

THE DREAM OF A 17TH CENTURY OTTOMAN INTELLECTUAL: VEYSİ AND HIS
HABNAME

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Submitted to the Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Sabancı University
Spring 2008

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DATE OF APPROVAL: 06 / 08 / 2008

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ABSTRACT

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History, M.A. thesis, Spring 2008

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This thesis endeavors to present a literary-historical analysis of a seventeenth century work of prose, *Habnâme*, which was written by one of the prominent literary figures of his time, Veysî. He was born in Alaşehir in 1561/2, and died in 1628 in Skopje. Having been enrolled in *medrese* education, he worked as a *kadı* in various locations in both Anatolia and Rumeli including Alaşehir, Tire, Serez and Skopje. He is, however, better known for his literary abilities, and respected by both contemporary biographers and modern scholars as one of the leading figures of Ottoman ornamental prose.

In his *Habnâme*, Veysî constructs a dream setting, in which the Alexander the Two-Horned has a conversation with Ahmed I regarding Ahmed's concerns of the abuses in state apparatus. It is, thus, considered as an example of the Ottoman mirror for princes genre. Yet the text has some considerable deviations from other treatises, for it a) unequivocally fictionalizes the content through 'dream' fashion, b) contravenes the "Golden Age" rhetoric by making Alexander the Great say that abuses were not peculiar to Ahmed's reign, they have been always there from the beginning. With this regard, the text serves as a consolation rather than a counsel.

Habnâme of Veysî is equally important for its special literary quality of using dream as a frame for the narrative. While attempting to understand his choice, various dimensions should be taken into consideration. Firstly, Veysî's possible familiarity with Islamic dream paradigms needs to be explained. Furthermore, the layers of correspondences between Veysî's *Habnâme* and alike pieces from subsequent periods such as the works of Haşmetî, Ziya Paşa, Namık Kemal or Ruşenî should be emphasized.

With all these regards, the following study aims to:

1) question the position of *Habnâme* of Veysî within the Ottoman mirror for princes literature through exploring the intertextuality between *Habnâme* and contemporary mirrors by taking into consideration the literary ecology (i.e. the audience, reception, authorial intentions) and/or political-cultural context in which the text was produced,

2) contextualize the text within a broader plane of Islamic dream lore in order to answer "Why might Veysî have created such a dream setting?" and/or "In what ways did this dream apparatus enable him in expressing his views?",

3) through benefiting from the debates on the dream-vision genre of medieval European literature, to scrutinize the continuity within the tradition of composing dream-framed accounts in the Ottoman literature, and hereby question the validity of a new literary genre.

ÖZET

17. YY'DAN BİR OSMANLI ENTELEKTÜELİNİN RÜYASI: VEYSÎ VE HABNAME İSİMLİ ESERİ

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Tarih, Master Tezi, Bahar 2008

Tez Danışmanı: Y. Hakan Erdem

Bu tez, 17. yüzyılda, döneminin önemli edebî figürlerinden biri olan Veysî tarafından yazılmış *Habnâme* isimli eserin edebî-tarihsel analizini yapmaya çalışmaktadır. 1561/2'de Alaşehir'de doğup 1628'de Üsküp'te ölen Veysî, medrese eğitimini tamamladıktan sonra Alaşehir, Tire, Serez ve Üsküp gibi Anadolu ve Rumeli'nin çeşitli bölgelerinde kadılık yaptı. Ne var ki Veysî daha ziyade edebî yetenekleriyle ün kazanmıştır. Gerek döneminin biyografi yazarları gerekse günümüz edebiyat tarihçileri, Veysî'nin Osmanlı süslü nesrinin önde gelen temsilcilerinden biri olduğu konusunda hemfikirdir.

Veysî, *Habnâme* adlı eserinde, rûyasında görmüşçesine İskender-i Zülkarneyn ile Sultan I. Ahmed'i, devlet düzeninde görülen ve sultana kaygı veren suistimaller hakkında konuşur. Bu politik içeriği nedeniyle, metin, Osmanlı nasihat literatürünün bir örneği olarak kabul edilmektedir. Yine de *Habnâme*'yi döneminde yazılmış risalelerden, i) rûya formu vesilesiyle anlatisını açıkça kurgusallaştırdığı, ve ii) İskender'e, suistimallerin yalnızca Ahmed'in dönemine özgü olmayıp tarihin başından beri görüldüğünü söyleterek yaygın "Altın Çağ" söylemine itiraz ettiği için ayırmak gerekir.

Siyasi içeriğinin yanı sıra, anlatıya özgünlük kazandıran 'rûya' çerçevesi hasebiyle de *Habnâme* incelenmeye değer bir metindir. Veysî'nin böyle bir stratejiye başvurmasındaki saikleri anlamak, çeşitli bağlamların incelenmesini gerektirir. Öncelikle Veysî'nin İslamî rûya teorileriyle olan olası yakınlığı ortaya konmalıdır. Bunun dışında, *Habnâme* ile sonraki dönemlerde Haşmetî, Ziya Paşa, Namık Kemal ve Ruşenî tarafından yazılmış benzer metinler arasındaki benzerlik/farklılıklar tahlil edilmedi.

Bütün bunların ışığında, bu çalışmanın başlıca amaçları:

1) Metnin üretildiği ve tüketildiği edebî çevre ile siyasî-kültürel bağlamı ortaya koyarak *Habnâme*'yi döneminde yazılmış diğer siyasi metinlerle karşılaştırmalı bir okumaya tabii tutarak, *Habnâme*'nin Osmanlı nasihat literatürü içindeki yerini sorgulamak,

2) Veysî'nin böyle bir rûya anlatisını neden kurgulamış olabileceği ve bu rûya aracının, Veysî'ye, düşüncelerini ifade etme hususunda ne gibi olanaklar tanıdığı sorularına cevap verebilmek adına *Habnâme*'yi daha geniş bir İslamî rûya literatürü içine yerleştirmek,

3) Osmanlı edebiyatında, benzer diğer eserler üzerinden tesbit edilebilen rûya formu geleneğini, ortaçağ Avrupa edebiyatındaki rûya-görülerini türü tartışmalarından da faydalanarak inceleyip yeni bir edebî tür tanımlamanın mümkün olup olmadığını cevaplamaktır.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I cannot express my deep gratitude enough to my thesis supervisor Y.Hakan Erdem, who has always encouraged us to study *adjaib & garaibs* of the Ottoman history. Without his inspiration, attention, and care, this thesis could not be written. I would like to particularly thank to Hülya Canbakal and Hülya Adak for the interest they showed in my work and their comments that enriched my thoughts. I am grateful to Halil Berktaş not only for his critical touch that enabled me to entirely concentrate in writing this thesis, but also his being a role model with his never-ending appetite for learning. I am also thankful to the whole history faculty for everything they taught during both my undergraduate and graduate years at the Sabancı University.

I am indebted to the generosity of Baki Tezcan, Emel Akal, Jonathan G. Katz and Tülay Artan who kindly shared their unpublished papers with me. During the research process, I have found a chance to receive invaluable comments from several scholars. Here I would like to thank Aslı Niyazioğlu, Cem Akaş, Derin Terzioğlu, Gottfried Hagen, Günhan Börekçi and Zehra Toska.

I would also like to specially thank to Hasan Karataş not only for teaching me Ottoman and helping me in deciphering the texts, but also his friendship. Along with him, Aykut Mustak, Emre Erol, Mehmet Kuru and Sinan Ciddi have shared with me all the ups and downs of this process. I am thankful to each of them for creating a hospitable environment, which was a real savior in desperate times.

Many thanks to the librarians in the Information Center at the Sabancı University, especially to Mehmet Manyas, who kindly and quickly provided my demands of interlibrary loan. I must also express my gratitude to TÜBİTAK that financially supported me during the last two years.

My family, who was patient with my murky and negligent mood, deserves much more than my humble remarks. They have always backed me with their endless love.

Finally, it has been a big pleasure to share each and every moment of not only this short-lived thesis process but also my entire life with my precious Sümeyye.

Hayatımı güzelleştiren Annem, Babam, Tuba, Tuğgen, Ferruh, Ali, Sümeyye, Nehir, ve dünyaya gelmeye hazırlanan Ege'ye, beraber yaşanacak nice güzelliklerin ümidiyle...

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INTRODUCTION

“The world has long recognized the importance of dreams and the role they play in anticipating the fates of countries and of people who govern them ... Our imperial state is the first in the history of the whole world to have institutionalized the interpretation of dreams and so to have brought it to such a high degree of perfection The idea behind the Sovereign’s creation of the *Tabir* is that Allah looses a forewarning dream on the world as casually as He unleashes a flash of lightning or draws a rainbow or suddenly sends a comet close to us, drawn from the mysterious depths of the Universe. He dispatches a signal to the earth without bothering about where it will land; He is too far away to be concerned with such details. It is up to us to find out where the dream has come to earth - to flush it out from among millions, billions others, as none might look for a pearl lost in the desert. For the interpretation of that dream, fallen like a stray spar into the brain of one out of millions of sleepers, may help to save the country or its sovereign from disaster; may help to avert war or plague or to create new ideas. So the Palace of Dreams is no mere whim or fancy; it is one of the pillars of the State. It is here, better than in any surveys, statements, or reports compiled by inspectors, policemen or governors of *pashaliks*, that the true state of the Empire may be assessed. For in the nocturnal realm of sleep are to be found both the light and the darkness of humanity, its honey and its poison, its greatness and its vulnerability ... It was for that reason that the Padishah decreed that no dream, not even one dreamed in the remotest part of the Empire on the most ordinary day by the most godforsaken creature, must fail to be examined by the *Tabir Sarraïl*.”¹

These sentences are from the book of the venerable Albanian writer, Ismail Kadare, “The Palace of Dreams.” The book in question is a satirical story of totalitarianism under whose rule the most, and maybe the only, independent sphere of human imagination, their dreams, were controlled. This is likely due to this satire and harsh criticism that Kadare’s book was banned when it first appeared in Albania. Beside its Orwellian dystopian atmosphere and the sharp judgments against totalitarian regimes, Kadare’s work is striking, for especially the Ottomanists, in terms of the setting of its plot. In “The Palace of Dreams”, the Ottoman Empire is chosen as the framing environment, in the centre of which the Dream Palace [*Tabir Sarraïl*] that collects all dreams from even the remotest part of the empire in order to interpret them has been erected.

It was possibly the case that Ismail Kadare chose the Ottoman Empire as the setting of his novel not because of his awareness pertaining to the tremendous interest shown toward

¹ Ismail Kadare, *The Palace of Dreams*, tr. from the French of *Jusuf Vrioni* by Barbara Bray, (London: Harvill Press, 1993), pp.18-20.

dreams in the Ottoman realm, but rather because of the symbolism the Ottoman Empire could provide as an authoritarian/totalitarian regime. We do and cannot know what insights Kadare might have had regarding the historical facts of the Ottoman Empire, but it would have been somewhat surprising for him if he had learned that there were signs of such a *Tabir Sarrail* once actually existed in the Ottoman Empire. Albeit exaggerated, these signs come from the hitherto unnoticed remarks within the Ottoman archival materials.

The seeds of this insight were first implanted with a quick search in the web site of the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, when the system found more than thirty results as to reveal that certain people with certain expectations had sent their dreams to the capital. Interspersed in diverse catalogues and a wide time span, the earliest document was from the eighteenth century, in which the dream of a certain Mehmed Edhemzâde from Niğbolu who saw the conquests of various castles in Balkans, is narrated as a harbinger of further auspicious events.² In most instances, these dream narratives are of glad tidings concluded by the dreamer's expression of his or her wish from the sultan as a reward for what he or she heralded. To some extent, these wishes seem to have been realized. In, for instance, one of these documents related with a certain Şerife Ayşe Hatun, a note is placed at the top of the document showing the imperial order to gift the woman with eight *akçes*.³

I do not intend to go too far by suggesting here that one can speak of an 'economy of dreams' prevalent in the Ottoman Empire. As argued in quite a different context by Selim Deringil, such kinds of transactions were most probably a means for the sultan to show his munificence and to secure the distribution of wealth.⁴ However, it should not be denied that dreams had an exceptional status in the cultural, political, and intellectual history of the Ottoman Empire. This is in fact a trite remark, since all the specialists and amateurs interested in the Ottoman Empire know very well that the entire story of the Ottoman Empire began with the dream of Osman. But sometimes, the issue that is supposed to be well-known

² BOA, C.Askeriye, # 501/20932 dated cemâzîyü'l-evvel 1150/1737.

³ BOA, C.Dahiliye, # 142/7081 dated cemâzîyü'l-ahir 1152/1739. Similar dream stories before the nineteenth century can be found in Cevdet and Hat collections. By the reign of Abdülhamid dream stories, which are greater in number, can be extracted from the archives of the Yıldız Palace, especially the collection of espionage reports.

⁴ Deringil states that in the reign of Abdülhamid, the interest shown in *holy relics* as a part of Abdülhamid's attempt to secure the legitimation of his authority led to a sudden increase in the numbers of similar materials allegedly found and sent by the people to the palace. All those people were, however, received symbolic amount of gifts no matter how dubious was the authenticity of their findings. See: Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909*, (London; New York: I.B.Tauris, 1998), p.39.

can be the most ignored and the least studied. The fate of dreams in the history of the Ottoman Empire is an exact representation of such a dilemma.

The aim of this thesis is not to explore in the dream worlds of the Ottomans through examining the archival sources in question. Highly alluring though, these documents do not establish a firm ground upon which a coherent and feasible analysis can depend, for they are mostly fragmentary in nature and cannot reflect anything beyond the story of dream itself. Moreover, it is nearly impossible to recover the lives of ordinary people like Mehmed Edhemzâde or Ayşe Şerife Hatun mentioned above. Therefore, an interpretation relying merely on these short dream stories would inevitably be self-referential and lacking necessary contextualization.

With my preoccupation with dreams, I met in various articles and studies with the name of a single literary work: *Habnâme* written in the early seventeenth century by one of the most prominent writers of his time named Veysî. I first encountered this text while reading Orhan Şaik Gökyay's preliminary article on dreams in the Ottoman Empire.⁵ He introduced *Habnâme* as a unique account bearing both literary and political aspects *per se*. Gökyay's point is accurate, since the text has been addressed with diverse emphases in various sources and studies. While in the compilations on the history of Ottoman literature or separate studies and articles on Veysî⁶, the names of Veysî and the *Habnâme* have been underlined for their literary qualities; those studies devoted to the early modern Ottoman political thought have identified the text as one of the representatives of the *nasihatnâme* genre.⁷ In that regard, *Habnâme* of Veysî stands at the crossroads of several perspectives, all of which merit attention in contextualizing the text and his author.

This study, which aims to present a literary-historical analysis of Veysî's *Habnâme*, is largely influenced by the recent approaches of cultural and intellectual history that call for the return of the 'text' into the centre of historical studies. Since 1980s, history is under the attack of postmodernism, which has tried to demystify the historians' fundamental assumptions and beliefs such as objectivity, scientificity and truth seeking. Although 'history' and 'post-modernism' sounds rather oxymoron, it cannot be denied that post-modernist insights have also positively affected historians to check their seated convictions, to ask new questions and

⁵ Orhan Şaik Gökyay, "Rüyalar Üzerine", *II. Milletlerarası Türk Folklor Kongresi Bildirileri, IV.Cilt: Gelenek Görenek İnançlar*, 1983, pp.183-208.

⁶ For the full account of these studies, see: chapter II, footnotes 71-72.

⁷ For the list of concerning literature, see: chapter I, footnote 17.

to open up new avenues.⁸ Owing mostly to the postmodernist critiques, last two decades have witnessed a rapprochement between especially history and literary criticism, since in both disciplines, ‘texts’ are, at the basic level, used as the chief subject matter. In this sense, the studies on ‘(historical) narratives’, which were once eclipsed by the hegemony of documentary materials as if these documents were not texts, resurfaced again within the discipline of history.

Re-burgeoning of the interest in the narrative sources, however, is rather different from the way these sources were used before. Historians became quite aware of the fact that, these texts are not ready mines of information to be used for reconstructing the past as it really happened. Since each text is bounded by several framing units including the entire social, political, economic, cultural, and personal contexts within which it was produced and consumed, all these aspects require to be paid attention. This is in fact not only fruitful for a more accurate comprehension of the meaning(s) of a particular text, but is also, and more importantly, fructuous for understanding and reconstructing the historical environment in question.

With respect to the scholarship on the history of the Ottoman Empire, the repercussions of this sea change can easily be discerned. Cornell Fleischer’s seminal study on the historian Mustafa Âlî is one important example.⁹ As expressed by its author in the preface section, through a scrutiny of Âlî’s oeuvre accompanied with an inspection of the overall historical context in which he wrote, Fleischer’s work aims to add “the human and intellectual flesh that gives coherence and meaning to the institutional skeleton”¹⁰ of Ottoman economy and society. In addition to his work focusing on a single intellectual and his writings, one may find a similar methodology in those studies examining a corpus of texts. Cemal Kafadar in *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*¹¹, and Gabriel Piterberg in *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play*¹², have aimed to show how historical texts have a reciprocal relationship with the realities and the prevalent

⁸ For a very useful compilation of articles representing all the perspectives of the debate between postmodernism and history, see: Keith Jenkins (ed.), *The Postmodern History Reader*, (London: Routledge, 1997).

⁹ Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: the Historian Mustafa Âli (1541-1600)*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986).

¹⁰ *ibid*, p.4.

¹¹ Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

¹² Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play*, (California: University of California Press, 2003).

discourses of the age they were written. On the one hand, they are crucial in representing the intellectual and political climate as well as the dominant rhetorical/discursive concerns of their ages. On the other hand, these same texts were also the means to shape the realities (or subsequent perceptions about the realities) of their world.

In all these regards, this thesis is a preliminary attempt to reconcile detailed literary/textual analysis of Veysî's *Habnâme* with a broader historical perspective through examining the wider political, intellectual, and cultural contexts to which the text referred. Although the text entails consideration of various perspectives, given the scarcity of an available literature as well as the time and source restrictions, most of them can only be touched upon here.

Since *Habnâme* has mainly been classified as a representative of the Ottoman mirror for princes genre, the definition and distinguishing features of this genre should first be provided. The first chapter dwells entirely on this purpose and tries to draw an interpretive framework for discussing *Habnâme*'s position within the Ottoman mirror for princes literature. Despite the inconsistency with regard to the nomenclature of the genre, the term 'mirror for prince' is preferred over the other alternatives like *nasihatnâmes* [advice literature] or *islahat layihaları* [reform treatises], since this term, unlike the others, well reflects both the strong literary tradition of the ages-old Indo-Iranian and Islamic mirror writing, and the grave presentist concerns of their authors.

Although these contemporary mirror writers' concerns and complaints regarding the present situation of the Ottoman Empire are invaluable sources in providing a panorama of the Ottoman politics and society, one must be careful not to be oblivious of the fact that these texts reflect more their authors' subjective biases than an objective reality. In this sense, the first chapter provides a reassessment of both traditional and more recent views on the question, "How to study the early modern Ottoman political writing?" The stress will be upon the importance of a methodology that analyzes these texts with regard to their authors' social status, cultural affinities and personal predilections as well as the close intertextual relationship and referential transactions between the mirrors.

The second chapter will present Veysî's biography within the framework of the social and political tensions of his time. Through exploring Veysî's personal involvements, the possible impacts of his connections, his social position and interests on the content and tone of *Habnâme* will be underlined. With all due shortcomings in reconstructing his biography, this chapter mainly addresses such questions: Who were the major figures in his world? What was the nature of Veysî's relationships with his friends, enemies, and patrons? What kind of

religious and/or intellectual affiliations Veysi might have had? With which Sufi orders and sheikhs was he in close contact? To what extent, might these factors influence his intellectual and literary pursuits in general, and his representation in *Habnâme* in particular?

The aim of the third chapter is twofold. On the one hand, Veysi's *Habnâme* will be introduced through extraction of various passages, for the text is mostly unknown to the reader if compared to the contemporary mirrors of Mustafa Âlî, Koçi Beg or Kâtib Çelebi. On the other hand, *Habnâme* will be compared to the literature of contemporary mirror for princes based on the content, message, themes and motifs, and its possible reception by both the contemporaries and the later readership. With regard to the gist of advice offered in *Habnâme* as well as its distinctive narrative structure based on a 'dream-form', the traditional literature that sees the text as an exact representative of mirror genre will be questioned.

The remaining two chapters will be reserved for an elaborate discussion on the dream frame of *Habnâme* as its most distinctive literary quality. Keeping always in mind the difficulty of reconstructing authorial intentions and motivations, these two chapters primarily aim to suggest reliable frameworks to make sense of Veysi's recourse to dream as a literary strategy.

Although *Habnâme* is rather a literary effusion couched in the form of a dream, one has to know first what a dream might have meant to a seventeenth century intellectual in order to understand what he may have striven for resorting to dream as a literary strategy. Given the limited literature on the perception and the use of dreams in the Ottoman milieu, the sources and studies regarding the Islamic dream lore will be utilized in the forth chapter. Through exploring multiple layers of dream and dream writing in the tradition of Islamic *belles lettres* such as Sufi initiation dreams and dream diaries, possible sources of inspiration and literary templates upon which *Habnâme* might have been modelled will be discussed.

In the final chapter, *Habnâme* will be treated as a fictive account that invents a dream story to express its author's views regarding the contemporary socio-political status of the empire. In this regard, there seems to be an apparent similarity between Veysi's text and the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Ottoman-Turkish utopian-like pieces written in a dream form. By means of a comparison between *Habnâme* of Veysi and a sample of the latter genre including works of Ziya Paşa, Namık Kemal, Mustafa Nazım Erzurumî and Ruşenî; the extent that these pieces share and differ will be summarized as to address whether it is possible to define a new literary genre other than the available models.

CHAPTER I

AN INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORK

Before questioning the position of Veysî's *Habnâme* within the genre of Ottoman mirror for princes, which has been usually labelled as Ottoman *nasihatnâmes* [advice literature], an interpretive framework is required to explain some important aspects of Ottoman *nasihatnâmes* in order to better locate *Habnâme* into its necessary historical and literary contexts. As a part of such an analysis, a reassessment of the extensive secondary literature on the Ottoman advice literature will be followed, in the light of recent studies, by a suggestion of a suitable methodological outlook to evaluate early modern Ottoman political treatises.

Although in the related historiography, both terms, 'mirror for princes' and '*nasihatnâme*' have been used interchangeably, throughout this thesis the former one will be preferred to *nasihatnâme*. This is because the latter one is a rather generic term that appears to be inadequate in expressing the perceivably specific characteristics of the Ottoman political tracts, which flourished around the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It should be always kept in mind that giving advice to administrators and ruling elite was not monopolized only by the writers of these political treatises. One can easily come across similar advice and complaints in various sources of Ottoman literary production such as poems¹³, historical accounts and chronicles¹⁴, and even treatises on hunting.¹⁵ However, what has been

¹³ Andreas Tietze, "The Poet as Critique of Society a 16th-Century Ottoman Poem", *Turcica*, no.9, 1977, pp.120-160. see also: Mahmut Kaplan, "Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Nasihatnâmeler", *Türkler*, vol.1, pp.791-799.

¹⁴ An exploration on early Ottoman historical accounts and chronicles such as the works of Âşıkpaşa-zâde, Ahmedî or Neşrî can provide numerous passages where the authors either implicitly or explicitly comment on how a ruler should behave. While at the end of the Âşıkpaşa-zâde's historical account, a list of positive characteristics that a ruler must have such as exhibiting his benevolence, constructing food houses and helping the poor are inscribed, Ahmedî specifies that carrying his men to richness is one of the most important qualities of an ideal ruler. see: Âşıkpaşa-zâde Dervîş Ahmed, *Tevârih-i Âlî Osman*, in *Osmanlı Tarihleri*, ed. by Nihal Atsız, p.230; Ahmedî, *Tevârih-i Mülûk-i Âl-i Osman*, in *Osmanlı Tarihleri*, ed. by Nihal Atsız, p.11.

