehrengîz* genre, which typically depicts the attractive young male residents of a particular town or city, its natural and historical sites, as well as renowned craftspeople and artists, and their social status within a specific urban context.⁴ In this example, only six young men are referenced by their names or nicknames. Excluding the first, all of these are mentioned in a single verse. The most striking feature is not only the use of local name variations, such as Haso, Salko, Ibro, Mujo and Kojo (all abbreviations of the commonly used names of Hasan, Salih, Ibrahim,

¹ Göker İnan, Ramazan Ekinci, "Hasīb, Mü'min-zâde Ahmed Efendi," *Türk Edebiyatı İsimler Sözlüğü*, <https://teis.yesevi.edu.tr/madde-detay/hasib-muminzade-ahmed-efendi>, accessed 28.11.2024.

² It is worth noting that Meylî, both the author and compiler of the manuscript in question, has carefully recorded the dates or years in which the poems were written or transcribed, establishing a clear chronological framework. The earliest poems date back to the Hijri year 1147, while the poem under analysis was transcribed a year later.

³ This poem was initially rendered in a transliterated form as part of an MA thesis by the author of this article. The version of this poem presented here has undergone certain corrections. For a more detailed comparison, see Adnan Mulabdić, "Mehmed Meylî Gûrânî'nin Mecmû'at'ü'l-Letâ'if Sandûkat'ü'l-Ma'ârif Mecmuası (Tenkitli Metin-Tahlil)," MA thesis, (Istanbul University, 2016).

⁴ Bayram Ali Kaya, "Şehrengîz," *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/sehrengiz>, accessed 29.11.2024. See also Barış Karacasu, "Eski Türk Edebiyatında Şehr-engîzler," *TALİD*, no. 10, Sept. 2007, 259-314.

Muhammed or Mustafa and Konstantin), but also the usage of Bosnian words and phrases, which are written down phonetically and adjusted to the *‘aruz* prosody. In keeping with the tradition of its genre, the text directly mentions several professions, including a *tellāk* (hammam attendant), a barber and a tavern-keeper, and may also refer to a tailor. In the absence of any known *Şehrengīz* devoted to the city of Sarajevo and its youthful population, this may be the sole surviving example of such an endeavour.

Transcription

Li-Ḥasīb

[fā ‘ilātün mefā ‘ilün fe ‘ilün]

1. *Bosnevī bir civān sevmiş-idüm*
Ḥulq[ı] gāyetde ḥūb nām[ı] Ḥaso
2. *Alsam āgūşa dir “ni taç ni taç”*
İstesem buse dir “sid s miro[m]”
3. *‘Amrī’ye disem ömrümüñ vārı*
Gāh “ışlatko⁵” dir gehī “gorço”
4. *Sürinürdüm o şūḥ dellāke*
Dise bir kerre raḥm idüb Şalko
5. *Ḥasreti cāna geçdi sūzen-vār*
Ol civānuñ ki nāmıdur İbro
6. *Gün-ı bī-mū ararsañ ey ‘āşık*
Ser-tırāşuñ degül midür Mūyo
7. *Sordum ismüñ o şūḥ muğ-beçenüñ*
Döndi nāz eyleyüb didi Koyo

⁵ The addition of the vowel “ı” is a result of the two consonants at the beginning of the Bosnian word for sweet, “slatko”. This provides an alternative reading of the word, as it coincides with the imperative form of two Turkish verbs, “ışlatmak”, meaning to moisten or to wet, and “ko[y]mak”, meaning to put. The Turkish verb “ko[y]mak” is capable of denoting obscene or vulgar meanings, including the act of engaging in sexual intercourse or inserting an object into a specified body part. See Andreas Tietze, “ko-/koy-,” in *Tarihî Ve Etimolojik Türkiye Türkçesi Lugati*, vol. 4, ed. by Semih Tezcan (Ankara: Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi, 2016), 328-329.

Translation

By Ḥasīb

1. Once I loved a Bosnian lad
Kind was his nature, Haso his beautiful name.
2. If I hugged him, he'd say "Don't touch, don't touch (me)!"
If I begged for a kiss, he'd tell me to "Give it a rest!"
3. If I told 'Amrī, you're my everything,
One moment he'd say "sweet," the next "bitter (things)."
4. For this flirty bath attendant I would even rub myself,
If only he'd pity me and tell me so, oh, that Salko!⁶
5. It pierced my heart needle-like,⁷ this yearning
For that lad, whose name is Ibro.
6. If you're looking for a hair-less style,⁸ oh lover,
Don't you have that barber Muyo?
7. I asked that flirty tavern boy his name,
He turned coquettishly and said Koyo!⁹

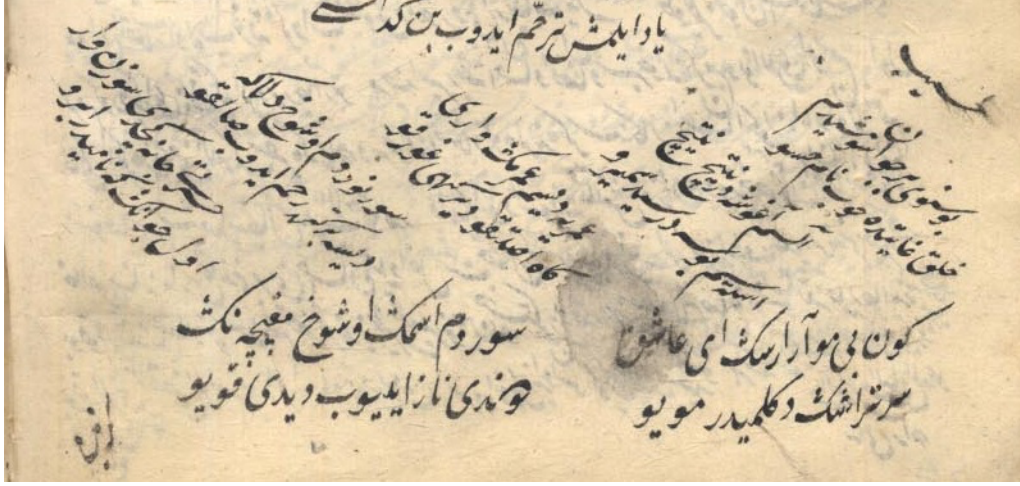
⁶ It is interesting to note the curious overlap between the name Salko and the imperative forms of two Turkish verbs, "salmak" and "ko[y]mak". The Turkish verb "salmak" has been suggested to carry sexual connotations, particularly in contexts such as "to relieve", "to give" or "to attack". See İlhan Ayverdi, "salmak," in *Misalli Büyük Türkçe Sözlük*, vol. 3, ed. by Ahmet Topaloğlu (Istanbul: Kubbealtı, 2011), 2694. For the Turkish verb "ko[y]mak", see footnote no. 5.

⁷ It is possible that the author is making an allusion to the youth's occupation as a tailor. The needle in this case could also be seen as a metaphor for the phallus.

⁸ The term "گون" is a homograph, denoting "gün", which signifies a multitude of meanings, including colour, kind, mode, manner, or fashion. Alternatively, when read as "kūn", it represents the anus.

⁹ An alternative reading of the word in question is "kuyo/kujo", which is the Bosnian term for "bitch" or "bastard". Accordingly, we may interpret this verse as follows: He turned coquettishly and said "you bastard!"

Facsimile



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Rebuilding the Monastery of Aya Yannis the Prodigios in the Ottoman Karaferye

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Context

The *ferman* presented below belongs to the monastery of Timios Prodromos in Veria (Ottoman Karaferye). It is the only Ottoman document that has been found in the archives of the monastery.¹ The document dates to a few years after the complete destruction of the monastery by Mehmet Emin Ebu Lubut Pasha in 1822² due to suspicions that the monasteries in the area³ were collaborating with the rebels. In fact, this document is in a sense a result of the failed revolution in Macedonia, which started in 1821, firstly in Halkidiki and then in the region of Olympus including Naousa (Ottoman Ağustos).⁴ In order to suppress the revolutions in the wider region, Mehmet Emin Ebu Lubut Pasha started out from Thessaloniki and after destroying some settlements in *Rumluk*⁵ (the wider region between Karaferye and Selânik), he defeated the rebels in Naousa, in the Monastery of Panagia Dovra⁶ (close to Veria), which he destroyed, and in

¹ After extensive research in the Ottoman State Archives [T.C. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi] an *i'lām* (BOA, C. ADL. 70-4194) was found about the rebuilding of the monastery. This document was issued on the 24 of April 1838, 4 years after the issue of the *ferman*, which means that the *i'lām* is chronologically the last document in the licensing process for the rebuilding of the monastery. There are no traces of this document in the monastery's codex and further research must be done in order to find out all the details of the document.

