

# Eavesdropping on the Pasha's Salon: Usual and Unusual Readings of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Bureaucrat

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*Paşa'nın Salonuna Kulak Kabartma: 18. Yüzyıl Bir Osmanlı Bürokratının Olağan ve Fevkalade Okumaları*

Öz ■ Bu makale bir seçme yazılar koleksiyonu, vakıf kütüphanesi ve tereke defterlerindeki kitap listeleri ışığında 18. yüzyıl yüksek mevki sahibi bürokratlarının entelektüel çalışmalarının ve okuma ilgilerinin izini sürmektedir. Sonuçlar karşılaştırılarak nüfuzlu bir yüksek bürokratın yani Ragıp Paşa'nın (ö. 1763) entelektüel faaliyetleri ve okumaya olan ilgisi söz konusu sosyal grup bağlamında ele alınmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: XVIII. yüzyıl, düşünce tarihi, bürokratlar, kalemiye, kitap okuma, bilimler, İran, Ragıp Paşa.

## Introduction

Early modern Ottoman culture is increasingly being appreciated as a valid subject of intellectual history, but the cultural and intellectual dynamics of 18<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman society remain a matter of controversy.<sup>1</sup> However, the debate elicited by the provocative question of a possible “Islamic Enlightenment” has demonstrated that it would be premature to evaluate 18<sup>th</sup> century intellectual

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1 While the so-called “Tulip Period” up to 1730 is usually portrayed as reformist and open-minded (both often equated with “westernising”) within the narratives of decline and westernisation, the subsequent decades tend to be cast indiscriminately in the shadow of the disastrous wars of the last third of that century. For a historiographical critique of the so-called *lale devri*, see Can Erimtan, *Ottomans looking west? The origins of the Tulip Age and its development in Modern Turkey*, London: Tauris, 2008.

history before a sufficient number of pertinent sources have been adequately examined.<sup>2</sup>

For obvious reasons, intellectual history tends to privilege individual authors by exploring their writings. But our knowledge of 18<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman literature remains so limited that it is difficult even to distinguish “mainstream” from unusual attitudes, and, hence, to identify change and distinct intellectual profiles. This contribution suggests two ways to learn which topics may have been discussed by an important, but often neglected group of educated non-‘ulamā’, namely high-ranking bureaucrats and administrators: A *mecmū‘a* compiled by a socially influential individual will be examined, and prominent readings and writings of this individual will then be compared with books owned by his social peers.

Collections of notes and excerpts, usually subsumed under the general rubric of *mecmū‘a*, remain seriously understudied, but they should enable us to start taking the sociable aspect of knowledge and literature more seriously.<sup>3</sup> In “Western” contexts, the key importance of civilised salon conversations for intellectual history and even the establishment of an early modern public sphere (Öffentlichkeit) has frequently been emphasised.<sup>4</sup> Due to their oral character, Ottoman salon conversations (*mecālīs*) are difficult to trace in the sources, but it is not hard

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- 2 For a concise overview, see Stefan Reichmuth, “Arabic Literature and Islamic Scholarship in the 17th/18th Century: Topics and Biographies. Introduction”, *Welt des Islams* 42 (2002): 281–288 and id., *The World of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (1732–91). Life, Networks and Writings* (Cambridge: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2009), XVIII–XX; cf. Reinhard Schulze, “Was ist die islamische Aufklärung?” *Welt des Islams* 36 (1996): 276–325, and Ulrich Haarmann, “‘Ein Mißgriff des Geschicks’. Muslimische und westliche Standpunkte zur Geschichte der islamischen Welt im achtzehnten Jahrhundert”, in *Geschichtsdiskurs. Band 2: Anfänge modernen historischen Denkens*, eds. Wolfgang Küttler, Jörn Rüsen and Ernst Schulin (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1994), 184–201.
  - 3 Ways of retrieving the sociable and performative aspects of literary salons (*mujālasāt*) have recently been suggested by Samer M. Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons in the Islamic Middle Ages. Poetry, Public Performance, and the Presentation of the Past* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).
  - 4 Historical research on the emergence of a public sphere has been stimulated especially by Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Neuwied/Berlin: Luchterhand, 1962). For the role played by coffeehouses and reader circles, see, e. g., Ulrich Im Hof, *Das gesellige Jahrhundert: Gesellschaft und Gesellschaften im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (München: Beck, 1982). For coffeehouses as public venues, cf. Ralph S. Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988); Uğur Kömeçoğlu, “The Publicness and Sociabilities of the Ottoman Coffeehouse”, *Javnost - The Public* 12, 2 (2005): 5–22.

to imagine that the brief sections contained in literary *mecmū'as* were read, cited or alluded to in the context of these social events. These *florilegia* were eclectic collections of short excerpts on literary, scholarly, or religious topics, similar to *mecmū'as* that consisted of lecture notes or selected scholarly treatises, but they were intended for leisure purposes, such as collective appreciation or discussion.

One example for a literary *mecmū'a* is Bahā' al-Dīn al-Āmilī's famous *Kashkūl*. In his preface, Āmilī states that this collection formed a set with an earlier collection of the same type (*al-Mikhlāt*), which contained "circumstantial discussions occurring to the mind at leisure and numerous conversations afforded by a deficient character in times of occupation".<sup>5</sup> Both anthological collections have been described as "comforting companions", "humble teachers" and "blossoming gardens" in times of solitude and could thus serve as a substitute for civilised salon conversation, or as a resource to prepare for it.<sup>6</sup> This type of *mecmū'a* would seem to represent the closest literary approximation to salon conversation.

### A literary bureaucrat

An 18<sup>th</sup> century *mecmū'a* similar in structure and intent was compiled by Rāḡib Meḥmed Paşa (d. 1763): *Safīnat al-Rāḡhib wa-dafīnat al-maṭālib* ("Ship of the desirous and treasure trove of important questions").<sup>7</sup> Rāḡib Paşa was a bureaucrat,<sup>8</sup> a man of letters and eminent participant in educated discourse of his time, who collected an impressive number of books that were to form part of an endowment library that exists to this day. Rāḡib Paşa became not only a respected poet and an influential politician, but also an important patron and, as such,

5 Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-Āmilī, *Kitāb al-Kashkūl li-khātimat al-udabā' wa-ka'bat al-zurafū*, ed. al-Ṭāhir Aḥmad al-Zāwī (Kairo: Dār ihyā' al-kutub al-'arabiyya, 1961), 3. On Āmilī and his *Kashkūl* (completed in 1593), see Clifford E. Bosworth, *Bahā' al-Dīn al-Āmilī and his literary anthologies* (University of Manchester, 1989) and Devin J. Steward, "Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Āmilī", in *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography 1350-1850*, ed. J. E. Lowry and D. J. Steward (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2009), 27-48. The *Mikhlāt* is treated by Bosworth as well, but according to Steward, the work printed under this title is "a false attribution" ("Bahā' al-Dīn", 31). All translations are mine except as otherwise marked.

6 So far, I have not encountered evidence for public recitation of *mecmū'a* texts in a *meclis*, but such a performance is conceivable.

7 The *Safīna* mainly included excerpts written in Arabic with some in Persian, but not in Turkish. Its title is rendered completely in Arabist transcription even though Rāḡhib also refers to the compiler whose name is otherwise rendered Rāḡib.

8 The term bureaucrat refers only to the imperial scribal class proper (*kuttāb/küttāb*), not including bureaucratic personnel of the judicial hierarchy (like *ḳādīs*).

instrumental in consolidating the bureaucracy's key position within the imperial power structure when he rose to be the first bureaucrat to serve for several years as grand vizier.<sup>9</sup>

Rāġīb Paşa's Career

1140/1727	head of financial administration ( <i>defterdār</i> ) of Revān
1142/1730	deputy chancellor ( <i>re'sülküttāb vekīlī</i> ) of Baghdad and Western Iran
1143/1730	head of financial administration ( <i>defterdār</i> ) of Baghdad
1146/1734	financial administrator ( <i>mālīye tezkirecisi</i> ) in Istanbul
1148/1735	military financial administrator and deputy chancellor ( <i>ordu defterdarı ve re'sülküttāb vekīlī</i> ) in Erzurum, Baghdad
1148/1735	capitation tax auditor ( <i>cizye muhāsebecisi</i> )
1149/1737	chief clerk of the grand vizier ( <i>şadāret mektūbcısı</i> )
1153/1741	chancellor of the grand vizier ( <i>re'sülküttāb</i> )
1157/1744	governor-general of Egypt ( <i>Mıŝr vālīsī</i> )
1161/1748	chief tax collector of Aydın ( <i>Aydın muhaŝŝılı</i> )
1163/1750	governor-general of Sidon ( <i>Şaydā vālīsī</i> )
1164/1751	governor-general of Raqqā ( <i>Raqqā vālīsī</i> )
1168/1755	governor-general of Aleppo ( <i>Haleb vālīsī</i> )
1170/1757	grand vizier ( <i>şadr-ı a'zam</i> )
1176/1763	died in office

Trained and employed in the imperial administration, Rāġīb was educated in the manner of Ottoman bureaucrats, as distinguished from 'ulamā' education.<sup>10</sup>

9 For further information on Rāġīb Paşa's network and politics, see my *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte. Beziehungen, Bildung und Politik des osmanischen Bürokraten Rāġīb Mehmed Paşa (st. 1763)* (Würzburg: Ergon, 2008) [Between Arab province and Sublime Porte. Networks, education and politics of Raghīb Mehmed Pasha (d. 1763)]. The first bureaucrat to achieve the grand vizierate was actually Rāmī Mehmed Paşa in 1703, but he managed to stay in office only for a few months. After Rāġīb Paşa, however, a growing number of bureaucrats achieved that illustrious office.

10 For a survey of bureaucrat education in the pre-Tanzimat period, see Carter V. Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire. The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922* (Princeton University Press, 1980), 24-30 and 95-97.

When entering the scribal service, an apprentice (*mülâzim*) already had acquired sufficient skills in reading, writing, the basics of Islam, and some knowledge of Arabic and Persian.<sup>11</sup> Then, a future scribe would be trained on the job, learning the art of letter writing (*inshā*), the various scripts, accounting and other necessary skills.<sup>12</sup>

An important characteristic of bureaucrats in most Islamic empires was their close association with the field of *adab/edeb*. In contrast to the religiously informed concept of *ilm*, which dominated madrasa learning,<sup>13</sup> *adab* used to signify not only belles lettres, but also proper conduct and personal refinement, intellectual sophistication and worldly wisdom; on the whole, a broad acquaintance with many fields of knowledge, rather than profound erudition. *Adab* was a comprehensive concept of character formation and gentlemanly education.<sup>14</sup> Guidebook texts from the Abbasid era onwards prescribing the appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviour of a proper bureaucrat (*adab al-kātib*) continued to be esteemed classics in Rāğīb Paşa's time.<sup>15</sup> Bureaucrats' inclination towards *adab* even seems

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- 11 Carter V. Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom, A Social History* (Princeton University Press, 1989), 36 and 53-55.
- 12 Findley mentions the possibility of taking additional afternoon lessons in mathematics, chronology, or law at a madrasa (Findley, *Officialdom*, 55).
- 13 Textbooks of 18<sup>th</sup> century education were studied by, among others, Cevat İzgi, *Osmanlı Medreselerinde İlim*, 2 vols., Istanbul: İz, 1997) and Ömer Özyılmaz, *Manzume-i Tertib-i Ulûm, Tertibu'l-Ulûm, Kaside Fi'l-Kütübî'l-Meşhure Fi'l-Ulûm, Kevakib-i Seb'a ve Erzurumlu İbrahim Hakkı'nın Tertib-i Ulûm İsimli Eserine Göre, XVII ve XVIII. yüzyıllarda Osmanlı Medreselerinin Eğitim Programları* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 2002).
- 14 Hartmut Fähndrich, "Der Begriff 'adab' und sein literarischer Niederschlag", in *Neues Handbuch der Literaturwissenschaft*, 25 vols., vol. V: *Orientalisches Mittelalter*, ed. W. Heinrichs (Wiesbaden: Aula-Verlag, 1990), 326-345 (after Nallino and Pellat). Of course, *ulamā* did concern themselves with *adab*, while *udabā* took an interest in *ilm*; indeed, it has to be kept in mind that the border between these two fields of knowledge was far from clear-cut. However, the traditional distinction between *adab* and *ilm* was reproduced in social practice of *ulamā* as well: An adjacency matrix analysis of topics occurring in Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī's rich contacts throughout the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Islamic world clearly shows the persistence of a distinct "literary field" (i. e., *adab*), see Reichmuth, *World*, 209.
- 15 Rāğīb himself included 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib's 8<sup>th</sup> century treatise *Risāla ilā l-kuttāb* in his compilation *Safīnat al-Rāğhib* (p. 213-5, see below). The Middle Eastern bureaucratic-literary tradition went back to antiquity, i. e. at least to the Sassanian *dabīr* scribes.

to have applied, to a certain degree, to officials of the learned hierarchy (esp. *qāḏīs*)<sup>16</sup> who did not belong to the *küttāb* scribal class.