¹⁵ Tülay Artan, "A Book of Kings Produced and Presented as a Treatise on Hunting", *Muqarnas* (forthcoming). I am grateful to Tülay Artan for allowing me to read her article in manuscript.

traditionally meant by Ottoman *nasihatnâmes* mainly refers to specific pieces comprised not only of long-standing advice but also of harsh criticism and descriptions of contemporary state and society. In that regard, the term ‘mirror for princes’ seems to be more apposite, for it provides more cues regarding the genre’s relationship with the Indo-Iranian, Arabic, and Turkic ‘mirrors for princes’ of ages-old and rich traditions, while at the same time corresponds well with their writers’ attempts as to mirror/project the state and society they were living in.¹⁶

Debates on the name of the genre will be discussed in detail in the following parts of this chapter, but suffice it so say, literature of Ottoman mirror for princes that seems to have proliferated by the sixteenth century dwells less on a theoretical outlook than on everyday politics, which is thought to have given the genre its own specificity. To say the last thing first, it is of my opinion that in terms of both the style it employs, content and arguments it renders, and the way it might have received by its contemporary readers, it would be better to identify *Habnâme* as an aberrant, if not an anti, example of Ottoman mirror for princes genre, notwithstanding the fact that the limited historiography on *Habnâme* has perpetually pointed out that the work is a typical Ottoman mirror.¹⁷

Before delving into a reassessment of secondary literature on the late sixteenth and seventeenth century Ottoman mirrors, and a close reading of Veysî’s *Habnâme* in comparison with contemporary pieces, it is of great benefit to discuss the once famous theoretical framework employed in understanding the realities of post-Süleymanic Ottoman Empire: ‘the decline paradigm.’ My aim here is not to basically repeat the arguments of the decline paradigm and the challenges raised by later scholars who have disproved some basic assumptions of the paradigm, and insisted on such neutral terms, like ‘change’ and/or ‘transformation,’ through a concentration upon the resilience of the empire in readjusting

¹⁶ Pal Fodor, “State and Society, Crisis and Reform, in the Fifteenth-Seventeenth Century Ottoman Mirror For Princes”, *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, vol. 40, no. 2/3, 1986, pp.217-240. See also: Halil İnalçık, “Turkish and Iranian Political Treatises and Traditions in Kutadgu Bilig”, *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1993), pp.1-18.

¹⁷ For those studies evaluating *Habnâme* as a representative of Ottoman mirror for princes, see: Agâh Sırrı Levend, “Siyasetnameler”, *Türk Dili Araştırma Yıllığı: Belleten*, 1962, pp.167-194; Bernard Lewis, “Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline”, *Islamic Studies*, vol.1, 1962, pp.71-87; Pal Fodor, “State and Society, Crisis and Reform, in the Fifteenth-Seventeenth Century Ottoman Mirror For Princes”; Coşkun Yılmaz, “Osmanlı Siyaset Düşüncesi Kaynakları ile Yeni Bir Kavramsallaştırma: Islahatnameler”, *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi*, vol.2, no.2, 2003, pp.299-337; Mehmet Öz, *Osmanlı’da “Çözülme” ve Gelenekçi Yorumları: XVI. Yüzyıldan XVIII. Yüzyıl Başlarına*, (İstanbul: Dergah, 2005, 2nd ed.).

itself in relation to the severe problems it had to tackle.¹⁸ However, an analysis of the paradox embedded at the very center of the decline paradigm, in my humble opinion, is still fruitful in finding the proper context of evaluating these political treatises in general and, Veysi's *Habnâme* in particular.

As a widely known phenomenon, the traditional historical narrative on the late sixteenth and seventeenth century Ottoman Empire pictures a state in thorough decline. Heavily concentrated upon selective aspects of the empire, such as high politics, administration, finances, and military power, the major factors of the decline are enlisted as the following: the impotent and inexperienced sultans, the reign of the women, overwhelming influence of eunuchs and other favourite companions, disorder in the janissary and *ulema* ranks, corruption of the once well-running *timar* system, defeats and embarrassing setbacks in both European and eastern fronts, population pressure and deep financial crises accompanied

¹⁸ Such a shift is well exemplified through the change of tone in Halil İnalçık's writings. Compare, for instance, İnalçık's two articles published respectively in 1970 and 1980: Halil İnalçık, "The Heyday and Decline of the Ottoman Empire", *The Cambridge History of Islam*, v.1a, ed. by P.M.Holt, B.Lewis and A.K.S.Lambton, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); İnalçık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire", *Archivum Ottomanicum*, v.6, 1980, pp. 283-337. There is a bulk of literature on the critique of decline paradigm and transformation that the empire had experienced in social, political, and financial terms. For a classical one that challenges, both methodologically and on content base, some basic premises of the Decline Paradigm, see: Roger Owen, "The Middle East in the Eighteenth Century – An 'Islamic' Society in Decline? A Critique of Gibb and Bowen's Islamic Society and the West", *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)*, vol.3, no.2, 1976, pp. 110-117. For more recent critiques that underline the viability of early modern Ottoman state, see: Cemal Kafadar, "The Question of Ottoman Decline", *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review*, vol.4, no:1-2, 1997-98, pp.30-75; Jane Hathaway, "Problems of Periodization in Ottoman History: the Fifteenth through Eighteenth Centuries", *The Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*, vol.20, no.2, 1996, pp.25-31; Suraiya Faroqhi, "Crisis and Change, 1590-1699", eds. by Halil İnalçık & Donald Quataert, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, v.2, pp. 413-636, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Jonathan Grant, "Rethinking the 'Ottoman Decline': Military Technology Diffusion in the Ottoman Empire, Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries", *Journal of World History*, vol.10, no.1, 1999, pp.179-201. For an erudite analysis of how changes in Ottoman fiscal policies that are largely assumed to have created decentralization, "facilitated the transition between a precocious imperial centralization of the 15th-16th centuries and the peculiar institutional centralization that ushered in the modern state in the early 19th century," see: Ariel Salzman, "The Ancien Regime Revisited: 'Privatization' and Political Economy in the Eighteenth Century Ottoman Empire", *Politics and Society*, vol.21, no.4, 1993, pp.393-423, at p.394. See also: Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: the Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550-1650*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Rhoads Murphey, "Continuity and Discontinuity in Ottoman Administrative Theory and Practice During the Late Seventeenth Century", *Poetics Today*, vol.14, no.2, 1993, pp. 419-433; Linda Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660*, (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1996) for the transformation in administrative apparatus of the state as to cope with the changing conditions. For a brief and very influential analysis of early modern Ottoman state that stresses upon the changing nature of state apparatus and calls to see it as a comparable unity vis-à-vis other early modern states, see: Rifa'at Ali Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: the Ottoman Empire, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, c1991). For a different reading of *Celali* revolts as a part of early modern Ottoman state's success in terms of securing its centralized rule, see: Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: the Ottoman Route to State Centralization*, (Ithaca; NY: Cornell University Press, 1994).

with banditry, rebellions and *Celali* revolts, and an overall lack of receptivity vis-à-vis the material transformation that western European countries were experiencing.¹⁹

Earlier studies of Bernard Lewis, Hamilton Gibb and Harold Bowen well epitomize such an approach that sees the empire in constant stagnation and decline. While Lewis speaks of “breakdown in the apparatus of government,” “catastrophic fall in efficiency and integrity,” “deterioration,” “decline of the Ottoman armed forces,” “decline in alertness (...) and in readiness to accept new techniques,” “technological backwardness not only to invent but even to respond to the invention of others,” “definite decline in agriculture,” “the lowest level of competence, initiative, and morality (...) in Ottoman economy,”²⁰ Gibb and Bowen mostly stress upon the “decay of the ruling institution.”²¹

The most obvious problem of the decline paradigm, as Cemal Kafadar argues, derives from its ability to “serve as a linearizing and totalizing device in (a)historical narration and analysis.”²² For Kafadar and many others²³, the decline paradigm provides an “all-encompassing referential framework” through which every historical phenomenon that the historian finds negative such as inflation, stagnation, rebellion or lack of receptivity is explained. In other words, all elements of Ottoman society including state, economy, or culture are thought to have disintegrated after a certain inevitable point, which is usually set to the end of Süleyman’s reign.

Although an objection against the decline paradigm from such a vantage point is quite accurate, there is one crucial detail that should be revised. While Lewis, Bowen and Gibb, or traditional scholarship written in Turkish seems to depict a thoroughly declining entity in terms of financial, political, diplomatic, or military matters, arts and letters in the same period have usually been left outside of the declinist framework. Unlike the deteriorated image of the empire with respect to the socio-political and financial aspects, Lewis, for instance, finds a strong sense of vitality in Ottoman cultural and intellectual production, and says, “[i]t is not

¹⁹ Linda Darling, “Introduction: The Myth of Decline”, in *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy*, p.1.

²⁰ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, (London; New York [etc.]: Oxford University Press, c2001.), pp. 21-35.

²¹ Sir Hamilton Gibb & Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West: A Study of the Impact of Western Civilization on Moslem Culture in the Near East*, vol.1, (London: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 173-199.

²² Cemal Kafadar, “The Question of Ottoman Decline”, p.34.

²³ See for instance: Rhoads Murphey, “The Review Article: Mustafa Âli and Politics of Cultural Despair”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol.21, no.2, 1989, p. 251-2.

until the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries that we can speak of a real breakdown in the cultural and intellectual life of Turkey.”²⁴

A similar style of narration is common in scholarship written on the literary history of the Ottoman Empire. It seems to be a common point shared by many literary historians that while compiling a huge set of Ottoman literary history, the sections dedicated to the late sixteenth and seventeenth century Ottoman literature are narrativized through the contrasting images of the then socio-political circumstances and literature. This is not just peculiar to earlier works of authors such as Ağâh Sırrı Levend or Nihat Sami Banarlı.²⁵ One can also find traces of such an outlook in the recent compilation of articles as a part of The Cambridge History of Turkey series, where the same discourse is perpetuated that seventeenth century intellectual production points to a culmination within the entire history of the Ottoman literature, although the same period refers to a disruptive age in terms of political and financial matters.²⁶

Such an opposing description of the Ottoman Empire that promotes both vitality, and in direct contradiction, lethargy is contingent upon where the historian stands to observe, i.e. the aspects that s/he selects to focus on. The paradox that was mentioned at the beginning of the chapter lies at the very center of this asymmetry. It should, however, be underlined that the paradox is not the asymmetry itself.

In order to understand this paradox, one has to look for the sources from which the scholars with declinist attitude have provided their evidence. It is safe to say that the theory of the decline of the Ottoman Empire from the late sixteenth century onwards rests primarily upon the interpretations, descriptions, and to a great extent, complaints of contemporary Ottoman (political) writers. The idea of decline was thus, in Douglas Howard’s words, “first an Ottoman creation.”²⁷ The underlying reason of these texts’ attractiveness for traditional historiography occupied with the decline paradigm is the fact that their thematic model

²⁴ Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, p.35. In one of his other articles, Lewis again talks about the “continuing vigor of (Ottoman) intellectual life” albeit the apathy of the Ottoman ruling class toward European voyages of discovery. See: Lewis, “Some Reflections on the Decline of the Ottoman Empire”, *Studia Islamica*, no.9, 1958, pp. 111-127, at p.127.

²⁵ See: Ağâh Sırrı Levend, *Edebiyat Tarihi Dersleri: Tanzimat’a Kadar*, (İstanbul: Kanaat Kitabevi, 1939); Nihad Sâmî Banarlı, *Resimli Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi: Destanlar Devrinden Zamanımıza Kadar*, (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1998).

²⁶ Hatice Aynur, “Ottoman Literature”, in *The Cambridge History of Turkey: the Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, vol.3, ed. by Suraiya Faroqhi, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.481.

²⁷ Douglas A. Howard, “Ottoman Historiography and the Literature of ‘Decline’ of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries”, *Journal of Asian History*, 1988, no.22, p.53.

comprising an image of decline and disintegration is perfectly applicable to the declinist narration of historiography. As Howard argues, these texts have been approached by Orientalist and nationalist historians, as they would read “transparent primary sources.”²⁸

Paradoxically enough, those same literati’s literary production has been regarded as an indicator of the then empire’s intellectual and cultural vigor. If one is asked, for instance, to give some examples of prominent figures in the entire history of Ottoman cultural and intellectual life; s/he is likely to enumerate the names of Mustafa Âlî, Katib Çelebi, Koçi Beg, Evliya Çelebi, Naima or İbrahim Müteferrika, who, -by a matter of coincidence?-, had lived and written right at the time when Ottoman Empire is conventionally thought to have deteriorated. While the presence of such figures has been underlined as manifesting the liveliness of Ottoman intellectual production, the writings and observations of these authors are, on the other hand, utilized to demonstrate the signs of Ottoman decline. As a result, the use of same element for both explicating a decline in certain aspects, and a flourishing state in yet other dimensions creates an ontological problem.

One can object here that literature and high politics are two diverse spheres that should not be mingled. In that regard, the thriving of arts and letters in a particular period when there are severe disasters and problems taking place can be regarded as unexceptional. Even it can further be claimed that an objective reality pertaining to a catastrophe might be a productive ground for creative abilities of the *littérateur*. The problem in the concerning historiography, however, is its selective approach that seems to neglect the contemporary intelligentsia’s artistic efforts and personal/political agendas as well as the overall intellectual mood of the period for the sake of using these political treatises as ‘transparent’ sources to picture the political and financial realities of the empire. To put it more precisely, the problem here is that a supposedly objective situation, i.e., the decline of Ottoman Empire, has been substantiated by subjective evidence provided by the writings of certain authors who might have been carrying different personal intentions, ideological affiliations, literary tastes, and sources of inspiration. However, without putting an effort to make sense of the *zeitgeist* that those intellectuals shared, one cannot understand why most of them were imbued with a sense of decline and what kind of reactions they gave. In that regard, as Cornell Fleischer and Cemal Kafadar accentuate, the nature of the Ottoman cultural and intellectual milieu that had an

²⁸ Douglas A. Howard, “Genre and Myth in the Ottoman Advice for Kings Literature”, in *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, ed. by Virginia Aksan & Daniel Goffman, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p.147.

influence on both the composition of such significant works of political criticism and the creation of a “convenient environment” for their acceptance should be studied.²⁹

The term ‘intellectual’ used here may seem odd, since most of those figures were earning their lives by means of working in certain bureaucratic ranks of the state apparatus such as judgeship [*kadılık*], scribal service [*katiblik*], or professorship [*müdürrislik*]. In this sense, if we are to apply the criteria that Edward Said proposes as determining factors of becoming intellectual, these Ottoman figures fail to become ‘real intellectuals,’ since they did not detach themselves, both economically and ideologically, from the state’s zone of influence.³⁰ In reality, as it will be demonstrated in the third chapter, none of those writers really challenged the rule of Ottoman dynasty and proposed a new type of regime instead of the existing one about which they had many complaints. On the contrary, one can feel at every page of their writings the strong commitments of those intellectuals to the felicity of Ottoman imperial dominion. Despite all these details, as Cornell Fleischer has argued, it should not be avoided to name, at least some of those members of men of letters as intellectual, for they seem to have had such a consciousness to differentiate themselves from other strata of society due to their privilege of holding intellectual and philosophical knowledge. It is likely this privilege that implanted a sense of responsibility and drove them to write such pieces as an outcome of their observations regarding the contemporary situation of the Ottoman Empire.

I. 1: The Name of the Genre: Ottoman Mirrors for Princes, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries

Although there is ample literature on Ottoman political writings of the early modern era, there is not an agreement regarding the definition of the genre. Various names and even sub-genres have been suggested in line with the historians’ manners of assessing and utilizing these texts, influenced not only by his/her scholarly preferences but also the political

²⁹ Cornell Fleischer, “From Şehzâde Korkud to Mustafa Âlî: Cultural Origins of the Ottoman Nasihatnâme”, in *3rd Congress on the Social and Political History of Turkey. Princeton University 24-26 August 1983*, eds. by Heath W. Lowry and Ralph S. Hattox, (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1990), pp. 67-77, at p. 69; Cemal Kafadar, *When Coins Turned Into Drops of Dew and Bankers Became Robbers of Shadows: The Boundaries of Ottoman Economic Imagination at the end of the 16th Century*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1986, p.7.

³⁰ See: Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual: the 1993 Reich Lectures*, (New York: Vintage Books, c.1996), passim.

environment s/he lives in. As Baki Tezcan clearly articulates, Ottoman political treatises of the post-Süleymanic era have usually been referred to as ‘reform literature,’ since the scholarship especially written in Turkish tends to read the seventeenth century Ottoman realities as a fierce struggle between two opposing groups: traditionalists composed mainly of the janissaries and the *ulema*, and reformists including the authors of these treatises.³¹ For Tezcan, this way of reading is rather an anachronistic transposition of the dichotomy dominating modern Turkish politics, which is thought to be formed by reformists and traditionalists, into the early modern Ottoman political environment. However, it would be very difficult to argue for a presence of such a dichotomy in early modern Ottoman society on mainly two grounds. First, there is no significant difference between those alleged reformists and conservatives with respect to the political ideas they formulated. It is, for instance, a common point shared by both groups to stress the negative consequences of deviating from the norms of ‘ancient law’ [*kanun-ı kadim*]. Moreover, most of those treatises, which we read today as ‘reform literature’ were penned by members of *ulema* circles who have been accepted as voices of traditionalism. Secondly, these so-called reformists do not generate a homogenous group and substantially differ from each other in terms of their underlying assumptions. While, for instance, Koçi Beg stresses the dissolution of the land-tenure system [*timar*], Mustafa Âlî’s complaints concentrate around the perils of patronage and favouritism, and Hasan Kâfî Akhisarî gives top priority to the importance of restoring the justice principle. This point will later be analyzed in detail.

Historiography of the names used to define this genre in Ottoman *belles lettres* would be a worthwhile study, but here I want to confine myself with a brief summary of main orientations of formulation. In one of the earliest attempts to create a bibliography on Ottoman political treatises, Agâh Sırrı Levend defines the genre as *siyasetnâme*, and says that all representatives of this genre are directly about administration of state affairs.³² Since the whole political and administrative authority was dependent upon the sultan at those times, he

³¹ Baki Tezcan, “II. Osman Örneğinde ‘İlerlemeci’ Tarih ve Osmanlı Tarih Yazıcılığı”, in *Osmanlılar*, vol.7, pp.658-668.

³² Agâh Sırrı Levend, “Siyasetnameler”, *Türk Dili Araştırma Yıllığı: Belleten*, 1962, pp.167-194. For a recent study repeating Levend’s arguments verbatim, see: Orhan M. Çolak, “İstanbul Kütüphanelerinde Bulunan Siyasetnameler Bibliyografyası”, *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi*, vol.1, no.2, 2003, pp.309-378. It is in fact dubious whether the term *siyasetnâme* had been contemporarily used as to mean political writings. An early sixteenth century material sent by Sultan Selim I to his governor son regarding the implementation of penal laws evinces the use of term in a quite different context. See: Enver Ziya Karal, “Yavuz Sultan Selim’in Oğlu Şehzâde Süleyman’a Manisa Sancağını İdare Etmesi İçin Gönderdiği Siyasetname”, *Belleten*, 1942, no.21, pp. 37-44.

says, these works can be referred to as mirror for princes. He also draws attention to the fact that the title of the works may be misleading, since there are many pieces bearing traditional *siyasetnâme* titles such as *Tuhfetü'l-Mülûk* or *Nasihatiü'l-Mülûk* whose contents are of little relevance to political philosophy. Levend also specifies a sub-genre within the general *siyasetnâme* literature: 'reform treatises' [*İslahat layihaları*]. This sub-genre is, according to Levend, about the complaints and suggestions of the writers regarding the conditions and disorder of the state and society that they had observed. As a result of his slight distinction, while for instance, *Asafnâme* of Lutfi Pasha and *Nushatu's Selatin* [Counsel for Sultans] of Mustafa Âlî are inaccurately regarded as representatives of *siyasetnâme* genre, *Habnâme* of Veysî is exemplified as a reform treatise among the other examples such as Hasan Kâfî Akhisarî's *Usûlü'l-Hikem fi Nizamü'l-Alem* [Philosophical Principles Concerning the Order of the World], Katip Çelebi's *Düstürü'l-Amel li-İslahü'l-Halel* [Regulations for Reforming Defects] and Koçi Beg's treatises.

In another study written by Ahmet Uğur, whose organization in his work is quite confusing and difficult to grasp, the term *siyasetnâme* is again suggested as the name of the genre.³³ In Uğur's categorization, *siyasetnâmes* can be divided into diverse sub-groups. One branch of *siyasetnâme* literature consists of books, which, as a continuation of Indo-Iranian tradition, merely proffers some political advice to the administrators such as translations of *Kalila wa Dimna* or *Kabusnâme*.³⁴ Another branch into which Ottoman political tracts can be grouped comprises works written by those functionaries working in different ranks of the Ottoman bureaucracy. The aim of the latter genre, for Uğur, is to communicate their authors' comments on the ongoing problems and related remedies that they suggested. According to Uğur, it is very difficult to differentiate these sub-groups from each other. This is probably why he impetuously uses the terms, *siyasetnâme* and reform treatise [*İslahat layihası*] interchangeably throughout his study, even though he suggests at the very beginning a distinction between these two. As far as *Habnâme* is concerned, there is not a single reference in his entire study to Veysî's work as an example of either *siyasetnâmes* or reform treatises.

The latest suggestion for labelling the genre came recently from Coşkun Yılmaz, who, in his comprehensive study on Ottoman political writings puts forward the name, *İslahatnâme*

³³ Ahmet Uğur, *Osmanlı Siyaset-Nâmeleri*, (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1992).

³⁴ See: Zehra Toska, "Kelile ve Dimne'nin Türkçe Çevirileri", *Journal of Turkish Studies-Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları*, no.15, 1991; Eleazar Birnbaum, "A Lifemanship Manual: The Earliest Version of the *Kabusname*?", *Journal of Turkish Studies-Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları*, no.1,1977, pp.3-61.

[reform literature], for consideration.³⁵ According to Yılmaz, so far suggested concepts such as *siyasetnâme*, declinist literature [*gerileme edebiyatı*], advice literature [*nasihatnâme*], or reform treatises [*ıslahat risaleleri*] fail to accurately cover the gist of Ottoman political writings' peculiarity. *Islahatnâme*, on the other hand, both enables the scholar, as Yılmaz states, to establish the genre's relationship with the long-standing tradition of 'mirrors for princes' via its suffix, *nâme*, and clearly explains the real motivation of their writers, *ıslahat*.

To concatenate Ottoman political treatises to the larger body of Islamic mirror for princes tradition can shed more light on the nature of Ottoman political writing. This is not only meaningful to underline the fact that Ottoman political writings did not emerge in an ahistorical vacuum, but also informative in challenging the parochial narrative that Ottoman political treatises were peculiar, for they, unlike their predecessors, are regarded as only examples of conveying harsh criticisms and suggesting immediate practical policies regarding their contemporary rule.

In the Encyclopedia of Islam, there is only one related article, *Nasihât al-Mülûk*, in which its author, Clifford Edmund Bosworth, prefers not to make any differentiation between *siyasetnâmes*, *nasihatnâmes* or reform treatises.³⁶ He defines the genre as *nasihat al-mülûk*, which literally means 'advice for rulers' and constitutes the corresponding term to the genre of medieval European literature known as 'mirror for princes.' As Bosworth argues, these works mostly emphasize on practical aspects of governments instead of conceptualizing a theoretical framework and developing a political philosophy. *Realpolitik* is, therefore, their main unit of analysis.

In one of her studies on medieval Islamic political thought, Ann K.S. Lambton focuses on the main features of Islamic mirror for princes, which, in her opinion, is one of the categories of literature on political theory in Islam.³⁷ She, like Bosworth, labels the genre as mirror for princes, and outlines some of their noteworthy qualities as following: they were written in elegant prose, and were illustrated by stories and anecdotes that served to display pictures of contemporary society. In all Islamic mirrors for princes, the state is taken for

³⁵ Coşkun Yılmaz, "Osmanlı Siyaset Düşüncesi Kaynakları ile Yeni Bir Kavramsallaştırma: Islahatnameler", *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi*, vol.2, no:2, 2003, pp.299-337.

³⁶ C.E. Bosworth, "Nasihât al-Mülûk", *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.).

³⁷ Other categories are juristic works, administrative handbooks [*siyasetnames*], and philosophical works. In that case, she makes a clear distinction between *siyasetnames* and *mirrors for princes*. See: A.K.S.Lambton, "Islamic Mirrors for Princes", *La Persia nel Medioeva*, 1970, pp. 419-442.; Lambton, "Justice in the Medieval Persian Theory of Kingship", *Studia Islamica*, vol.17, 1962, pp.91-119.

granted and there is no attempt to justify its existence. The writers of mirrors were less concerned with the theory of the government than with its practice. Although they seem to be inclined to be timeless, they could not be entirely divorced from the circumstances of their time. They were, in fact, very much entangled with comments regarding the changing conditions of the time and provision of feasible remedies in response to the need of reform. In part, these works can be read as protest against the evils of their contemporary society and its failure to achieve the ideal that the authors of these works had in their minds.³⁸

As a part of overall dearth in terms of comparative historical analyses in Ottoman historiography, neither Ottoman political treatises nor the decline paradigm has been studied much with regard to the experiences other early modern countries had been experiencing.³⁹ Beyond a comparison with earlier Islamic political writings, Ottoman political treatises ranging from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries may be analyzed in comparison with concurrent literature prevailing elsewhere such as Spain. This kind of comparative study has much to say about the nature of the early modern Ottoman political writing.