² D. A. Papazes, «Σύντομη ιστορία τῆς Ἱ. Μονῆς τοῦ τιμίου Προδρόμου (Σκήτη) Βεροίας» ["Brief History of the H. Monastery of T. Prodromos (Skete) of Veria"], *Nicolaus 1-2*, 1998, 376-377 and Γ. Χιονίδης [G. Chionidis], «Τὰ γεγονότα εἰς τὴν περιοχὴν Ναούσης-Βεροίας κατὰ τὴν Ἐπανάστασιν τοῦ 1822» ["The events in the area of Naousa-Veria during the Revolution of 1822"], *Μακεδονικά [Makedonika]* 8, 1968, 217-219.

³ There was an extensive network of monasteries along the Haliacmon river [İnce Karasu nehri], which were destroyed because there were groups of rebels in the area. For more details regarding the monastery network see: Μ. Χ. Χατζηγιάννου [M. C. Chatziioannou], *Ἡ ἱστορική εξέλιξη τῶν οικισμῶν στὴν περιοχή τοῦ Αἰιάκμονα κατὰ τὴν Τουρκοκρατία. Ὁ κώδικας αρ. 201 τῆς Μονῆς Μεταμορφώσεως τοῦ Σωτήρος Ζάβορδας [The Historical Development of the Settlements in the area of Haliacmon during the Ottoman period. The Codex no. 201 of the Monastery of the Transfiguration of the Jesus in Zavorda]*, 2000.

⁴ Β. C. Gounaris, "Macedonia" in P. M. Kitromilides, C. Tsoukalas (ed.), *The Greek Revolution. A Critical Dictionary*, 2021, 232-247 and Δ. Παπασταματίου, Φ. Κοτζαγεώργης [D. Papastamatiou, F. Kotzageorgis], *Στις παρυφές τῆς Ἐπανάστασης. Μία νέα προσέγγιση τοῦ Αγῶνα στὴ Χαλκιδική με βάση οθωμανικό τεκμηριακό υλικό [On the outskirts of the Revolution. A New Approach to the Struggle in Halkidiki based on Ottoman Documentary Material]*, 2021.

⁵ Γ. Δ. Μοσχόπουλος [G. D. Moschoroulos], *Τὸ Ρουμλούκι (Καμπανία) κατὰ τὴν πρώτη και μέση οθωμανοκρατία (14^{ος} αἰῶνας – 1830) [Rumluk (Campania) during the Early and Middle Ottoman Rule (14th century – 1830)]*, 2012, 206-232.

⁶ Θ. Παπαζώτος [T. Papazotos], «Μονή τῆς Παναγίας Κουκουμητριώτισσας τῆς λεγόμενης Δοβρά» ["Monastery of Panagia Koukoumitriotissa of the so-called Dovra"], *Ἱστοριογεωγραφικά [Istorikogeografika]* 3, 1991, 282.

Kolindros, where in the wider region there was the Monastery of Panagia Makryrrachi,⁷ which he also destroyed. The latter two monasteries are similar cases to that of Timios Prodromos as they scattered at the same time and were rebuilt relatively soon. There are many other cases of rebuilding of monasteries that are much older and in other regions.⁸

This document was the most necessary one for the rebuilding of the monastery's main church (*Katholikon*) because it gives us information that we did not know until now, such as the characteristics that the new building should have had and that a question was put to the *Şeyhülislam*, who responded positively to the request for reconstruction by issuing a *fetva*. Within the Greek Codex of the monastery, we found the payment for the publication of the *ferman*, which cost 11,509 *ğuruş*,⁹ in the annual budget of 1834. Before the *ferman*, the monks requested permission to build other monastery buildings in 1825, but we do not know whom they approached. Then, in 1828, a permit was issued by the Ecumenical Patriarchate,¹⁰ which cost 1,274 *ğuruş*.¹¹ This *ferman* is the symbolic end of a document-issuing trail, and by combining Ottoman and Greek sources we can trace a pattern for the licensing process for building Christian places of worship in the late Ottoman world.¹²

⁷ Δ. Α. Παπάζης [D. A. Papazes], «Η συμμετοχή της Ι. Μ. Υπεραγίας Θεοτόκου Μακρυρράχης στους αγώνες του Μακεδονικού Ελληνισμού» ["The participation of the Holy Virgin Mary of Makryrrachi in the struggles of the Macedonian Hellenism"], *Μακεδονικά [Makedonika]* 44, 2020-2023, 212-214.

⁸ Φ. Κοτζαγεώργης, Μ. Κ. Σιμωνοπετρίτης [F. Kotzageorgis, M. K. Simonopetritis], «Συμβολή στην ιστορία του καθολικού της μονής Σιμωνόπετρας» ["Contribution to the History of the Catholic of the Monastery of Simonopetra"], *Αθωνικά Τετράδια [Athonika Tetrada]* 2, 2015, 45-84 and Ν. Τσιβίκης, Η. Κολοβός [N. Tsvikis, E. Kolonos], «Manastır-ı San Dito: Ο καθεδρικός ναός του Αγίου Τίτου στον Χάνδακα της Κρήτης μέσα από τις οθωμανικές πηγές» ["Manastır-ı San Dito: The Cathedral of Saint Titus in Chandakas, Crete, through the Ottoman sources"] in Τ. Κιουσοπούλου, Β. Φωσκόλου [T. Kiousoyroulou, V. Foskolou] (ed.), *Grata Dona: Μελέτες προς τιμήν της Όλγας Γκρατζίου [Grata Dona: Studies in honour of Olga Graziou]*, 2023, 521-565.

⁹ *Codex of the Holy Monastery of Timios Prodromos - Skete Veria (1825-1922)*, 4v.

¹⁰ For a detailed transcription of the text see: Π. Δ. Πυρινός [P. D. Pyrinos], *Ανέκδοτα έγγραφα αφορώντα εις τας Ιεράς Μονάς Τιμίου Προδρόμου (Σκήτη Βέροιας) και Μουτσιάλης [Unpublished Documents Concerning the Holy Monasteries of Timios Prodromos (Skete of Veria) and Moutsiali]*, 1975, 11-14.

¹¹ *Codex of the Holy Monastery of Timios Prodromos - Skete Veria (1825-1922)*, 14v.

¹² R. Gradeva, "Ottoman policy towards Christian church buildings", *Balkan Studies* 4, 1994, 14-36.