To an Ottoman bureaucrat, appreciating and applying the literary tradition of the combined literary languages of Middle Eastern Muslim Empires (Arabic, Persian, Turkish) set the benchmark of his qualification, which became evident, first and foremost, in the writing of poetry and sophisticated prose. The extensiveness of a bureaucrat's *adab* thus manifested itself in ornate correspondence that was indispensable for the functioning of the state and for maintaining its authority. By the same token, a very large portion of Ottoman-Turkish poetry and artful prose was written by bureaucrats,<sup>17</sup> and this preference for *adab* is present in bureaucrats' private book collections as evidenced by probate inventories: Topics related broadly to belles lettres and history<sup>18</sup> were especially popular among bureaucrats.<sup>19</sup>

### Sources: *Safīnat al-Rāghib*

*Safīnat al-Rāghib*, a collection of excerpts, mainly in Arabic, on a great variety of topics in Islamic scholarship, is by far the most voluminous work compiled by Rāghib Meḥmed Paşa<sup>20</sup> and should therefore provide a better insight into his reading interests than his library. The *Safīna* is preserved in an autograph copy,<sup>21</sup>

- 16 Reichmuth, *World*, 208; Elger, "Selbstdarstellungen", 127. The *edīb* ideal may as well have been valid to some degree for other officials outside the scribal class like provincial bureaucrats or administrators of *waqf* or tax farms.
- 17 On the concept of "literary bureaucrats" (Literarbürokraten), see Sievert, *Provinz*, 45-76.
- 18 Collective biography and geography were traditionally related to the field of history (*tārīḥ*) and used to be included in the latter in contemporary library inventories.
- 19 For a more detailed study of these probate inventories, see my "Verlorene Schätze – Bücher von Bürokraten in den *Muḥallefāt*-Registern", in *Buchkultur im Nahen Osten des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, eds. Tobias Heinzelmann and Henning Sievert (Bern: Lang, 2010), 199-263 [Lost treasures. Bureaucrats' books in *muḥallefāt* registers].
- 20 Rāghib's writings, including diplomatic reports, exemplary official letters and, of course, poetry show his broad literary knowledge and rhetorical skill in Arabic, Turkish and Persian. Apart from the rather scholarly *Safīna*, a collection of poetry and ornate prose (*Mecmū'a-ı Rāghib*) is extant, the only copy of which is unfortunately inaccessible for conservatory reasons (Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Hamidiye 1468).
- 21 *Musawwadat Safīnat al-Rāghib* (Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragib Paşa 1489). Despite of its name, the manuscript seems to be the first clean copy (*mubayyada*) and might thus have been written by a scribe, but no actual autograph draft (*musawwada*) has survived.

as well as in two 19<sup>th</sup> century Būlāq prints. Based on these prints, a new edition was ventured in 2000, but it undertook a thorough and not always appropriate revision of the original order of entries.<sup>22</sup> According to the autograph, Rāḡib compiled his excerpts up to 1175/1761-2, while internal evidence suggests that the few dated entries went back mostly to his years as governor of Raqqā and Aleppo in the first half of the 1750's. As a full-scale study of *Safīnat al-Rāḡhib* still remains to be done, the present contribution will only address selected sources that Rāḡib quotes prominently. As for the *Safīna*'s purpose, the compiler states:

On these pages I have recorded intellectual discussions that caught my eye and curious things I discovered while studying the precious books I had the opportunity to read and to consult when necessary. But not everybody is able to collect all of these nor to find them in one place.<sup>23</sup>

In contrast to *adab* collections like 'Āmilī's *Kashkūl*, the *Safīna*'s focus is on scholarly endeavour, not entertainment and consolation, but it combines the dual objectives of *prodesse et delectare*: to entertain the reader with curiosities (*nawādir ʿarīfa*), and to provide a compendium of relevant opinions on key issues of Islamic knowledge (*'ilm*), thus relieving the reader of the task of searching through scattered books and providing him with a library of essential knowledge in a single volume.<sup>24</sup> Whether used for study or in connection with a scholarly inclined salon, when travelling or as bedside reading, this *mecmū'a* was meant to serve as a ship (*safīna*) to navigate the proverbial ocean of knowledge and to provide a concise synopsis of opinions on any peculiar topic to be at hand when it came up in a *meclis*.

22 Muḥammad al-Rāḡhib [= Rāḡib Meḥmed Paşa], *Mawsū'at muṣṭalahāt al-mawḏū'āt fi Safīnat al-Rāḡhib wa-dafīnat al-maṭālib*, eds. Rafic Al-Ajam and Ali Dahrouj (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 2000). As the title suggests, the authors did not intend to produce a critical edition, but to transform it into an encyclopedia, as it was indeed made part of a series of "terminological encyclopedias" (*Silsilat mawsū'āt al-muṣṭalahāt al-'arabiyya wa-l-islāmiyya*). For the reader's convenience, references will be made not to MS Raḡib Paşa 1489, but to this print edition.

23 Rāḡib, *Safīna*, 3.

24 To describe a collection of philosophical and scientific texts from 15th century Yemen, Franz Rosenthal coined the term "one-volume library": Franz Rosenthal, "From Arabic books and manuscripts, V: A one-volume library of Arabic philosophical and scientific texts in Istanbul", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 75 (1955), 14-23. In the madrasa context, excerpt collections had become quite common by the 16th-17th century in Iran, Central Asia and India; see Gerhard Endreß, "Philosophische Ein-Band-Bibliotheken aus Isfahan", *Oriens* 36 (2001), 10-58.

### Sources: Râğıb Paşa's library

To better appreciate Râğıb Paşa's readings and writings, a study of the *Safına* can be complemented by the extant manuscripts of the pasha's private collection, which was transferred to his newly founded library<sup>25</sup> and supplemented with books he subsequently acquired. The founder seems to have felt that some additions were necessary to furnish a public library,<sup>26</sup> even if it was not attached to a madrasa, because it would be frequented by students and scholars requiring classical texts, works of reference or madrasa textbooks.

Therefore, Râğıb's donation of approximately 1100 titles includes most titles he mentions in his *Safına* as well as multiple copies of standard titles.<sup>27</sup> Many manuscripts from the pasha's private library, however, contain owner's marks, marginal notes or similar indications of their previous use. Râğıb Paşa was an avid collector of books and seems to have acquired large parts of his library during his many years of service in Iran, Iraq, Egypt and Syria; he probably also sent his librarians to buy books or asked friends and clients to do so in various parts of the empire.<sup>28</sup>

To avoid an anachronistic inference of later categorisations and additional ambiguities resulting from the fact that a book may be assigned to more than one branch of literature, the categories of the first library inventory, compiled

25 The *waqf* combined the library with a Qur'an school (*mekteb*), a few adjacent buildings, fountains and Râğıb's tomb in a newly built complex in Koska/Istanbul, funded by gardens, shops, mills and a public bath. The endowment deed (*waqfiyya*) is dated 1<sup>st</sup> Rabî' II 1176 / 20<sup>th</sup> October 1762 (Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Rağıb Paşa 1337). After the original building had been damaged in the 1999 earthquake, the library was transferred to the Süleymaniye Manuscript Library.

26 This is indicated, for example, by the presence of multiple copies of standard works like dictionaries (Jawharî, Firûzâbâdî), *fiqh* handbooks like those of Hâlabî, or various commentaries on the dogmatic books of Nasafî, Khayâlî etc. It is conceivable, though, that an individual owned multiple copies of any given book, but there are virtually no such instances in the probate inventories (see below).

27 Some of Râğıb's books did not enter the library. For example, the manuscript *Risâle-i Tâtâr-ı Leh*, a 1588 treatise on the Tatars of Lithuania, was acquired by the Polish orientalist A. Muchliński in the 19th century, bearing the mark of Râğıb Paşa's ownership without ever having been part of the *waqf* library (Paul Suter, *Alfurkan Tatarski. Der litauisch-tatarische Koran-Tefsir* (Köln: Böhlau, 2004), 89). I am grateful to Professor Michael Kemper (Amsterdam) for this information.

28 For this purpose, he sent Şâlih, one of his librarians, to Aleppo in 1758 (BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 45/20).

about one year after the founder's death, have been applied.<sup>29</sup> At first glance, central fields of Islamic scholarship like *tafsīr*, *fiqh*, *'aḳā'id*, *kalām*, *uṣūl al-fiqh* quantitatively dominate Rāḡib Paṣa's donation, just as in most 18<sup>th</sup> century libraries.<sup>30</sup> According to the classification of its first inventory, over 43% of the books in Rāḡib Paṣa's library could be assigned to the mentioned fields of Islamic scholarship. On the other hand, books pertaining to fields of knowledge associated with *adab*, such as belles lettres, history, grammar and rhetoric amount to a third (33.3%).<sup>31</sup> The field of *ḥadīth* is represented quite weakly (7.9%), while the collective category of philosophy (*ḥikma*; including logic and the quadrivial arts of geometry, arithmetics and astronomy) adds up to 9.2%, the remaining categories being medicine (2%) and sufism (4.4%). This profile with relatively strong components of *adab* and philosophy distinguishes Rāḡib Paṣa's collection from libraries belonging to madrasa institutions or individual *'ulamā'*.<sup>32</sup>

Even if compared not to full-fledged madrasa libraries, but to private book collections of scholars (*'ulamā'*), Rāḡib Paṣa's library had a markedly different profile. The probate inventories from Damascus around 1700 examined by Establet and Pascual, which belonged predominantly to local *'ulamā'*, suggest almost reversed priorities: By far the largest fields are jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and mysticism (*taṣawwuf*), followed by the middle-sized fields of *ḥadīth*, hagiography/biography

29 The inventory Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Raḡib Paṣa 4III (c. 1764) gives the titles donated as part of the original *waqf* by Rāḡib Paṣa himself, adding later donations until 1794 in a distinct manner.

30 Most Ottoman libraries still belonged to madrasas and therefore had to cover primarily the fields of knowledge taught there, but the number of independent libraries less closely attached to Islamic scholarship was rising from the late 17th century onwards. For an extensive list of libraries established in that period, see İsmail E. Erünsal, *Türk Kütüphaneleri Tarihi II. Kuruluştan Tanzimat'a kadar Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayınları, 1998), vol. II, 289-306.