Similar to the flourishing of Ottoman political treatises by the late sixteenth century, Spain witnessed a parallel increase in terms of the popularity of the genre. Spanish *arbitrios*, a parallel Spanish term for political treatises whose exact English equivalent is ‘project,’ seems to share plenty of characteristics with its Ottoman counterparts.⁴⁰ First of all, like the Ottoman mirrors and their writers, *arbitrios* are thought to have been penned as a response of their writers’ recognition of some major problems and imbued with strong declinist sentiments. Furthermore, akin to the Ottoman writers, most of the *arbitristas* came from the ranks of academics, clergy, bureaucracy, the urban patriciate and the mercantile community. Although meaningful diversities between these *arbitrios* are manifested due to their writers’ distinct identities and political affiliations, they were united around the shared belief that there was something going wrong in the state they were loyal. Their projects, *arbitrios*, were thus attempts to search for feasible remedies in order to revoke all the disaster or impending disasters of which they were conscious. Main message of *arbitrios* was a message of return,

³⁸ Lambton, “Islamic Mirrors for Princes”, pp.419-421.

³⁹ For such an attempt of a comparative study, see: Geoffrey Parker and Lesley M. Smith (eds.), *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century*, (New York: Routledge, 1997). With respect to political writings, both Abou-el-Haj and Gabriel Piterberg has separately announced that they initiated such a comparative project, yet any substantial study has not been published. See: Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play*, p.146, footnote 31.

⁴⁰ For a detailed analysis of Spanish political projects in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see: J.H. Elliott, “Self-Perception and Decline in Early Seventeenth-Century Spain”, *Past and Present*, no.74, 1977, pp.41-61.

which immediately reminds of the Ottoman writers' projects: "[r]eturn to the primeval purity of manners and morals; return to just and uncorrupt [sic] government; return to the simple virtues of a rural and martial society."⁴¹

To sum up the discussions on the name of the genre, it is best to label these sixteenth and seventeenth century Ottoman political tracts as 'mirror for princes', since these works bear important motifs of earlier Islamic mirror for princes genre, while at the same time project/mirror the socio-political, economic, and more importantly intellectual atmosphere of the age in which they were written. In the following section, emphasis will be put upon the methodological questions on the use/misuse of this literature as conclusive evidence of the early modern Ottoman Empire.

I. 2: Different Approaches to the Problem: How to Read Early Modern Ottoman Political Writings?

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, labelling the genre is very much associated with the approaches utilized in studying the political treatises. Within this context, three main grounds of analysis can be concluded. The first and the traditional one, typified in Bernard Lewis's and many Turkish scholars' approach, mostly takes the arguments proffered in these texts at face value, and uses them as explanatory models of the 'Ottoman Decline.' Strictly challenging the traditional one, second approach asks for a methodology evaluating each text in its own historical context, and further assumes that since the content of these texts was heavily influenced by personal predilections and the social status of their writers, it would be erroneous to accept their arguments as sincere opinions. One can name Rifa'at Ali Abou-el-Haj and Linda Darling as pioneers of this approach. Similar to the second approach, there is a nuanced third approach that manifests itself in the works of Cornell Fleischer, Cemal Kafadar, and Douglas Howard, and recommends to view these texts not only as simple indicators of political, economic and personal dimensions, but also of overall intellectual mood and cultural liveliness.

The authors of the traditional approach regard the political treatises and their writers as significant tokens of the Ottoman decline. The narrative and causal link in these studies is established as such that these texts are accepted to have begun to be composed immediately after the earlier signals of decay and deterioration in Ottoman moral values and ruling

⁴¹ Elliott, "Self-Perception and Decline in Early Seventeenth-Century Spain", p.52.

institutions became visible.⁴² Decline has, therefore, a pivotal role in the emergence of the genre. In his classic article, “Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline”, Lewis, for instance, takes ‘decline’ for granted and finds those mirror writers perceptive enough at discerning “the characteristic signs of Ottoman decline”: inflation, venality, incompetence, oversize of both the army and the bureaucracy, economic contraction and decay of morality.⁴³ This approach, however, fails to remember earlier tradition of advice literature and to grasp the role of each writer’s identity and predispositions on their preferences of what to tell, how to tell and where to silence.

Rifa’at Ali Abou-el-Haj is among those scholars who have a revisionist stance vis-à-vis the traditional way of reading the Ottoman mirrors. Since the mid 1980s, he has vehemently challenged those scholars who have taken mirrors at face value. For Abou-el-Haj, reading the declinist content of mirrors as a manifestation of a material decline in the Ottoman Empire would be erroneous, because “if we were to accept this premise, it would amount to attributing the same preoccupation with decline by the political tract writers of Western Europe, who were also concerned with their societies’ loss of virtue”.⁴⁴ Unlike the Lewisan interpretation of advice literature, the underlying assumption Abou-el-Haj has insisted is that the personal/political dimension of each author should be evaluated while assessing the corpus of mirrors, because those writers were “not only observers but also participants” of the environment in which they had written their treatises.⁴⁵

As a part of his class-based analysis of the early modern Ottoman state, and his occupation with political struggle among the Istanbul-based ruling elite during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Abou-el-Haj tends to see Ottoman mirrors for princes as a reflection of this struggle.⁴⁶ Although the ostensible impetus for this genre was providing guidance for the sultan or viziers in the management of their personal and public affairs, these

⁴² This is prevalent in especially the scholarship written in Turkish. In addition to Orhan Çolak and Coşkun Yılmaz, see: Ejder Okumuş, “İbn Haldun ve Osmanlı’da Çöküş Tartışmaları”, *Dîvân İlmî Araştırmalar*, vol.1, no.6, 1999, pp.183-209; Mehmet Öz, *Osmanlı’da “Çözülme” ve Gelenekçi Yorumları: XVI. Yüzyıldan XVIII. Yüzyıl Başlarına*, (İstanbul: Dergah, 2005, 2nd ed.).

⁴³ Bernard Lewis, “Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline”, *Islamic Studies*, vol.1, 1962, pp.71-87, at p.73.

⁴⁴ Rifa’at Ali Abou-el-Haj, “The Ottoman Nasihatnâme as a Discourse over Morality,” *Mélanges Professeur Robert Mantran, Revue D’Histoire Magrebhine*, 47-48, 1987, pp.17-30, at p.27.

⁴⁵ Abou-el-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State : The Ottoman Empire Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries*, p.26.

⁴⁶ Abou-el-Haj, “*Fitnah, Huruc ala al-Sultan and Nasihat: Political Struggle and Social Conflict in Ottoman Society, 1560s – 1700s*”, *Comite International D’Etudes Pre-Ottomanes et Ottomanes, VIth Symposium Cambridge*, ed. by. Grammont & Van Donzel, 1987, p.186.

texts were, for Abou-el-Haj, inevitably distorted by their authors' political partisanship, which might be instructive of the ongoing intra-elite struggle.⁴⁷ Through scrutiny of these texts, one can find, for instance, which political faction a particular actor was representing at the time of his writing, and what faction used his writing to justify their ideological stance.⁴⁸

Abou-el-Haj's call for a new kind of methodology that would treat each representative of this genre as the product of specific historical factors and personal dimensions should be appreciated though, he is still open to be criticized on mainly two grounds: First of all, in his interpretive model, the mirror for princes genre is reduced into a mere matter of high politics. However, the probability that at least some of these texts might have been written on pure literary concerns should be taken into account. Related to this first objection, Abou-el-Haj does not pay a meticulous effort to differentiate those aberrant examples of the literature of Ottoman political treatises, since he depends mostly on the works of Âlî and Koçi Bey. In this sense, it is dubious whether these two examples are sufficient to label the entire mirror genre.

Linda Darling is another scholar whose arguments are reminiscent of Abou-el-Haj's overall attitude toward Ottoman mirrors and their writers. Like Abou-el-Haj, Darling states, "their [those mirror writers] tales of domestic woe were intended to stimulate governmental responses from which they as individuals and as a group often expected to benefit," for the writers of advice literature were "scarcely disinterested observers."⁴⁹

Having appreciated the critiques of the second approach regarding the traditional narrative, the third approach proposes somewhat a different perspective: rather to evaluate and use these texts with regard to understanding then political factions, economic situation and social structure, it would be better to directly focus on what these texts can say about intellectual atmosphere and cultural production of the period.

Cornell Fleischer is one of those scholars who has made an effort to portray the personal mood of Mustafa Âlî, and the overall intellectual and aesthetic atmosphere of the late sixteenth century Ottoman empire under which the author of *Nushatü's-Selatin* [Counsel for Sultans], Âlî, started to compile his book.⁵⁰ In his seminal study, he shows how a bureaucrat and intellectual became embittered due to his unaccomplished goals and desires, and then

⁴⁷ Abou-el-Haj, *Formation*, p.20.

⁴⁸ Abou-el-Haj, "The Ottoman Nasihatnâme as a Discourse over Morality," at p.26.

⁴⁹ Darling, "Introduction: The Myth of Decline", p.5.

⁵⁰ Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: the Historian Mustafa Âlî (1541-1600)*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986).

dauntlessly denounced the values of the age he was living in through a comparison to the ‘allegedly’ glorious old days. Although Fleischer’s work was criticized by Rhoads Murphey on the ground that his work reproduces the declinist discourse as having failed to separate Âlî’s biased opinions and his own views⁵¹, the following lines can be illuminating in determining Fleischer’s actual position: “the ideal of the ‘Golden Age’ and the notion of decline, which recur throughout that political literature, were rhetorical devices that served more to express dissatisfaction with the present than to portray on historical reality.”⁵²

Fleischer defines the genre as ‘pragmatic political commentaries’ and further argues that the declinist outlook common in most of these treatises began long before the end of the sixteenth century.⁵³ Şehzâde Korkud’s treatise from the early sixteenth century, for instance, engenders one of the earliest criticisms of Ottoman institutions. The book, *Dawat al-nafs al-taliha ila al-a’amal al-saliha* [The Erring Soul’s Summons to Virtuous Works], written by Şehzâde Korkud, sibling of Selim I, is significant as to challenge the notion that a fifteenth or early sixteenth century ‘golden age’ had ever existed.⁵⁴ To Fleischer, the intellectual roots of Ottoman mirrors are partly composed of classical advice literature derived from Persian and Arabic classics, and partly shaped by the self-consciousness of the era where there were signs of anxiety towards the deep transformation from a frontier polity into an imperial one.⁵⁵

Like Cornell Fleischer, Cemal Kafadar proposes to replace reading Ottoman mirror for princes for the sake of understanding Ottoman political and economic institutions as well as their downfall with a new framework that tries to contextualize these texts to understand Ottoman intellectual milieu in general, and their declinist sensibility in particular. He states:

“The literature of decline and reform that permeates Ottoman intellectual life in the post-Süleymanic age can be seen as evidence of *vigor* rather than *decline*. A public forum, in which intellectuals and bureaucrats could openly criticize institutions and policies, as well as the personalities and actions of the sultans, was one of the strengths of the pre-industrial Ottoman order up until the nineteenth century establishment of more modern and effective means of both political opposition and control over ideas.”⁵⁶

⁵¹ Rhoads Murphey, “The Review Article: Mustafa Âlî and Politics of Cultural Despair”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol.21, no.2, 1989, p. 243-255. see also Fleischer’s response: “Notes and Comments”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol.22, no.1, 1990, pp.127-128.

⁵² Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, p.268.

⁵³ Fleischer, “Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and ‘Ibn Khaldunism’ in Sixteenth Century Ottoman Letters”, *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, vol.18, no.3/4, 1983, pp. 198-220, at p.204.

⁵⁴ Fleischer, “From Şehzâde Korkud to Mustafa Âlî: Cultural Origins of the Ottoman *Nasihâtname*”, p.71.

⁵⁵ *ibid*, p.7.

⁵⁶ Kafadar, “The Question of Ottoman Decline”, p.47. Italicized words are of Kafadar.

Kafadar, yet, disclaims that such a hypothetical forum does not imply freedom of speech and organized political opposition in the modern sense.⁵⁷ His preference in conceptualizing the genre is “practical political philosophy,” because for Kafadar, those writers were so imbued with everyday politics that a modern reader can even liken them to modern day columnists.⁵⁸

One important scholar worth to be mentioned within this context is Douglas Howard. Unlike other scholars studying these materials to explain socio-political and economic facets of the post-Süleymanic Ottoman Empire, Douglas Howard invite scholars to view these works as generating a literary genre, that of the ‘decline treatise,’ through an elaborate analysis of their formal characteristics, i.e. their audience, style, characteristic motifs, format, terminology and content.⁵⁹ Similar to many other scholars, Howard thinks that Ottoman works are different from earlier examples in terms of the “immediacy” and “urgency” apparent in their narratives.⁶⁰ It might be, thus, insufficient to describe them as simple advice givers on how to rule the state. Rather, they presented a critical analysis of then Ottoman society, which is a significant material *per se* for the historian committed to the reconstruction of Ottoman intellectual mood. Instead of viewing them as indicators of decline, their presence corroborates the idea that sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were an age of considerable intellectual and literary activity. As a clear reminder to modern scholars, Douglas Howard argues:

“[T]he major significance of these works for the modern historiography of the Ottoman Empire lies not in the information they provide regarding Ottoman administrative practice or changes in the structure of Ottoman institutions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Rather, the value of this decline literature consists in the degree to which it elucidates the intellectual climate of the era, in which traditional Ottoman concepts of legitimacy and sovereignty were the subject of intense debate.”⁶¹

Corollary to all these discussions on the nature of Ottoman political writings from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, it can be clearly inferred that the genre of Ottoman mirror

⁵⁷ Kafadar, “The Question of Ottoman Decline”, p.47.

⁵⁸ Kafadar, “Osmanlı Siyasal Düşüncesinin Kaynakları Üzerine Gözlemler, *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet’in Birikimi*, pp.23-28, at p.27.

⁵⁹ Howard, “Ottoman Historiography and the Literature of ‘Decline’ of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries”, p.53-4.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p.55.

⁶¹ Howard, “Ottoman Historiography and the Literature of ‘Decline’ of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” p.77.

for princes points to a distinctive, yet not so much a peculiar type of intellectual endeavour. As demonstrated above, Islamic mirror for princes had also been written as a means of criticizing their contemporary state and society, therefore it would be incorrect to label Ottoman mirrors as completely unique and innovative. Nonetheless, Ottoman mirrors provide invaluable evidence to portray the intellectual and psychological climate of the late sixteenth and seventeenth century Ottoman Empire. An intertextual analysis of these mirrors accompanied with efforts to reconstruct each author's identity including his occupation, ideological affiliations, literary tastes or sources of inspiration as well as the general historical context, a more reliable assessment can be produced with addressing such questions: How did each author formulate his own version of political thought? To what extent did he espouse the declinist ideas? In what ways did he react against the dominant discourse of his age, if he reacted at all? What kind of literary strategies did he employ? Which specific aspects did he stress? Keeping these questions in mind, while the next chapter will be dedicated to reconstructing Veysi's biography with special reference to his networks, the third chapter will be devoted to a close reading of *Habnâme* in comparison with the contemporary and eminent Ottoman mirrors.

CHAPTER II

THE AUTHOR OF *HABNÂME* and HIS ENVIRONMENT

The aim of this chapter is to portray Veysî's life and career within the framework of social and political realities of his time. Through exploring his milieu, a tentative picture regarding Veysî's social position, relationships with his contemporaries, career, failures and successes as well as his aspirations, which might have moulded his representation in *Habnâme*, will be adumbrated. The fundamental source in this undertaking will be the information contained in Nev'izâde Atâ'î's compilation of *ulema* and dervish biographies, *Hadâ'iku'l-hakâ'ik fi Tekmileti's-Şakâ'ik*.⁶² This work, which consists of detailed biographical entries of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century *ulema* and *sheikhs*, is an invaluable material in resurfacing the lives of the then scholars. It should, however, be pointed out that since those entries were products of an individual who had his own personal interests, tastes, affinities and relationships, crosschecking is required in order to test the accuracy of his information.⁶³

Beside Nev'izâde Atâ'î's work, a couple of contemporary biographical dictionaries of poets [*şu'ara tezkireleri*] will be utilized as well. The earliest reference to Veysî is in Kınalızâde Hasan Çelebi's *Tezkiretü's-Şuara*, which was completed ca.1585 when Veysî was probably penning his first poems.⁶⁴ Kınalızâde's remarks on Veysî were then repeated by Beyâni in his *Tezkiretü's-Şuara*, which was completed around 1595 as an abridged version of Kınalızâde's biographical dictionary.⁶⁵ Beyond these two late sixteenth century compilations,

⁶² Nev'izâde Atâ'î, *Hadâ'iku'l-Hakâ'ik fi Tekmileti's-Şakâ'ik*, in *Şakaik-i Nu'maniye ve Zeyilleri*, vol.2, ed. by Abdülkadir Özcan, (İstanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1989), pp.713-716.

⁶³ For a detailed analysis of *Hada'ik*, see: Aslı Niyazioğlu, *Ottoman Sufi Sheikhs Between This World and Hereafter: a Study of Nev'izâde Atâ'î's Biographical Dictionary*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2003.

⁶⁴ Kınalızâde Hasan Çelebi, *Tezkiretü's-Şuara*, vol.2, ed. by İbrahim Kutluk, (Ankara: TTK, 1989), pp. 1051-2. This work has also been studied as a dissertation project: Aysun Sungurhan, *Kınalızâde Hasan Çelebi: Tezkiretü's-Şuara, İnceleme - Tenkitli Metin*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertatiton, Gazi Üniversitesi, 1999.

⁶⁵ Beyâni Mustafa b.Carullah, *Tezkiretü's-Şuara*, ed. by İbrahim Kutluk, (Ankara: TTK, 1987), p.323.

two accounts from the early seventeenth century, which are *Tezkire-i Rıza* of Seyyid Rıza and *Riyazü'ş-Şuara* of Riyazî Mehmed Efendi respectively, will be used as well.⁶⁶ Although there are other biographical dictionaries of poets written in this period such as Güftî's *Teşrifatü'ş-Şuara*, there is not a single reference to Veysî in this account.⁶⁷ One possible explanation is Güftî's personal distaste of Veysî's works, particularly his verses. Since Veysî earned his fame not with his verses but rather with his prose, he might have been excluded from Güftî's compilation, which was specifically dedicated to poets. Overall, the same concern for Nev'izâde's account is also true for the information conveyed through these biographical dictionaries, for the information they communicate mostly rely upon each *tezkire* author's personal predilections as well as his utilization of earlier biographical sources. In that sense, they tend to reiterate each other and reflect the decisive discourse of their time, all of which create controversies over the veracity of the knowledge produced about the poets.⁶⁸

Recourse to a selection of chronicles which are either eye-witness or subsequent accounts relying upon the former ones will also provide insights while retracing both Veysî's biography and the lives and personalities of especially those top-ranking officials such as grand viziers Nasuh Paşa or Mere Hüseyin Paşa, with whom Veysî is said to have connections, patronage relations, or in an opposite manner enmities.⁶⁹ Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatnâme* also presents informative anecdotes about both Veysî and the places he had

⁶⁶ Seyyid Rıza, *Tezkire-i Rıza*, (Dersaadet: Kitabhane-i İkdâm, 1316/1898-1899), p.101-2; Namık Açıkgöz, *Riyazü'ş-Şuara: Riyazi Mehmed Efendi*, unpublished M.A. thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi, 1982, p.271.

⁶⁷ Kâşif Yılmaz, *Güftî ve Teşrifatü'ş-Şuarası*, (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, 2001).

⁶⁸ For critical remarks on using biographical dictionaries as first-hand sources, see: Niyazioğlu, pp.16-7; J.Stewart-Robinson, "The Ottoman Biographies of Poets", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, vol.24, no.1/2, 1965, pp.57-74; Haluk İpekten (et al), *Şair Tezkireleri*, (Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları, 2002).

⁶⁹ Hasan Beyzâde, *Hasan Bey-zâde Târîhi*, vol.3, ed. by Şevki Nezihî Aykut, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2004); Abdülkâdir Efendi, *Topçular Katibi Abdülkâdir (Kadrî) Efendi Tarihi: Metin ve Tahlil*, vol.2, ed. by Ziya Yılmaz, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2003); Na'îmâ, *Târîh-i Nâ'ima: Ravzatü'l-hüseyin fi Hulâsati Ahbâri'l-hâfikayn*, vol. 1-2, ed. by Mehmet İpşirli, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007); Mustafa Safî Efendi, *Zübdetü't-Tevârîh*, ed. by İbrahim Hakkı Çuhadar, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2003); Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke-i Katib Çelebi*, vol.2, (İstanbul: Ceride-i Havadis Matbaası, 1287/1870-1871); Peçevi, *Peçevi Tarihi*, vol.2, ed. by Bekir Sıtkı Baykal, (İstanbul: Neşriyat Yurdu, 1981); Joseph Hammer-Purgstall, *Osmanlı Devleti Tarihi*, vol.8-9, tr. by Mehmed Ata & Vecdi Bürün, (İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1983); İ.H.Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi*, vol.3, (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1971). For a rather local account based on the history of Üsküb, which was written in the early twentieth century, see: Sâlih Âsım Bey, *Üsküb Tarihi ve Civarı*, (İstanbul: Rumeli Araştırmaları Merkezi Yayınları, 2004).

lived in.⁷⁰ Finally, all these first hand sources will be supplemented by encyclopaedic entries⁷¹, monographs and articles written by modern scholars.⁷²

Although these are the chief sources that will be utilized throughout this chapter as to uncover Veysî's biography, it should be underlined that there are more sources, most of which can only be touched without going into detail due to the limitations of time and their availability. Other pieces of Veysî's oeuvre, for instance, can provide strong insights regarding his literary tastes, sources of inspiration and ideological affiliations, however there are so few studies on Veysî's literary works.⁷³ His *Divan* has been paid attention by two separate scholars. While the earlier work of Zehra Toska is, to a great extent, dedicated to the transliteration of Veysî's *Divan*, the later study of Fazıl Hoca focuses on a detailed yet unfruitful literary analysis of his verses. Beside his *Divan*, his incomplete *siyer* book [the biography of the Prophet Muhammad] through which he gained a great reputation has been transliterated into the Latin alphabet as a part of a dissertation project, but neither a literary nor a historical analysis of the text and the author has been done so far. Critical editions of Veysî's *Habnâme* along with his letters and other important pieces such as his *Şehadetname* and his work of ethics, *Hediyetü'l-Muhlisiyn ve Tezkiretü'l-Muhsinin*, still wait to be prepared as to depict a more reliable Veysî picture.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, vol.5, ed. by Seyit Ali Kahraman & Yücel Dağlı, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1996-).

⁷¹ Menzel, "Weysi", *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.); M.Kanar, "Veysî", *MEB İslam Ansiklopedisi*; "Veysî", in *Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi*, p.532; Şemseddin Sâmî, *Kamus-ül Alâm: Tarih ve Coğrafya Lûgati ve Tabir-i Esahhiyle Kâffe-yi Esma-yi Hassa-yi Camidir*, vol.6, (İstanbul: Mihran Matbaası, 1306/1888-1889), pp.4713-4; İbrahim Necmi, *Tarih-i Edebiyat Dersleri*, (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1338/1919), pp.125-127; Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, vol.2, (İstanbul: Meral Yayınevi, 1972), pp.423-425; Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, vol.5, (İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı & Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996), p.1664; Franz Babinger, *Osmanlı Tarih Yazarları ve Eserleri*, tr. by Coşkun Üçok, (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 2000), p.168; Ağâh Sırrı Levend, *Edebiyat Tarihi Dersleri: Tanzimata Kadar*, (İstanbul: Kanaat Kitabevi, 1939), pp.268-9; Vasfi Mahir Kocatürk, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi: Başlangıçtan Bugüne Kadar Türk Edebiyatının Tarihi, Tahlili ve Tenkidî*, (Ankara: Edebiyat Yayınevi, 1964), p.487; E.J.W.Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol.3, (London: Lowe-Brydone Ltd, 1958), pp. 208-210; *Başlangıcından Günümüze Kadar Büyük Türk Klasikleri*, vol.5, (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 1985), p.90; Nihad Sami Banarlı, *Resimli Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi: Destanlar Devrinden Zamanımıza Kadar*, vol.2, (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1998), p.681.