Transcription

[Tuğra of Mahmud II] *Maḥmūd ḥān bin ‘Abdülḥamīd el-muẓaffer dā’imā*

*Ḳıdvetü ’n-nüvvābi ’l-müteşerri ’in Ḳaraferye ḳazāsı nā’ibi Mevlānā [] zīde ’ilmuhū ve mefāḥirü ’l-emāsil ve ’l-aḳrān a ’yān ve vüçüh-ı memleket ve bi ’l-cümle iş erleri zīde ḳadru-
hū[ma] tevḳī’-i refi’-i hümayūn vāsıl olıcaḳ ma ’lüm ola ki Ḳaraferye ḳazāsına tābi’ Bodrum
Manastırı ’nda kā’ın Aya Yani Bodromus Kilisesi dimekle ma ’rūf bir bāb Rum kilisesinüñ
cüdrān ve sakfı mürür-ı zamān ile müşrif-i ḥarāb olduğına binā’ en ta ’mīri ḥuşuşı ḳarye-i
mezbūre re’āyāsı ḫarafından niyāz ve istirḫām olunmuş ve ma ’rifet-i şer’le lede’l-mu’āyene
ḫarābiyyeti taḫaḳḳuḳ ile keşf ve misāḥa olınduḳda ḫūlen yigirmi ve arzen on beş ve ḳadden
on zirā’ oldığı tebeyyün itmiş olduğundan baḫşle vaż’-ı ḳadīm ve hey’et-i aşliyyesi üzre
ta ’mīr ve termīmüne ruḫşatı ḫāvī emr-i şerīfim şudūrı bā-i ’lām recā ve istid’ā ḳılınmış ve
muḳteżā-yı şer’iyyesi bi ’l-fi’l Şeyḫülislām ve Müfti’i ’l-enām olan Mekkizāde a’lemü’l-
’ulemāi ’l-mütebahḫirīn efzālü’l-fuzālā’i ’l-[müteşerri ’in] mevlānā Muştafā Aşım edāme
llāhu te’ālā fezā’ iluhūdan lede’l-istiftā bir beldede vāḳı’ kenise-i ḳadīme ḫarāb olduḳda
erbābı heyet-i aşliyyesine nesne ziyāde itmeksizin vaż’-ı ḳadīmī üzre şer’an ta ’mīre ḳadir
olurlar mı el-Cevāb Olurlar, diyü bir ḳıḫ’a fetvā-yı şerīf[e] virilmiş olmaḳdan nāşī mesāğ-ı
şer’-i şerīf oldığı üzre ta ’mīrine ruḫşat-ı seniyye-i mülükānem bī-dirīğ ḳılınarak ol bābda
ḫatt-ı hümayūn-ı merāḫim-nümün-ı pādīşāḫānem şaḫīfe-pīrā-yı şudūr olmaḫla mantūḳ-ı
münīfi ve virilen fetvā-yı şerīfe muḳteżāsı oldığı ü[zre] ’amel olunmaḳ fermānım olmaḫın
ruḫşatı ḫāvī işbu emr-i şerīfim ısdār ve tesyār olunmuşdur imdi kilisa-yı mezbūruñ ḫūlen ve
’arzen ve ḳadden ve vüs’aten vaż’-ı ḳadīm ve hey’et-i aşliyyesini bir ḳarış ve bir parmaḳ
tecāvüz itmemek şartıyla ber-vech-i mesāğ şer’-i şerīf[e] ta ’mīrine müsā’ade-i ’aliyyem
erzān ḳılındığı ve bu vesīle ile vaż’-ı ḳadīminden ziyāde nesne iḫdāsına irā’et-i ruḫşat
olinmaḳ ve bir gūne ḫama’ ve irtikāba düşilerek zımnında re’āyādan bir aḳçe ve bir ḫabbe
aḫz ve taḫşil ḳılınmaḳ lāzım gelür ise mütecāsir olanlar mazḫar-ı mu’āḫaze ve ’itāb [ola-
caḳlarından] şübhe olmadığı siz ki nā’ib ve a ’yān ve sār mūmā ileyhimsiz ma ’lümüñüz
oldıḳda aña göre ’amel ve ḫarekete ihtimām ve diḳḳat ve ḫilāfından teḫāşī ve mücānebet
eylemeñüz bābında fermān-ı ’ālī-şānum şadır olmuşdur buyurdum ki vuşul bulduḳda bu*

*bābda vech-i meşrūh [üzre] şeref-yäfte-i şudūr olan fermān-ı vācibü 'l-ittibā' ve lāzīmü 'l-
imtisālimūn mazmūn-ı itā'at-maḳrūniyla 'amel ve ḫareket eylesiz şöyle bilesiz 'alāmet-
i şerīfe i 'timād kılasız Tahḫīran fī evāsīti şehri Rebī'ü 'l-āḫir sene ḫamsīn ve mi'eteyn ve elf
[11-20 Rebī'ü 'l-āḫir 1250/ 26.8.1834]
be-maḳām-ı Ḳoşantiniyye*

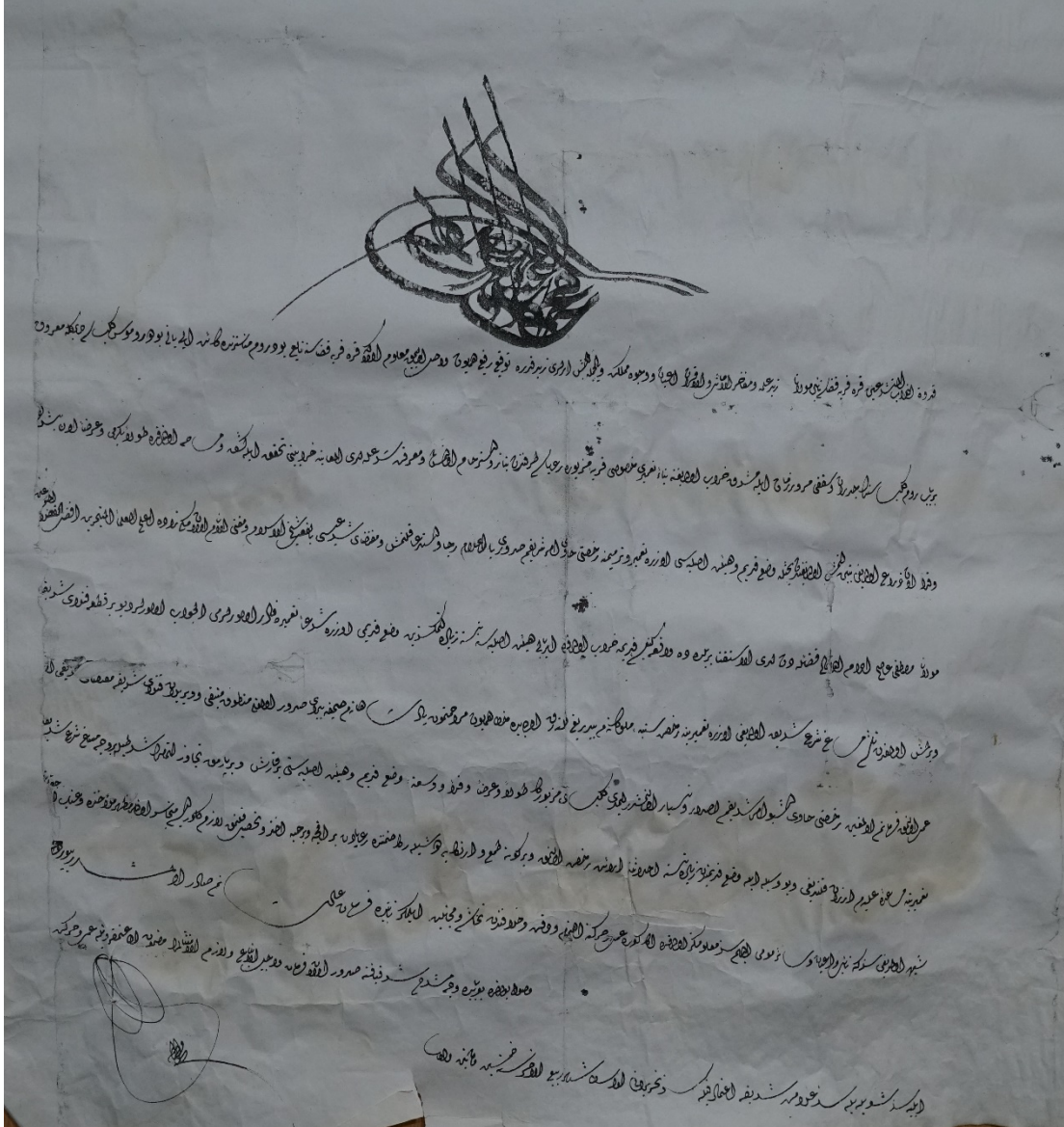
Translation

[Tuğra of Mahmud II] Mahmud Khan son of Abdulhamid, the eternal victor

To the exemplar of knowledge of the sacred law, Mevlana [...], regent of judge's office of Veria – may his wisdom increase –, to the excellent and brilliant primates and state officials and to anyone involved in this affair – may their wisdom increase – the following be known as soon as my imperial letter arrives: In the monastery of Prodomos, which belongs administratively to the kaza of Veria, there is an orthodox church with one door known as the church of Agios Ioannis Prodomos. With the passage of time, because the walls and the roof of the church were crumbling, a request and request for repair was made by the Christians of the aforementioned village, and after an on-site inspection and survey, according to a forensic opinion, an imperial order was requested to send an imperial order to issue a permit for repair and restoration according to the actual form and the old plan, which is 20 cubits long, 15 cubits wide and 10 cubits high and in accordance with the holy law the approval was sought from the illustrious, honored, exemplar of knowledge of the holy law, the Şeyhülislam Mekkizade Mevlana, Mustafa Asim, – may Allah increase his virtue and wisdom –, who was asked whether the holy law permits the construction of a church, which is dilapidated, according to the actual plan and as it was before without making a new addition. He said that it was permitted and he issued a holy fetva and in order to issue the imperial permission to make the repairs, the fetva was sent to the Sultan so that he could act to issue the imperial order. A high order was issued to me, authorizing the repair of the aforesaid church according to the sacred law, on condition that there be no variation and that it be repaired according to the original plan and as it was of old as to length, width, and height but

you, regent of judge's office and prelates and the rest of you, take care that nothing be done against the law and take your precautions and act accordingly and do not be suspicious of those who will consider or show greed when there is a need to obtain even a grain, even a little money from Christians falling into abuse and greed because of the establishment of the church by the old law. I order that: You act according to your powers as soon as this present and excellent ferman, issued in the manner aforesaid for this case, arrives. Be aware of the above and place your trust in my imperial emblem. It was written in the middle of the month of August in the year 1834 in Istanbul.