31 These categories are obviously anything but clear-cut. For instance, history may be assigned to Islamic scholarship as well, especially if prophets, traditionalists and saints are concerned, but not with regard to court chronicles, geography and biography. Quite similarly, the trivium arts of grammar and rhetoric used to serve as ancillary sciences to studies of Qur'ān and tradition.

32 According to *Kevākib-i Seb'a*, *adab* books were taught marginally at best in madrasas (six titles out of 70-80; see Özyılmaz, *Manzume*, 41), while philosophy (*ḥikmet-i nazariye*) was considered an ancillary discipline covered by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Abharī's *Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, the commentaries on it by Qāḏī Mīr Maybudī and the supercommentary by Muṣliḥ al-Dīn Lārī, and Najm al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī al-Kātibī's *Hikmat al-'ayn* on physics and metaphysics.

(*sîyar*), linguistics, grammar, Qur'anic exegesis, then history and sciences, while philosophy (*falsafah/hikma*) and theology (*kalâm*) are scarcely represented.<sup>33</sup>

Râğîb Paşa's fellow bureaucrat Re'îsülküttâb el-Hâcc Muştafâ Efendi endowed a public library as well, and in his case, the difference to '*ulamâ*' libraries was obvious as well, as belles lettres, history and biographies form the largest single categories (together almost 36% of the listed titles).<sup>34</sup> This emphasis on *adab* is also manifest in bureaucrats' private collections treated in the next section.

### Sources: Probate Inventories

Probate inventories have been subject to detailed study for decades,<sup>35</sup> but books listed in these registers have started to attract attention only recently.<sup>36</sup> Most inventories were compiled under the auspices of the local *qādî* and entered into a court record book (*sicill-i şer'î*). Some estates, however, particularly those belonging to officials, were confiscated or inherited by the state,<sup>37</sup> which resulted

33 Cf. Colette Establet and Jean-Paul Pascual, "Les livres des gens à Damas vers 1700", *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 87–88 (1999), 143–169. So far, the importance of regional differences within the empire with regard to book ownership is not known.

34 See, Erünsal, *Türk Kütüphaneleri*, vol. II, 91–3 and Servet Bayoğlu, Günay Kut et al., *Türkiye Yazmaları Toplu Kataloğu 34/IV. İstanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Mustafa Âsir Efendi Koleksiyonu* (Ankara: Millî Kütüphane Basımevi, 1994); cf. *Defter-i Kütübhanê-i Âşir Efendi* (Der-i Sa'adet 1306/1889), 2–97. Regarding the Reisülküttâb subcollection, no contemporary library inventory has been consulted, but due to the complicated formation of this library, it can be assumed that later additions would have entered the subsequently added subcollections of Muştafâ's son Âşir Efendi, or his grandson Hafîd Efendi.

35 Christoph K. Neumann, "Arm und Reich in Qaraferye: Untersuchungen zu Nachlaßregistern des 18. Jahrhunderts", *Der Islam* 53 (1996 [1997]), 259–312, Rossitsa Gradeva, "Towards a portrait of 'the rich' in Ottoman provincial society: Sofia in the 1670s", in *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Antonis Anastasopoulos (Rethymno: Institutouto Mesogeiakôn Spoudôn, 2005), 149–199, Orlin Säbev, *İbrahim Müteferrika ya da İlk Osmanlı Matbaa Serüveni (1726-1746)*, *Yeniden Değirlendirme* (Istanbul: Yeditepe Yayınları, 2006), 38–9.

36 See, Establet and Pascual, "Les livres"; Säbev, *Müteferrika*; Meropi Anastasiadou, "Livres et 'bibliothèques' dans les inventaires après décès de Salonique au XIXe siècle", *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 87–88 (1999), 111–141, Nelly Hanna, *In Praise of Books. A Cultural History of Cairo's Middle Class, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Century* (Syracuse University Press, 2003).

37 Because military officers, courtiers and officials could legally be considered slaves (*kul*) of the ruler, the latter was entitled to inherit or confiscate their property. Apart

in the compilation of a probate inventory by the responsible bureau (*muhallefât kalemi*) in the main department of accountancy (*başmuḥāsebe*).<sup>38</sup> After that, the listed property would be auctioned in order to settle remaining debts and for the benefit of the treasury. As far as the inventories indicate it, most books were bought by officials, courtiers and antiquarian booksellers.<sup>39</sup> The 36 mid-18<sup>th</sup> century probate inventories consulted for this study belong to middle and high-ranking bureaucrats and pashas (several of them originating from a bureaucratic milieu, as well).<sup>40</sup> They contain at least three book titles, the majority showing between 11 and 509 entries.<sup>41</sup> Of course, owning books does not necessarily mean reading them, but if these books consisted of a limited number of elaborate manuscripts, it seems reasonable to assume that the owner did read them.<sup>42</sup> To determine whether Rāḡib's predilections were usual or exceptional within his social group, the books quoted most prominently in *Safīnat al-Rāḡhib* will be presently compared with the mentioned probate inventories.

### Teachers

Many high-level bureaucrats and other officials of the 18th-century Ottoman Empire used to support and participate in literary activities, but rarely contributed to scholarship. Among the bureaucrats of his time, Rāḡib Meḥmed Paşa stands out with a reputation of literary prowess combined with a scholarly level of Islamic erudition. During his career, while rising from the scribal office through several administrative and diplomatic duties in the core region and the Arab

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from this case, the fiscus (*bayt al-māl*) would inherit the property of any Muslim dying without legal heir, and in certain cases, the *qāḏī* or the treasury would act as a fiduciary for a minor heir.

38 Tahsin Özcan, "Muhallefat", in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. XXX (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2005), 406-7; see also Mehmet Zeki Pakalın, *Osmanlı tarih deyimleri ve terimleri sözlüğü*, 4 vols. (Istanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi, 1946), vol. I, 149 and 160. Between 1601 and 1835, this bureau produced roughly 1400 registers of this kind. See also Sievert, "Verlorene Schätze", 207-9.

39 See, e. g., BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12646 (probate inventory of Köprili 'Abdullāh Paşa).

40 Of these, 29 are dated between 1729 and 1767, two were prepared in 1716 and 1724, another two in 1775 and 1783. Three inventories are not dated, but must have been prepared in the middle decades of the 18th century.

41 Only four collections had 3-6 titles, and only one more than 509, namely the collection of 'Ātıf Muştafā Efendi (encompassing 3452 volumes) that was meant to be donated to the *waqf* library still known as 'Ātıf Efendi Kütüphanesi.

42 Especially the Qur'ān, or parts of it, may as well have served talismanic purposes.

provinces, and ultimately to the grand vizierate, Râğıb Paşa continued to study, collect books and meet scholars and men of letters.

While Râğıb Paşa's early years remain obscure,<sup>43</sup> his sojourn in war-torn Iran and in the provincial administration of Iraq in the 1720's has left some evidence in the sources. Râğıb (then an Efendi) was not only engaged in administration and diplomacy, but also concerned himself with the admired Persian poetry<sup>44</sup> and with scholarly pursuits, as is testified by annotations to manuscripts in Râğıb Paşa's books preserved in his library.<sup>45</sup> One of the books Râğıb had copied for himself during his tenure as *defterdâr* of Baghdad was Ibn Nujaym's Ḥanafî law manual *al-Ashbâh wa-l-naẓā'ir*.<sup>46</sup> As a resource for jurisprudential reasoning and particularly for identifying analogies (*qiyās*), *al-Ashbâh wa-l-naẓā'ir* could prove useful not only for scholars, but also for bureaucrats.<sup>47</sup> Ibn Nujaym's manual therefore appears quite frequently in the probate inventories,<sup>48</sup> indicating that Râğıb Paşa's occasional reference to it<sup>49</sup> was to some degree consistent with its use on part of officials and pashas.

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- 43 Born between 1694 and 1699, he seems to have been trained as an apprentice in the *defterhâne*, perhaps by his father Meḥmed Şevkî Efendi, who was an employee in that department. Allegedly, the young Râğıb was a follower (*mürîd*) of the Mevlevî dervish and poet Şeyḫ Enîs Receb Dede (d. ca. 1734, see H. Aksoy, "Enîs Receb Dede", in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi* IX (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1994), 241-242).
- 44 References to Persian poetry abound in Râğıb's poems; he explicitly commented on the influence the 17<sup>th</sup> century poets Shawkat-i Bukhârî, as well as Şâ'ib-i Tabrîzî and Ṭâlib-i Âmulî had on his poetry (Hüseyin Yorulmaz, *Koca Ragıp Paşa* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1998), 43-4). For Shawkat, see Raḥîm-i Musalmanân Qubâdyânî, "Shawkat-i Bukhârî" in *Dânishnâme-i adab-i fârsî*, ed. Ḥasan Anûsha, 6 vols. (Teheran: Mu'assasa-i farhangî va intishârât-i dânishnâme, 1375-1378/1996-2001), vol. I, 567-8. Şâ'ib and Ṭâlib were proponents of the "Indian Style" (*sebk-i hindî*) in Persian poetry; see Ḥamîda Ḥujjatî, "Şâ'ib-i Tabrîzî", in *Dânishnâme-i adab-i fârsî*, vol. IV, 1565-75, and Jawâd Sharîfî, "Ṭâlib-i Âmulî", *ibid.*, vol. IV, 1628-32.
- 45 E. g., Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragıp Paşa 862 (Şadr al-Dîn Shirâzî's *Sharḥ Hidâyat al-hikma*), fol. 1a and 254a. For offices held by Râğıb in Iran, see Fahameddin Başar, *Osmanlı Eyâlet Tevcihâtı (1717-1730)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), 270.
- 46 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragıp Paşa 448, fol. 1 and 262a.
- 47 On books bearing this title, and Ibn Nujaym, see Mustafa Baktır, "Esbâh ve nezâ'ir", "el-Esbâh ve'n-nezâ'ir", in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. XI (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1995), 456-59; Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*. 2 vols., 3 suppl. (Leiden: Brill 1937-43, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), vol. II, 310.
- 48 BOA, D. BŞM. MHF. 12449, 12460, 12606, 12619, 12624, 12646, 12694, 12703/12713, 12811.
- 49 E. g., in Râğıb, *Safına*, 370 and 862.

After returning to Istanbul, Rāḡib Efendi served in several high offices, finally being appointed *reʿsülküttāb* in 1741, when he made the acquaintance of the Syro-Egyptian scholar Shaykh Ibrāhīm b. Muṣṭafā al-Ḥalabī and kept him as his private tutor.<sup>50</sup> Since Shaykh Ibrāhīm had been teaching the applied branches (*furūʿ*) of Ḥanafī law,<sup>51</sup> Rāḡib’s interest might at first have been primarily practical, but according to evidence in the *Safīna* and certain manuscripts in his library, they soon concentrated on completely different topics. Under Shaykh Ibrāhīm’s guidance, Rāḡib delved into the depths of theological and philosophical thinking, with special emphasis on the question of freedom of will and action in relation to man’s responsibility to God (*al-qadāʾ wa-l-qadar*; *ṣiḥḥat taklīf al-ʿibād*) and the *creatio ex nihilo* (*ḥudūth al-ʿālam min al-ʿadam*).<sup>52</sup> These questions were of considerable theological significance and regularly treated in *kalām* treatises, but related books hardly appear in the bureaucrats’ probate inventories.