⁷² Hayriye Deryan, *Habnâme-i Veysî*, senior thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1960-61; F.A.Salizvjanova, *Khab-name(Kniga Savidenija)*, (Moscow: Nauka, 1976); Zehra Toska, *Veysî Divanı: Hayatı, Eserleri ve Edebî Kişiliği*, unpublished M.A. thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1985; Sedat Şensoy, *Veysî (Üveys b. Muhammed el-Alaşehri) ve eseri "Merace'l-Bahreyn" in Tahkiki*, unpublished M.A. thesis, Selçuk Üniversitesi, 1995; Nuran Öztürk, *Siyer Türü ve Siyer-i Veysî: Dürretü't-Tâc fi Sîreti Sâhibi'l-Mi'râc*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Erciyes Üniversitesi, 1997; Nuran Öztürk (Yılmaz), "Habnâme-i Veysî", *Bir: Türk Dünyası İncelemeleri Dergisi, Prof. Dr. Kemal Erarşlan Armağanı*, vol.9-10, 1998, pp.650-669; Fazıl Hoca, *Veysî Divanı Tahlili*, unpublished M.A. thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 2002.

⁷³ see the above footnote.

Other important yet untouched sources might be judicial documents used and/or written by Veysî while he served as *kadı* in various districts of Rumeli. For example, the court records of Üsküb [Skopje], where he was appointed as *kadı* for seven times, could provide some sense of insights about how Veysî had operated as a *kadı*. As a part of overall dearth in the studies of the court records of major districts in Rumeli⁷⁵, Üsküb's court records for the concerning periods have not been studied yet.⁷⁶ Moreover, the *sicill-i sakk* registers, which were used by *kadıs* as collections of personal notes including wide range of topics such as samples of earlier judicial decisions, prescriptions for illnesses, or specific invocations, can shed a strong light on Veysî's biography.⁷⁷ We do not have an exact copy of such a register of Veysî, but as far as a certain catalogue entry shows, he seems to have had a similar account, where he had put down excerpts from various poets and stories as well as invocations for warding off nightmares and troubles.⁷⁸

Last but not least, *mühimme defterleri* [registers of important affairs] and *kadıasker ruznamçeleri* [daybooks of chief military judges] can be resorted in order to follow Veysî's judicial career from archival documents. The first group of documents compiles the copies of the orders of the Imperial Council related to a wide range of issues discussed at the meetings. These registers are of special importance, for it is possible to find relevant information on almost all aspects - political, social, economical, and cultural - of the Ottoman Empire. As far as those two published registers of important affairs, which cover the last years of Veysî, are concerned, there is no mentioning of Veysî's name as either an appointee or a subject of *reaya*'s complaint.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ *Habnâme* was first published in 1252/1836-7 in Egypt by Bulaq printing house. This copy was followed by numerous publications in Istanbul by different printing agencies, consecutively in 1263/1846-7, 1286/1869-70, and 1293/1876-7. It was also published along with his *Münşeât* and *Şehadetname*.

⁷⁵ One exception is Halime Doğru's recent publication on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century records from Sofia. See: Halime Doğru, *Bir Kadı Defterinin Işığında Rumeli'de Yaşam*, (İstanbul: Kitap Yayinevi, 2007).

⁷⁶ Marlene Kurz's study, which utilizes eighteenth century court records of Skopje, is another exception for scholarship on Rumelian districts' judicial documents. Unfortunately, Kurz's work does not cover Veysî's epoch. See: Marlene Kurz, *Das Sicill aus Skopje: Kritische Edition und Kommentierung des einzigen vollständig erhaltenen Kadıamtsregisterbandes (sicill) aus Üsküb (Skopje)*, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, c2003).

⁷⁷ İlber Ortaylı, *Hukuk ve İdare Adamı Olarak Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kadı*, (Ankara: Turhan, 1994), p.65.

⁷⁸ Günay Kut (ed.), *Tercüman Gazetesi Kütüphanesi Türkçe Yazmalar Kataloğu*, (İstanbul: Tercüman Gazetesi, 1989), p.282-3. Here, Kut enters his account as *Mükâtebât-ı Veysî* [letters of Veysî] and says that the collection of his letters was later published in 1869. However, in the published version of *Münşeât*, such notes and items did not take place.

⁷⁹ BOA, MD, no:82-83.

The *ruznamçe registers* are rather specific accounts containing biographical information about all appointees to the upper echelons of the *ilmiye* [the religious-judicial hierarchy], to the positions of *kadı* [judge], *müderriş* [teacher], and *müftü*.⁸⁰ Although there are some published registers from the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth century Rumeli, those are either prior to Veysî's inception of his career⁸¹, or include records of only the *müderrişün* [teachers].⁸² Nonetheless, Nev'izâde Atâî is known to have used the contemporary *ruznamçe registers* while compiling his biography⁸³; therefore it would not be erroneous to be contingent upon his provenance of information.

II. 1: The Career Beginning

It will be easily noted that biographical information pertaining to Veysî is quite incomplete. As in the case of many Ottoman figures, there are no pieces of knowledge about, for instance, Veysî's mother, his brothers and sisters, his earlier education, his wife or wives, his child or children⁸⁴, and overall his personal life. One thing for certain is, while his real name is Üveys b. Mehemmed, Veysî is the penname he was famous with. He is sometimes referred to as Veysî-i Alaşehri or Veysî-i Üskübi regarding first to his birthplace and the second to the city where he spent most of his career as a judge.⁸⁵ It seems rather obvious that his penname was not derived through an intricate and even spiritual story or granted on behalf of one of his best writings, but rather acquired through a petit distortion of his real name.

This similarity in terms of the names is probably the reason why another seventeenth century poet named Üveysî, who is famous with his harsh *kaside*, *Nâsihat-i İslambol*

⁸⁰ See: Halil İnalçık, "The Ruznamçe Registers of the Kadıasker of Rumeli as Preserved in the İstanbul Müftülük Archives", *Turcica*, vol.20, 1988, pp.251-275.

⁸¹ Ertuğrul Oral, *993-994 (1585-1586) tarihli Rumeli Kadıaskeri Ruznâmesi: (İstanbul Şer'i Siciller Arşivi Rumeli Kadıaskerliği No.3)*, unpublished senior thesis, İstanbul University, 1980; Süleyman Uzan, *997-998 (1589-1590) tarihli Rumeli Kadıaskeri Ruznâmesi: (İstanbul Şer'i Siciller Arşivi Rumeli Kadıaskerliği No.5)*, unpublished senior thesis, İstanbul University, 1980.

⁸² M.Kemal Özergin, "Eski bir Ruznâme'ye Göre İstanbul ve Rumeli Medreseleri", *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no.4-5, 1973, pp.264-290.

⁸³ This point is emphasized by Abdülkadir Özcan in his introductory remarks in *Şakaik-i Nu'maniye ve Zeyilleri*, 5 volumes, (İstanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1989).

⁸⁴ If we are to believe Evliya Çelebi's narrative, Veysî had at least a son, about whom Evliya Çelebi had unfavourable feelings. According to Evliya, strictly contrary to the characteristics of his father, Veysîzâde Çelebi was completely ignorant and unrefined. see: Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, vol.5, p.301.

⁸⁵ F.A.Salizvanova, *Khab-name (Kniga Savidenija)*, (Moscow: Nauka, 1976), p.3.

[Admonition to İstanbul], that includes several derogatory remarks regarding the contemporary situation of the empire, has been confused with Veysî in the concerning literature. This poem has generally been attributed to Veysî, which creates further problems in understanding *Habnâme*, because as having attributed to Veysî such a derisory piece, *Habnâme* is thought to have been written under similar motivations or intentions. However, as Baki Tezcan has substantially evinced, these two figures could not be the same person with regard to their totally disparate style and *Weltanschauung*.⁸⁶

He was born in 969/1561-2 in Alaşehir [ancient Philadelphia, in modern day Manisa], which was at those times the most important district of the Aydın province.⁸⁷ His father is said to have been a *kadı* of Alaşehir. His maternal uncle, Makalî, was a poet about whom contemporary *tezkire* writers had a word or two. There are two poets from Alaşehir having used the same alias, Makalî. While Kınalızâde and Riyazî enter two separate entries for each Makalî, there is only a single reference in Beyanî's account.⁸⁸ Additionally, while Riyazî identifies names of those two poets using the same penname, Kınalızâde does not give any details about their real names. According to Riyazî's account, one of those Makalîs is Makalî Mustafa who had an eloquent use of language and a *Divan*. The other Makalî is Hamamcı-zâde Muhammed Çelebi, who had obtained his *mülazım* status from the Şeyh Arab-zâde Efendi. This latter Makalî is the one of whom Beyanî has made mention. Neither Kınalızâde nor Riyazî specifies which Makalî was his uncle; yet there is a tendency in the secondary literature without any justification that it was Makalî Mustafa Beg.⁸⁹ If we were to accept Beyanî's single entry on Makalî however, Veysî's uncle seems to have been not Makalî Mustafa but Hamamcı-zâde Muhammed Çelebi who was graduated under Arab-zâde Efendi. Keeping aside the discussion on his uncle's identity, it is safe to say that Veysî might have received his early instruction from his father and maternal uncle. He might have even inspired from his uncle during his adolescence as an incipient poet.

⁸⁶ See: Baki Tezcan: "From Veysî to Üveysî: Ottoman Stories of Decline in Comparative Perspective", unpublished paper, *The Vienna Conference on Aspects of Imperial Decline and Resistance*, 11-13 April 2008.

Full version of the *kaside* can be found in Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol.3, p.213-217; Fahir İz, *Türk Edebiyatı'nda Nâzum: XIII. yüzyıldan XIX. yüzyıl ortasına kadar yazmalardan seçilmiş metinler I - Divan Şiiri*, (İstanbul: Küçükaydın Matbaası, 1966), p.117-9; Günay Kut, "Veysî'nin Divanında Bulunmayan Bir Kasidesi Üzerine", *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı: Belleten*, 1970, pp. 169-178.

⁸⁷ See: Feridun Emecen, "Alaşehir", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*.

⁸⁸ Kınalızâde, vol.2, pp.920-1; Riyazi, pp.221-2; Beyani, pp.271-2.

⁸⁹ See: Menzel, "Weysi"; M.Kanar, "Veysî".

As far as Kınalızâde Hasan's remarks on Veysî are concerned, Veysî was a prospective poet whose early writings bear signs of brightness.⁹⁰ Beyanî, writing a decade after Kınalızâde, also appreciates young poet's literary talents while at the same time points out his attainment in scholarship.⁹¹ We do not know, however, how exactly Veysî progressed during his education and where exactly he finished his *medrese* education. He is said to have graduated under the *alim* Molla Abdülkerim Salih Efendi no later than 992/1584-5.⁹² In Naima's account, a certain Molla Abdülkerim is mentioned, who later became chief military judge following his service as a *müderris* in one of the *medreses* in Manisa during the reign of Murad III when Veysî was probably studying as a *medrese* student.⁹³ In Nev'izâde Atâî's account, Molla Abdülkerim Salih Efendi is said to have served as the chief military judge as well, who, thus, can be the same person as described in Naima's text.⁹⁴ In Cahid Baltacı's study on Ottoman medreses from fifteenth and sixteenth centuries however, no reference is reserved for Molla Salih Efendi.⁹⁵ In the light of these, nothing for certain can be said in terms of the place Veysî completed his education, whether Manisa or Istanbul. Nonetheless, it seems likely the case that he finished his *medrese* education in Manisa and then went to Istanbul in order to be able to form an association with those individuals who could grant positions.⁹⁶

Although information on his *medrese* education is rather hazy, things become more visible following his graduation. Before delving into Veysî's career story, it would be useful to briefly summarize the bureaucratic structure of *ilmiye* [judicial-religious hierarchy] in the late sixteenth century Ottoman Empire.⁹⁷ Having completed his education, a young scholar

⁹⁰ Kınalızâde, vol.2, pp.920: “[B]u hâl üzere ber-karar ola gerçekten şair-i pür-iştihar olacağı ruşen ve aşıkardır.”

⁹¹ Beyanî, p.323: “Henüz نوسن ve nevsal iken ilm ve irfanı berkemaldir. Ale't-tevali bu hal üzere sabit ve berkarar olursa şair-i namdar ve üstad-ı bi'l-iştihar olması gün gibi aşikârdır.”

⁹² Nev'izâde Atâî, *Hadâ'ik*, p.714.

⁹³ Naima, *Târih-i Nâ'ima*, vol.1, p.84.

⁹⁴ Nev'izâde Atâî, *Hadâ'ik*, p.303.

⁹⁵ Cahid Baltacı, *XV-XVI. Asırlar Osmanlı Medreseleri: Teşkilât, Tarih*, (İstanbul: İrfan Matbaası, 1976).

⁹⁶ Salizvjanova is the only scholar who has argued that Veysî was instructed by Kadızâdelis in Istanbul. See: F.A.Salizvjanova, *Khab-name(Kniga Savidenija)*, p.4.

⁹⁷ See: İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin İlmiye Teşkilâtı*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988); R.C. Repp, *The Müfti of Istanbul: A Study in the Development of the Ottoman Learned Hierarchy*, (London: Ithaca Press, 1986), pp.1-72; Ali Uğur, *The Ottoman Ulema in the Mid-17th Century: An Analysis of the Vaka'i'ül-Fuzala of Mehmed Şeyhi Ef.*, (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1986), introduction; İlber Ortaylı, *Hukuk ve Idare*

first became a *mülazım*, which specifically refers to candidate for offices, even though the word literally means novice and assistant.⁹⁸ While the term was used for a candidate for office at any stage in his career, candidates for their subsequent posts were sometimes distinguished as *munfasıl* [out of office]⁹⁹, and those who wait for their first appointment could be referred to as “new *mülazıms*” [*mülazimin-i nev* or *nev mülazım*].¹⁰⁰

The length of waiting would depend on various factors including number of graduates and the extent of the available posts as well as the nature of the patronage relations and even the bribes/gifts being offered.¹⁰¹ Since the geographical expansion of the empire slowed down and the population level, on the contrary, tended to increase by the late sixteenth century, there arose an asymmetry between the number of applicants and the available posts, which was the cardinal reason behind the unrest in especially provincial regions led by young *medrese* students. One can wonder whether Veysî had ever been influenced by the contumacious students, for as Mustafa Akdağ has demonstrated, the upheaval was widespread in especially the area covering Manisa, Muğla and Isparta.¹⁰² Various methods were utilized by the central authority in order to deal with the overcrowding in the learned hierarchy such as dividing the districts into smaller units or reducing the time spent in the appointed region.¹⁰³ Nonetheless, problems could not be resolved at all and clouds over granting posts in terms of bribery, nepotism, and favouritism even intensified. Corruption in *ilmiye* ranks and appointment procedures was one of the most favourite topics upon which contemporary political writers heavily stressed.¹⁰⁴ In, for instance, the satirical poem of Üveysî, the author

Adamı Olarak Osmanlı Devletinde Kadı, (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 1994); Rossitsa Gradeva, “On Kadıs of Sofia, 16th-17th Centuries”, *Journal of Turkish Studies – Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları*, vol.26, no.1, 2002, pp.239-264.

⁹⁸ Repp, p. 51.

⁹⁹ Süleyman Uzan, *997-998 (1589-1590) tarihli Rumeli Kadıaskeri Ruznâmesi: (İstanbul Şer'i Siciller Arşivi Rumeli Kadıaskerliği No.5)*, unpublished senior thesis, Istanbul University, 1980, p.12.

¹⁰⁰ Repp, p.51.

¹⁰¹ Uğur, p.xliv.

¹⁰² Mustafa Akdağ, *Türk Halkının Dirlik ve Düzenlik Kavgası: Celâl İsyânları*, (İstanbul: Barış Yayınevi, 1999), p. 259.

¹⁰³ Uzunçarşılı, p.48, 94.

¹⁰⁴ See: Hans Georg Majer, “Die Kritik an den Ulema in den Osmanischen Politischen Traktaten des 16.-18. Jahrhunderts”, in *Social and Economic History of Turkey*, eds.by Osman Okyar & Halil İnalcık, pp.147-155; Feriha Karadeniz, *Complaints Against the Kadıs and Abuses of Their Authority*, unpublished M.A.thesis, Bilkent University, 1996. see also: İskender Pala, *Kadılar Kitabı*, (İstanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2006).

laments the chief military judges and blames them of taking bribery in return for granting positions to undeserving men.¹⁰⁵

Keeping aside the problems with regard to the appointments, there were three main paths for a new graduate to follow. Apart from *müftilik* option, he could either seek for teaching positions or start with a *kasabat kadılık*. In choosing a *kasabat kadılık*, he could be better off financially at the beginning of his career; however, the career of *kasabat kadı* was generally regarded as “dead end”, for they could not re-enter the teaching track easily although the opposite was much possible.¹⁰⁶ The judgeships were ranked according to a hierarchic structure composing of the lowest level with an income of 20 *akçe*, the middle level with an income ranging from 20 to 300 *akçes*, and the upper degree, which was also called *mevleviyet*, with an income 300 *akçes* and more.¹⁰⁷ *Kadı* appointments were done by two chief military judges.¹⁰⁸ The judgeship appointments in the districts of Rumeli were arranged by the chief military judge of Rumeli, whereas it was the chief military judge of Anatolia that managed the appointments with regard to the lands in Anatolia, Egypt and North Africa.¹⁰⁹ Attaining to the periodically scheduled councils of the chief judges was necessary for all the potential and out-of-office functionaries, whereby their names could be recorded down to the registers of *mülazıms*.¹¹⁰ The various high officers within the ulema ranks had a right to distribute working permits to a certain number of students once in seven years. In addition to this sort of appointing mechanism, there seem to have been distributions on a number of special occasions such as the accession of new sultan, the first military campaign of the sultan, the birth of a prince, a recent victory, or a personal fondness of the sultan or a high-

¹⁰⁵ Gibb, p. 217: “But yet more tyrannous than these, my lord, the Qadi-Askers are / For now through bribery they've given o'er the world to wrack by God! / Poor are the men of learning, all their life is passed in want and woe; / But so thou be a knavish fool, thou'lt win both fame and altitude” [*Bunlardan dahi azlemdür, efendim, kazı-askerler/Cihanı şimdi rüşvetle haraba virdiler vallah/Fakir alimlerin ömri geçer uzletde zilletle/Olursan mürteşi cahil bulursın hem izzet hem cah*”].

¹⁰⁶ Repp, p.56.

¹⁰⁷ Uzunçarşılı, p.91.

¹⁰⁸ Uzunçarşılı, yet, notes that by the mid-sixteenth century, it became one of the tasks of the *sheikhulislams* to appoint those *mevleviyet kadıs*. See: Uzunçarşılı, p.77. Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi narrates the story of Ebussuud Efendi who is said to have embittered due to this change, because according to Ebussuud, this would lead *sheikhulislam* with a heavier burden. See: Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi, *Telhisü'l-Beyan fi Kavanin-i Al-i Osman*, ed. by Sevim İlgürel, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1998), p.200.

¹⁰⁹ One exception is the reign of Selim I, when there existed for a very short time a third *kadıaskerlik* for the Arab and Persian lands. This was later in his reign combined with the *kadıaskerlik* of Anatolia. See: Repp, p.45.

¹¹⁰ Baltacı, p.26.

ranking member of *ilmiye* to a particular candidate owing to his literary talents or esoteric knowledge.¹¹¹ Since these permits were granted by few officials and on few occasions in between long intervals, it was probably the most difficult task for the new graduate to withstand against the troubles of unemployment and misery.

Veysî seems lucky enough, for he, thanks to his literary gifts, obtained a judicial position without waiting too long when he was in his early twenties. As narrated in Nev'izâde Atâî's account, while Veysî was parting to the company of Molla Ahmed Efendi, the chief military judge of Anatolia, one of his recent compositions, which was a satirical piece written in a language imitative of *Şehnâmeçi* [official historian-panegyrist] Lokman's kind, became celebrated in that particular milieu.¹¹² It is, indeed, vague whether Veysî was satirizing Lokman and his style, or addressing another person/group/institution through utilizing Lokman's popularity. As far as Lokman b. Huseyin is considered, the first possibility is much likelier, for Lokman was unfortunate in terms of receiving praises and eulogies of his contemporaries. Rather, there were controversies over his literary talents that most of the contemporary biographers of poets do not dedicate a section to him in their accounts. Mustafa Âlî even uttered serious animadversions concerning the Lokman b. Hüseyin's aptitude.¹¹³ No matter whose satire was it, Veysî was appointed as a *kasabat kadı* to Beni Harem in Egyptian lands.

It is unknown how long Veysî had stayed in Egypt and with whom he had contacted. According to Nev'izâde Atâî's illustration of Veysî's career line, he might have spent more than a decade there. Following his service as the *kadı* of Beni Harem, Veysî held the posts of the judgeships in Ferre and Reşid as well as the secretary of the council of Şerif Mehmed Paşa, the governor of Egypt.¹¹⁴ His last occupation began by 1004/1595-6, but the exact span of time he had operated as the scribe of Şerif Mehmed Paşa is undefined. We, then, see Veysî as having occupied posts in Anatolian provinces until 1603. While he functioned as a *kadı* in Akhisar, Tire, and Alaşehir; he held the posts of inspector of property [*müfettiş-i emval*] in Aydın and Saruhan.¹¹⁵ There is a remarkable detail here regarding one of Veysî's *fatawa*,

¹¹¹ Uzunçarşılı, p.45-6; Hezarfen Hüseyin, p.202-3.

¹¹² Nev'izâde Atâî, p.714.

¹¹³ See the relevant articles: H.Sohrweide, "Lokman b. Huseyn", *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.); Bekir Kütükoğlu, "Lokman b. Hüseyin", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*.

¹¹⁴ Nev'izâde Atâî, p.714.

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*

which was likely to have been issued during his inspecting service in Aydın. Although there is no reference from which exact source this information derives, Hüseyin Yurdaydın has published an article on Veysî's related *fatwa*.¹¹⁶ The *fatwa* was about a man named Ahmed Senayi who had penned twenty-thousand couplets of poem satirizing the Prophet Muhammad and propagandising his own prophecy.¹¹⁷ The case of Ahmed Senayi, which seems to have created a tension among the local population, was later transmitted to Veysî. This is suggestive of Veysî's influence as a scholarly figure, for it was not to the *mufti* or the *kadı* of the district the case was conveyed. In his response, Veysî is said to have proposed to sentence Ahmed Senayi to death for the grave transgression of apostasy and offence to Islam as well as its Prophet.¹¹⁸

II. 2: Veysî in Rumeli

Following his terms of office in Anatolian districts, Veysî's career path was shifted to Rumeli. This can be interpreted as a promotion in his career, for the offices in Rumelian lands did supersede those of Anatolia.¹¹⁹ Veysî further obtained a highly appraised status in 1012/1603-4 as he became the chief judge of the imperial army during the campaign against Hungary under the command of the grand vizier Yavuz Ali Paşa.¹²⁰ According to Uzunçarşılı, this position was quite important within the entire rankings of the *ilmiye*; and only those experienced judges could be merited as judge of the army. Upon their service in the campaign, they were likely to be appointed to the highest rung of judgeships such as that of Mecca or any other *mevleviyet*.¹²¹ Uzunçarşılı's depiction however, does not fit much to Veysî's own experience, since Veysî could not retain his service as the chief judge of army. After Yavuz Ali Paşa passed away in the first days of the campaign, Veysî was dismissed and sent to Istanbul. No signs of power dynamics and/or intra-elite struggles were implied in the

¹¹⁶ Hüseyin Yurdaydın, "Alaşehir Kadısı Veysî Efendi (1561-1628)'nin İlginç Bir Fetvası", *CIEPO – Osmanlı Öncesi ve Osmanlı Araştırmaları Uluslararası Komitesi*, VII. Sempozyum Bildirileri, 1986, pp.269-271.

¹¹⁷ Yurdaydın, p. 271: "*Devr-i Muhammed geçübün / Haliya saltanatı Ahmed'e verdi Huda*".

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Repp, p.45.

¹²⁰ Nev'izâde Atâî, p. 714. Yavuz Ali Paşa may sometimes be referred to as Malkoç Ali Paşa in different sources.

¹²¹ Uzunçarşılı, p.131.

relevant first-hand sources though, Veysî's appointment and a sudden dismissal alludes to his involvement in a possible political struggle between Yavuz Ali Paşa and his opponents. The image of Yavuz Ali Paşa as reflected through chronicles and historical narratives seems to verify such an intra-elite struggle. While Mustafa Safi, who wrote an eyewitness account on the reign of Sultan Ahmed I (1603-1618), cites how successful was Yavuz Ali Paşa in exterminating all the tyrants and the traitors¹²², Peçevi, who ostensibly speaks from the loser's point of view, bemoans the grand vizier's conceit, villainy and brutality.¹²³

Upon his return to the Capital, Veysî was appointed by the Imperial Council as *kadı* of Rodosçuk [modern day Tekirdağ]. However, this imperial order was not put into execution by the decision of Rum Esad Efendi, the then chief military judge of Rumeli.¹²⁴ Although we do not know the details of the motives behind Esad Efendi's disallowance of Veysî's appointment to Rodosçuk, there are cues predicating an adversary between these two. It is however uncertain whether this enmity had roots or just started after Veysî's office of Rodosçuk was averted. Here, it would be better to speak of a struggle not on an individual basis but more of a result of group solidarity.