Facsimile



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A Recipe for Black Ink in a Manuscript of ‘Aṭā’ī’s *Ḥamse*

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Context

The short recipe presented here is found in a manuscript in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz with the shelfmark Ms. or. oct. 1629. It is a copy of Nev'izāde 'Aṭāyī's (d. 1635) *Ḥamse*, which was completed in Istanbul in 1684. The *Ḥamse* itself ends on fol. 269r, and on the last fol., 270r, someone – possibly the copyist himself – has noted a recipe for the production of a “Yāḳūt-i Musta'ṣimī” ink.²

Although not explicitly stated, it can be seen from the ingredients that the recipe is apparently intended to create black ink, based on soot and iron sulphate. The recipe does not specify the substance from which the soot is obtained, as is quite common in other formulae.

Transcription

Terkīb-i mürekkeb-i Yāḳūt-i Müsta'ṣimī

ṣabr-i soḳoṭrī³ dirhem 2

ḥinnā şuyı m 2

zāc şuyı m 2

māzū m 10

dūde m 3

Ḥāccī Bektaş tuzı⁴ m 2

mā'-i verd m 3

nebāt m 2

zağferān m 2

¹ A certain Ḥasan Āmidī, fol. 269r: “*an yeddi Ḥasan Āmidī.*”

² Yāḳūt al-Musta'ṣimī (el-Müsta'ṣimī in Ottoman vocalisation, d. 1299) came to the court of the last Abbasid caliph al-Musta'ṣim Bi-llāh (hence his epithet) as a slave and became one of the most important and innovative calligraphers. Through his “canonisation” of the *aḳlām-i sitte*, he became a role model for generations of calligraphers.

³ This is *aloe succotrina* whose name derives from the Island of Socotra. In order to use it as an ink raw material, the juice is pressed from its thick leaves and left to concentrate in the sun. Cf. Demir, *Gülzâr-ı Savâb*, p.155.

⁴ Salt from the Hacı Bektaş mine near Nevşehir, which is still in use today as table salt.

zamǧ-i 'arabī m 13

cümle eczā dirhem 41

Evvelā zamǧı havāna [!] koyub ḥall idesin ba 'dehū dūde' i içine koyasın

iki gün geregi gibi saḥḳ idüb üçinci gün eczāları ko[yu]b cümlesin

saḥḳ idesin ba 'dehū zāc şuyı ile ḥall idüb süzesiz a 'lā ola

Translation

Recipe for ink à la Yāḳūt el-Müsta'şımī

aloe, *dirhem*⁵ 2

henna water, *m*⁶ 2

ferrous sulfate water, *m* 2

nutgall, *m* 10

soot, *m* 3

salt from Ḥācī Bektaş, *m* 2

rose-water, *m* 3

rock candy,⁷ *m* 2

saffron, *m* 2

gum arabic, *m* 13

all substances *dirhem* 41

First, put the gum in a mortar and grind (lit. „dissolve“) it, then add the soot. Pound it for two days as necessary,⁸ add the [other] substances on the third day, pound all of them, then dissolve it with ferrous sulfate water and sieve it. It will be excellent.

⁵ One *dirhem* is approximately 3,2 grams.

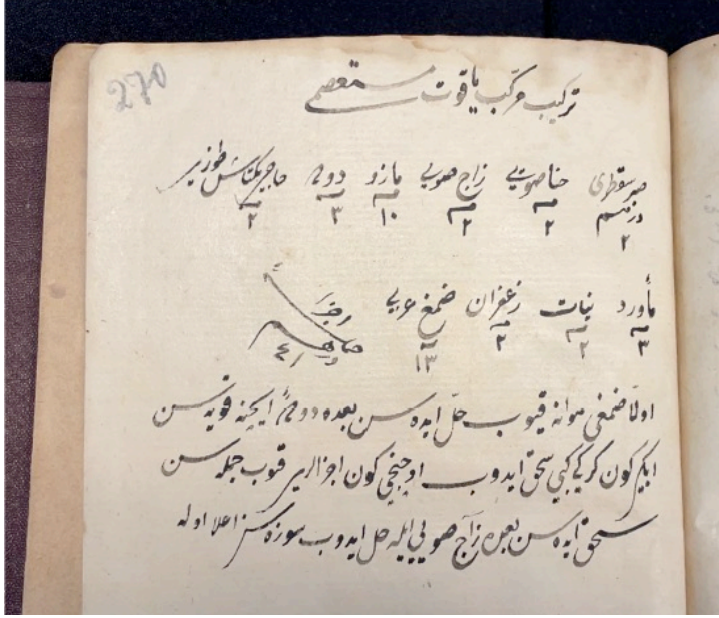
⁶ Here and passim the *m* is the abbreviation of *dirhem*.

⁷ Candy sugar was used to add shine to the ink. cf. Cf. Demir, *Gülzâr-ı Savâb*, p.155.

⁸ Ink was actually pounded for several days before it reached its optimum quality. For example, in the *Gülzâr-i Şavâb* p. 94, an ink recipe reads: "Havanda on bin kerre darb edeler". However, there are also recipes that prescribe 80,000 or even 500,000 poundings.

Cf. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/murekkep>

Facsimile



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Yours Sincerely, the Grand Vizier.

A Compendium of İbrāhīm Paşa's Letter Weaving Love and Longing

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Context

The term ‘vizier’ is the Romanized form of the Arabic word *wazīr* (rendered as *vezīr* in Turkish), which translates to ‘helper’ or ‘assistant’. The term’s etymology can be traced back to the root ‘vizr’, which translates as ‘heavy burden’. This reflects the role of the vizier in ‘bearing the heavy burden of the king’.¹

Among the most prominent figures to embody this title was İbrāhīm Ağa (d.1536), a longstanding companion and trusted confidant of Sultan Süleymān (d.1566). On 27 June 1523, İbrāhīm Ağa was elevated to the position of Grand Vizier, marking a significant moment in Ottoman history and his illustrious career.² His authority was further consolidated through his concurrent appointment as Governor-General of Rumelia.³ From an alternative perspective, İbrāhīm Paşa’s rapid ascent to the highest office in the empire represents an extraordinary and unparalleled event in Ottoman history, one that would not be replicated. Prior to İbrāhīm Paşa, no enslaved individual had ever been directly appointed to such a position on the basis of their master’s personal favor alone, without prior experience in military or administrative roles.⁴ İbrāhīm Paşa’s ascension to a prominent position was noteworthy, attracting considerable attention and criticism. Many within the capital considered him to be inexperien-

¹ Yasir Yılmaz, “‘From Theory to Practice’ Origins of the Ottoman Grand Vizierate and the Köprülü Restoration: A New Research Framework for the Office of the Grand Vizier,” *Review of Middle East Studies* 57, no. 1 (June 2023): 15, doi:10.1017/rms.2024.19.

² İbrāhīm Paşa, also known as Makbul and Pargalı in the context of the Ottoman Empire, is believed to have been born around 1487. It is thought that he was of Christian origin and entered the Ottoman imperial system as a slave. His ascension to a position of prominence was marked by his appointment as Grand Vizier by Sultan Süleymān in 1523, which placed him at the pinnacle of political authority within the empire. Despite his considerable achievements, İbrāhīm Paşa’s ascent also gave rise to feelings of envy and prompted a series of political manoeuvres. His close relationship with Sultan Süleymān, coupled with his growing influence, gave rise to suspicion among other court officials and nobles. In 1536, İbrāhīm Paşa was executed on the orders of Süleymān, most likely as a result of palace intrigue and concerns over his increasing power. For more see, Ebru Turan, “The Sultan’s Favorite: İbrahim Paşa and the Making of the Ottoman Universal Sovereignty in the Reign of Sultan Süleymān (1516-1526)” (Ph.D., University of Chicago, 2007).

³ Kaya Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleymān: Narrating the Sixteenth-Century Ottoman World*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 45-46.