Among the books Rāḡib studied with Shaykh Ibrāhīm, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī’s *al-Matālib al-ʿāliya* on dogma (*ʿaqīda*) enjoys a certain prominence, as he referred to it in *Safīnat al-Rāḡhib* in various instances.<sup>53</sup> One of the three copies preserved in Rāḡib Paşa’s library was written during his tenure as *reʿsülküttāb* and seems to have marginal notes by Shaykh Ibrāhīm.<sup>54</sup> Further remarks indicate that Rāḡib

50 A native of Aleppo, Ibrāhīm b. Muṣṭafā al-Ḥalabī (d. 1776) had been teaching at al-Azhar, but was forced to leave Egypt for political reasons. From 1741 onwards, he stayed in Istanbul and became known as “Rāḡib Paşa’s tutor”. For further information, see: Şālih Sa’dāwī Şālih and Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, *al-Thaqāfa al-turkiyya fi Miṣr. Jawānib min al-tafaʿul al-ḥadārī bayn al-miṣriyyīn wa-l-atrāk, ma’a mu’jam al-alfāz al-turkiyya fi l-ʿammīyya al-miṣriyya* (Istanbul: IRCICA, 2003), 184; İhsanoğlu, Ekmeleddin (Hg.), *Osmanlı Matematik Literatürü Tarihi*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: IRCICA, 1999), vol. I, 222-227.

51 In Cairo, Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī had been the first scholar to teach *al-Durr al-mukhtār fi sharḥ Tanwīr al-abṣār*, a commentary by Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ḥaskafī (d. 1677) on Tamurtāshī’s *Tanwīr al-abṣār* on the branches of Ḥanafī law. In 1736, Ḥalabī started to write his own supercommentary on *al-Durr al-mukhtār*, named *Tuḥfat al-akhyār ʿalā al-Durr al-mukhtār*, which he finished only in 1739 and which is preserved in Rāḡib’s library (Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb 477, fol. 2a and 345a; Muḥammad Khalīl al-Murādī, *Silk al-durar fi a’yān al-qarn al-thānī ʿashar*, ed. Akram Ḥasan al-ʿUlābī, 4 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-kutub al-ʿilmiyya, 2001), vol. I, 47; Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, Suppl. II, 428).

52 Rāḡib, *Safīna*, 303-5 and 703.

53 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb Paşa 810; Rāḡib, *Safīna*, 247-9, 301-2, 365-7, 374, 385-6, 640-2, 706-7, 734-737, 760-1, 788-9.

54 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb Paşa 812, unpaginated first folia and fol. 1a. Marginal notes of Shaykh Ibrāhīm’s idiosyncratic handwriting can be spotted in some other

turned to this book again during his tenure as governor-general of Egypt,<sup>55</sup> quoting it extensively at least a dozen times in the *Safīna*. Among contemporary bureaucrats, reading *al-Maṭālib al-‘āliya* seems not to have been very common, as it is noted only in a single registered collection.<sup>56</sup>

When Rāġīb Paşa was transferred to the governorship of Egypt in 1744, Shaykh Ibrāhīm, preferring to stay in Istanbul, composed a small compendium for Rāġīb,<sup>57</sup> which summarises these topics characterised by Ibrāhīm as central problems of religious thought.<sup>58</sup> In this way, whenever he wanted to resume his studies, Ibrāhīm’s busy student had a textbook ready at hand. Apart from the customary laudatory phrases, Ibrāhīm suggests in his preface that teaching Rāġīb had induced him to “revive my languid thoughts”,<sup>59</sup> which he might otherwise not have ordered and compiled. While praising his employer’s erudition in flowery phrases, Ibrāhīm insinuates ambiguously that Rāġīb should not forget to subsidise him.<sup>60</sup>

During his tenure as governor-general of Egypt, Rāġīb (now a Pasha) used to have discussions with local scholars, exchanging thoughts and sometimes “blurbs” (*taqārīz*), flowery recommendations on the last pages of a manuscript.<sup>61</sup> At least one of these local ‘*ulamā*’, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Dimashqī, gave him a teaching

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books of Rāġīb’s library as well, e. g. in Es’ad Yanyavī’s partial translation of a Latin rendition of Aristotle’s *Physics* (Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb Paşa 842). Yanyalı Es’ad Efendi (d. 1731) seems to have been heading a committee that translated Greek and Latin versions of treatises by Porphyry and Aristotle into Turkish; see Mahmut Kaya, “Some Findings on Translations Made in the 18th Century from Greek and Es’ad Efendi’s Translation of the *Physica*”, in *Transfer of Modern Science et Technology to the Muslim World*, ed. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Istanbul: IRCICA, 1992, 385-391.

55 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb Paşa 812, fol. 1a.

56 Namely, the inventory of Kāmil Aḥmed Paşa (d. 1763): BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12703 and 12713.

57 Rāġīb, *Safīna*, *ibid.* This compendium is preserved in Rāġīb Paşa’s library as MS 769 (*Risāla fī khalq af’āl al-‘ibād*). On Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī’s enemies in Egypt, see Murādī, *Silk*, 47.

58 “*Min ummahāt uşul al-dīn*” (Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb Paşa 769, fol. 2a).

59 *Ibid.*: “*idh huwa l-muḥyī li-mawāti fikratī l-‘alilati*”.

60 *Ibid.*: “*mā dāmat faḍā’iluhu muta‘āliyyatan wa-fawāḍiluhu mutatāliyyatan wa-tā’iru sa’dihi mugharridan wa-bulbulu rifdihi munshidan*”.

61 See, e. g., Rāġīb’s recommendation of Abū l-Ḥasan al-Qal‘ī al-Tūnisi’s commentary of Rāġīb’s own treatise on prosody (Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb Paşa 1191, fol. 43a-44a); cf. ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Jabartī, *‘Ajāib al-Āthār fī l-tarājim wa-l-akhbār*, 7 vols., ed. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Jamāl al-Dīn (Cairo: Madbūli 1997), vol. II, 282.

certificate (*ijāza*), which has survived among Rāğīb Paşa's books.<sup>62</sup> The *ijāza* contains several standard works 'ulamā' were supposed to know, including dictionaries, Sunnī canonical *ḥadīth* compilations and related commentaries, widespread works of Qur'ānic exegesis, prayer books, poetry on the prophet and some books on mysticism. The document may show what Shaykh 'Abd al-Laṭīf actually taught his prominent student, but at any rate, it contained what a scholar was expected to have in an *ijāza* at the very least and does not necessarily coincide with what Rāğīb actually used to discuss with Shaykh 'Abd al-Laṭīf. It has to be kept in mind that, at this point, Rāğīb Paşa had already been introduced to intricate problems of *kalām*, and therefore should have been familiar with most of the basic reading and works of reference. The pasha later endowed 15 of the 27 titles mentioned in the *ijāza* to his library as reference works, but referred only to ten of them in his *Safīna*, and only to five of these more often than once or twice,<sup>63</sup> which supports the assumption that what is documented in the *ijāza* is knowledge of standard reference works.

If we compare the books listed in the *ijāza* with the bureaucrats' probate inventories, Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ's and al-Jazūlī's pious books on the prophet, Buḥārī's *ḥadīth* collection, Bayḍāwī's Qur'ānic exegesis and Fīrūzābādī's Arabic dictionary are well-represented. Several further *ḥadīth* collections, Ghazālī's writings dealing with the teachings of the philosophers, Ibn al-'Arabī's *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* and the exegesis of Ebū l-Su'ūd are listed only in one or two inventories. Apart from a limited number of standard titles (usually Bukhārī, or a 'forty *ḥadīth*' collection), few bureaucrats exhibited a sustained interest in *ḥadīth*,<sup>64</sup> although many of them displayed a general commitment to mysticism and piety.

Rāğīb Paşa, however, was specifically interested in Ibn al-'Arabī's teachings. He even sent his tutor Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī to Konya to bring the autograph copy of the famous *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* to commission a copy for himself.<sup>65</sup> While respecting Ibn al-'Arabī as a mystical thinker, Rāğīb did not hesitate to raise critical questions, as far as the former's almost prophetic claims were concerned.<sup>66</sup> Ibn al-'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* were fairly popular, i. e., quoted by Rāğīb and owned

62 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb Paşa 1471 (*mecmū'a*). On Shaykh 'Abd al-Laṭīf, see Murādī, *Silk*, vol. III, 132-3.

63 These five indispensable classics are: Bayḍāwī's *Tafsīr*, Ghazālī's *Iḥyā'*, Ibn al-'Arabī's *Futūḥāt*, Mālik's *Muwatta'*, and Fīrūzābādī's *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*.

64 Two further books on *ḥadīth* in the *ijāza* (al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt al-maṣābiḥ*, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Sharḥ al-Bukhārī*) are never listed at all.

65 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb Paşa 704 (*al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*), fol. 1a.

66 *Safīna*, 273-4.

by several contemporary bureaucrats,<sup>67</sup> his *Futūḥāt*, on the other hand, are listed only in two registers, but Rāḡib quoted them extensively.<sup>68</sup> Despite his sincere interest in mystical thinking, Rāḡib does not seem to have been closely associated with any particular *ṭariqa* or *shaykh*, as were many other officials. Rāḡib had been initiated into the Khalwatiyya and the Naqshbandiyya,<sup>69</sup> which were rather widespread among his colleagues, but *Safīnat al-Rāḡhib* does not refer to specifically related topics. The fact that Rāḡib held an *ijāza* of Shādhilī's *Ḥizb al-baḥr*, 'Abd al-Salām al-Mashīsh's *Ṣiḡhat al-ṣalāt* and Suhrawardī's *al-Arba'ūn al-idrīsīyya*<sup>70</sup> does not seem to have been particularly significant, as neither of them appears in the library inventory, nor in the *Safīna*. The fact that neither of these books is listed in the probate inventories would indicate that they were not appreciated or hardly known among Ottoman bureaucrats.<sup>71</sup>

### Theology and philosophy

Problems of metaphysics, theology (*kalām*) and dogmatics ('*aqā'id*) dominate many *Safīna* excerpts. Some of the titles quoted by Rāḡib several times, like the commentaries by Qāḏī Mīr Ḥusayn Maybudī on the *Dīwān 'Alī*<sup>72</sup> and on

67 BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12449, 12460, 12530, 12619, 12694, 12703/12713, 12714, 12811 (6 times in Arabic plus 3 times in Turkish translation).

68 Rāḡib *Safīna*, 273-4, 632, 728-731, 833. Apart from *al-Futūḥāt* and *Fuṣūṣ*, Rāḡib Paşa donated several treatises by Ibn al-'Arabī, as well as related commentaries, to his library: Süleymaniye Ktp, MS Ragib Paşa 220, MS 1453, MS 1458, MS 1464, MS 1467, MS 1476. Cf. Osman Yahia, *Histoire et classification de l'Œuvre d'Ibn 'Arabī. Etude critique* (Damaskus: Institut Français de Damas, 1964), 203, 144, 155-9, 172, 291, 294, 319, 349, 391, 396, 400, 404, 414, 419, 467, 499, 503. Cf. BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12703/12713 and 12714/12715.

69 Müstaḡimzāde Süleymān Sa'deddīn, *Majallat al-niṣāb fī n-nasab wa-l-kunā wa-l-alqāb*, publ. G. Yalçın (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2000), 228a. While Shaykh 'Abd al-Laṭīf included a *silsila* of the Naqshbandiyya into his *ijāza*, Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī acted as a *khalīfā* to the leading shaykh of the Khalwatiyya-Sha'bāniyya, Maḥmūd al-Kurdī of Cairo ('*Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jabartī's History of Egypt. 'Ajā'ib al-Āthār fī'l-Tarājim wa'l-Akhhbār*, eds., transl. T. Philipp, M. Perlmann et al., 4 vols. in 2 (Stuttgart: Reichert, 1994), vol. I, 298. Both mystical connections are, however, never implicated by Rāḡib nor by the shaykhs.

70 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragib Paşa 1471, fol. 25b. Shādhilī's and Mashīsh's prayerbooks belong to North African traditions of sufism.

71 Only in BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12675, a *ḥizb-i a'zam* is listed, which may or may not refer to Shādhilī's prayer book.