As Aslı Niyazioğlu argues in her dissertation, it is possible to identify a certain clique including Veysî, Nev'izâde Atâî, *sheikhulislam* Yahya Efendi, Nergisî and Ganizâde Nadiri, who were most probably united through their interest in poetry and literature.¹²⁵ As far as Veysî's letters and *kasides* are concerned, it seems quite obvious that he did have intimate relations with the aforementioned figures. In, for instance, one of his correspondences with Nergisî, Veysî, after eulogizing Nergisî's writings and abilities, entreats him to help one of his companions to find an available post.¹²⁶ Beside the letters and *kasides* circulating among them, the existence of common adversaries is another indication that they can be classified as a distinct social group. According to Niyazioğlu, they were likely to compete with another clique composed of the chief judge Bostanzâde, chief mufti Mehmed Efendi, and Esad Efendi. One indicator of this competition derives from the fact that when a member of a

¹²² Mustafa Safi Efendi, *Zübdetü't-Tevârîh*, vol.2, p.2.

¹²³ Peçevi, *Peçevi Tarihi*, vol.2, p.297-8.

¹²⁴ Nev'izâde Atâî, p.714.

¹²⁵ Aslı Niyazioğlu, *Ottoman Sufi Sheikhs Between This World and Hereafter: a Study of Nev'izâde Atâî's Biographical Dictionary*, pp.48-9.

¹²⁶ see: J.R. Walsh, "The Esâlîbü'l-Mekâtîb (Münşe'ât) of Mehmed Nergisi Efendi", *Archivum Ottomanicum*, vol.1, no.1, 1969, pp.213-302, at pp.277-280. see also: Halil İbrahim Haksever, "Veysî ve Nergisi'nin Karşılıklı Mektupları", *Afyon Kocatepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 2001, pp.179-184.

particular group obtained a position, it did happen at the expense of the other group's member. Yahya Efendi, for instance, succeeded Es'ad Efendi while the latter was dismissed from the office of *sheikhulislam*. Nonetheless, Yahya Efendi was later dismissed due to the campaigns of Bostanzâde against himself. The pattern of Yahya Efendi's career is also corresponding to that of Ganizâde Nadiri.¹²⁷ More important than this maybe, all the figures mentioned as members of the former group were subjected to Nef'î's satirical poems, while there is not a single poem that is critical of any of Bostanzâde, Mehmed Efendi, or Esad Efendi.¹²⁸ In his satire pertaining to Veysî, Nef'î laments of his literary talents, intellectual abilities and scholarly knowledge.¹²⁹

This poem is also meaningful as to demonstrate how the term, 'Turk' can be pejoratively used in the early modern Ottoman setting. Although it is a seated conviction that, the term 'Turk' was certainly used in the Ottoman realm as a derogatory remark in order to insult or belittle someone and to identify him/her with a rude peasant, this was not always the case. As shown in Hakan Erdem's article¹³⁰, the term, 'Turk', as used in contemporary Ottoman sources, have no single connotation. While it can be attributed to rudeness, ignorance, bad-manners, and/or coming from a rural background, as it is mostly the case in Nef'î's portrayal of Veysî, the term can also refer to positive connotations. One can find in Âşıkpaşa-zâde's and Neşrî's accounts some of these positive connotations, for 'Turk' is sometimes identified in these texts with heroism or bravery.

¹²⁷ Niyazioğlu, p.49.

¹²⁸ *ibid.*

¹²⁹ Metin Akkuş, *Nef'î ve Sihâm-ı Kazâ*, (Ankara: Akçağ Yayınları, 1998), p.186-7:

Der Hakkı Veysî

Barekallah zihî kudret-i hak celle celal / Nedür ol Türk-i müzevvir suhen-i turfa-makal
Öyle Türkün kasabii's-sebk-i belagat yerine / Kef-i destinde ya ser-deste gerekdür ya kaval
Öyle Türkün yaraşur kande ise yanında / Kise-i defter-i mana yerine eski çuval
Türk tursun tutalum kendi imiş bu fende / O da olmazsa ya Ruyinten ya Rüstem-i Zâl
Hünéri var ise gelsin biricik/birazcık elleşelim / İşte tuğ-ı suhen işte ser-i meydan-ı hayal
Türke hak çeşme-i idraki haram etmişdür / Eylese her ne kadar sözlerini sihr-i helal
Köhne resmi kalemi tazeliğindeydi anun / Kim elindeydi asa-yı reh-i piran-ı dalal
Fark-ı resm-i kühen ü taze tyandur haşa / Beyt-i mamur ile bir ola rüsum-ı utlal
Nice talik eder ehl-i dil olan yarane / Şair olmuş tutalum hazret-i molla kilkal
Kendi bakkal ser-i kuçe-i şehri yave / Sözleri seng-i terazu-yı dükkân-ı bakkal
Kadı-ı mültezim-etvar u harami-siret / Müfti-i meseledan zurefa-yı cühhal
Şair-i muhteşem-i devleti hubbazziye / Nazım-ı gevher-i har-mühre-i medhi erzal
Hissedar olmağile gerçi ki ol devletten / Kamran oldu biraz eyledi tahsil-i menal
Reh-nişin müflis-i cerrar gibi tab'ı veli / Reh-rev-i şehri maaniden eden cerr-i sūal
Ne amel kavline ger eylese dava-yı suhen / Nice isbat-ı hüner edebilür her kavval.

¹³⁰ Y.Hakan Erdem, "Osmanlı Kaynaklarından Yansıyan Türk İmaj(lar)ı", in *Dünyada Türk İmgesi*, ed.by Özlem Kumrular, (İstanbul: Kitap Yay., 2005), pp.13-27.

Around 1605, Veysî was appointed to Üsküb for the first time. Üsküb has a significant place in Veysî's career, since he later held this office on six different occasions and died there during his last service. One can argue here whether Veysî's career is anomalous as being appointed to the same place for more than once. As far as the Ottoman administrative logic is considered, which tends to retain a system of constant rotation in order to impede the *kadıs* to have established connections with local elites¹³¹, Veysî's case seems aberrant. While he was appointed to the *kadılık* of Üsküb for seven times in the course of twenty-four years, four of them were successive between 1613 and 1621.¹³² However, it should be underlined that he was not unique and this was possible to happen in the Ottoman administrative practice. As Rossitsa Gradeva has demonstrated in her article, there were *kadıs* who were appointed to the judgeships of Sofia more than once.¹³³

We do not have sufficient information on his affairs in Üsküb as well as his predilection for this city. Why did he want to be appointed to Üsküb although there were higher positions he could have obtained?¹³⁴ Was he involved in a specific religious path or *tariqa* dominant in Üsküb? Did he engage in provincial politics? Did he ever come into a severe conflict with any of the local notables? Did he establish any pious foundation?¹³⁵ Were there any signs of Veysî's malfunctioning as a *kadı*, such as complaints about his accomplice in bribery or tyranny? These and more questions cannot be answered within such a limited project, which is mostly dedicated to a literary-historical analysis of *Habnâme*. Nonetheless, it is safe to assume that in the light of his duties and responsibilities as a provincial *kadı*, Veysî had presumably sat in his court, listened to matters of disputes, arbitrated over the cases,

¹³¹ Boğaç Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice in the Ottoman Empire: Legal Practice and Dispute Resolution in Çankırı and Kastamonu (1652-1744)*, (Leiden; Boston: E.J.Brill, 2003), p. 36.

¹³² Between his third and fourth tenure, Rodosi-zâde Mehmed Efendi had been appointed as the *kadı* of Üsküb, but thanks to the help of grand vizier Güzelce Ali Paşa, the judgeship of Üsküb was reassigned to Veysî. see: Nev'izâde Atâî, p.714. For Güzelce Ali Paşa, see: Robert Mantran, "Guzeldje Ali Paşa", *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.); İdris Bostan, "Güzelce Ali Paşa", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*.

¹³³ Rossitsa Gradeva, "On Kadıs of Sofia, 16th-17th Centuries", p. 280.

¹³⁴ Although Üsküb was higher than most of the middle ranking judgeships, it was not among the highest ranking positions. The judgeships of, for instance, Tırhala, Tire, Gümülcine or Sakız, which positions Veysî had also held, were either equal to or higher than the ranking of Üsküb. For the rankings of the judgeships, see: Uzunçarşılı, p.94; Ertuğrul Oral, 993-994 (1585-1586) *tarihli Rumeli Kadıaskeri Ruznâmesi:(İstanbul Şer'i Siciller Arşivi Rumeli Kadıaskerliği No.3)*, pp.23-141; M.Kemal Özergin, "Rumeli Kadılıklarında 1078 Düzenlemesi", *Ordinaryus Prof. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı'ya Armağan*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1976), pp.251-309.

¹³⁵ There seems to exist in Üsküb a village named Veysî Efendi, however it is uncertain whether it was established by Veysî and his family, or the village was later named as such for commemorating Veysî. see: Sâlih Âsım Bey, *Üsküb Tarihi ve Civarı*, (İstanbul: Rumeli Araştırmaları Merkezi Yayınları, 2004), p. 56.

monitored the pious foundations, provided certificates pertaining to marriage, divorce, sales and inheritance as well as acted as a state representative in order to receive and send orders regarding the forthcoming campaigns, security of his region and activities of the officials in his city.¹³⁶ Since he had been exposed to actual problems and misery of the population, he had better chance to describe the situation of the empire in his time. The question is, however, whether there were really signs of his own professional experiences between the lines in *Habnâme*.

II.3: Search for Patrons

Veysî's ties with the ruling elite in Istanbul seem to have continued during his holding of offices in the provinces. Through his *kasides* and letters, he either complimented and congratulated his addressee owing to his recent promotion, or expressed his aspiration and need for help in securing a better position. Sultans, grand viziers, viziers, the grand muftis, chief military judges of Rumeli and Anatolia were among those top-ranking figures to whom Veysî wrote *kasides* and/or letters. Within this context, it should be first explained the motives behind writing *kasides* and/or letters in general. Here, I will employ the term "the economy of *kasides*" that Walter Andrews has pointed out in his brief yet laconic analysis of Ottoman *kasides*.¹³⁷

According to Andrews, *kasides* had two interrelated functions. The first one is about the direct material outcomes of the *kasides* to the poet, which may be summarized as "the commodification of poetry."¹³⁸ With this regard, *kasides* commemorating special occasions and celebrating particular achievements were means for the poet to obtain official grants such as stipends, expensive garment and other presents as well as bureaucratic positions.¹³⁹ Beside

¹³⁶ see: Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice in the Ottoman Empire: Legal Practice and Dispute Resolution in Çankırı and Kastamonu (1652-1744)*, pp.32-55; Ortaylı, *Hukuk ve İdare Adamı Olarak Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kadı*, p.28-9; Ronald Jennings, "Kadı, Courts, and Legal Procedure in Seventeenth Century Ottoman Kayseri: The Kadı and the Legal System", *Studia Islamica*, no.48, 1978, pp.133-172.

¹³⁷ Walter G. Andrews, "Speaking of Power: The 'Ottoman Kaside'", in *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa, vol.1: Classical Traditions & Modern Meanings*, ed. by Stefan Sperl & Christopher Shackle (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp.281-300, at p.287-8.

¹³⁸ *ibid*, p.288.

¹³⁹ Halil İnalçık, *Şair ve Patron: Patrimonyal Devlet ve Sanat Üzerinde Sosyolojik Bir İnceleme*, (Ankara: Doğu Batı, 2005), p.28. For the lists of *in'amat registers* [material blessings bestowed upon the poets], see: İ.H.Erünsal, "Türk Edebiyatı Tarihinin Arşiv Kaynakları I, II. Bayezid Devrine Ait Bir İn'amat Defteri", *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no.10-11, 1979-1980, pp.303-342; Erünsal, "Kanunî Sultan Süleyman Devrine Ait Bir İn'amat Defteri", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, no.4, 1984, pp.1-17.

this kind of direct outputs, *kasides* also function as “creating links (or *intisab* relations)” to influential figures that could provide future direct material benefits.¹⁴⁰ Overall, although *kaside* production in Ottoman literary history has not been much investigated under such historical *problématiques*, they were crucial in detecting the nature of relations and networks. As stated by Andrews:

“A kaside was a gift to monarch, or as good as a gift to the monarch; it could make or break a career or a life. It was a way of speaking into a space where no speech was permitted. It created a standard and genre of expression for addressing a group and a place immersed in its own private rituals. (...) It told the story of power and the story of one human being’s relation to that power. It was half the dialogue between empire and individual. What could be more important?”¹⁴¹

Similar to the functions of *kasides*, letters, which can be found in *münşeat* collections of the authors, are expressive of those authors’ emotions and impressions with regard to their expectations, complaints, literary preferences, and career frustration.¹⁴² In Christine Woodhead’s own words, “[a] study of who wrote to whom, when, why and on what topics is a line of enquiry which (...) will contribute to the understanding of cultural patronage and social values.”¹⁴³ With respect to Veysî’s own production, we are lucky enough in terms of both *kaside* and *mektub*, which makes it relatively easier to follow his possible patronage ties.

An impressionistic picture inferred from his *kasides* and letters shows that while Veysî wrote encomiastic pieces in order to be favoured, he, yet, did not shy away from expressing his bitterness and caustic remarks whenever he felt that he had lost his privileges. Among those people to whom Veysî had presented his *kasides* or sent his letters, the sultans Murad III and Ahmed I, the grand viziers Nasuh Paşa and Bayram Paşa, the grand muftis Sunullah Efendi, Yahya Efendi, and Hoca Sadüddinzâde Mehmed Efendi, and the chief military judge Molla Mehmed Efendi appeared as the larger body.¹⁴⁴ We are, yet, unlucky in terms of the exact dates these pieces were written, therefore we can only extrapolate in which specific context he penned those works. In, for instance, one of those periods Veysî was out of office,

¹⁴⁰ Andrews, p.288.

¹⁴¹ *ibid.*

¹⁴² Christine Woodhead, “Ottoman Insa and the Art of Letter-Writing Influences Upon the Career of the Nişancı and Prose Stylist Okçuzâde (d.1630)”, *Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, no.7-8, 1988, pp. 143-159, at p.145.

¹⁴³ *ibid.*, p.159.

¹⁴⁴ For the full list of the recipients of his *kasides*, see: Zehra Toska, *Veysî Divanı: Hayatı, Eserleri ve Edebî Kişiliği*, unpublished M.A. thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1985, pp.34-60.

he wrote to the chief mufti Molla Mehmed Efendi a *kaside*, in which, he vehemently inveighed those who dismissed him out of no reason and heavily criticized the administrators who were inclined to grant posts to undeserving and ignorant men.¹⁴⁵

As narrated in Nev'izâde Atâî's account, Veysî seems to have written a similar account named *Feryadnâme* [letter of complaint] with regard to his recent dismissal from the judgeship of Gümülcine due to the grand vizier Mere Hüseyin Paşa's unjust decision.¹⁴⁶ Mere Hüseyin Paşa was indeed a disliked figure among contemporary *ulema* circles. The nickname of this Albanian origin grand vizier is a sign of his brutality, which has such a story behind: whenever Hüseyin Paşa had ordered his men to execute somebody, he would have just said in Albanian, "Mere!" which literally means, "take him!"¹⁴⁷ In 1623, Mere Hüseyin Paşa became an object of great turmoil led by a large *ulema* assembly accompanied with the *sipahis*. All these groups gathered in the Fatih Mosque having heard that Hüseyin Paşa had had an old-aged member of the council murdered and then disgraced a *kadı* of the Prophet's blood by beating him up. The dissidents demanded the deposition and execution of the grand vizier; however, Mere Hüseyin Paşa crushed the opposition after securing the assistance of the janissaries. The revolt lasted two days and numerous *ulema* members were either killed or exiled.¹⁴⁸ The important question for our purposes is, however, whether Veysî had attended to the gathering in the Fatih Mosque. At the time of the uprising, Veysî might have been in Istanbul. He had been dismissed by Mere Hüseyin Paşa's decision and he was probably circulating his *Feryadnâme* among some members of the *ulema* elites. Therefore, he had every reason to be considered among the discontented *ulema*.

Veysî's connection with Nasuh Paşa also merits special attention not only as an example of his patronage ties but also, and more importantly, for better locating *Habnâme* into its specific historical context. Although *Habnâme* is largely believed to have been

¹⁴⁵ Toska, p.45: "Rüzigar itmese idi nice ebü cehilleri / Hakim-i mahkeme-i şer-i nebiyü'l mürsel / Bi-sebeb azl ile dem-beste idi hatırlar / Garih-i rişte-i can olmuş idi ukde-i hal / Alim ü cahili bir görmese bari dir idüm / Merdüm-i dide-i bed-bin sipahr-i ahval (...) Hatem-i devleti na-ehle düşürmüş idi felek / Meğer olmuş idi bu çarh-ı deni perver-şell... İlmüni bais-i mansıb bilene dirlar idi / İlmüni neyleyeyim olmyacak sende amel / Her taraftan bozulup perde-i kanun-ı şer / Hasılı gelmese idi kaide-i dine halel (...) Unudup gitme paun bekleyen üftadeleri / Bizi sergeşte-i sahra-yı bela eyleme gel / Çıkamam çah-ı beladan kalurın alçakda / Bana virmezse eğer ahid-i ikbalün el / Veysî-i hasteyi garh-ı niamun it yeridür / Yeter itdün anı padergil-i ümmid ü emel."

¹⁴⁶ Nev'izâde Atâî, p.715.

¹⁴⁷ Metin Kunt, "Ethnic-Regional (Cins) Solidarity in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Establishment", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol.5, no.3, 1974, pp.233-239, at p. 235.

¹⁴⁸ For the full account of the story, see: Joseph Hammer-Purgstall, *Osmanlı Devleti Tarihi*, vol.8, p.256-8. see also: Madeline Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600-1800)*, (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988), p.104.

presented to Sultan Ahmed I in 1608, the information rendered from Nev'izâde Atâî's account points to a difference. According to Atâî, whose information is crucial since he was both an eyewitness and probably had intimate relationship with Veysî, *Habnâme* was presented to Nasuh Paşa while he was the grand vizier. Since Nasuh Paşa held the office of grand vizier from 1611 to 1614, the exact date of *Habnâme*'s presentation must have been established in between these years.

Atâî recounts that Nasuh Paşa first appreciated the work as teasing with good intentions that “the counterfeit is the most beautiful.”¹⁴⁹ Having noticed in the work the story of the Abbasid vizier Ibn Alkami, who was blamed for betraying the caliphate in collusion with the Mongol emperor, Hülagû Han¹⁵⁰, Nasuh is said to have decided an increment in Veysî's bestowment.¹⁵¹ This story is turned upside down in Mehmed Süreyya's *Sicill-i Osmani* that this section on Ibn Alkami drove Nasuh to cancel Veysî's endowment.¹⁵² One possibility why there exists such a controversy might be the case that Nev'izâde Atâî or the earliest copyist had made a minor mistake about spot that turned *terk etmek* [to cancel] into *berkitmek* [to consolidate].¹⁵³ As far as the course of the story narrated in Nev'izâde Atâî's account and the contemporary rumours on Nasuh Paşa are concerned, it is much likelier that Nasuh Paşa got upset and decided to abort Veysî's gift. First of all, as Nev'izâde Atâî's course of narration is considered, although Nasuh Paşa seems to have enjoyed the piece at the very beginning, the tone in the anecdote suddenly changes as Nasuh subsequently realized that the aforementioned story was a satire. Did Nasuh suspect it of his own satire and therefore get upset; or did he think that it was a satire of another person, and even one of his enemies, so that become happy? In my opinion, the first was the case, since the image of Nasuh Paşa as reflected through contemporary sources well overlaps the Ibn Alkami character. There were rumours expressed by both the Ottoman and non-Ottoman sources that Nasuh Paşa, who was a highly ambitious and arrogant character even aiming at the throne, had made a secret

¹⁴⁹ Nev'izâde Atâî, p.715.

¹⁵⁰ see: J.A.Boyle, “Ibn al-Alkami”, *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.).

¹⁵¹ Nev'izâde Atâî, p.715: “*Kıssa-i Yusuf gibi bedi' ve dil-pezir ve hida-i ihtirama ahsen-ül-kasas denilse hüsn-i tabirdir. Sadrazam Nasuh Paşa'ya arz eyledikde 'ahsanahu akzabahu' latifesin imişlerdir. Bادهu hilal-i hikâyede vezir-i Muta'asım-ı Abbasi olan İbn Alkami hıyanetin görüb tariz fehmi imekle derr-i ihsanı berkitmişler idi.*”

¹⁵² Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, vol.5, p.1664.

¹⁵³ I have checked out in Süleymaniye library three different copies of Nev'izâde Atâî's work, of which the earliest one dates back to 1643. However, in all these manuscripts, the word in question seems to be *berkitmek*. See: *Hadâ'iku'l-Hakâ'ik fi Tekmileti'ş-Şakâ'ik*, Esad Efendi, #2309; Nuruosmaniye, #3315; Fatih, #4319.

agreement with the Safavids, and that the discovery of this betrayal caused his death.¹⁵⁴ Nasuh Paşa was so notorious with his personality that Naima even utters, “The world was refreshed following his death.”¹⁵⁵

In one of his *kasides* written on behalf of Nasuh Paşa, Veysî disavows what had been said by his enemies to Nasuh Paşa about his hideous acts, and declares his deep sorrow:

“My enemies told you tales on me
Let us suppose that my skirts are contaminated with hundreds of sin
I could not have committed such a despicable deed in my entire life
God knows, I did not do this either
With wiping my bitter tears away, I would have confessed my guilt if I had one
Let us suppose that I was imbued with troubles, where is the benevolence?
My aim is the essence of the elixir of your favour
God forbid that neither coin nor money is my desire
Please give drink of beloved with your hand of goodness
Whereby, every drop of dew can turn to a candle of Cem’s place of enjoyment
Who cares if they find my wording obsolete?
Isn’t this pen the butcher of word painting?”¹⁵⁶

This *kaside* seems to have been written as a response against Nef’î’s satire of Veysî, since Veysî’s word choices as well as his addressing confirms this as true. However, this *kaside* could also include references other than Nef’î. No matter who were the exact addressee of this *kaside*, it is instructive of, first a general awareness of seventeenth century literati about recent writings of his contemporaries, and second Veysî’s particular ties with Nasuh Paşa, from whom he demanded compassion and mercy.

II.4: Sufi affiliations

One final note should be reserved for Sufi tendencies of Veysî. We do not know much about the exact nature of Veysî’s affiliation with Sufism, and his allegiance to a particular lodge or *tariqa*. There are glimpses of evidences that he had strong ties with one of the most

¹⁵⁴ Franz Babinger, “Nasuh Paşa”, *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.); Tayyip Gökbilgin, “Nasuh Paşa”, *MEB İslam Ansiklopedisi*; Joseph Hammer-Purgstall, *Osmanlı Devleti Tarihi*, vol.8, p.184-5; Naima, *Târih-i Nâ’ima*, vol.2, p.412-417.

¹⁵⁵ Naima, vol.2, p.417.

¹⁵⁶ Toska, p. 107: “Beni gamz eyledi dergahuna ada tutalım / Damenüm olsa da alude-i sad-güne tühem / Böyle bir vaz-ı kabih itmez idüm ömrümde / Bunu da itmediüm Allahü Teala alem / Cürmüm olsa dir idüm hun-ı sirüşküüm silerek /”Tutalum iki eliüm kanda imiş kanı kerem” / Garazum cevher-i iksir-i nazardur senden / Haşali’llah ki muradum ola dinar u direm / Dest-i lütfün bana vürsün şu mey-i dilkeşi kim / Her hababı ola kandil-i tarabhane-i Cem / N’ola dirlerse bana sabık-ı meydan-ı suhen / Kasabü’s-sebk-i belagat mi değil elde kalem” Translation is mine.

influential Sufi *sheikhs* of not only his time but also the entire history of the Ottoman Empire: Aziz Mahmud Hudai.¹⁵⁷ As a highly esteemed figure in his time and ages to follow, he had large spectrum of adherents ranging from sultans such as Murad III or Ahmed I to contemporary scholars and litterateurs. His career path merits attention that having served as *kadı* and *müderris* in certain districts and *medreses* upon his graduation in 1560s, he is said to have decided to turn into Sufi path following his dream/nightmare in which he saw hell where his teacher, an eminent *kadı*, was among those people sentenced to death.¹⁵⁸ He is said to have asked himself how it could be possible for him to enter heaven while an outstanding scholar like his teacher did fail. He, then, decided to leave his career in the judicial-religious hierarchy and began his Sufi journey.¹⁵⁹

Dreams did continue to play a major role in Hudai's world. There are accounts showing that all Murad III, Ahmed I, and Osman II sent their dreams to Aziz Mahmud Hudai for receiving his interpretation. In one of these accounts, it is narrated that Sultan Osman is said to have a dream in which he sees himself sitting on his throne reading the Qu'ran. Then the Prophet appears, first takes the sacred pages from Osman's hands, then strips off his gown and finally strikes him violently. The sultan wakes up while he falls of his throne in his dream. This dream was first interpreted by Hoca Ömer Efendi, personal tutor of the Sultan, and he told the sultan to go to Mecca, for the latter had once expressed his resolve to perform the hajj but then neglected to fulfil it. Osman, who became dissatisfied with Ömer Efendi's conclusion, appealed Mahmud Hüdai and the latter wrote in response that it is the authority of *sharia* that the Qu'ran represents, and the world of substance that the gown corresponds. What is to be done was, thus, to secure divine companionship through repentance.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ For Aziz Mahmud Hüdai's life and influence, see: H.Kâmil Yılmaz, *Aziz Mahmud Hüdai ve Celvetiyye Tarikatı*, (İstanbul: Marmara Üniv. İlah. Fak. Yay. – 1984); Ziver Tezeren, *Aziz Mahmud Hüdai*, (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yay., 1987); and more recently, H.Kâmil Yılmaz (ed.), *Aziz Mahmud Hüdai'yi Uluslararası Sempozyumu Bildirileri*, 2 vol., (İstanbul: Üsküdar Belediye Başkanlığı, 2005).