⁴ Turan, “The Sultan’s Favorite,” 181.

ced and unsuitable for the role, which intensified tensions among the city's elite.⁵ In order to reinforce his position as the recently appointed and relatively inexperienced Grand Vizier, İbrāhīm Paşa was assigned specific tasks with the objective of modifying public opinion among those who were discontented with his appointment. His voyage to Egypt (1523-1524) served two interconnected purposes: firstly, to enhance his personal reputation; secondly, to stabilize a turbulent province that had recently experienced significant unrest and rebellion.⁶ İbrāhīm Paşa's involvement in the Hungarian campaign (1526) likewise served to reinforce his position, enhancing his prestige and solidifying his role as the new Grand Vizier.⁷

İbrāhīm Paşa's political career commenced in an unanticipated manner and reached its conclusion with equal swiftness. His tenure remains one of the most controversial and exceptional in the history of the Ottoman Empire. An individual lacking the requisite experience was elevated to the highest office in the empire, resulting in an immense burden of responsibility being placed upon his shoulders.

Süleymān's inaugural campaign against the Safavids is designated as *Sefer-i 'İrākeyn*, or the "Two Iraqs" campaign (1533-1535), within the Ottoman historical tradition. This designation emphasizes the dual focus of the campaign, which targeted both Arab Iraq and Persian Iraq, the latter corresponding to western Iran.⁸ The *Sefer-i 'İrākeyn* represented the final military campaign to be led by Grand Vizier İbrāhīm Paşa. In 1533, İbrāhīm Paşa successfully recaptured Bitlis. The following year, he achieved further victories, occupying Tabriz and facing no resistance from Şāh Ṭahmāsb (d.1576).⁹

Nevertheless, Sultan Süleymān was displeased with the result of the *'İrākeyn* campaign. Despite the successful conquest of Baghdad and its surrounding regions, Şāh Ṭahmāsb managed to evade capture and remained undefeated. This deficiency was

⁵ Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleymān*, 46.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁷ Turan, "The Sultan's Favorite," 240.

⁸ Kaya Şahin, *Peerless among Princes: The Life and Times of Sultan Süleymān* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2023), 184, doi:10.1093/oso/9780197531631.001.0001.

⁹ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650: The Structure of Power* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 51.

attributed to the Grand Vizier's inability to implement the requisite strategic measures.¹⁰ This final military campaign by İbrâhîm Paşa was one in which his reputation underwent a notable decline. In their writings shortly after the conclusion of the campaign, several Ottoman historians censured İbrâhîm Paşa for prioritizing a march on Tabriz over the initial objective of capturing Baghdad. Although the majority of historians attributed this strategic misstep to the influence of ambitious individuals within his inner circle, many of whom were former Safavids, the underlying critique of İbrâhîm Paşa's decision-making was unmistakable. Ultimately, on the night of 14–15 March 1536, İbrâhîm Paşa was executed by order of Sultan Süleymân while residing at the Sultan's palace.¹¹

Despite his status as the second most influential figure in the Ottoman Empire during the sixteenth century, İbrâhîm Paşa was not solely a Grand Vizier or Governor-General; he was also a husband and father. In the course of the *Sefer-i 'İrakeyn*, İbrâhîm Paşa dispatched approximately 11 missives to his wife and family, wherein he articulated his ardent longing and affection for them.¹² Gaining an understanding of the emotional experiences of warriors or statesmen on duty is a challenging undertaking. How did such figures manage and regulate their emotional states? Historical chronicles indicate that, in lieu of mathematical or logical reasoning, members of the ruling elite frequently situated their emotions within the framework of duties and obligations, underscoring their roles and responsibilities over personal

¹⁰ Mehmet Şakir Yılmaz, “‘Koca Nişancı’ Of Kanuni: Celalzade Mustafa Çelebi, Bureaucracy And ‘Kanun’ In The Reign Of Suleyman The Magnificent (1520–1566)” (Ph.D., Bilkent University, 2006), 123.

¹¹ Şahin, *Peerless among Princes*, 186.

¹² The letter under discussion in this paper constitutes a segment of a more extensive research article that is currently being prepared for publication. The article focuses on eleven letters written by İbrâhîm Paşa to his wife during the *Sefer-i İrakeyn* campaign. The primary objective of this study is to analyze the emotional dimension of İbrâhîm Paşa's character, with particular emphasis on the manner in which his personal feelings and attachments are expressed through these letters. Furthermore, the article seeks to analyze the language of the letters to determine whether they were authored by the Grand Vizier himself. By undertaking this comprehensive analysis, the study aims to provide a unique perspective on the emotional dimensions of the Grand Vizier's character.

sentiment.¹³ Furthermore, historical records seldom provide direct access to personal emotions. Instead, they primarily reveal the prescriptive practices of cultivating and regulating emotions, which often function as expressions of power.¹⁴

The correspondence of İbrāhīm Paşa provides a unique insight into his personal sentiments, elucidating the difficulties of reconciling obligations with individual feelings. It is highly probable that the letter was composed by İbrāhīm Paşa himself, as indicated by the linguistic and scriptural characteristics of the text. The presence of multiple misspellings would be an unusual feature for a scribe of the Ottoman court, thereby indicating that the document serves as a reliable exemplar of İbrāhīm Paşa's personal written command of the language. In these letters, İbrāhīm Paşa is not merely a Grand Vizier; he is also a man separated from his wife and child, expressing profound longing and intense love for them. He explicitly states that his achievements and successes are devoid of significance in the absence of his cherished wife. This correspondence illuminates the emotional intricacies of a prominent figure striving to harmonise individual attachment with public accountability. This challenges the assumption that political leaders are emotionally detached, demonstrating that even those in positions of power experience difficulties in balancing their personal lives with their professional obligations. The emotional vulnerability evident in İbrāhīm Paşa's letters indicates that leadership entails not only the fulfilment of duties but also the management and expression of emotions.

Transcription¹⁵

Yā Allāh Yā Muḥammed

Ḥazret-i cānum daḥı sevdigüm

Selām-ı muḥabbet i 'lām ü peyām-ı meveddet-encām ki iştiyāk u farḥ-i eşvāḳdan nāṣī

¹³ Ali Anooshahr, "Letter-Writing and Emotional Communities in Early Mughal India: A Note on the *Badāyi' al-Inshā*," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 44, no. 1 (January 2, 2021): 4, doi:10.1080/00856401.2021.1857573.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁵ The letter, presumably authored by the grand vizier himself, contains occasional misspellings. The accurate spellings of these words are presented in the footnote.

olur kâfile-sālār-ı muhabbet-şi 'ār u rāhile-yi ihtisās-disārla ithāf
u ihdā kılınduđdan ōnra zamīr-i münirññüze ma 'rüz-ı muhibbāne budur ki hāliyā
eger bu cānibüñ hāl u ahvālinden lutfiñuz mücebince fi'l-cümle
istifsār mā? olunursa yümn-i himmetiñüzle selāmet [ü]
şihhatda olub gice ve gündüz ol cānibüñ hayr-du 'āsına
iştigāldeyüz ve şimdikihālde¹⁶ İnöñi dimekle ma 'rūf
maħalle gelinüb andan ilerü muttaşıl gidilmek üzredür
cem ī ümmet-i Muħammede hayrlar müyesser olmış ola ümizimiz budur ki
bu tarafından gūşe-yi hātırdan çıkarmayub şihhatiñuz haberlerin
mektüb-ı durer-bārñuzla yād idüb şād idesiz
ki selāmetiñüz haberleriññ istimā '-ı sermāye-yi iftiħarımızdur bākī
ed-du 'ā ammā ā benüm çok sevdiğüm eger bereket? hāberi¹⁷ gelmez-
se eyü degüldür ben bir düş gördüm sevdicegüm için
hoş olmadügüññüze¹⁸ ol gūşşaya¹⁹ çekerdüm şu digü da
yazmışsız ammā ne günüm gündür ne gecem gecedür Allāh bilür
el-fakīr İbrāhīm

Marginilia

ve yenge kaduna selām iderün
Hařsa kadun hāzretlerine selām iderün
ve Fařma kaduna selām iderün
ve nūr-ı dīde sürür-i sīne ciger-gūşem Meħammed Şāhuñ
gözlerinden öperin cem hāli nicedür
cem devletlü hūnkār Meħammed Şāhuma yüz aķçe dahı arturmuş üç yüz
oldı

Translation

¹⁶ Şimdiki-hālde

¹⁷ haber [خبر]

¹⁸ Olmadügüññüz

¹⁹ gūşşaa [غصه]

O Allah, O Muhammad,

To my dear one and beloved,

I extend heartfelt greetings and a message filled with affectionate words, born from profound longing and deep yearning. This offering is made with sincere dedication, guided by love, and embellished with tokens of affection. I humbly present this to your esteemed conscience, filled with warmth, and should you graciously inquire about the state and condition of this side, rest assured we are safe and sound, thanks to your benevolence. Night and day, we are devoted to praying for your well-being

We are presently located in an area known as İnönü, from which we aim to advance further. As it is widely acknowledged that goodness and blessings have been bestowed upon the entire Ummah of Muhammad. Our heartfelt desire is that you keep us in your thoughts and, in doing so, send a letter adorned with precious news of your health, bringing us joy. For receiving tidings of your well-being is a source of great pride for us

Endless prayers.