72 *Safīna*, 306-7, 599, 637-40. The *Dīwān 'Alī* is a collection of Arabic poetry attributed to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālīb that Maybudī had commented on in Persian around 1494. This

Abhari's *Hidāyat al-ḥikma*,<sup>73</sup> were in the possession of some bureaucrats,<sup>74</sup> indicating that they used to be read and discussed by contemporary bureaucrats and pashas to a certain degree. On the other hand, several frequently quoted books, like Ibn Ḥazm's heresiology *Kitāb al-Fiṣal fī l-milal wa-l-niḥal*<sup>75</sup> and Ghazālī's famous *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*,<sup>76</sup> appear in few inventories, and some important sources of the *Safīna*, like Rāzī's *al-Maṭālib al-'āliya* and Kāshānī's *al-Taḥbīd fī bayān al-tawḥīd*, are rarely ever listed in the probate inventories.<sup>77</sup> These books seem to have been of more interest to 'ulāmā' - and to Rāḡib Paşa.

One contemporary treatise on *kalām* is even included completely in *Safīnat al-Rāḡhib*, namely Saçaqlızāde Meḥmed Mar'aşī's *Nashr Ṭawālī' al-anwār*.<sup>78</sup> This

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extensive *sharḥ* was not donated to the Raḡib Paşa Library, but there are copies in several Istanbul libraries dating from the 16th century onwards. Rāḡib quotes extensively from the commentary's voluminous introductory section called *al-Fawātiḥ*, which was occasionally copied separately and amounts to as much as 200 pages in the recent critical edition (Kamāl al-Dīn Mīr Ḥusayn b. Mu'īn al-Dīn Maybudī Yazdī, *Sharḥ-i Dīwān-i mansūb bi amīr al-mu'minin 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*, eds. H. Raḥmānī / S. I. Ashk-Shīrīn (Teheran: Markaz-i nashr-i mīrāth-i maktūb, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1379/2000). Rāḡib seems to have been interested especially in topics related to revelation and knowledge of God.

- 73 On al-Abhari's *Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, divided in three parts on logic (*manṭiq*), the natural (*tabī'īyyāt*) and the divine (*ilāhiyyāt*), see Brockelmann, *Geschichte* vol. I, 464-5. Many commentaries have been written on the *Hidāya* and became madrasa textbooks (İzgi, *Osmanlı*, 71-4, 78; Özyılmaz, *Manzume*, 40-2). For Mullā Şadrā's commentary, see below.
- 74 Maybudī's commentary is listed two times (BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12449, 12460). Four further commentaries on *Hidāyat al-ḥikma* are listed, but it is impossible to determine their authors (BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12530, 12650, 12675, 12703/12713). Abhari's own book is listed up to seven times, but is hard to identify definitely because of several similar book titles (BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12512, 12517, 12530, 12650, 12675, 12703/12713, 12811).
- 75 BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12678, 12449, 12694.
- 76 BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12624, 12646, 12675, 12703/12713.
- 77 Only Rāzī's book is listed once (BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12703/12713).
- 78 Rāḡib, *Safīna*, 429-554. *Nashr al-Ṭawālī'* refers to commentaries (*sharḥ*) on Bayḍāwī's metaphysics *Ṭawālī' al-anwār* (on which see Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, vol. I, 418; on the commentary, see Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, vol. II, 370). A manuscript of *Nashr* is preserved in Rāḡib Paşa's library (Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Raḡib Paşa 818). On Saçaqlızāde Meḥmed b. Ebībekr el-Mar'aşī (d. 1732), see Tahsin Özcan, "Saçaqlızade Mehmed Efendi", in *İslām Ansiklopedisi*, vol. XXXV (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2008), 368-70. There are a few other treatises included completely in the *Safīna*, namely 'Abd al-Ḥamid b. Yaḥyā's epistle to the scribes (*Risāla ilā l-kuttāb*), Ṭāhir

marginal commentary (*hāshiya*) on Bayḍāwī's metaphysics appears only in a single inventory,<sup>79</sup> suggesting that it was not widely read among officials. Rāḡib Paşa's theological preferences indicate that his intellectual curiosity went beyond average upper-class spirituality as he pursued his personal line of inquiry.

In many excerpts on theological topics, Rāḡib refers to the authoritative Qur'anic exegeses of Rāzī, Zamakhsharī, Qurṭubī, Bayḍāwī and Khafājī, as well as their commentaries and supercommentaries. This is the case with the relation between belief and submission to God's law (*īmān – islām*), freedom of will and action, heresiology and unbelievers' fate in the hereafter, as well as metaphysical and other definitions, but also with rules of prayer, and even with curiosities like the emergence of Satan's offspring. All of these *tafsīrs* were part of Rāḡib Paşa's library, and they were standard works for a scholar or Qur'ān exegete, but not for a bureaucrat. Only Bayḍāwī's book was listed in several probate inventories,<sup>80</sup> indicating that most bureaucrats were content with one *tafsīr*, and it was usually Bayḍāwī's.

In *Safīnat al-Rāghib*, Rāḡib mentions the positions of several thinkers considering the freedom of will and action in relation to God, including "the author of the *Qabasāt*". This author is Mīr Dāmād Astarābādī, the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Persian scholar associated with the so-called Isfahan school of speculative philosophy.<sup>81</sup> His philosophical work, *Kitāb al-Qabasāt*, was neither present in Rāḡib's library nor in any of the estate inventories. In *Safīnat al-Rāghib*, however, Rāḡib refers to other exponents of this philosophical school, like 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhijī,<sup>82</sup> as well.

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b. al-Ḥusayn's letter on political ethics to his son in the version transmitted by Ibn Khaldūn, Ghazālī's *al-Risāla al-qudsiyya* and Jāmi's *Risāla fī kalimat al-tawḥīd*.

79 BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12675.

80 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Asrār al-tanzīl*: Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragıb Paşa 20, 21, no inventory; Maḥmūd al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl*: MS Ragıb 209, plus several later copies, BOA D. BŞM. MHF 12703/13; Muḥammad al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' aḥkām al-Qur'ān*: MS Ragıb 81, D. BŞM. MHF 12449, 12460; 'Abdallāh al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl*: MS Ragıb 66, plus several later copies, D. BŞM. MHF 12703, 12563, 12496, 12675, 12606, 12535, 12512, 12811/17; Aḥmad al-Khafājī, *Ḥāshiya 'alā tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*: MS Ragıb 103, plus later copies, possibly D. BŞM. MHF 12703.

81 Rāḡib, *Safīna*, 305. Rāḡib's quote refers to Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Bāqir Dāmād al-Ḥusaynī Mīr Dāmād, *Kitāb al-Qabasāt*, ed. M. Muḥaqqiq, T. Isutzu, 'A. Mūsavī Bihbihānī and I. Dībājī (Teheran University Press, 1977), 407-484 (the tenth *qabas*). On Mīr Dāmād (d. 1630-31), a teacher of Mullā Şadrā, see A. J. Newman, "Dāmād", in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. VI, 623-626.

82 "Rāḡib, *Safīna*, 273. On 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhijī (d. 1661), see Wilferd Madelung, "'Abd al-Razzāq b. 'Alī al-Ḥosaynī Lāhijī", in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. I, 154-157.

Most titles mentioned above seem to have been well-known among mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman literati (if not among bureaucrats, then among scholars), but Râğıb Paşa's reference to exponents of the so-called Isfahan school, especially of Mullâ Şadrâ, was exceptional. Râğıb had already come into contact with the latter's thought when he was *defterdâr* of Erivan in 1727-28 and commissioned a copy of Mullâ Şadrâ's commentary on al-Abhari's *Hidâyat al-ḥikma* in Tabrîz.<sup>83</sup> In addition to this commentary, Râğıb quotes from Mullâ Şadrâ's most voluminous book *al-Asfâr al-arba'a*,<sup>84</sup> and then praises him as "Şadr al-Dîn al-Shîrâzî, one of the excellent recent scholars of the Imâmiyya and one of the exemplary profound mystics. May God be most merciful with him."<sup>85</sup> Few authors quoted by Râğıb get a similar blessing. Besides, this is one of few cases when Râğıb deemed it necessary to explicitly introduce an author to the reader because Mullâ Şadrâ was virtually unknown in most parts of the empire.<sup>86</sup> Just as in the case of Bahâ' al-Dîn al-Âmilî, Mullâ Şadrâ's political and religious attitudes hardly preoccupy Râğıb; he only mentions it once in a matter-of-fact manner.<sup>87</sup> Denomination is obviously immaterial in either context.<sup>88</sup>

But, in contrast to almost all other scholars mentioned in the *Safîna*, Râğıb felt obliged to introduce this highly appreciated author to the Ottoman readership: "[Quoted] from the section on *kalâm* in *al-Asfâr al-arba'a* by Şadr al-Dîn Shîrâzî. [This book] combines the philosophy of illumination (*ḥikmat al-isbrâq*) with mysticism (*taşawwuf*). It had been unknown in the central lands of the

83 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Rağıb Paşa 862 (*Sharḥ Hidâyat al-ḥikma*), fol. 1a and 254a; cf. Başar 1997, 270. On al-Abhari's book and Mullâ Şadrâ's commentary, see Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, vol. I, 464-465 and suppl. II, 589.

84 Râğıb, *Safîna*, 333-339. Cf. Şadr al-Dîn al-Shîrâzî, *al-Ḥikma al-muta'aliya fi l-asfâr al-aqliyya al-arba'a*, 9 vols. (Qum: al-Maktaba al-Muştafâwiyya, 1966-67), vol. VI, 379-388.

85 Râğıb, *Safîna*, 339.

86 Except of Iraq, where Mullâ Şadrâ's ideas must have been current among the Shî'î scholars of Najaf and Karbalâ'.

87 Râğıb, *Safîna*, 673.

88 Râğıb Paşa's intellectual interest must not, of course, be confused with political action. In the 1736 negotiations with Nâdir Shâh's envoys, he did take a compromising attitude, but only to avoid an unnecessarily costly and bloody war. A statement in this sense is put into Râğıb's mouth in *Şem'dânî-zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi târihi Mür'i-tevârih*, ed. Münir Aktepe, 3 vols. (Istanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Matbaası, 1976-1980), vol. I, 123. In Râğıb's own account on the negotiations, however, no reference is made to theological and philosophical issues; cf. Koca Râğıb Mehmed Paşa, *Tabkik ve Tevfik. Osmanlı-İran Diplomatik Münasebetlerinde Mezhep Tartışmaları*, ed. Ahmet Zeki İzgöer (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2003).

Ottoman Empire (*al-diyār al-rūmiyya*), until I brought a manuscript of it from Iraq and had it copied once or twice.”<sup>89</sup> Apparently, Rāġib Paşa was instrumental in introducing Mullā Şadrā’s ideas to the Ottoman audience, as *al-Asfār al-arba‘a* (Mullā Şadrā’s *magnum opus*) was indeed absent in contemporary probate inventories. According to the first library inventory,<sup>90</sup> Rāġib Paşa donated a two-volume copy of *al-Asfār* to his library, but it seems to have been lost and is not listed in the library catalogue of 1892 any more. In addition, Rāġib donated two copies of another book by Mullā Şadrā, *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyya*.<sup>91</sup>

Rāġib Paşa’s engagement with Mullā Şadrā’s thought culminated in the study of *al-Asfār* and *al-Shawāhid*, but his intellectual curiosity seems to have already been stimulated when he went to western Iran as an official in the 1720’s and acquired a copy of Mullā Şadrā’s commentary on Abharī’s madrasa textbook *Hidāyat al-Hikma*.<sup>92</sup> Philosophical and metaphysical questions continued to dominate Rāġib’s intellectual endeavour when he employed Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī as his tutor, and are again well-represented in the *Safīna*, which was for the most part compiled in the 1750’s. Not surprisingly, such preferences tended to influence Rāġib’s poetry, as well.<sup>93</sup>

### Old and new topics

Some topics addressed in the *Safīna* seem to have remained favoured subjects of discussion for generations, as they had already been included in Kātib Çelebi’s *Mizān al-ḥaqq* completed in 1656, for example the faith of the prophet’s parents and of the Pharaoh, as well as controversies on Ibn al-‘Arabī’s teachings.<sup>94</sup> On the

89 Rāġib, *Safīna*, 857.

90 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragib Paşa 4III, fol. 26a.