¹⁵⁸ Niyazioğlu, p.174.

¹⁵⁹ This theme of *kadı* dreams/nightmares is quite frequent among the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Ottoman ulema. There were cases other than Hudai that having seen in their dreams/nightmare how they were punished hereafter, some of the *kadıs* ended up their *kadı* career and turned into Sufi path of knowledge. As a contemporary *kadı* and a person upon which dreams seem to have influences, Veysî might have had similar dreams/nightmares as well. Whether he had such dreams or not, it is clear that Veysî did not deviate from his legal profession. For an enlightening work that deals with the *kadı* dreams, see: Aslı Niyazioğlu, "On Altıncı Yüzyıl Sonunda Osmanlı'da Kadılık Kabusu ve Nihânî'nin Rûyası", *Journal of Turkish Studies - Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları*, vol.31/II, 2007, pp.133-143.

¹⁶⁰ Naima, vol.2, p.478.

Although it is clear that Veysî had connections with Hudai, it is rather dubious whether he was one of the disciples of the Sufi sheikh. Evliya Çelebi, for instance, narrates in detail that he had a chance to meet Veysî in Hudai's presence, but he does not pinpoint whether he was a disciple of Hudai.¹⁶¹ In a similar fashion, in the biographical dictionary of the Sufi saints prepared in the late nineteenth century, Osmanzâde Hüseyin Vassaf does not identify Veysî as Hüdai's disciple. While he gives the name of Nev'izâde Atâî as a strong follower of the sheikh, Veysî's name is not mentioned.¹⁶² However, Mehmed Emin Tahir, and latterly Kâşif Yılmaz, who has studied Hüdai's life and works in detail, argues that Veysî was a disciple of Hüdai.¹⁶³ No matter how Veysî's position with respect to Aziz Mahmud Hüdai was, it can be safely argued that Veysî had connections with both an influential Sufi sheikh and his adherents.

One can also trace signs of his Sufi dispositions between the lines of his works. Beside his remarks in *Habnâme* that point to the impermanence of this world, which was indeed a hackneyed motif used by many Ottoman mirror writers, similar passages can be found in Veysî's other writings. It is argued by Salih Asım that while it was a custom among *kadı*s to write down the idiom, "*hatime bi'l hayr*", at the end of the *kadı* records in order to bear his wishes of luck to the next *kadı* of the district, Veysî is said to have written instead a couplet: "Do not ever think that I merely dizzy due to drinking the wine of dismissal / You all know, the offices of this world cannot remain till end."¹⁶⁴ More important than these, Veysî had a particular poem named *Tövbenâme* [book of repentance], which was more informative of his ascetic views. In his poem, which is considered to have been dedicated to late Şeyh Abdürrahim Merzifonî from the Zeyniyye tarîqa¹⁶⁵, Veysî says that it is time for oneself to

¹⁶¹ Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, vol.5, p.301.

¹⁶² Osmanzâde Hüseyin Vassaf, *Sefine-i Evliya*, vol.2, (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2006), pp.585-595.

¹⁶³ Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, vol.2, pp.424; H.Kamil Yılmaz, *Aziz Mahmud Hüdai ve Celvetiyye Tarikatı*, pp. 54-69 & 132-140.

¹⁶⁴ Sâlih Âsım Bey, *Üsküb Tarihi ve Civarı*, (İstanbul: Rumeli Araştırmaları Merkezi Yayınları, 2004), p.43-4: "*Şarab-ı azl içmekten beni sanma döner safi / Bilirsin mansıb-ı dünya değildir kimseye baki.*" Translation is mine.

¹⁶⁵ Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, vol.2, p.424; Veysî", *Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi*, p.532. Mustafa Kara notes down that, Veysî was one of those Sufis who had contributed to the dissemination of Zeyniyye culture through his writings. It is likely the *Tevbenâme* of Veysî to which Kara means. See: Mustafa Kara, *Bursa'da Tarikatlar ve Tekkeler*, vol.I, (Bursa: Uludağ Yay., 1990), p.111.

give up all worldly things and gravitate to God only. In this sense, he expresses his own repentance for having demanded the worldly things and made numerous mistakes.¹⁶⁶

What should be deduced from all those anecdotes and pieces of information regarding the author of *Habnâme*? Keeping aside all the discussions on the historian's ability and possibility to fully reconstruct the past as it did really happen, the various problems in terms of time, and availability of sources hindered me to portray a full-fledged Veysî picture. Nonetheless, this relatively restricted portrayal of Veysî does still shed some light on the web of networks Veysî were involved, the turning points and stages of his life, and overall, his attitude against his successes and failures.

Although he first tempted the attention of the contemporary biographers through his verses, he owed his fame much to his prose, among which one has to count his *siyer* book [the biography of the Prophet Muhammad] and *Habnâme*. Apart from his literary abilities, he had a long judicial career and held various offices in numerous districts in Egypt, Anatolia, and finally Rumeli. This career must have provided him with first-hand administrative knowledge and awareness of the conditions of the population. There would be, thus, no doubt to assume that he had adequate amount of data and knowledge to have penned a detailed mirror for princes.

His contemporaries tend to underline the good nature of Veysî's personal and physical properties while saying, "His poetry is better than his science, his prose is more excellent than his poetry, his conversation is to be preferred to his prose, but the superior comeliness of his presence and gratefulness of his figure are self-evident."¹⁶⁷ However, as far as Evliya Çelebi's remarks on him¹⁶⁸ along with Veysî's career path are taken into consideration, Veysî can easily be labelled as a typical Ottoman mirror writer, whose bitter voice was heavily influenced by his disgruntlement for having lost his privileges. As a judiciary functionary, who is said to have obtained each and every position through his writings, it can be argued,

¹⁶⁶ Toska, p.60-1: "Yeter ey dil heves-i zülf-i siyeh-kar yeter / Yeter ey can-ı bela-dide bu efkar yeter / Ceyb-i endişeye çek başını fıkır it halün / Halk ile eyledüğün beyhude güftar yeter / Rişte-i fikre dür-i eşk-i nedamet-i nazm it / Arzu-yı dil için didüğün eş'ar yeter / Yeter oldı bu heva vü hevesi terk idelüm / Yönelip Hakka reh-i sıdk-ı sedada gidelüm (...) Tevbe Ya-rabbi giriftar-ı heva olduğuma / Tevbe Yarabbi taleb-gar-ı bela olduğuma / Tevbe Yarabbi esir-i mey-i gül-reng olub / Bende-i muğbeçe-i işve-nûma olduğuma / Arzu-yı sanem-i mahlika itdiğüme / Mübtela-yı heves-i mihr-i vefa olduğuma / Tevbe yarabbi ibadet sanup itdüklerime / Damen-alude-i çirkab-ı riya olduğuma / Pey-rev oldum o sühan-pervere itdüm tevbe / Dayima rah-ber-i amd ü hata olduğuma / Tevbe yarabbi hata yoluna gitdüklerime / Bilüp etdüklerime bilmeyüp etdüklerime".

¹⁶⁷ Gibb, p.210.

¹⁶⁸ Evliya Çelebi says that Veysî obtained all his judicial positions with the help of his treatises and writings. See: Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, vol.5, p.300.

without any doubt, that Veysî was adept at producing compelling pieces in line with his desires and goals. In that regard, the question is legitimate whether *Habnâme* was one of his attempts to solicit the donation of the Sultan or any other top-ranking ruling elite.

CHAPTER III

COUNSELLING OR CONSOLING THE SULTAN? *HABNÂME* AS A 'MIRROR FOR PRINCE'

Through a comparative and critical reading of Veysî's *Habnâme* together with a selection of contemporary written texts in a published corpus, this chapter aims to provide a feasible answer to this fundamental question: to what extent Veysî's *Habnâme* can be regarded as an example of Ottoman mirror for princes genre?

We have no substantial evidence to establish when exactly, to whom, under which title, and for what specific purposes [*sebeb-i telif*] Veysî's account was written. Although the text is largely known as either *Habnâme* or *Vakı'anâme*, and is thought to have been presented to Ahmed I in 1608, there is no direct reference to these titles and date in the entire piece of Veysî. This is rather unusual in Ottoman manuscript production except anonymous texts, since the name of a book, its organizational scheme and the reason(s) of its composition [*sebeb-i telif*] are typically mentioned in its preface section.¹⁶⁹

Library catalogues contain various copies of Veysî's account identified as either *Vakı'anâme* or *Habnâme*¹⁷⁰, and some scholars even confuse these two names and erroneously assume them as different accounts.¹⁷¹ Yet, we have evidence that there is a significant difference between the preference of Veysî's contemporaries and that of modern scholars with respect to labelling the text. While, for instance, Nev'izâde Atâ'î, Katib Celebi, and Evliya Çelebi speak not of *Habnâme* but *Vakı'anâme*; in modern biographical books,

¹⁶⁹ Christoph K. Neumann, "Üç Tarz-ı Mütalaa: Yeniçağ Osmanlı Dünyası'nda Kitap Yazmak ve Okumak," *Tarih ve Toplum: Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, vol.1 no.1, 2005, pp.51-76, at p.61.

¹⁷⁰ In Süleymaniye library, I have also encountered two separate copies, one of which is catalogued as *Rüyetname-i Veysî Efendi*, and the other as *Rûyaname-i Veysî Efendi*. The first one seems to be one of the earlier manuscripts, since it was written in 1633. In the second one, however, there is not a notation pertaining to its copying date.

¹⁷¹ Bursalı Mehmed Emin Tahir, for instance, lists *Habnâme* and *Vakı'anâme* as two different works of Veysî. See: Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, vol.2, ed. by A.Fikri Yavuz & İsmail Özen, (İstanbul: Meral Yayınevi, 1972-1975), p.425.

encyclopaedic entries, and the published versions of the text, *Habnâme* is preferred.¹⁷² In order to understand the reasons of such a distinction, one has to know how Veysî's text was perceived in its time and/or what kind of connotations and nuances did the words, *vaki'a*, *rûya*, *hab*, *Vaki'anâme*, imply to seventeenth century Ottomans. Preliminary attempts to provide an answer to these questions will be initiated in the forth chapter of this thesis.

After the traditional lines dedicated to an invocation of God and praise of the Prophet and his companions, Veysî begins his account with a passage that can be demonstrative of both his anxious state regarding his observations on events of his time and his strong desire to meet Sultan Ahmed I in person. In his own words, he wishes either “to prostrate himself before the Sultan's presence and to attain the ultimate happiness of directly talking to him” or “to meet by chance with him” when the Sultan wanders around the city incognito to seek information about the conditions of the poor inhabitants. He seems determinant in terms of his desire to contact with the sultan, because there are various important matters, matters that make him “plunge into the ocean of melancholy,” which Veysî wants to inform Sultan Ahmed I in person.¹⁷³

These lines implying Veysî's aspiration to meet Sultan Ahmed I are likely the reason why *Habnâme* is thought in the secondary literature to have been presented to the sultan. However, we do not know any convincing evidence that the text was certainly presented to Ahmed I. As discussed in detail in the previous chapter, there is only one informative testimonial provided by Nev'izâde Atâ'î. Nonetheless, this does not mean that the sultan did not read the text, because in the complex network of royal patronage, certain members of the

¹⁷² In addition to Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, see: İbrahim Necmi, *Tarih-i Edebiyat Dersleri*, (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1338/1919), p.126; Menzel, “Waysî”, *EF*; Kanar, “Veysî”, (*M.E.B.*) *İslam Ansiklopedisi*; Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî vol.5*, p.1664; Babinger, *Osmanlı Tarih Yazarları ve Müverrihleri*, tr. by Osman Uçok, (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 2000), p.90; Nihad Sami Banarlı, *Resimli Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi: Destanlar Devrinden Zamanımıza Kadar, vol.1-2* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1998), p.681; Vasfi Mahir Kocatürk, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi: Başlangıçtan Bugüne Kadar Türk Edebiyatının Tarihi, Tahlili ve Tenkidi*, (Ankara: Edebiyat Yayınevi, 1964), p.487; *Büyük Türk Klasikleri: Başlangıçtan Bugüne Kadar, vol.5* (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 1985), p.90.

¹⁷³ Veysî, *Habnâme*, (İstanbul: Şeyh Yahya Efendi Matbaası, 1876), p.3-4: “*Bu havâdis-i ‘âlem-i kevn ü fesâdı mülâhaza kıldıkça ve eşnâ-yı tefekkürde deryâ-yı mâl-hulyâya taldıkça böyle gevher-keş-i silk-i temennâ olub fikr iderken dirdimki “Bu eyyâmda pâdişâhımız şehinşâh-ı felek-bârgâhımız halîfe-i rûy-i zemîn şahinîrân-ı Sikender-karîn zibende-i tâc ü taht şehriyâr-ı firûze-baht âftâb-ı cihân-efrûz merrîh-i düşmen-süz cihângîr-i Cemşid-nazîr tâcdâr-ı Erdeşîr-şemşîr (...) Hâkân-ı mesned-ârâ-yı devlet-i sermedü's-sultân bin es-sultânü's-sultân Ahmed Hân bin es-sultân Mehmed Hân eyyeda'llâhü te'âlâ 'azzehü ve eyyede ve şeddede esâse saltanatîhi ve şeyyede hazretleriniñ rikâb-ı kâmyâb-ı hümâyûnlarına yüz sürüb bilâ-vâsîta sa'âdet-i mükâlemeye nâ'il olaydım yâhûd gâhî tefak্কud-i ahvâl-i fukara için teğayyür-i tavr-ı pâdişâhî itmekle geşt ü güzâr-ı şehîr ü bâzâr iderken bârî rast geleydim ve müteğâfilâne hitâb idüb “ahvâl-i ‘âlem perîşân oldu ve eşkiyâ ta'addisi kemâlin buldı” diyeydim ve zu'm-ı fâsîdim üzre tedbîr-i ıslâh-ı memlekete müte'allik nice kelîmât-ı muqaddemât 'arz ideydim (...)*”

palace circle could be resorted as a medium in transmitting such works of art to the ruler. In that regard, Veysî might have approached to the grand vizier Nasuh Paşa, who was the son-in-law of the sultan and had already established ties with Veysî, to make his text's royal acceptance easier.

As the narrative continues, Veysî's intentions become quite visible. It is recounted in *Habnâme* that having observed the collapse of the world around him, and the oppression of the bandits, Veysî expresses his desire to present the sultan his own opinions on how the affairs of the state can be reformed. Right as he becomes secluded with all the troubles and annoying thoughts in his mind, he suddenly falls into sleep and has a dream.¹⁷⁴ As it will be largely discussed in the forth and fifth chapters, seclusion and solitude are typical motifs one can find in dream narratives. Depiction of isolation enables the author to draw a contrasting image between his pre-sleep anxiety and refreshing atmosphere of his dream. In addition to this point, as discussed in the most recent article of Asli Niyazioğlu¹⁷⁵, there seems to be a correlation between the seclusion of a poet - or at least a narrative on the seclusion of a poet - and his dismissal from the office. In this regard, we can speculate that Veysî might have been out of office while writing *Habnâme*, and thus his mundane concerns such as securing an available post might have occupied his construction of narrative.

The ostensible reason for *Habnâme*'s composition as expressed by Veysî at the beginning of the account looks similar to most of other contemporary Ottoman mirrors. Witnessing a disastrous time accompanied with unprecedented hardship and wrongdoings is one important theme many mirror writers shared. Apropos this motif, the present is depicted as a period of decline from a "classicized standards" defined with respect to the author's administrative and social ideals.¹⁷⁶ Following this depiction, suggestions for the solutions of present problems necessary for the restoration of that idealized past are enumerated. In that regard, as Christine Woodhead precisely summarizes, "the Ottoman utopia lay definitely in the past."¹⁷⁷

This does not, however, mean that problems and crises never happened at that particular time span, and that these writers began to write out of nowhere. On the contrary, the

¹⁷⁴ *Habnâme*, p.4: "[B]u efkâr-ı perîşân ile bir gice kûşe-nişîn-i zâviye-i mihnet ve haste-hâl-i gumûm-i 'uzlet idim. Nâgâh derîçe-i çeşm-i cihân-bînime perde-i gâflet aşılub merdûm-i dâde günûde-i mehd-i râhat olub (...)"

¹⁷⁵ Asli Niyazioğlu, "Uzlet ve Onaltıncı Yüzyıl Osmanlı Şairi", *Kritik*, 2008, no.1, pp.102-105.

¹⁷⁶ Fleischer, "From Şehzâde Korkud to Mustafa Âlî: Cultural Origins of the Ottoman Nasihatnâme", p.67.

¹⁷⁷ Christine Woodhead, "Perspectives on Süleyman", *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: the Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*, eds. by Kunt & Woodhead, p. 185.

prefaces of mirrors and expressions of authorial intentions are invaluable as to convey what these writers saw as the most problematic and how they preferred to comment on these selective aspects.

In, for instance, *Asafnâme*, which is usually regarded as the earliest original example of Ottoman mirror for princes, the author Lütfi Paşa, the once grand vizier of Sultan Süleyman who had been dismissed from his office while he was composing his account, employs the same strategy. Although he lived during Süleyman's reign, which is traditionally accepted as the zenith of the empire, Lütfi Paşa does not keep himself from speaking of disarray and pernicious innovations that he witnessed such as an oversized paid-soldiery or the appropriation of peasants' horses for the *ulak* [courier] system. However, his points regarding the hodgepodge in the empire are not adequately substantiated as Lütfi Paşa fails to vary his arguments beyond some generic advice. His primary intention is said to provide guidance to those who would fill the office of grand viziership after him, and to give practical advice as well as pronounce some ethical principles concerning the conduct of state affairs.¹⁷⁸

Unlike Lütfi Paşa, Mustafa Âlî begins his *Nushatü's-Selatin* [Counsel for Sultans] with harsh criticisms and direct references to whom his criticisms were addressed. Before uttering his intentions to write his text, he talks at length about how ignorant and "brazen-faced low class" people occupied important posts instead of qualified men, what kind of harmful acts those viziers living in full pleasure and luxury committed, and to what extent traditional values such as securing justice and equity were abandoned. Like Lütfi Paşa, he sees it as his responsibility that truth has to be said no matter how bitter it is. Furthermore, as it sounds similar to Veysi's dream, he inserts some sense of other-worldliness and tells that he had a dream in which certain holy men instructed him in terms of the beneficial deeds to be performed. In that regard, he formulates the reasons that drove him to write as the following:

"If some questioners who look but at the outward appearance of things and regard the gift of speech as only a means of opportunism consider this unsolicited talk a sort of unnecessary exercise of zeal and say: 'The Ottoman dominions are full of erudite men and of learned persons of great understanding. Those are silent on this matter, keeping their mouths shut contrary to the maxim: Say the truth albeit bitter! Why do you then have the boldness to

¹⁷⁸ Mübahat Kütükoğlu, "Lütfi Paşa Âsafnâmesi (Yeni Bir Metin Tesisi Denemesi)", in *Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1991), p.59-60 (hereafter *Asafnâme*): "Süleyman Han (...) hazretleri vakti ki bu hakire vezir-i azamlık mansıbın ferman buyurdıklarından zamanede bazı adab u erkan ve kanun-u divaniyi evvel gördüklerime muhalif ve perişan gördüğüm için vizaret-i uzma hüdmetine tasaddur iden karındaşlarıma yadgar olmağışün adab-ı vizaret-i uzma mühimmatını derc ve bu risaleyi telif idub ismini *Asafnâme* kodum."

write about this like an expert, and, why you are so eager to express your thoughts with harsh words that offend the heart!’ Here is our apt reply: ‘Not only is this outpour [of opinion] (...) in harmony with [the commands] of Divine destiny, this sin-laden slave has also been obeying the instruction of certain holy men that appeared to him in his dreams, and the repeated miracle-working guidances of, from among the host of spiritual teachers, Master Firdevsi (...), Galen (...), Master Sa’dii, (...) Master Hafiz (...) as well as Master Nuruddin Jami. (...) I have also heard from the mouths of the great this advice worth minding: ‘It is the duty of all men to assist the ruler by advice’ (...) and when they see them in growing trouble because of disasters and catastrophes they should rush to their aid with word and deed, with [their] possessions and [good] intentions.’¹⁷⁹

Nearly two decades later than Mustafa Âlî, Hasan Kâfî Akhisarî, a *medrese* graduate serving as a judge in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, explains in his treatise, *Usûl ül-Hikem fi Nizâm ül-Âlem* [Philosophical Principles Concerning the Order of the World], his primary motivation for writing such an account with reference to the unfavourable experiences of his observations regarding those detrimental acts, damaging circumstances and overall downturn of his time. Like Âlî, Akhisarî attempts to stress his prophetic authority by means of other-worldliness, and describes how all the things to be written were revealed to him by God. In his own way of depiction, he has entreated God in order to be informed about the causes behind the corruption and decline, and God is said to have put the ideas in his mind, so that Akhisarî has become enabled to explore the reasons and process of decline and disturbance, which, in Akhisarî’s point of view, began in the 980/1572-3.¹⁸⁰

One can also find similar passages in *Hırzû’l-Mülûk*, *Kitab-ı Müstetab*, Koçi Beg’s treatises, and Katib Çelebi’s *Düsturü’l-Amel li-İslahü’l-Halel* [Regulations for Reforming Defects]. The resentful author of *Hırzû’l Mülûk*, which was likely a participant of the struggle among political factions during the time of Murad III, writes down that since he has noticed some unrighteous acts that signify to a state in disasters, he has compiled well ordered sayings and admonitions from the counsels of far-seeing sages that relate the admirable practices for a secure rule and protection of the subjects.¹⁸¹ In quite a similar fashion, the anonymous writer

¹⁷⁹ *Mustafa Âlî’s Counsel for Sultans*, vol 1, (hereafter *Counsel for Sultans*), ed. and tr. by Andreas Tietze, (Wien : Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979), p.23-4.

¹⁸⁰ Mehmet İpşirli, “Hasan Kâfî el-Akhisarî ve Devlet Düzenine Ait Eseri *Usûlü’l-Hikem fi Nizâmi’l-Âlem*”, *İÜFTD*, no.10-11, 1979-80, p.249 (hereafter *Usûlü’l-Hikem fi Nizâmi’l-Âlem*): “[H]icre-i Nebeviyye târihinün bin dördüncü yılında âlemün nizâmında fesâd ve bozgunluk müşâhede eyledim (...) Pes bir gice sünnet ve farz olan ibâdâtü edâ itdükden sonra yerleri ve gökleri halk eyleyen Rabbü’l-izzet cânibine kalbimi ve nefsimi döndürdüm. Ya’nî vâki’ olan halel ve zülelün hikmeti ve sebebi olan esrâra vâkıf olmak için teveccüh-i tâm ile teveccüh eyledim. Pes Rabbü’l-izzet hazretleri bana fehm eylemeği müyesser eyledi. (...) Pes, şol vaktki Allah ta’âlâ hazretleriniñ latif avni ile te’emmül ve fikr eyledim (...) Bana bu hususda münkeşif oldı, ya’nî tokuz yüz seksen târihinden berü vâki’ olan ihtilâl ve teşevvüş hususunda ba’zı vechler ve ba’zı sebebler feth ve keşf oldı.”