But alas, my beloved, if news of blessings does not reach us, it brings great sorrow. I dreamt of an unpleasant day for your sake, and I endured that heartache for you, my beloved, as you had penned. Yet, without you, neither my day is a day nor my night is a night—Allah knows.

The Humble İbrahim,

Marginalia

Send my greetings to Lady sister-in-law.

Send my greetings to (the) presence of Lady Hafsa.

And send my greetings to Lady Fatma.

And kiss the eyes of the light of my eyes, the joy of my heart, the piece of my soul

Mehmed Şâh, and, how is he? And my sovereign, has added an additional one hundred *akçe* for my Mehmed Şâh, and [now it is three hundred].

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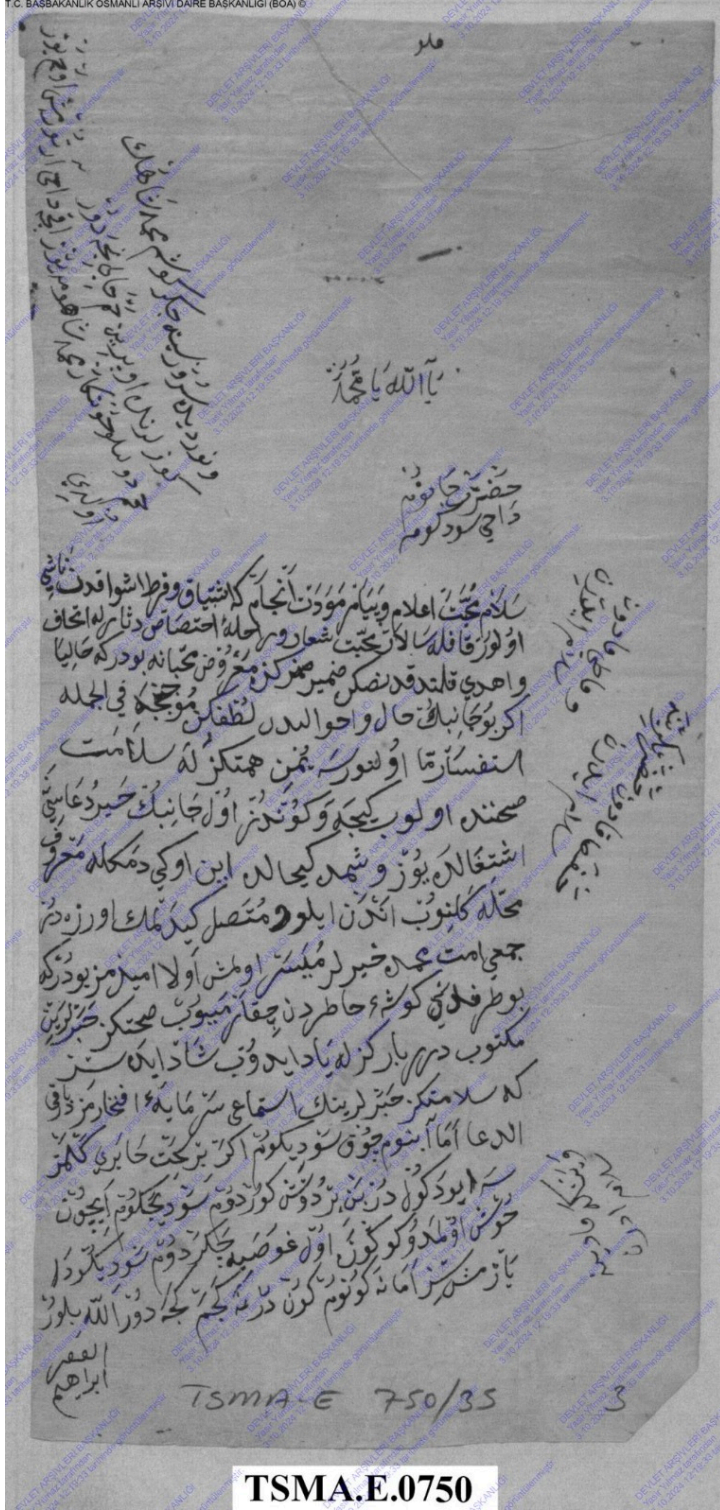
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An Ottoman Pasha's Encounter with a Dagestani Scapulimancy Practitioner in Iran

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Context

The following excerpt is drawn from the chief physician Gevrekzâde Hâfız Hasan Efendi's (d. 1801) treatise on physiognomy. Two extant copies of this treatise are housed in the Istanbul University Library.¹ Physiognomy, the practice of interpreting a person's character or fate through their outer appearance, is the primary focus of the treatise. However, Gevrekzâde expands the discussion to encompass various disciplines of *'ilm-i firâset*,² including scapulimancy (*'ilm-i ketf*). He provides a brief account of scapulimancy, describing its practice.

According to Gevrekzâde, scapulimancy involves interpreting markings on the scapula of a sheep. He notes that practitioners of this art, who often exhibit an unusual appearance—possibly hinting at shamanistic traditions³—use the scapula to predict future events. The process begins with specific rituals: the sheep must be slaughtered with intention, in a clean environment, while the moon is visible, and near a garden or water source. The right scapula is then cleaned and held with its thin, flat side facing upward, oriented toward the sun and eastward. Gevrekzâde admits, however, that there is no codified method for interpreting the markings; practitioners rely on inspiration, and their interpretations are products of imaginative insight rather than a systematic study.⁴

Gevrekzâde also recounts the following fascinating anecdote involving Râğıb Paşa (d. 1763), during his tenure as a financial administrator in Tebrîz. Râğıb Paşa, a known enthusiast of divination, stayed at the residence of Mehdî Hân who is likely Mîrzâ

¹ Gevrekzâde Hâfız Hasan. *Dürrü'l-Manşûr / Mürşidü'l-Etibbâ fi Tercemeti Ispagorya*. Istanbul University Rare Books and Manuscripts Library T. 7085; Gevrekzâde Hâfız Hasan. *Qiyâfetnâme*. Istanbul University Rare Books and Manuscripts Library T. 02695.

² Liana Saif. "Physiognomy: Science of intuition." In S. Brentjes (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook on the Sciences in Islamicate Societies: Practices from the 2nd/8th to the 13th/19th Centuries* (pp. 180-193). Routledge (2022).

³ "bu fennde mâhir olanlaruñ dahı erbâb-ı ma'ârif kıyâsıyla şekl ve şemâ'illeri nazâr-ı ğarîbdür ki aşlâ ma'ârif zann olınacağ şüretde olmayub" Gevrekzâde Hasan, *Dürrü'l-Manşûr / Mürşidü'l-Etibbâ*, 133a.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 132b-134b.

Mehdī Astarābādī (d. circa 1760).⁵ Mehdī Hān introduced the paşa to a scapulimancy practitioner from Ṭāġīstān who is reputed for his remarkable skill in this science. In the following excerpt, at a feast arranged at Rāġīb Paşa's request, the scapulimancy practitioner demonstrates his abilities.

Transcription

134b

Ḥattā bunuñ misillü

*zıkr olınan fenn-i ketf Rāġīb Paşa merhūmdan naql-i şahih olarak
aşhāb-ı şıkkadan ve kendi lisānından böyle naql iderler ki devlet-i
'aliyyenüñ taraf-ı Īrānla muhārebesi esnāsında Tebrīzde defterdār
bulnub sākin olduğımız konaġuñ şahib-i evveli Mehdī hān
didikleri zāt-ı 'ālī-kađr ki cemī'-i 'ulūm-ı şettāda kāmīl ve fāzılinden
bir recul-ı fā'ik olub huşuşiyle fenn-i nücūmda Ebū Ma'şer-i sānī
idi bir gün fakīrūñ hānesini teşrif idüb ve kemāl-i inbisātla
didi-ki behey sulṭānum bizler nücūm nücūm diyüb deryā gibi bir fennüñ
ardına düşmişüz anuñ ise ne ka'rı ma'lūm ve ne kenārı mer'ī
böyle bir fenn ki şavābından haṭası ekser dünki gün Ṭāġīstāndan
fakīre misāfireten henüz dađı tāze bir zāt geldi elinde koyunuñ
ketfi ya'nī küregi var her ne niyyet iderseñ aña baġub cevāb
viriyor eger cüz'ī ve eger küllī ve ašlā taḥallūf dađı itmek imkānı
yoġ bir ġarīb keyfiyyet ne ḥesāb ve ne irtifā'ı ve zāyiçe yollu*

⁵ Ernest Tucker. "Mahdī Khān Astarābādī." In Fleet, Kate; Krämer, Gudrun; Matringe, Denis; Nawas, John; Rowson, Everett (eds.). *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (3rd ed.). Brill Online (2020).