91 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragib Paşa 867-868. It is, however, hardly mentioned in *Safīnat al-Rāġhib*.

92 Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragib Paşa 862, fol. 254a: “this is one of the books copied in the city of Tabriz for the unworthy Meḥmed Rāġib, the treasurer of Erivan (*mimmā istaktabahu l-ḥaqir Muḥammad Rāġhib daftari-i khazīnat Revān bi-baldat Tabriz*).”

93 Although poetic language was quite remote from scholarly discourse, Rāġib is considered the most important exponent of “wisdom poetry” (*hikemî şiir*) of his time; this inclination is reflected by his emulation of Nābī, as well; see, Osman Horata, “Klasik estetikte hazan rüzgârları: Son Klasik Dönem (1700-1800). Şiir”, in *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, eds. T. S. Halman, O. Horata et al. (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2006), vol. II, 496.

94 Kātib Çelebi, *The Balance of Truth*. Translated with introduction and notes by G. L. Lewis (London: Allen and Unwin, 1957), 65-83.

other hand, several topics discussed prominently in *Mizān al-ḥaqq*, like singing, dancing, whirling, visiting tombs and other *ṣūfī* practices, or the consumption of coffee, tobacco and certain drugs,<sup>95</sup> are not mentioned in the *Safīna*. These debates obviously played an important role in their time, when controversy between Ebū l-Su‘ūd and Birgili or between *ṣūfīs* and *ḳādīzādelīs* had enjoyed significant political importance, which in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century was no longer the case.

Rāḡīb quotes dozens of authors on a variety of philosophical and theological topics, ranging from Suhrawardī to Mīr Ḥusayn Maybudī, from Ibn Khaldūn to Ibn al-‘Arabī.<sup>96</sup> Most quotations refer not directly to original “classics”, but to commentaries, supercommentaries and treatises that were fairly recent in Rāḡīb’s time, indicating that those fundamental works were not simply repeatedly read, but, as true classics, were accepted as the basis of contemporary intellectual discourse, as in the case of Saçaklızāde’s commentary *Nashr al-Ṭawālī*’ and Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī’s compendium *Risāla fī khalq af‘āl al-‘ibād*.<sup>97</sup>

Ibn Khaldūn’s *Muqaddima*, today regarded as a classic, seems to have been discovered or rediscovered by the Ottomans. Its reception dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> or even to the 16<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>98</sup> growing more intense in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, when Pīrīzāde Meḥmed Şāḥīb translated part of it into Turkish in 1725. This reception is also documented by a sizeable number of manuscripts,<sup>99</sup> as is the employment of Khaldūnian social theory by influential scholars like Kātib Çelebi

95 Kātib Çelebi, *Balance*, 38-46, 50-64.

96 In the rearranged print edition published in 2000, almost 100 pages are devoted to *felsefe*, *manṭiq* and *nafsāniyyāt* (*Safīna*, 663-761), and 340 pages to *‘aqīda* and *kalām* (231-571).

97 On the other hand, Rāḡīb repeatedly cited directly from ‘Aḡud al-Dīn al-Ījī’s (d. 1355) *Mawāqif*, while the library inventory as well as the probate inventories contain only commentaries.

98 Muşṭafā ‘Ālī (d. 1600) does not seem to be directly influenced by the *Muqaddima* (Cornell H. Fleischer, “Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and ‘Ibn Khaldūnism’ in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Letters”, in *Ibn Khaldun and Islamic Ideology*, ed. B. B. Lawrence (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 45-64), but some passages were already quoted verbatim in Bostān’s *Süleymānnāme* dated 1542 (Petra K. Kappert, “Zur Charakteristik osmanischer historiographisch-narrativer Quellen des 16. Jahrhunderts”, in *XIX. Deutscher Orientalistentag vom 28. September bis 5. Oktober 1975 in Freiburg im Breisgau*, ed. W. Voigt (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1977), 1204-1209).

99 According to the Süleymaniye catalogues and the metasearch interfaces of Turkish manuscript libraries ([www.yazmalar.gov.tr](http://www.yazmalar.gov.tr) and <http://ktp.isam.org.tr/ktpgenel/fin-drecords.php>), there are more than 60 copies in Istanbul alone, almost half of them in Turkish translation.

and, following his lead, by the historian Muṣṭafā Na‘īmā.<sup>100</sup> *Safīnat al-Rāghib*, however, does not refer to the *Muqaddima* in matters of history or society, but in connection with prophethood, ethics and mysticism,<sup>101</sup> which probably means that Rāghib was not particularly interested in Ibn Khaldūn’s social theory, at least not in the context of the *Safīna*.

In the probate inventories, Ibn Khaldūn’s *Muqaddima* (not to mention the whole of *Kitāb al-‘ibar*) does not appear at all, except for one entry that may be deciphered as *Tārīḥ-i Ḥaldūn*.<sup>102</sup> This suspicious absence seems even more remarkable if we take into consideration that several officials seem to have been collectors of history books,<sup>103</sup> among them Na‘īmā’s history as well as several works by Kātib Çelebi. Rāghib Paşa obviously knew the *Muqaddima*, and his social peers had a good chance to be acquainted at least indirectly with Ibn Khaldūn’s thought, but their interests seem to have been different from what 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century historians may expect. It would be worthwhile to ascertain in the course of further research whether Ibn Khaldūn’s reception was less uniform than it has thus far been judged to be, while Kātib Çelebi, Na‘īmā and others might have belonged to a Khaldūnian “school” that was mainly interested in his social theory.

Bahā’ al-Dīn al-‘Āmilī’s already mentioned *Kashkūl*, containing a potpourri of Arabic and Persian poetry and prose on a variety of subjects, is quoted several times in *Safīnat al-Rāghib*.<sup>104</sup> Due to its purpose as a substitute or preparatory reading for salon conversation, the *Kashkūl* lacks an overarching organisational structure, topical or otherwise, a peculiarity it has in common with *Safīnat al-Rāghib*. Rāghib’s reference to the *Kashkūl* suggests a certain interest in Persian intellectual life, as Bahā’ al-Dīn al-‘Āmilī (d. 1621) was a prominent scholar and man of letters of Safavid Iran and one of Mullā Şadrā’s teachers.<sup>105</sup>

Given the impressive number of belles-lettres books listed in the *muhallefāt*

100 Bernard Lewis, “Ibn Khaldūn in Turkey”, in M. Sharon, *Studies in Islamic history and civilization in honour of Professor David Ayalon* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 527-530.

101 Rāghib Paşa possessed a copy of Ibn Khaldūn’s history (Süleymaniye Ktp, MS Ragıb Paşa 978).

102 BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12530.

103 For example, the *Tārīḥ-i Na‘īmā*, which draws on Ibn Khaldūn’s views to a certain extent, is listed in 18 inventories. Some pashas and bureaucrats were indeed collectors of history books, e. g. ‘Abdī-Paşazāde el-Ḥācc ‘Alī Paşa with at least 24 out of 104 book titles relating to history (BOA, D. BŞM. MHF 12563).

104 On ‘Āmilī and his *Kashkūl*, see Bosworth, *Bahā’ al-Dīn*, and Steward, “Bahā’ al-Dīn”.

105 Ibid., 11-15. Like several Shī‘ī scholars, ‘Āmilī migrated from Jabal ‘Āmil in Lebanon to Iran.

registers, it is striking that the *Kashkūl* does not appear there even once. According to Bosworth, 'Āmilī's book was well known in Iran and India, and perhaps in adjacent regions like Iraq or Baḥrayn, but did not gain much popularity in the central Arabic-speaking lands (and even less so further to the north and west) until it was printed for the first time in 1871.<sup>106</sup> This assumption seems to be corroborated by available library catalogues.<sup>107</sup> Rāġīb Paşa decided to donate not only one, but three copies of this book, which until then had been very rare in Istanbul, to his endowment library in an effort to make it accessible to a broader audience.<sup>108</sup>

Since Rāġīb Paşa is primarily remembered as a poet, it can safely be assumed that he was fully conversant in the Arabic, Turkish and Persian *adab* traditions, and his reading interest clearly included various theological and philosophical topics, but it is now also possible to ask which topics failed to attract his interest. His writings and library do not reveal much about a possible interest beyond the lands of Islam, but foreign sources do hint at a certain curiosity towards the greater world. According to the learned Italian cleric Gianbattista Toderini, who visited the *waqf* library around 1781, Rāġīb Paşa's library held translations of Western medical books,<sup>109</sup> and he had commissioned a translation of du Halde's

106 Bosworth, *Bahā' al-Dīn*, 21-2. Especially in Iran and in the Shī'ī tradition, several later authors modeled their work on the *Kashkūl*. However, Bahā' al-Dīn al-Āmilī was not totally forgotten in the 18th-century Ottoman Empire (see, e. g., Bosworth, *Bahā' al-Dīn*, 32, and Muḥammad Amīn al-'Umarī, *Manhal al-awliyā' wa-mashrab al-aşfiyā' min sādāt al-Mawşil al-ḥadbā'*, ed. Sa'īd al-Diwajī, 2 vols. (Mosul: Maṭba'at al-Jumhūriyya, 1967-68), vol. I, 241).

107 Apart from a large number of late 19th-century prints, few manuscripts west of Iran predated Rāġīb Paşa's time, and all of them were stored in libraries only established in the 18th century. An examination of these manuscripts could determine whether they were produced in the Ottoman Empire. This preliminary statement is made after consulting the catalogues of Süleymaniye library and ISAM's Türkiye Kütüphaneleri Veri Tabanı (<http://ktp.isam.org.tr>).

108 Two copies were written in the 17th century; the pasha probably brought both of them from Iran or Iraq (Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb Paşa 1181, fol. 372a and MS Ragīb Paşa 1183, fol. 491a). The third copy was finished in 1744 (MS Ragīb Paşa 1182, fol. 317a).

109 He claims to have been shown translated books of Thomas Sydenham and Hermann Boerhaave in Rāġīb Paşa's library (Gianbattista Toderini, *Letteratura Turchesca*, 2 vols. (Venice: Storti, 1787), vol. I, 150-1). Unfortunately, neither the catalogues nor surviving books seem to support this. Until Toderini's visit to the library in the early 1780s, few books had been added, which were listed in a distinct manner in the inventory Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragīb Paşa 4111.

*Déscription de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise*, which was never finished because of the sponsor's demise.<sup>110</sup>

The Scottish physician Patrick Russell, a long-time resident of Aleppo, proudly pointed to his conversations on geography and medicine with the *vālī* of the province (namely, Rāğīb Paşa), mentioning that the pasha showed him a silk map with familiar place names written in Arabic script.<sup>111</sup> On another occasion, Rāğīb showed Russell a manuscript copied by one of his daughters and praised her accomplishments in the field of Arabic literature,<sup>112</sup> indicating that he encouraged the girl's *adab* education.