¹⁸¹ Yaşar Yücel, *Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilâtına Dair Kaynaklar*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988), p.171: “Bu cihetten cemi cihanı terk idüb ekser evkatta dide-i ibretle ahval-i cihana nigeran ittüğünce beka-yı devlet ve

of the *Kitab-ı Müstetab*, which is thought to have been written during the reign of Osman II, says that unprecedented patterns of behaviours paved the way to disorder of the world, and created discontentment among population, all of which made him express his own comments of problems and suggestions of remedies.¹⁸² In his treatises written in petitionary [*arz*] form and likely presented to Murad IV and Ibrahim, Koçi Beg states similarly that the real motivation behind his composition of such a text is to enumerate those negative innovations as the chief causes of disorder, and to suggest how these setbacks can be reformed.¹⁸³ Finally, the polymath Katib Celebi, who composed a corresponding account during his occupation in the financial department of bureaucracy in the early 1650s, iterates how he decided to participate to this popular genre of compiling advice and admonitions based on his own observations pertaining to the signs of decline and downfall in the essential characteristics of the empire.¹⁸⁴

The vocabulary used and the concepts underlined by the writers of mirrors manifested in especially the preface section of each account reveal how the contemporary literati was so obsessed with declinist sentiments: *fesad* [corruption], *tezelzül* [turmoil], *infial* [confusion], *ihtilal* [disorder]. Their organizational framework is designed in such a way that they first point to an overall disorder and decline they have recently realized, and then begin to delineate the essential causes of these problems in the light of their personal agendas, i.e. the aspects that they want to draw attention. Veysî, however, differs from these writers on three main grounds. First, his remarks of disasters or disorder are rather put subtly, and as it will be demonstrated below, he, unlike his contemporaries, does not speak in detail about the reasons of this disorder or reforms to be immediately implemented. On the contrary, he turns into an unusual route and begins to picture how the world had been filled with pain, discord, and seditious acts from the time of Adam onwards. In this sense, *Habnâme* is best to be labelled

saltanat ve asayiş-i ahval-i raiyyete müteallik niçe rey ü tedbir hatıra /.../ olup zail olmasun diyü cem ve tahrir iderdim ve bazı erkan-ı devletten bina-yı saltanat-ı kahire ve esas-ı hilafet-i bahirenün el-iyazü billah tezelzül ve ihtilaline say-ı belîğ işar ider bazı na-şayeste evza ve etvar müşahade itmeğle asitan-ı saadete hulus-ı ubudiyetüm hasebiyle i'lam ve arz itmeği üzerime vacib ve farz bilüp..."

¹⁸² Yücel, p.1: "Fi zamanına haza sadır olan ahval-i alem ve mütebadir olan ef'al-i Beni Adem ki nizâm-i aleme ihtilal ve reaya ve berâyaya infi'al virmişdir. Ana bais ve badi ne vechile olmuşdur ve şimden sonra girü tedbir ve tedarüki ne üslub üzre görülmesi münasibdür, (...) takrir ve tahrir olunur."

¹⁸³ Koçi Bey Risalesi, ed. by Ali Kemali Aksüt, (İstanbul: Vakıf Matbaası, 1939), p.18: "Devletpenah-ı şehriyariye arz ü inhaya musaraat ettim ki bais-i ihtilal-i alem ve sebeb-i tegayyür-i ahval-i beni Adem ne idüğü ve biinayettillah ne vechile salah-pezir olacağı mücmelen malum-u Hümayûn-u padişahi olub anen feanan asar-ı cemile-i şahane zuhura gele"

¹⁸⁴ Orhan Şaik Gökyay, *Kâtip Celebi: Yaşamı, Kişiliği ve Yapıtlarından Seçmeler*, (Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1982), p.236-7.

as an anti-declinst treatise. Secondly, Veysî's text is less imbued with details related to actual politics and picture of his contemporary society than didactic tales of earlier times. This didacticism is, however, not based upon the rhetoric of 'Golden Age' as the criteria of an ideal state and society, but rather upon the portrayal of past as a means to indoctrinate that nothing was different. Finally, Veysî's concerns regarding the contemporary state and society are not communicated directly by the author, but through the words put into the mouth of Ahmed I, who strikes a conversation with Alexander the Two-Horned in a dream setting.

Before delving into the details of this conversation and questioning the validity of his dream whether it is invented as a mean to conceal and displace his own criticism with those of Sultan Ahmed character in his fiction, this dream setting should be first disclosed. After Veysî says that he falls asleep and has a dream, he suddenly finds himself among some exalted men whose faces are shining like the "light of happiness." All of these men including Veysî tend to walk slowly toward the paradise-like garden and then decide to stop before a golden figured throne. Veysî, along with the other servants, goes behind them and stands in a position ready for service. By the signal of the ruler occupying the throne, he sits on the grass, then suddenly realizes that it is Alexander the Two-Horned who is enthroned, and flanked in both sides by the late Ottoman sultans.¹⁸⁵

It is of no coincidence that in Veysî's dream setting, Alexander is exalted and considered as the sultan of the sultans, since Alexander was quite a popular character in Ottoman literary production and was deemed with great respect in terms of his political wisdom, moderation, and heroism.¹⁸⁶ However, there is a controversy over his identity whether the name, Alexander the Two-Horned, implies the Macedonian king, Alexander the Great, or the Qur'anic figure, *Zü'l-Karneyn* [the Two-Horned]. At most times, the two were

¹⁸⁵ *Habnâme*, p.4: "Nāgāh derīçe-i çeşm-i cihān-bīnime perde-i gāflet aşılub merdüm-i dīde günūde-i mehd-i rāhat olub seyyāh-ı cihāngir-rūh temāşā-yı şehristān hayāl iderken nāgehān bir tā'ife-i celilü 'ş-şāne rāst geldim ki her biriniñ nāşiye-i hālinden nūr-i sa'ādet lāmi olub her biri bir sīmā-yı dilārā ile hūrāmān olarağ bir bağçe-i firdavs-nişāne yetdiler ki hezār haşmet ü vekār ile birer kürsī-i zer-nigārda karar eylediler. Bu fakīr daği sā'ir hūddām ile hīdmet iderek ya'nī sāye-mişāl 'akablarınca giderek mağām-ı hīdmetde tūrdum. Bālā-nişīn-i meclis olan devlet-mendiñ işāretiyle sebze-i çemen-zār üstüne oturdum. Meger ol āftāb-ı sadr-nişīn olan İskender-i Zü'l-karneyn olub yemīn ü yesārında nūcūm-ı zāhire gibi leme'ān idenler selātin-i māziyye-i Āl-i 'Osman kaddesa'llāhü esrārahūm hāzerātı imiş."

¹⁸⁶ W.Montgomery Watt, "Al-Iskandar", *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.); İsmail Ünver, "İskender", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*. See also: Jonathan G. Katz, *The Oriental Adoption of Alexander the Great*, unpublished senior thesis, Harvard University, 1975. I am thankful to Prof. Katz for permitting me to read his senior thesis.

intended as one and the same.¹⁸⁷ Therefore, it would be more appropriate to treat Alexander the Two-Horned not as the real/historical Alexander but rather the legend of Alexander.

One can find in Persian literature, especially in the *Shahnâme* tradition, how Alexander was transformed into a Persian king, and represented an exemplary sultan figure bearing all the ideal characteristics a king had to have.¹⁸⁸ Inspired heavily from Persian literature, the Alexander romance is also famous in Ottoman *belles lettres*. One of the most famous one is *İskendernâme* of the fourteenth century poet, Ahmedî, who also merges Alexander and *Zü'l-Karneyn* in his account. It is therefore best to consider Veysî's use of Alexander the Two-Horned as a continuation of a literary tradition.

Ahmedî's *İskendernâme*, beside its importance as one of the earliest masterpieces written in Ottoman-Turkish literature, is crucial in making sense of Veysî's possible motivations behind composing *Habnâme*, in which Alexander the Two-Horned appears as the protagonist. As Caroline Goodwin Sawyer, who has made the most detailed analysis of Ahmedî's *İskendernâme* thus far states, *İskendernâme* was written "in response to the upheavals of the time, and in an evidently frustrating search for patronage and fame."¹⁸⁹ When he completed his account, it was a time of political ambivalence and increased tension between Bayezid I and Timur. His choice of Alexander as the protagonist of his work is, therefore, not accidental. Before all else, Bayezid and/or Timur, as potential patrons of Ahmedî, might have admired and even identified themselves as Alexander. Ahmedî could have wished to benefit from such a detail. Secondly, Alexander may have been a model for Ahmedî himself in terms of his wisdom or any kind of knowledge that a "well-read person like Ahmedî considered important to know."¹⁹⁰ As far as *Habnâme*'s historical context is concerned, a similar interpretation can be done that *Habnâme* was a reflection on Veysî's concern over both the political instability of his time and his search for patronage. There are no substantial evidences whether Ahmed I had such a claim to become an Alexander of his time; yet there are cues expressed in contemporary European sources that Ahmed I promoted himself as the young *Alexander*.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ İskender Pala, "İskender mi, Zülkarneyn mi?", *Journal of Turkish Studies-Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları*, no.15, 1991, pp.387-403.

¹⁸⁸ A.Abél, "İskandar Nâma", *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.).

¹⁸⁹ Caroline Goodwin Sawyer, *A Study of Ahmedî's 14th-Century Ottoman İskendernâme*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1997, p.4.

¹⁹⁰ *ibid*, p.11-3.

After Veysî's realization that it is the Alexander the Two-Horned sitting on the throne, Sultan Ahmed I and his companions compounding troops of majestic sergeants, cavalries, gold-hatted janissaries, fully robed *aghas*, and viziers, appear in the scene. While Ahmet dismounts from his horse, each of his men begins to place himself to a suitable position with respect to their hierarchy. Ahmed, having accessed to a gold brocade tent close to the throne of Alexander, begins to have a chat with the legendary ruler. Veysî explicitly articulates here his ebullience to have a chance to be exposed to the advice of such a ruler who has conquered all the known world. Veysî even says that attending such an auspicious council made him forget his former anxious mood. After some ordinary remarks and exchange of generic ideas, the dialogue between Ahmed and Alexander the Two-Horned turns to issues regarding state affairs.

In this relatively short dialogue constituting well-nigh three pages of the entire account, the expression of political and ethical ideas ranging from emphasis upon justice to the loyalty of the subjects is concentrated. It is first Alexander the Two-Horned who begins to speak of how the ruler corresponds to the heart of the world, and how the body becomes injured if the heart is 'not on the right course,' and deviates from the state of temperance.¹⁹² Such kind of a political language that identifies rulers, institutions, and groups of society with bodily organs is one of the favourites of Ottoman political treatise writers. This is, however, not an invention of Ottoman writers, but a legacy of an established tradition in Islamic political writing whose roots can be traced as far back as ancient Greek and Sasanid philosophy.¹⁹³

Sequentially, Alexander the Two-Horned states that justice, equity, and compassion are the necessary properties a ruler must have, otherwise tyranny and injustice cause the ruin of the subjects. Ahmed takes first a very deep sigh that he even cries. Stopping for a moment, Ahmed starts his harangue:

¹⁹¹ Richard Knolles, *The Turkish History: From the Original of That Nation, to the Growth of the Ottoman Empire: With the Lives and Conquests of Their Princes and Emperors*, vol.3 (London: Printed for Charles Brome, 1687). p.839.

¹⁹² Habnâme, p.5-6: "*Giderek cevâhir-i kelâm bu semte îsâr olundu ki pâdişâhlar 'âlemiñ kalbidir kalb ki müstaķimü'l-ahvâl olmayub hadd-i i'tidâlden münharif ola be-her-hâl beden iğtilâl-pezîr olur.*" Except those sentences marked by single quotes, all translations are mine. Here, see: Baki Tezcan: "From Veysî to Üveysî: Ottoman Stories of Decline in Comparative Perspective", unpublished paper, The Vienna Conference on Aspects of Imperial Decline and Resistance, 11-13 April 2008, p.5.

¹⁹³ See: Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

“O Lord of the world! I have already been aware of the fact that justice and equity are crucial for the ruler, who will be deprived of God’s favour if he fails to provide these. However, the present problem is having accessed to the throne when the world has ruined from beginning to end and the hearts of the people have been burnt by the fire of the bandits. It has been around some forty years since my grandfather Murad III had sent myriad of soldiers to fight against the heretics for the sake of subduing the enemies of religion. The war had not ceased for even a year, and old honourable deeds were abandoned as exemplified through those undeserving men’s occupation of high offices and ranks of men of sword. Due to that, there appeared a great tumult in every corner of the world, and arose an enmity and hatred among members of *reaya* and military (...) *Celalis* did also emerge in this atmosphere when those bandits gathered under the flags of their leaders.”¹⁹⁴

Following with the *ecnebi* problem, Ahmed says:

“While our loyal slaves were torn down during their persevering efforts to protect the majesty, those *ecnebis* who had been recruited to the circles of slavery for emergency needs, betrayed and joined *Celalis*. As a result, the inherited domains of the Ottoman Empire, and the houses of *reaya* have been ruined for a long time. If the *kuls*, who are mine indeed, refuse to obey me, how am I to protect the *reaya* with the sword of justice and equity, and control the country? Had God entrusted the Ottoman sultanate to me when the world was prosperous and thriving, I could show everyone how to secure the country and run the state affairs.”¹⁹⁵

Ahmed’s long tirade, through which a relatively slight picture drawn by Veysî regarding the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Ottoman state and society is disclosed, is the only part in the entire text where one can find direct references to contemporary circumstances. Before posing the question whether this depiction is sufficient to evaluate Veysî’s account as an example of Ottoman mirrors, a historical analysis is needed as to what Veysî might have meant by using concepts such as justice, equity, and tyranny, and

¹⁹⁴ Habnâme, p.6-7: “*Didi ki: Ey şâhib-kırân-ı ‘âlem takrir-i dilpeziñ üzre pâdişâhlara ‘adl ü dâd pîrâye-i sa‘âdet olduğı ma‘lûmdur ve ol pâdişâhki ser-çeşme-i inşâfdan bî-naşibdir ‘ayn-ı ‘inâyet-i Hağ‘dan maħrûmdur. Ammâ müşkil budur ki imdâd ü ‘ayn-ı hażret-i rabbü’l-erbâb celle celâlihu ile bir zamânda taħtgâh-ı salţanata cûlûs eyleyesin ki gâh hâne-i ‘âlem serâser ħarâb ü yebâb ve ħalkıñ âteş-i fitne-i eşkiyâ ile cigerleri kebâb ola. Ceddim merhûm ü mağfûrîn-leh Ĥudâvendigâr-ı a‘zam sultân Murâd Ĥan tayyeba ‘llâhu te‘âlâ şerâhu kal‘-i şecere-i rafz ü ilhâd için memâlik-i Kızılbaş-ı bî-dîne râyet-i hümâyûn-sâye-i sultânî birle ‘asâkir-i deryâ-ħurûş gönderiliden berü bu âna dek kırk yıla ħarîbdır şarğ u ħarba ser-dârlar ya‘nî ħahr-ı a‘dâ-yı dîn için sipâh-sâlâr gönderilip bir yıl sefer terk olunmamağla nice mekrûhâtlar ihtiyâr olunub meşelâ menâşib-i ‘aliyye ve merâtib-i seyfiyye nice nâ-ehl âdeme düşmekle, rûy-ı zemînde gûşe-be-gûşe kıyâmetler kopup her yıl zehâb u iyâb-ı ‘asâkir tekâlifinden re‘âyâ ile ‘asker miyânesine ‘azîm ‘adâvet-i fitne-engiz düşüb giderek muħâşama-ı lisân muħâkeme-i seyf ü sinâne mü‘eddî olmağla aşl-ı ħilkatinde şecere-i şekâvet merkûz olanlar seçilüb çıkub fitne nâmına olan eşkiyâ sürbe sürbe olub sürbe nâmına olan sürbelerin birkaçı yek-pâre biriniñ ħaldırdığı râyet-i ma‘kûse altına cem‘ olub biri birine mu‘în ü zâhîr olarak yek-pâre taħl-ħurûc velvelenin âsmâne yetirib celâlîniñ şî‘ârın izhâr eylediler.”*

¹⁹⁵ *ibid*, p.6: “*Ve âbâ‘an ceddin ħânedânımız ħayr-ħ‘âhı olan ħullar, uğur-ı hümâyûnda baş ü cân oynatmağla munħariz olub sefer zarûretiyle ħulluğ silkine mülhâk olan ħullar daħi ni‘met-i pâdişâhîyi bilmeyib celâlîniñ tavrın ħollanub memâlik-i mevrûşe-i ‘Osmânî bu ħadar zamândan berü pây-mâl-i eşkiyâ olmağla ħânümân-ı re‘âyâ suzân ü perişân olmuşdur. ħul ki benim ħulumdur baña tâbi‘ ve fermân-ber olmayıcak baña şemşir-i ‘adl ü dâd ile şiyânet-i ra‘iyyet ve zâbı u rabı‘-ı memleket nice ħâbil olur? Ey şâhib-kırân! Ĥazret-i sultân-ı ħaybdân celle celâlihu ser‘ir-i salţanat-ı ‘Osmânîyeyi baña böyle ‘âlem ħarâb iken âmâde itmeyüb ma‘mûr u âbâdân iken müyesser ideydi zâbı‘-ı memleket ve ħall u ‘ağd-ı umûr-ı ra‘iyyet nice olur, görüleydi (...)’*

by emphasizing the role of *Celali* rebellions, corruption in military orders and incessant warfare.

Justice, equity, and fear from oppression accompanied with admonitions to adhere to the principles of *kanun* and/or *sharia* are the leading themes of the Ottoman political thought. However, it should be always kept in mind that the emphasis upon these notions was not an Ottoman invention, but rather a part of long philosophical chain tracing as far back as ancient Greek philosophy and Sasanid principles of administration. One can find in Aristotle, Plato, or Sasanid tradition, major similarities in terms of the ideas communicated. We should be cautious here, however, to argue for early modern Ottomans' direct utilization of ancient Greek philosophers. Although there are various references to Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, and Galen in early Ottoman texts, it is likely that Ottoman intelligentsia were exposed to these names and their opinions from Islamic philosophers such as al-Ghazzali or Farabi.¹⁹⁶

The principles of Sasanid administration that had been largely incorporated into Islamic political philosophy have much to say about the commonality of concepts. According to this tradition, a social structure whose borders are well defined was required for the operation of the religion. In Zoroastrian theory, society was composed of four main classes: priests, warriors, husbandmen, and artisans. Each individual man was expected to do his own job and no one else's. The king, as the representative of God on earth, was entitled to rule the country orderly and just, which involved keeping the balance and hierarchy among social orders. Religion was identified with the social order, therefore there was no separation between religion and the state. On the contrary, "religion and "kingship" were regarded as two brothers.¹⁹⁷ While the ruler's role was to be absolute and to create prosperity, what is left to its subjects was passivity, i.e. staying at their well-defined circles. Justice was, in this sense, the cement of all this structure determining not only each individual's proper status, but also legitimizing the authority of the king as the provider of protection and prosperity.

Justice in this particular context has no relevancy with legal justice or impartial judgment in its modern sense. It is rather defined as "the prevention and elimination of the oppressive acts, *zulm*, by those who exercise power in the name of the ruler."¹⁹⁸ In that regard, justice can be regarded as a mechanism organizing social relations and positions among

¹⁹⁶ Fahri Unan, *İdeal Cemiyet, İdeal Hükümdar, İdeal Devlet: Kınalı-zâde Ali'nin Medîne-i Fâzıla'sı*, (Ankara: Lotus, c2004), from his introduction.

¹⁹⁷ Lambton, "Islamic Mirrors for Princes", pp.421-422.

¹⁹⁸ Halil İnalcık, "State and Ideology under Sultan Süleyman I," in *The Middle East and the Balkans Under the Ottoman Empire: Essays on Economy and Society*, (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1993) p.71.

power holders and the masses. According to the conventional approach of Ottoman writers of mirrors regarding the social structure, society is divided into four main strata: the military [*askerî*], the religious/intellectual [*ulema*], the peasant [*reaya*] and the merchant [*tüccar*].¹⁹⁹ While the former two were exempt from tax payments, the latter two were sometimes grouped as a single unit of tax-paying subjects. The basic premise of justice is to keep each order in their initial positions, and in a well-known formulation of the ‘Circle of Equity’, the causal link is expressed as such:

“It is justice which is necessary for the world; the world is a vineyard and its wall is a state; the state is governed by the *sharia*; the *sharia* cannot be maintained without a king; the king cannot govern without soldiers; he cannot congregate soldiers without wealth; it is the *reaya* who accumulate wealth; and it is justice which makes the *reaya* the servants to the *padişah* of the universe.”²⁰⁰

The practical implementation of justice in Ottoman administration has been referred to as one of the principal factors why no peasant rebellion was witnessed in the early modern Ottoman Empire while many coeval European and Asian countries faced them.²⁰¹ According to this way of interpretation, the Ottoman political culture and institutions are regarded to have provided the peasants with sufficient means to avoid the tyranny of local administrators. One of the *reaya*’s methods was to forward their complaints to the capital. They could send their personal or collective petitions including their personal grievances either directly or through the office of *kadı*.²⁰² There are specific registers for recording these kinds of petitions that are called ‘record book of complaints’ [*şikayet defterleri*], which have not been studied as

¹⁹⁹ Virginia Aksan, “Ottoman Political Writing: 1768-1808”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol.25, no.1, 1993, pp.53-69, at p.53.

²⁰⁰ “Adldir mucib-i cihan; cihan bir bağıdır divarı devlet; devletin nazımı şeri'attır; şeri'ata haris olmaz illa melik; melik zaptylemez illa leşker; leşkeri cem' edemez illa mal; malı cem' eyleyen re'ayadır; re'ayayı kul eder padişah-ı ademe 'adl”, quoted in Boğaç Ergene, “On Ottoman Justice: Interpretations in Conflict (1600-1800)”, *Islamic Law and Society*, vol.8, no.1, 2001, pp.52-87, at p.57.

²⁰¹ In addition to Barkey’s *Bandits and Bureaucrats*, see: Suraiya Faroqhi, “Political Tensions in the Anatolian Countryside Around 1600: An Attempt at Interpretation”, *Varia Turcica IX, Türkische Miszellen, Robert Anhegger Festschrift*, (İstanbul: Divit Press, 1987), pp.117-130; and Faroqhi, “Political Initiatives ‘From the Bottom Up’ in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Ottoman Empire: Some Evidence for their Existence”, in *Coping With the State: Political Conflict and Crime in the Ottoman Empire 1550-1720*, (Istanbul: Isis, 1995), pp.1-21.

²⁰² Halil İnalçık makes a differentiation between arz-ı hâl and arz-ı mahzar with respect to their personal or collective nature. See: Halil İnalçık, “Şikâyet Hakkı: ‘Arz-ı Hâl ve Arz-ı Mahzar’lar”, *Osmanlı Araştırmaları – The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, no.7-8, 1988, p.35.

much as *mühimme registers* or *kadı records*.²⁰³ Another sign of the practical adoption of the justice principle is *adaletnâmes*, which include orders sent by the Palace to the provincial administrators in order to severely admonish and even to threaten those oppressive officials who were blamed for acting in contradiction to justice and equity.²⁰⁴ One interesting detail with regard to Veysî, who served as a judge in most of his career, is that while *kadıs* were the medium to transmit the complaints of *reaya* to the central authority, it was also the *kadıs*, about whom most of the complaints were made in especially the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Main faults that *kadıs* were accused of were venality, bribery, and extraordinary taxes and fees arbitrarily imposed by them upon the *reaya*.²⁰⁵

Beyond its practical implications, one has to ask why Ottoman writers of mirrors put so much emphasis upon promotion of justice. Did these writers talk about justice as a mere continuation of a political tradition that upholds just rule, or did they have different sets of assumptions and definitions attributed to the principle? What might be the relationships between *kanun*, *sharia* and justice? What can be inferred from these writings with respect to the *reaya*? Can we speak of a sincere sympathy shown towards *reaya*'s misery, or did these writers simply deliver *reaya* within the context of the importance of preserving traditional social borders? What about Veysî and his overall attitude as reflected through *Habnâme*?

In his article devoted to understanding how the notion of justice was used in the early modern Ottoman Empire as a mechanism of political legitimization, Boğaç Ergene elucidates that justice was defined in different ways.²⁰⁶ This variety of meaning, for Ergene, is corroborated by the fact that both the central authority and its challengers claimed to act in the name of justice.²⁰⁷ In its first and classical meaning, justice refers to the protection and well-being of *reaya* against the oppression of administrators. According to Ergene, through such a discourse secures the state its legitimacy as a revenue-appropriating entity.²⁰⁸ Beyond this way of utilization, the notion of justice was also heavily used by the dissenters, who uttered

²⁰³ For a recent example, see: Michael Ursinus, *Grievance Administration (Şikayet) in an Ottoman Province: the Kaymakam of Rumelia's 'Record Book of Complaints' of 1781-1783*, (London; New York: Routledge Curzon, 2005).