135a

bir harf yazısı var fi-mā ba ‘d fakīriñüz kütüb-i nücümüyyeyi iħrāk bi’n-nār
 idüb andan telemmüz itmek murād eyledüm didikde baña daħı istiğrāb
 elvirüb bu mişillü erbāb-ı kemālden olan zāt böyle i ‘tikād
 eyledikde bu şahş ne mertebede ehl-i ma ‘ārifden olmaķ gerekdür diyüb
 şahş-ı mezbūrı görmek murād eylemekle Mehdī Hāna ‘acabā ol-zātı
 bu mevķi ‘e da ‘vet eylesek icābet iderler mi didikde Hān
 vallāhi sulṭānum dünki gün gelüb misāfirimüz oldu henüz meşrebi
 ma ‘lūmum degüldür icābet eylemez ise soñra ṭarafına hacālet elvirir
 lākin fakīr-ḥānede bir ziyāfet tertīb idelüm de teşriḫ
 idüñ hem görüñlür ve hem keyfiyyet ma ‘lūm-ı şerīfüñüz olur
 diyüb bu kavlı ile yevm-i mev ‘ūdda Hānuñ konağına varılıb
 bir miķdār şöḫbet ve istirāhatden soñra Hān zikr olınan
 zātı oldıgımız mevķi ‘e getürüb efendüm cenābuñuza evşāfını
 itdigim zāt bunlardur diyüb ta ‘rif eylediklerinde gördüm taḫmīnen
 yigirmi beş otuz yaşında var kösec ve başında kalpaķ
 bir zāt birbirimizle āşināyiden soñra bir miķdār şöḫbet-i
 istīnās olınuķda Hāna işāret idüb ‘azīze keyfiyyātı
 tefhīm itdigimi dīde evet, eger bir niyyetüñüz var ise ṭutuñuz” diyüb
 imā eyledikde fakīr daħı nefsinde vardıkda niyyet eylemiş idüm
 Hān daħı ‘azīze haber virdikde koyunıdan bir koyun küregi
 çıkarub ve bir miķdār te ‘emmül-i nazar eyleyüb başını kaldırub
 sizüñ niyyetüñüz cenābuñuzdan rütbede büyük bir zātda alacaķ ḫaķķuñuz
 vardur andan içün niyyet eylemişsiñüz didikde Hān varabildiñüz mi

135b

diyü işāret eyledikde didim belī vardılar ve yine ‘azīz hattā maṭlabuñuz
on üç kīsedür didikde belī öyledür didüm tekrār yine kürege
nazar idüb efendi ḥaṭā itmişüm zīmmet on beş kīsedür
didikde ammā benüm fi’l-aşl ma ‘lūmum olmağla ḥayır on üç kīsedür
diyü mu ‘āraza idüb lākin ‘azīz kelāmından nükül itmeyüb elbette
on beş kīsedür didikde faḳīre daḥı ḥayret gelüb ma ‘a-hāzā
‘azlūmi getürdüb ve birkaç gün zarfında ‘āzim-i rāh olmaḳ
içün cümle eşyāmı yirleşdirmiş idüm lākin ‘azīzūñ işrārından
baña daḥı ta ‘accüb ve ḥayret gelüb konağa geldikde yükleri açub
ve defterleri çıkarub yeñiden ḥesāb eyledim nefsu’l-emrde ‘azīzūñ
didigi gibi tamām on beş kīse aḳcedür yekūn iderken faḳīr
ḥaṭā itmişüm buña vāḳıf oldukda ḥayret üzre ḥayret
gelüb ve derūnuma bir i ‘tikād-ı küllī ḥāşıl oldı ve ‘azīz ile
ülfet itmekle Ḥān ile ‘azīzi berāber da ‘vet idüb ve gendüsine
‘azīm i ‘zāz ve ikrāmdan şoñra dünki söyledigi kelāmı taşdıḳ
idüb nefsu’l-emrde kelām buyurdığıñuz gibi olub yekūnda
ben ḥaṭā itmişüm didikde belī öyledir benüm ḳatumda ḳaṭ ‘ā ḥaṭā
oldığı yoḳdur didikde didim işbu aḳceyi ‘acabā alabilür miyüm
didüm ḥayır almanıñ imkānı yoḳdur didi çünki bundan aḳdem
Köprilizāde ‘Abdullāh Paşa ser ‘asker iken faḳīr nüzl emīni
eylemişler idi ol sebebden zīmmetlerinde ḳalmışdı vefāt
eyledikde mālını mīrīden aḥz idüb ol-ḳadar aḳce ḳaldı gitdi
alamadıḳ imdi bu keyfiyyete vāḳıf oldukda öyle şeylere

136a

*aşlâ i 'tibârum yoğiken hevesüm düşüb fenn-i mezbûrı ta 'allüm eylemek
 için ol günlerde naqd olarak otuz kîse aqcem var idi anları
 çıkarub 'azîz-i merķûma "işbu aqcenüñ cümlesi saña helâl olsun
 eger dağı olsa dirîğ eylemez idüm didikde koynından bir şahîfe kadar
 kâğıd çıkarub didi işbu fennüñ cümle şerh ve tafşîli budur
 şüreti bir sâ 'atde taħrîr olunub ve ta 'lîmi iki sâ 'atde olur
 ve ta 'lîmi için ħudâ bilür bir aqçe ve bir ħabbe talebinde degülüm lâkin
 küregi elime alub nazâr eyledikde derûnuma bir miqdâr keyfiyyet tülû '
 ider ki anları taħrîr idüb ta 'lîme kudretüm yoqdur bunlar bizüm öteden
 berü ħânedânumuza ırsla vedî 'a olunmuş bir ħâletdür yoqsa 'alimallâh
 cenâbuñuzdan bir şey dirîğ degüldür diyü cevâb virdikde bundan
 ma 'lûmum oldı-ki nefş'ül-emrde bu keyfiyyet tülû 'ât-ı ilâhiyyeden
 bir ħâlet olub ta 'lîm ve te 'allüm ile fehm olınacaq fennden olmayub
 bu fennüñ aşĥâbınuñ tîli 'lerinde sehm'ül-gayb ta 'bîr olınan ħâlâtdan
 bir şey olub yâĥûd taħrîr eylediği gibi ħânedânlarında cifr 'ilmi
 keyfiyyâtı mişillü bir esrâr-ı ilâhiyyedür eger böyle olmasaydı faķîr âdem
 olkadar aqçeyi aĥz idüb ta 'lîm iderdi diyü naql eylediği zât
 bu faķîre bu şüret üzre ħikâyet eylediği li-münâsebetihi baş u taħrîre
 bādî oldı ħarrarehu li-nâķilihi*

Translation

In relation to the aforementioned science of scapulimancy, they recount from the late Ragıb Pasha through reliable sources and directly in his own words as follows:

During the time of the Sublime State's war with Iran, I was residing in Tabriz as the financial administrator. The former owner of the house we lived in was a certain distinguished person named Mehdi Khan. He was a man of high standing, well-versed in all branches of knowledge, particularly excelling in the science of the stars, being the second Abu Ma'shar⁶ of his time. One day, he visited this humble one's residence and, in a state of great openness, remarked: "My lord, we have pursued the science of astrology which is like a vast ocean, with neither its shores clearly visible nor its depths comprehensible. It is a discipline where truth is often overshadowed by error. Recently, however, a man from Dagestan has arrived as a guest at this one's home. He possesses a sheep's scapula and whatever intention you held in your mind, whether general or specific, he would look at the bone and provide an answer. His skill is such that his interpretations never fail, a peculiar ability that requires neither calculation nor celestial elevation, nor the drawing of any charts or figures. Observing this, I felt inclined to abandon my astrological studies entirely and instead devote myself to this knowledge."