Despite his many interests, certain fields of knowledge did escape Rāğīb's attention. For example, both of his teachers Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī and 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Dimashqī shared a passion for mathematical science, which is hardly reflected in Rāğīb's excerpts nor in his library and may have been considered to be of minor importance from a literary bureaucrat's point of view.<sup>113</sup> The pasha continued to disregard mathematical science in his literary exchange with the scholar Abū l-Ḥasan al-Tūnisī, who also wrote treatises on geometry and astronomy.<sup>114</sup>

Although there are no contemporary sources directly relating to Rāğīb Paşa's salon (*meclis*), we may presume that the pasha's household members, friends, clients and allies used to frequent these meetings. They would have done so for intellectual stimulus as much as for social and political reasons because the *meclis* provided them with an opportunity to meet the host as well as to build further useful contacts. It brought bureaucrats and scholars together to discuss *adab* topics as well as scholarly issues, thus forming a meeting place for provincial

<sup>110</sup> Toderini, *Letteratura*, vol. I, 146.

<sup>111</sup> Alexander Russell, *The natural history of Aleppo and parts adjacent...* (London: Robinson, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1794), vol. II, 110. Cf. Ariel Salzmänn, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire. Rival Paths to the Modern State* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 31-37 and Virginia Aksan "Ottoman Sources of Information on Europe in the Eighteenth Century", *Archivum Ottomanicum* 11 (1986), 5-16 (p. 14).

<sup>112</sup> Russell, *History*, vol. I, 249-50.

<sup>113</sup> For Ḥalabī's writings on mathematics and astronomy, see *Osmanlı Matematik Literatürü Tarihi*, 224-7, *GAL* II, 126, and Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Esad 1953; for 'Abd al-Laṭīf's writings on arithmetics, geometry, astronomy and chronology, see Murādī, *Silk*, vol. III, 132; *Osmanlı Matematik Literatürü Tarihi*, 194-7 and *Osmanlı Astronomi Literatürü Tarihi*, 2 vols., ed. E. İhsanoğlu (Istanbul: IRCICA, 1997), vol. I, 427-9.

<sup>114</sup> Jabartī, *Ajā'ib*, vol III, 203-4. Yet, mathematics and astronomy are not completely absent from Rāğīb's compilation: Rāğīb, *Safīna*, 767, 781-788 and 841-846.

bureaucrats,<sup>115</sup> for bureaucrats of the central administration,<sup>116</sup> and for high-ranking *‘ulamā’*.<sup>117</sup> As many of Rāġib Paşa’s associates have left written sources in their own right, it would be quite possible to further expand our knowledge of what they used to read.

For instance, the poet and later *şeyhülislām* Çelebizāde ‘Āşım İsmā‘il Efendi presented several books<sup>118</sup> to Rāġib Paşa, which are preserved in his library. ‘Āşım and Rāġib shared a commitment to *adab*<sup>119</sup> as well as an interest in intellectual trends in Persia. He annotated one of the two manuscripts of *Lisān al-khawāşş*<sup>120</sup> on terminological and numerological aspects of religious disciplines, which is mentioned in *Safīnat al-Rāġhib* and extant in the Rāġib Paşa library.<sup>121</sup> On another occasion, ‘Āşım asked a certain Nu‘mān Efendi, who procured one of these two manuscripts, to find another book for him in Baghdad, namely *Hikmat-i gawhar-i murād*<sup>122</sup> on ontology, prophethood, the imamate and the hereafter by the already mentioned ‘Abd ar-Razzāq Lāhījī. While curiosity about Western

115 For instance, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Nihālī and Yūsuf al-Jābirī from Aleppo.

116 E. g., Rāġib’s clients Kāşif Meḥmed Emīn, Ḥaṭībzāde Dāniş Aḥmed, and İbrāhīm Münīb. Among Rāġib Paşa’s influential associates in the bureaucracy was Aḥmed Resmī, a client and son-in-law of Rāġib’s erstwhile ally *re’isülküttāb* el-Ḥācc Muşṭafā (for Resmī, see Virginia Aksan, *An Ottoman statesman in war and peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi, 1700-1783* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

117 Apart from İbrāhīm al-Ḥalabī, *‘ulamā’* participants in the salon would have been Mollācıķzāde İşḥāk, Vaşşāf ‘Abdullāh and his son Vaşşāfzāde Meḥmed Es‘ad, the satirist poet ‘Abbāszāde Ḥaşmet Meḥmed and Çelebizāde İsmā‘il ‘Āşım. Zübeyde Fıṭnat Ḥānım, daughter of a *şeyhülislām*, is famous for her poetic exchanges with Rāġib Paşa. The personal contacts listed here and in the preceding notes are of course far from exhaustive (cf. Sievert, *Provinz*).

118 The following is an incomplete list of manuscripts presented by ‘Āşım: Süleymaniye Ktp., Raġib Paşa 1221, 162, 806, 827, 1217 and 1218. Cf. ‘Āşım, *Münşe‘āt*, 60.

119 He authored the court chronicle *Tāriḥ-i Çelebizāde*, a collection of exemplary letters (*münşe‘āt*), poetry assembled in a *divan*, as well as translations of the world history *Ḥabīb al-siyar* and the travel account *Ajā‘ib al-laṭā‘if* (both from Persian to Turkish). Besides, ‘Āşım composed several artfully written letters to Rāġib Paşa that are preserved in his *Münşe‘āt*.

120 For *Lisān al-khawāşş fi dhikr ma‘āni al-alfāz al-iştilāḥiyya li-l-‘ulamā’* by Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan Aqā Rizā Qazvīnī (d. 1096/1684), see Aqā Buzurg al-Ṭahrānī, *al-Dharī‘a ilā taşānīf al-Shī‘a*, 26 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-adwā, 1983-1986), vol. XVIII, 302-4.

121 Rāġib, *Safīna*, 188-191. The two manuscripts are Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Raġib Paşa 805 and 806.

122 Çelebizāde ‘Āşım İsmā‘il, *Münşe‘āt-ı ‘Āşım*, [Istanbul:] Luṭfullāh, 1286/1869, 219. The precise title asked for is *Majma‘-i bahrayn-i taşavvuf va hikmat-i gawhar-i murād*,

Europe seems to have been rising among 18th century Ottoman bureaucrats, there are indications of a serious interest in Persian thought as well, at least as far as Râğıb Paşa, Çelebizâde Âşım and possibly more people belonging to their intellectual milieu are concerned. A closer study of their readings and interrelations would reveal whether they formed an intellectual circle with a distinct profile of interests.

### Conclusion

Most of the books commonly owned by bureaucrats were present in Râğıb Paşa's library, which is not surprising for standard works, but due to their divergent purposes, private libraries are not easily compared with public libraries. To track individual fields of interest represented in a private book collection, it is more appropriate to compare them with an excerpt collection intended as a "one-volume library". In *Safinat al-Râğhib*, speculative theology, philosophy, dogma and metaphysics figure prominently, quite in contrast to bureaucrats' private collections, which would typically be dominated by *adab* books (especially belles lettres and history) as well as books of piety. However, other fields of knowledge typically of special interest to scholars, like jurisprudence and *hadith*, appear in the *Safina* only in theological or philosophical contexts, or even for providing curiosities. While topics that had enjoyed importance in earlier times or that modern scholars might expect are absent, unexpected topics emerge that Râğıb Paşa introduced to the attendees of his *meclis*, as in the case of 'Âmilî's *Kashkûl* and the writings of Mullâ Şadrâ.

Râğıb Paşa's level of erudition was certainly unusual, but many bureaucrats strove to emulate him well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, at least as far as *adab* is concerned.<sup>123</sup> He should therefore not be regarded as a typical bureaucrat, but as a model Ottoman "gentleman" with some unusual areas of scholarly interest. Comparing his collection of excerpts and his private book collection with books owned by other bureaucrats and pashas provides hints at what may have been discussed in his *meclis*. This salon would seem to have connected literary with certain philosophical-theological interests, with a special emphasis on Persian intellectual life (including a continuous admiration for Persian poetry). It seems

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which may indicate just the same book or a commentary on it, or perhaps two books, the first one being an unknown book on sufism.

123 Recep Ahışalı, *Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilatında Reisülküttâblık (XVIII. Yüzyıl)* (Istanbul: TATAV, 2001), 15-17; Şeyh Galip, *Hüsn ü Aşk*, transcr., comm. V. R. Holbrook (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2005), 74; Aksan, *Statesman*, 1995, 7.

that some influential mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman literati were looking to the East at least as much as to the West.

However, a thorough study of the *Safina* and of Râğib's poetry, as well as a scholarly catalogue of his library would be prerequisites for drawing a complete picture. Assuming that topics included in literary, or scholarly, collections of excerpts correspond to topics discussed in the salon conversation of a *meclis*, a study of *mecmû'as* in combination with privately-owned manuscripts and probate inventories would allow for at least some eavesdropping on other Ottoman salons.

*Eavesdropping On the Pasha's Salon: Usual and Unusual Readings of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Bureaucrat*

Abstract ■ This contribution traces the intellectual activities and reading interests of 18<sup>th</sup>-century bureaucrats and high-ranking administrators as represented by a collection of excerpts, an endowment library, and books listed in probate inventories. The findings are compared in order to determine whether the intellectual and reading interests of an influential individual, namely Râğib Paşa (d. 1763), were unusual within his social group.

Keywords: 18<sup>th</sup> century, intellectual history, bureaucrats, *ķalemīye*, reading, education, Iran, Ragib Pasa

## Appendix

### 1. Books prominently cited in *Safīnat al-Rāghib*

Title	Safīnat al-Rāghib, pages	Library catalogue number (1764)	Probate inventories listing the title
Ibn Nujaym, <i>al-Ashbāh wa-l-naẓā'ir</i>	370, 862	448	9
Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī, <i>Risāla fī khalq af'āl al-'ibād</i>	303-5, 703	769	0
Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, <i>al-Maṭālib al-'āliya</i>	247-9, 301-2, 365-7, 374, 385-6, 640-2, 706-7, 734-737, 760-1, 788-9	810	1
Ibn al-'Arabī, <i>al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya</i>	273-4, 631-2, 731, 833	704	2
Firūzabādī, <i>al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ</i>	179, 188, 300, 505, 551, 848, 863	1426, 1427, 1428	7
Ibn al-'Arabī, <i>Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam</i>	273, 630	1453/4	9
Kāshānī, <i>al-Tambid fī bayān al-tawḥid</i>	265, 368-9	726	0
Ibn Ḥazm, <i>Kitāb al-Fiṣal fī l-mīlal wa-l-niḥal</i>	353, 398, 403, 414, 582, 589	815, 816	3
Ghazālī, <i>Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn</i>	128, 259, 328, 378, 546, 604-5, 637, 719	645	4
Mīr Ḥusayn Maybudī, <i>Sharḥ Diwān 'Alī</i>	619, 761	-	0
Abhari's <i>Hidāyat al-ḥikma</i>	486, 619	_124	7
Saçaklızāde Meḥmed Mar'aşı, <i>Nasr al-Ṭawālī'</i>	429-554	818	1
Mīr Dāmād Astarābādī, <i>al-Qabasāt</i>	305	-	0
'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhījī, [ <i>Risāla</i> ]	273	-	0
Mullā Ṣadrā, <i>al-Asfār al-arba'a</i>	333-9	_125	0
Mullā Ṣadrā, <i>al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyya</i>	339	867, 868	0
Ibn Khaldūn, <i>al-Muqaddima (K. al-'Ibar)</i>	191-4, 218-24, 602-12, 829-33	978	(1?) <sup>126</sup>

<sup>124</sup> Commentaries on *Hidāyat al-ḥikma* by Mullā Ṣadrā (Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragıb Paşa 862), Mīr Ḥusayn Maybudī (MS Ragıb Paşa 863, 864), and al-Quṭb al-Gilānī (MS Ragıb Paşa 1295).

<sup>125</sup> According to the first inventory Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Ragıb Paşa 4111, fol. 26a, Rāghib Paşa donated a two-volume copy of *al-Asfār al-arba'a* to his library, but it no longer appears in the library catalogue of 1892.

<sup>126</sup> The entry might be read as *Tārīḥ-i Ḥaldūn*.

Bahā' al-Dīn al-ʿĀmilī, <i>al-Kashkūl li-khāṭimat al-udabā' wa-ka'bat al-zurafā'</i>	19, 44, 207, 227, 595, 671-3, 763, 825, 862-3	1181, 1182, 1183	0
Aḥmad b. Yahyā al-Taftazānī, <i>Majmū'at al-Hafīd</i>	18, 32, 82, 130, 269, 302, 370	1488	0
Abū l-Baqā' al-Kafawī (Kefevī), <i>Kulliyāt al-Kafawī</i>	23-33, 37-8, 183-4, 187-9, 239-40, 261-2, 291-2, 340-8, 351-3, 449-51, 578, 676-7, 671-2, 712-3	1432, 1433, 1434, 1435	3 <sup>127</sup>
Jalāl al-Dīn Davānī, <i>Risālat al-Zawā'ir</i>	644-60	1460/25, 1478/10-12	1
Ījī, <i>al-Mawāqif</i>	207, 229, 272-7, 439, 449-51, 456, 462-6, 475, 479-99, 505-6, 514-7, 521-38, 542, 546-7, 553, 672, 700, 720, 777	several commentaries	several commentaries

## 2. Categories of books donated by Rāḡīb Paşa to his library endowment

Category according to inventory	Number of titles	Ratio (%)
exegesis ( <i>tafsīr</i> )	143	13,1
jurisprudence ( <i>fiqh</i> )	143	13,1
belles lettres ( <i>adab</i> )	121	11,1
theology ( <i>'aqā'id, kalām</i> )	114	10,4
philosophy, mathematics ( <i>ḥikma, manṭiq, handasa, hay'a, ḥisāb</i> )	101	9,2
Islamic tradition ( <i>ḥadīth</i> )	86	7,9
grammar ( <i>naḥw, ṣarf</i> )	83	7,6
history, biography ( <i>siyar, tārikh</i> )	79	7,2
principles of law ( <i>uṣūl al-fiqh</i> )	72	6,6
mysticism ( <i>taṣawwuf</i> )	48	4,4
rhetoric ( <i>ma'ānī, bayān</i> )	43	3,9
dictionaries ( <i>lugha</i> )	38	3,5
medicine ( <i>ṭibb</i> )	22	2,0
Qur'ān copies ( <i>maṣāḥif</i> )	2	0,2
total	1095	100

<sup>127</sup> Listed as *Tā'likāt-ı Kefevī*.

3. Books listed in Shaykh ‘Abd al-Laṭīf’s *ijāza* to Rāġib Paşa

Author and book title	Ijāza	Manuscripts in library (1764), catalogue number	Safinat al-Rāġhib, pages	Probate inventories listing the title
Bukhārī, <i>Ṣaḥīḥ</i>	fol. 20a	335	-	13
Muslim, <i>Ṣaḥīḥ</i>	fol. 20b	339-340	-	2
Abū Dāwūd, <i>Sunan</i>	fol. 21a	-	-	1
Tirmidhī, <i>Jāmi‘</i>	fol. 21b	-	-	1
Nasā‘ī, <i>Sunan</i>	fol. 21b	-	-	1
Ibn Māja, <i>Sunan</i>	fol. 22a	259	-	2
Mālik b. Anaṣ, <i>Muwatta‘a</i>	fol. 22a	357	10, 118, 375	1
Qādī ‘Iyād al-Yaḥṣūbī, <i>al-Shifā‘ fī ta’rif ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā</i>	fol. 22b	329-331	-	19
al-Ḥusayn b. Mas‘ūd al-Baghawī, <i>Maṣābiḥ</i>	fol. 22b	335	-	2
al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrizī, <i>Mishkāt</i>	fol. 23a	[354] <sup>128</sup>	-	0
Ṣafā‘ī, <i>Mashāriq</i>	fol. 23a	-	-	0
Suyūṭī, <i>al-Jāmi‘ al-ṣaġbir</i>	fol. 23b	254	120, 725	1
Nawawī, <i>al-Adhkār</i>	fol. 23b	-	-	3
Bayḍāwī, <i>Tafsīr</i>	fol. 24a	66	84-5, 91-2, 163, 260, 271, 284, 369, 644, 695	7
Abū l-Su‘ūd, <i>Tafsīr</i>	fol. 24a	55	87	2
Qaṣṭallānī, <i>Sharḥ al-Bukhārī</i>	fol. 24a	291-293	-	2
Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, <i>Sharḥ al-Bukhārī</i>	fol. 24a	-	-	0
Ghazālī, <i>Kitāb al-ihyā‘</i>	fol. 24a	645	128, 259, 328, 378, 546, 604-5, 637, 719	4
Ghazālī, <i>Mishkāt al-anwār</i>	fol. 24a	-	63, 693	2
Ibn al-‘Arabī, <i>al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya</i>	fol. 24b	704-705	273-4, 632, 728-731, 833	2
Firūzabādī, <i>al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ</i>	fol. 25b	1426-1428	179, 188, 300, 505, 551, 848, 863	7

<sup>128</sup> Not listed in Süleymaniye Ktp., MS Raġib Paşa 4111 and therefore probably acquired after Rāġib’s death.

Ibn al-Athîr, <i>al-Nihâya</i>	fol. 25b	359	19, 303	3
Büşîri, <i>al-Hamziyya</i>	fol. 25b	-	-	0
Jazûli, <i>Dalâ'il al-khayrât</i>	fol. 25b	255	105-6	11
Shâdhîli, <i>Hizb al-baḥr</i>	fol. 25b	-	-	0
'Abd al-Salâm al-Mashîsh, <i>Şiḡbat al-şalât</i>	fol. 25b	-	-	0
Suhrawardî, <i>al-Arba'ûn al-idrîsiyya</i>	fol. 25b	-	-	0

#### 4. Selected probate inventories (*muhallefât defterleri*)

D. BŞM. MHF	Name of the deceased	year AD	number of book titles
50/64	el-Ḥâcc Meḥmed Kudsî Efendi	1765	288 <sup>129</sup>
50/51, 12710, 12718, 12719	Bâhir Muştafâ Paşa	1765	13
12395	Dâmâd 'Alî Paşa	1716	55
12408	Ḥasan Paşa	1724	25
12416	Ḥasan Ağa	1729	15
12418	Meḥmed Paşa	1729	97
12449	'Alî Paşa	1736	132
12455	'Abdullâh Paşa	1735	23
12459	İsmâ'il Paşa	1735	3
12460	Süleymân Ağa	n. d.	71
12493	'Oşmân-Paşazâde Meḥmed Paşa	1738	3
12494	'Âtıf Muştafâ Efendi	1741	3452 <sup>130</sup>
12512	'Abdullâh Paşa	n. d.	95
12530	Yeğen Efendi	1756	305
12535	La'li el-Ḥâcc Muştafâ Efendi	1741	78
12541	el-Ḥâcc Aḥmed Paşa	1742	47 <sup>131</sup>
12563	'Abdi-Paşazâde el-Ḥâcc 'Alî Paşa	1744	104
12586	Meḥmed Paşa	1750	17

129 Fifty-three titles of 235 volumes mentioned.

130 Only three titles listed, while 3449 volumes destined for 'Âtıf Efendi's endowment library are mentioned summarily.

131 Only four titles out of 43 volumes listed explicitly.

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12606	'Abdurrahmān Paşa	1752	87
12609	İsmā'il Paşa	1753	3
12619	Ḥasan Ağa	1755	124
12624	el-Ḥācc 'Abdi Efendi	1767	68
12641	Nu'mān Paşa	1756	33
12646	Köprilizāde 'Abdullāh Paşa	1735	121
12650	'Abdullāh Paşa	1750	107
12664	Dıvoğlu el-Ḥācc Muştafā	1757	11
12669	Yeğen 'Alī Paşa	1756	31
12675	Aḥmed Paşa	n. d.	509
12678	Ḥasan Şāh Efendi	1759	104
12684	Ḥalīmi Muştafā Paşa	1760	42
12694	Şehsuvārzāde Muştafā Paşa	1763	143
12702, 12707	Derviş Meḥmed Efendi	1764	72
12703, 12713	Kāmil Aḥmed Paşa	1763	223
12714, 12715	Ḥalīl Efendi	1765	147
12811, 12817	el-Ḥācc Ḥalīl Paşa	1775	105
12887	Meḥmed Ḥayrī Efendi	1783	6

5. Books most commonly owned by bureaucrats and pashas (listed in six or more registers)

Title	Probate inventories listing the title	Library catalogue number (1764)	Safinat al-Rāghib, pages
<i>Muḥḥaf</i>	20	1-2	various
<i>Kitāb al-Shifā'</i> <sup>132</sup>	18 sharḥ: 1	329-331	-
<i>al-An'ām</i>	16	-	-
<i>Tārīḥ-i Na'imā</i>	16	996	-

<sup>132</sup> Although in most cases identified as Qādī 'Iyād's *al-Shifā' fi ḥuqūq al-Muştafā*, on the muslim's obligations towards the prophet Muḥammad (*Şifā'-ı şerīf*), several book titles contain the word *shifā'*, to be sure, most prominently Ibn Sīnā's philosophical encyclopedia *K. al-Shifā' (Sufficiencia)*.

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<i>Tārīḥ-i Peçevî</i>	14	-	-
<i>Şaḫīḥ al-Bukhārī</i>	13	335 <i>sharḥ</i> : 285-93, 295, 297-300	113 (commentaries)
<i>Meşnevî</i>	13	1201	-
<i>Yūsuf wa-Zulaykhā</i>	12	-	-
<i>Dalā'il al-khayrāt</i>	11 <i>sharḥ</i> : 7	several added after 1764	-
<i>Tārīḥ-i Rāşid</i>	11	992	-
<i>Cibānnümā</i>	11	1061-62	-
<i>Aḫlāk-ı 'Alā'i</i>	11	966	-
<i>Durar al-ḥukkām</i>	11	-	-
<i>al-Asbbāḥ wa-l-naẓā'ir</i>	10	445-48	370, 862
<i>Jāmī</i>	10	several works ascribed to him	568 (R. kalimat al- tawḥīd)
<i>Gulistān</i>	9 <i>sharḥ</i> : 5	after 1764	-
<i>Multaqā l-abḫur</i>	9 <i>sharḥ</i> : 3	593 <i>sharḥ</i> : 528, 533-34	-
<i>Tārīḥ-i Ḥoca Sa'deddin</i>	9	after 1764	-
<i>Ḥāfız</i>	7 <i>sharḥ</i> : 5	after 1764 <i>sharḥ</i> : in 1478 ( <i>mecmū'a</i> )	-
<i>Qāmūs</i>	7	1426-28	179, 188, 300, 505, 551, 848, 863
<i>Baydāwī</i>	7	66	84-5, 91-2, 163, 260, 271, 284, 369, 644, 695
<i>Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī</i>	6 <i>sharḥ</i> : 3	1209 -	- <i>sharḥ</i> : 226
<i>Dīwān al-Mutanabbī</i>	6 <i>sharḥ</i> : 3	1111-12 <i>sharḥ</i> : 1134-35, 1169	-
<i>Nābī</i>	6 <i>sharḥ</i> : 3	1113 <i>sharḥ</i> : after 1764	-
<i>Nizāmī</i>	6	1094 ( <i>Khamsa</i> )	-
<i>Hümāyünnāme</i>	6	1221	-

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