I too became astonished and thought to myself: when such a distinguished and accomplished person holds such beliefs, what level of learning and refinement must this remarkable man possess? Filled with curiosity, I desired to meet this extraordinary man in person. Turning to Mehdi Khan, I asked, "I wonder, if we were to invite this individual to our gathering here, would he accept the invitation?" Khan replied, "My Sultan, though he visited us yesterday, I am unsure of his temperament and cannot guarantee he will accept an invitation. It may lead to embarrassment should he decline. However, I propose we arrange a feast at my house, allowing you to meet him informally and observe his abilities."

On the appointed day, we arrived at Mehdi Khan's residence, and after some conversation and repose, the Khan took the man to where we were standing, saying: "This is the person I spoke of." He appeared to be about twenty-five or thirty years old,

⁶ Ebû Ma'ser Ca'fer b. Muhammed b. Ömer el-Belhî (d. 272/886) was a highly influential Persian scholar of astrology and astronomy.

beardless, and wearing a fur cap. After being acquainted, we engaged in a close conversation. The Khan signaled to me, "If you have an intention in mind, please proceed." I already had an intention. The Khan informed the esteemed man, who then took a sheep's scapula from his bosom, examined it intently for a moment, and raised his head, saying: "Your intention pertains to a prominent individual of high rank from whom you are owed something. This is the reason behind your intent."

When the Khan asked if I had been able to collect the debt, I replied, "yes, the debt had been paid." The man continued, "the amount in question is thirteen purses." I replied, "yes, that is correct." However, upon further inspection of the scapula, saying, "I was mistaken—it is fifteen purses." However, being certain of the matter, I objected, saying, "No, it is thirteen purses." However, the person did not waver from his statement, insisting, "It is certainly fifteen purses." I was overtaken by astonishment and, consequently, prepared for my dismissal. Over the course of a few days, I gathered all my belongings, intending to set on a journey. However, due to the insistence of the esteemed person, I was again struck by amazement and wonder. When I arrived at the house, I opened the luggage, took out the account books, and conducted a thorough review. In fact, the actual total corresponded precisely to what the esteemed person had stated: fifteen purses of aspers. Realizing my own mistake, I was overwhelmed by astonishment upon astonishment, and a profound conviction formed within me regarding the truth of his words.

Ultimately, I became closely acquainted with the esteemed person, and accompanied by the Khan, invited him to a gathering. After showing him great respect and honor, I confirmed the truth of his earlier words, acknowledging that they were entirely accurate. I admitted my error, saying, "Indeed, I was mistaken." To this, he replied, "Yes, that is correct. There is absolutely no error on my part." Then I asked, "Would it be possible for me to collect this money?" He answered, "No, it is impossible for you to obtain it." Then, I understood that, "Previously, when Köprülüzade Abdullah Pasha was the commander-in-chief, he had appointed me in charge of the army's provisions. For this reason, the debt remained outstanding in his records. Upon his

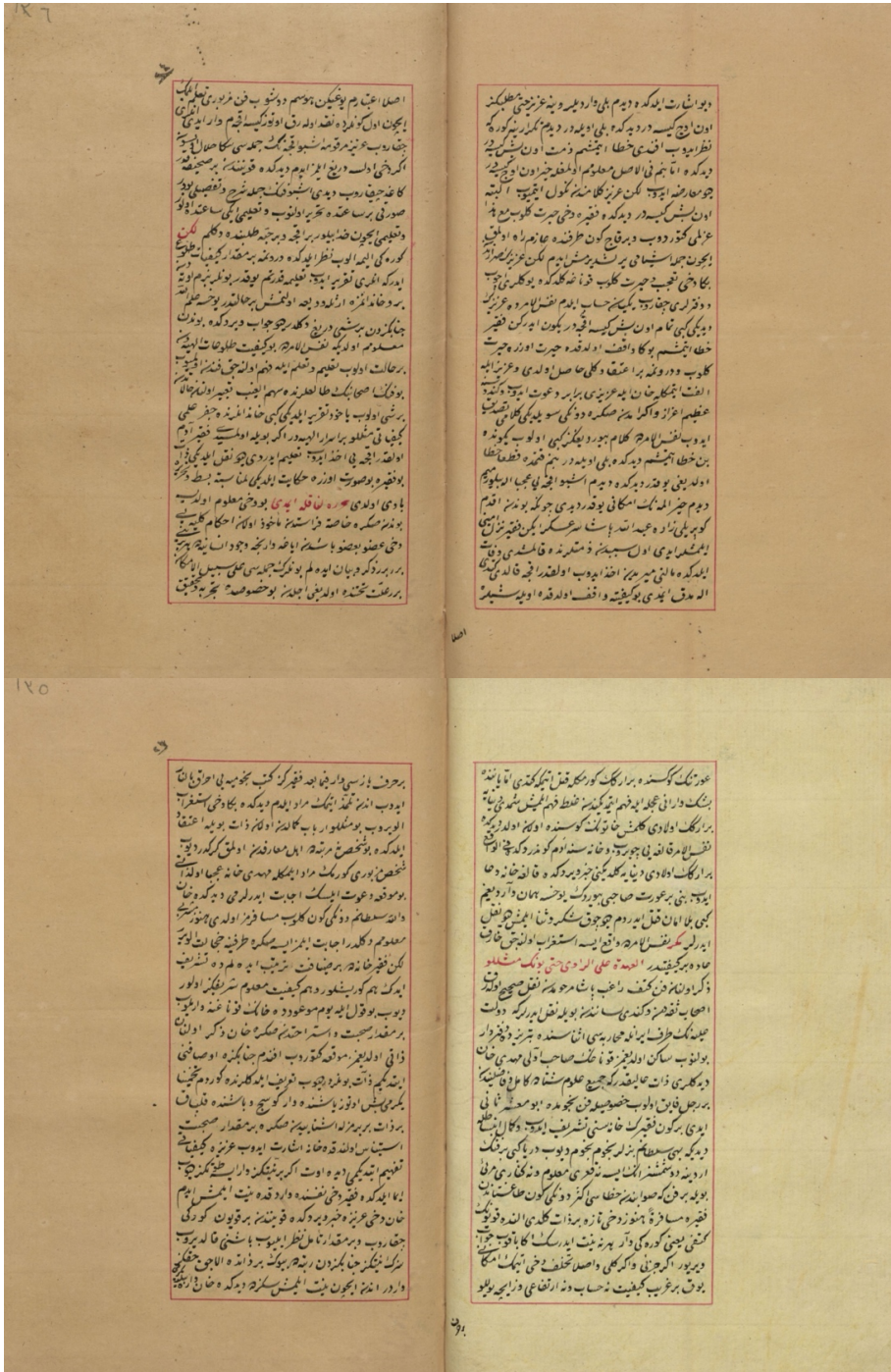
passing, his wealth was taken by the state treasury, and the amount I seek was included in that, leaving it unrecoverable.”

When I became aware of this situation, although I usually had no interest in such matters, I developed a sudden fascination with learning this science. At the time, I had thirty purses of aspers in hand. I brought them out and said to the esteemed person, “Let all this money belong to you, and if I had more, I would not hesitate to give it as well.” Then, he drew out a sheet of paper from his bosom and said, “This contains the complete explanation and details of this art. Its copy can be written in an hour, and its instruction takes two hours. I seek neither a single coin nor a grain for teaching it, as God is my witness. However, when I hold the scapula in my hand and examine it, certain states reveal themselves into my mind. I lack the ability to articulate or teach them. These are states entrusted to our lineage as a sacred inheritance from generations past. Otherwise, God knows, I would not withhold anything from you.” He thus responded.

From what I understood, this state is one of the divine illuminations and not a science that can be comprehended through teaching and learning. It appears to be a state referred to as one’s destined share (*‘sehmü’l-ğayb’*) in the astrological charts of those versed in this field, or, as he explained, an esoteric divine secret akin to the qualities of the cifr science preserved within their lineage. If it were not so, that person would surely have accepted such a substantial amount of money and taught this knowledge.

This account was narrated to me in this manner, and I have recorded it here due to its relevance and significance.

Facsimile



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Correction

Sümeyye Hoşgör Büke

In my article

“Exploring Fish Species in an Unexpected Source: Insights from the Inheritance Inventory (*tereke*) of Baḳḳāl Estavrīnu”,
published in *Keshif* 2/2, Summer 2024,

I translated the Ottoman Turkish phrase “*sıḡır dili*” (p. 38) as “beef tongue” (p. 42). However, upon further consultation with scholars in the field, I have been made aware that this term refers to a botanical species rather than an anatomical term. Specifically, *sıḡır dili* is a plant belonging to the Boraginaceae (borage) family, most likely *Anchusa officinalis*.