²⁰⁴ Halil İnalçık, "Adaletnameler", *Belgeler*, vol.2, n.3-4, 1965, pp.49-145.

²⁰⁵ *ibid*, pp.75-79.

²⁰⁶ Boğaç Ergene, "On Ottoman Justice: Interpretations in Conflict (1600-1800)", *Islamic Law and Society*, vol.8, no.1, 2001, pp.52-87.

²⁰⁷ Ergene, p.53.

²⁰⁸ *ibid*, p.67.

their complaints regarding their perception that the hierarchical social order was disrupted by detrimental innovations such as the intrusion of *reaya* into military ranks, diffusion of venality, corruption and favouritism in bureaucracy.²⁰⁹

In quite a similar fashion, Abou-el-Haj argues that *kanun*, and justice as its paramount quality, provided the means of expressing and organizing political and social relations as well as “legitimizing roles and actions available in social groups.”²¹⁰ The fundamental reason why the complaints and suggestions of many mirror writers concentrated around the necessity of restoring ancient law [*kanun-ı kadim*], and adhering to the principle of justice was, for Abou-el-Haj, these writers’ acridness regarding the changing social order. “Call for justice” was, therefore, less much related with a consistent political philosophy or concerns about the *reaya*’s misery than their personal agendas.

The opening remarks of *Nushatü’s-Selatin* [Counsel for Sultans] of Mustafa Âlî provides glimpses of evidence about what Âlî had in mind when he underlined the importance of justice. “[J]ustice and equity are,” says Mustafa Âlî at the very beginning of his account,

“(…) coins of standard purity on the scales of popularity and prestige (…) They [men of understanding and wisdom (*erbab-ı fehm ü zeka*), the owners of intelligence and sagacity (*ashab-ı akl ü nüqa*)] have observed that the maxim ‘Justice means putting things in places where they belong’ fits persons of rank, and especially that the sentence ‘Injustice is buried in the soul: weakness hides it, strength brings it out’ applies to the vezirs of weighty opinion, to the powerful statesmen, and to most others of whom it is said: ‘those who belong to the highest ranks.’”²¹¹

Following his rather theoretical instruction, Mustafa Âlî substantially enumerates throughout his work how “ignorants” were appointed when there were wise men available, to what extent “truthfulness” and “justice” were replaced by “flattery” and “eulogy,”²¹² and what is the duty of the Sultan in order for curing all these ills. Justice in Âlî’s terminology, therefore, refers more to the fair distribution of offices and the preservation of the old hierarchical class balance than the protection of the *reaya*.

Similar passages can also be found in many of the Ottoman mirrors. Hasan Kâfi Akhisarî, for instance, underlines the failure in the maintenance of justice as the primary cause

²⁰⁹ Ergene, p.86-87.

²¹⁰ Abou-el-Haj, “Power and Social Order: The Uses of the Kanun”, in *The Ottoman City and its Parts: Urban Structure and Social Order*, eds. by A.Pierman, R.A.Abou-el-Haj, and Donald Preziosi., p.77.

²¹¹ *Counsel for Sultans*, vol.1, p.17.

²¹² *ibid*, p.18.

of the disorder by giving special reference to legendary Sasanid emperors famous for their justness such as Anushirevan Hosraw or Ardashir. He seems to identify injustice as granting posts to undeserving men.²¹³ Moreover, a breach in the traditional order of society is also regarded as one of the fundamental problems. He divides society into four main groups as men of sword [*kılıç ehli*], men of letters [*kalem ehli*], agriculturalists [*reaya ve beraya*], and merchants and guild members [*tüccar ve zanaatçı*]; and says that it is the duty of the sultan, who is the heart of the world, to make each member of these groups keep their orders and act accordingly. Otherwise, disorder would occur.²¹⁴

The objections of many mirror writers against the intrusion of *reaya* into the military class, or outsiders [*ecnebi*] and city boys [*şehir oğlanları*] into palace circle are of direct relevancy vis-à-vis their anxiety with regard to the shifting class balance. In, for example, an early seventeenth century treatise written by a certain Aziz Efendi from the secretarial profession, the author harshly criticizes the filling of the Sultan's palace by “*low, undesirable types and city boys*, from whose employ it is fruitless to expect any good will ever come.”²¹⁵ A similar message is also prevalent in a treatise written in the first decade of the seventeenth century by a top-ranked janissary, who decries the penetration of outsiders into the corps that led to disarray in the hierarchy of organization.²¹⁶ Koçi Beg also chastises the destruction of the traditionally closed ranks of the *sipahi* class by the illegitimate outsiders. For Koçi Beg, the *sipahi* army, whom he regards as the founders of the empire, was exterminated²¹⁷, and thus the government was forced to increase the number of cash paid soldiers. This in turn resulted in the

²¹³ *Usûlü'l-Hikem fi Nizâmî'l-Âlem*, p.249: “*Bu tagayyürât ve tebeddülâtun evvelki vechi, adâletde ihmâl ve tekasüldür, dahi hüsn-i siyâset ile zabt olunmakta ihmâl olunduğudur. Bu ihmâlün sebebi, umûr-ı nâsı ve mühimmât-ı memleketi ehl olanlara tefviz eylememekdür, ya'nî mesâlîh ve menâsıb nâ-ehle virilmekdendir.*”

²¹⁴ *Usûlü'l-Hikem fi Nizâmî'l-Âlem*, p.252-3: “*Her bir sınıf ehlinün kendülere mahsus olan amel üzere sabit ve ka'im olmaları mülk ve saltanatda nizâmı icab ve iktiza ider. Amma her sınıfın kendüye mahsus olan amelde ihmâl idüp tekasül üzere olması nizâmın hilafını iktiza ider, yani mülkde ihtilal icab ider.(...) Padişah olanlar sair halk-ı aleme göre bedendeki kalb gibidür; sair bedene göre pes her kaçan ki yürek sağ ve salih ola, cümle bedene salah ve sağlık hasil olur.*”

²¹⁵ Rhoads Murphey, *Kanûn-nâme-i Sultânî li-'Azîz Efendi* [Aziz Efendi's Book of Sultanic Laws and Regulations], (Harvard: Harvard University, 1985), p.6. Italics are original.

²¹⁶ Pal Fodor, “Bir Nasihatnâme Olarak Kavanin-i Yeniçeriyân”, 5. *Milletlerarası Türkoloji Kongresi, III-Türk Tarihi*, vol.1, 1985, p.219.

²¹⁷ Although it has been enlightened today that transformation of timar system and implementation of *malikane* system (life-time tax-farming) was the primary fiscal method employed in this age of “crises and change” in order to solve the problem of liquidity, neither Koçi Beg nor any of these writers tend to see these changes as a part of readjustment instead of signs of decay and collapse. For transformation of timar system and shifting patterns in Ottoman fiscal measures, see, in addition to Salzmänn: Mehmet Genç, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Devlet ve Ekonomi*, (İstanbul: Ötüken, 2000).

expansion of the *kul* army whose ranks were filled with outsiders. Taking all these into consideration, the *reaya*'s penetration into the military ranks was detrimental according to Koçi Beg, for it led both to uncultivation of lands which was the cause of grave financial problems, and the abandonment of old class-balance between the *sipahi* army and the *kul* army in favour of the latter one.

It should be however pointed out that, as Abou-el-Haj puts forward, the discourse produced in these mirrors seems to be restricted to the ruling class. *Reaya* is not considered as an important actor of the debate; on the contrary, their social mobility is regarded as a major peril facing the empire.²¹⁸ Lütfi Paşa, for instance, advises that the gate of *sipahihood* should be closed to *reaya*, because in that case everyone would flee from *reaya* life and become a *sipahi*.²¹⁹ Similarly, Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa, who wrote in the early eighteenth century, firmly states that the *reaya*'s entering into the military class must be prohibited, since this would cause the diminishing of the producer class, and thus a deficiency of the treasury.²²⁰ Nonetheless, as demonstrated by Julius Kaldy-Nagy, none of these writers raised any objection regarding the *reaya*'s being carried away to the galleys of the fleet. For this matter, it seems obvious that the Ottoman writers of mirrors were concerned only when *reaya* became *timar*-holders or infiltrated to other official positions, and thereby endangered these authors' social statuses.

Veysî's attitude against *reaya* is quite interesting. Despite the fact that none of the Ottoman mirror writers were sincerely concerned with *reaya*'s misery, Veysî goes one step further, and expresses through Alexander figure that *reaya* is fully responsible for all the ruin and deterioration.²²¹ Nonetheless, one must be cautious before labelling Veysî as an extreme elitist. First of all, since the apparent intention in *Habnâme* is to assuage Ahmed I and provide his patronage, by blaming *reaya* for their misbehavior Veysî automatically releases the sultan from the accountability of the changing fortunes of the empire. Beside, we do not know for sure what Veysî specifically meant by the word *reaya*. He might have meant not the *reaya* as

²¹⁸ Abou-el-Haj, "The Ottoman Nasihatnâme as a Discourse over Morality", p.28.

²¹⁹ Asafnâme, p.98: "Ve reayadan biri külli hidmette bulunub mezid inayetden tımara müstahıkk olub sipahi olsa akrabasın ve babasın ve anasın siyanet itmek gerek. Veyahud danışmend olsa kendü raiyyetlikten kurtulur, ama tevabii yine raiyyetdür."

²²⁰ Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa, *Ottoman Statecraft : the Book of Counsel for Vezirs and Governors* [*Nasaihü'l-Vüzera ve'l-Ümera*], tr. by Walter Livingston Wright Jr., (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1935), p.118.

²²¹ *Habnâme*, p.44: "Bu evrâkda meşûr olan meşâib ü beliyât her 'aşrda re'âyânîñ niyyet-i fâsidesinden lâzım gelmişdir. Pâdişâhların bu bâbda medhali yokdur. Nitekim rabbü'l-'âlemîn kur'an-ı bâhirü'l-burhânında buyurmuşdur bi'sm'illâhi'r-raḥmâni'r-raḥîm inna'llahû lâ yugayyirü mâ bi-kavmin hatta yugayyirü mâ bi-enfüsihim"

we understand today, but maybe the ‘people’ in general. For he immediately quotes the Qur’anic verse in which ‘people’ is referred to, this second possibility sounds more credible.

To summarize the discussions of these writers’ stress regarding justice, preservation of hierarchical social orders and fear from *reaya*’s mobility, it can be argued that the anxiety concerning the distressed present and the unknown future with respect to their social status was the underlying factor behind these writers’ declinist sentiments. Such an anxious state is, however, not peculiar to Ottoman society. As William Bouwsma demonstrates, anxiety was one of the critical aspects of the early modern European intellectual atmosphere.²²² Unlike medieval culture, which was well suited to provide some sense of safety with its fully articulated system of boundaries, early modern culture and transformations in all economic, political and social terms, paved the way to vertical mobility that disturbed the old class balance by which “people could orient themselves and find meaning.”²²³ In response to their loss of meaning, ‘an idealized past’ that represented the ‘good old days’ of peace, order, prosperity and victory became a consistent linguistic and thematic element, which seems very much akin to “post-Süleymanic historical consciousness” of Ottoman literati.²²⁴

To return to *Habnâme* and the sentences put into Ahmed I’s mouth, Veysî shares much in terms of the thematic and linguistic baggage of contemporary Ottoman writers of mirrors. The importance of justice and equity, prolonged wars, the enrolment of *reaya* as military recruits and its detrimental consequences are all briefly voiced by Sultan Ahmed I as major signs of his deep anxiety. The text however, unlike other mirrors, does not provide any in-depth schemes of practical suggestions. One cannot find in *Habnâme* any specific proposal such as reinforcing naval technology as expressed by Lütü Pasha, keeping registers of office appointments as advised by anonymous writer of *Hürzü’l Mülük*, improving the military equipments and techniques as proffered by Hasan Kâfi Akhisarî, reforming and improving the conditions of Kurdish beys as suggested by Aziz Efendi, training those newly conscripted boys [*acemi oğlanları*] directly by janissaries or *sipahis* instead of Turkish peasants as offered by

²²² William J. Bouwsma, “Anxiety and the Formation of Early Modern Culture”, *After the Reformation: Essays in Honor of J.H.Hexter*, ed. by Barbara C. Malament, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980), pp. 215-246.

²²³ Bouwsma, p.230.

²²⁴ See: Cemal Kafadar, “The Myth of the Golden Age: Ottoman Historical Consciousness in the post-Suleimanic Era”, in *Süleyman the Second and his Time*, eds. by Cemal Kafadar & Halil İnalcık, (İstanbul: Eren, 1993), pp.37-48. For an interpretive analysis regarding the use of “past” for the sake of presentist concerns, see: Eric J. Hobsbawm, “The Social Function of the Past: Some Questions”, *Past and Present*, no.55, 1972, pp.3-17.

the anonymous author of *Kitab-ı Mesalihi'l-Müslimin*, lowering the size of paid soldiery as demanded by Koçi Beg, or lessening the tax burden on *reaya* as written by Katib Celebi.

Ahmed I is replied by Alexander the Two-Horned not with extensive lists of what to do and what to avoid, but rather with a historical outlook considerably different from the kind provided by other Ottoman mirror writers. Unlike most of the authors of mirrors who idealize the past in order to underline their present concerns, the historical consciousness represented by Alexander is an anti-idealized one. According to Alexander the Two-Horned, if one were to listen to Ahmed, s/he would think that the world was prosperous and thriving before Ahmed's time, and it was first during Ahmed's reign that the world began to be dominated by suffering and wickedness.²²⁵ However, as he reminds Ahmet, "the world had neither been all prosperous during the reign of any king, nor have the people of the universe been able to find safety from its evil." He then asks a single, yet crucial rhetorical question: "When was the world, which we call in ruins today, ever prosperous and thriving?"²²⁶ This rhetorical question is a literary device repeated by Veysî at the end of each story that he narrates regarding the agony, cruelty and destruction witnessed in world history, which is, indeed, Islamic in nature.

Beginning with the story of Adam and Eve, and ending with the narrative on the political turmoil during the Mongolian invasion of the Abbasid lands, Alexander the Two-Horned recounts thirty-four stories in order to show Ahmed I that the world was not the kind of place he had supposed to believe. About half of these stories, which are about the periods of the prophets, are Qur'anic in origin such as murder of Abel by Cain, fight among Hud and the people of Ad, struggle between Saleh and Thamud, and Moses and the Pharaoh. It is noteworthy to realize that unlike the general tendency of the Islamic interpretation which sees the age of the Prophet as the 'Golden Age,' Veysî does not refrain from including this era into his narrative and asks whether "the world was prosperous and thriving when the swords of Muhammad's companions turned to coral, that is red, from enemy blood as they were converting tribes that worshipped to creatures instead of the Creator"²²⁷

²²⁵ *Habnâme*, p.8: "[H]azret-i Zü'l-*karneyn* daği *semt-i taḥkika imāle-i licām-ı kelām idüb müte'accibāne buyurdılar ki: Ey pādīşāh-ı 'ālem! Ser-rişte-i takrīre çekdiğiñiz cevāhir-i kelāmıñızdan münfehim olunur ki bu kār-hāne-i 'ālem pādīşāhān-ı pīşin zamānında ma'mūr u ābādān olub hemān siziñ zamān-ı devletiñizde ḥarāb u yebāb oldı. Ya'nī selātın-ı māziyye eyyāmında bu zīr destān-ı ra'ıyyet āsūde-i gūşe-i ferāğ olub (...) bu dolāb-ı āsmān meydān-ı kudretde ser-gerdān olalı ḥāl-i 'ālem bir ṭavr üzre ḳarār itmemişdir."*

²²⁶ Tezcan, p.6. In *Habnâme*, p.8: "Ey pādīşāh-ı civān-baḥt! Bī-vefā dūnyā eger benim bildiğim dūnyā ise ne bir pādīşāh zamānında hergiz ma'mūr u ābādān olmuşdur ve ne ḥalk-ı 'ālem onuñ şerrinden amān bulmuşdur. Zamānımızda ḥarāb didiğimiz dūnyā ne vaḳıide ma'mūr u ābādān idi."

²²⁷ Tezcan, p.7. In *Habnâme*, p.23: "«*Veyāḥūd*» ḥazret-i (...) Muḥammedü'l-Muştafa (...) rüy-i 'ālem serāser ḥāristān-ı şer ü şūr olmağla kimse menhic-i müstakim-i hidāyete mühtedī olmayub her ḳabile ahālisi

One important detail to be delineated is Veysî's attitude regarding the Ottoman history within his entire historical approach. In that matter, what Veysî says and where he silences provides us evidences to understand his opinions. There is not a specific story dedicated to the exemplification of a similar suffering and wickedness in Ottoman history. Although all the former Ottoman sultans sit around Alexander the Two-Horned in this dream setting, neither one of them nor Alexander serves to narrate an anecdote about a particular destitute time ever witnessed in Ottoman rule. On the contrary, there are three stories where Veysî interjects his own voice and make comparisons to the Ottomans in order to emphasize the good nature of the Ottoman style of administration. In, for instance, the twenty-ninth story, Alexander the Two-Horned speaks of Abbasid "*mihna*", a measure similar to the Inquisition, within the context of the policies that Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mûn followed to have ascendancy over the religious circles.²²⁸ Alexander reminds Ahmed of the story of Ibn Hanbal, one of the prominent scholars of Islamic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], who tried to withstand al-Mam'ûn's pressure and refused to accept the opinion that Qo'ran was created. However, at the end he was tormented and imprisoned.²²⁹ Following this story, Alexander asks his rhetorical question whether the world was prosperous and thriving when "the vault of heaven turned into a rosy-red tent from the reflection of the blood of the martyrs who were executed because of their beliefs."²³⁰ Right at this moment, Veysî inserts his own voice into the narrative and eulogizes the Ottoman ways of managing affairs. According to Veysî, one could never find a similar unlawful act against Muslims during the reign of any Ottoman sultan. For him, to execute a

mahlûkâtdan birine ya'nî kimi sûya ve kimi âteşe ve kimi tâğa ve kimi tâşa 'ibâdet ya'nî tapârken bu kadar erâzil-i bed-nihâd-ı dâlâlet-i i'tiyâdı tarîk-i dâlâletden döndürüb mihrâb-ı islâma serfürü itdirinceye dek bu kadar muhâcirîn ü enşârîñ dest ü tîgleri düşmen kanından pençe-i mercâna döndükde mi 'âlem ma'mûr u âbâdân idi"

²²⁸ Tezcan, p. 7.

²²⁹ *Habnâme*, p.34: "‹Veyâhûd› destgâh-ı hilâfet-i 'uzmâ âl-i 'Abbâsa müsellem oldukda tañtana-i devletleri hâtrâ gelmez bir fitne-i 'azîme ikâz idüb kur'an mañlûk midir yohsa kâdim midir diyü gulât-ı mutezileden bir iki bî-dîn hevâsına tâbi' olmağla 'ibâdullahı imtiñân mişillü kadîmdir diyü tarîk-i müstakîme gidenleri dîvânında eşedd-i siyâsetle katl iderdi. Ekâbir-i 'ulemâdan Ahmed bin Hanbeli rađıallahü 'anhü hazretlerini Me'mûn halîfe mañbüsen getirüb 'akd-i meclis-i münâzara olunmadan Me'mûn kuşte-i tîg-i reybu'l-menûn olub evreng-i hilâfet mu'taşım bi'llaha müyesser oldukda imâm-ı müşârünileyhi mañalli-i münâzaraya getirüb kelâmullah mañlûk midir yohsa kâdim midir diyü su'âl olundukda ol dahî cevâbında allahıñ ilmi mañlûk ise kelâmı da mañlûkdur didikde cellâdân-ı zebâniye meşreb iñzâr olunub ol meclise ol zât-ı 'azîmü'ş-şâmi mertebe-i 'aklden sâkiñ oluncaya dek kârbâc-ı ş'übân-endâm ile darb eyleyüb envâ'-i işkenceye mübâşeret itdikde 'asâkir-i islâm 'ulemâya bu haķaret nedir diyü çenber-i iñâ'atden hürüc ideyazdılar."

²³⁰ *Habnâme*, p.35: "Ehl-i dîvân perîşân oldukdan soñra zindâne gönderüb iki yıl dört ây esîr-i bend-i zindân iken eñrâf-i reb'-i meskûna emirler gönderilüb kırk yıla qarîb güşe-be-güşe katl ü işkence-i 'ibâdullahdan cellâdân-ı bî-rahma melâl gelüb 'aks-i hûn-i şehîdân ile kubbe-i âsmân hayme-i gülgüne döndükde mi 'âlem ma'mûr u âbâdân idi"

Christian or a Jew living under Ottoman rule could not be done arbitrarily, but a decision was required to be religiously and judicially approved following a complex set of bureaucratic procedures in the entire judicial system that starts from the *kadı* and ends with the Sultan.²³¹

Next, Veysî's voice is also manifested in another section where Alexander the Two-Horned narrates the story of Abu Hanifa in the context of his imprisonment by Caliph al-Mansur. When Abu Hanifa rejected the offer of the post of chief judge of the state, and chose to remain independent, the Caliph Abu Ja'far Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Mansur arrested and locked him in prison, and furthermore tortured him. Alexander repeats here his usual question whether "the world was all prosperous when the oppression of such a tyrant as al-Mansur reached all quarters of the universe?"²³² Subsequent to this question, Veysî involves in the debate and notes down that under the Ottoman rule not only those people who dare to insult experienced Hanafi scholars but also those who venture to scorn even the newest member of the scholarly profession, would be punished.²³³

His final interpolation emerges while Alexander the Two-Horned completes his narration of the battle between al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf, the governor of Iraq under the Umayyad' reign, and Abdallah b. ibn al-Zubayr, the anti-caliph of Mecca. The story of the battle includes the anecdote regarding the bombardment of the Holy City by the forces of al-Hajjaj with stones from the mountain of Abu Qubays. Alexander finishes his anecdote with his rhetorical question, and asks whether the world was prosperous and thriving when al-Hajjaj turned the sands of the Qaba' into the particles of coral made up of human blood.²³⁴ Veysî again engages in the narrative and explicitly expresses that under the rule of just and conscientious Ottoman sultans, it is impossible not only to dare to throw a stone to Qaba' but

²³¹ *Habnâme*, p.35: "[P]âdişahlarımız âl-i 'Osmân sebbet'allahû âsâs devletihûm hazretleriniñ zamân-ı şerîflerinde şerî 'at-ı seyyidü'l-enâma muhâlif vaz'a ikdâm ile katl-i 'âm-ı ehl-i islâm itmek degil tâife-i Yahûd ü naşârâdan bir zımmi'-i nâçiziñ şer'en katli lâzım gelse kudât-ı islâmdan biri hükm idüb yâzdığı hüccet-i şer'iyeyi kadı-asker muṭâbık-ı şerî'at-i garrâdır diyü pây-e serîr-i sultâniyyeye 'arz idüb şüreti defter-i ru'ûse kayd olunub aşl-ı hüccet hıfz olduğdan şoñra siyâset oluna diyü zâbıta-i şüret-i ru'ûs virilmeyince katl olunmaq muhâldir."

²³² *ibid*, p.36: "[Z]âlim-i bî-dîniñ velvele-i zulmi çâr-cihet-i 'âlemi tutub nice yıllar tarabhâne-i zemînden h'âb ü râhatı kaldıran bî-dîniñ zamânında mı 'âlem ma'mûr u âbâdân idi", at Tezcan, p.8.

²³³ *ibid*: "«Velâkin» serîr-ârâ-yı devlet-i ismâmiye olan pâdişahlarımız şehriyârân-ı 'Osmânî zamân-ı şerîflerinde imâm-ı 'azam rađıallahû'anhû mezhebini ihyâ ider 'ulemâ-i 'âmilîn degil imâm-ı 'azam tâcidür diyü destârın kabardub gezdiren 'âlimân-ı tarîk-i 'ilmiñ birine qarşu söyleyen âdemi tahkîr-i 'ulemâ itdiñ diyü makâm-ı katle getürürler"

²³⁴ *ibid*, p.33: "Haccâc-ı zâlim (...) hâk ile yeksân medfûn eyledikte baṭhâ-yı k'abetullahiñ kumlarını âdem kânından hurde-i mercâna döndüren zâlim-i bî-dîn zamânında mı 'âlem ma'mûr u âbâdân idi"

even to precede local mosques with military bands due to the deep respect shown to these places.²³⁵

Following the stories recounted by Alexander and the direct interventions made by Veysî in order to underline the glory of Ottoman rule, comes the concluding section of the text where the positions of both Veysî and *Habnâme* are clearly manifested. Here, Alexander recapitulates all the anecdotes by saying that it would be a futile attempt to tell each and every day from the time of Adam onwards, for there had always been always similar incidents taking place. “It is the *reaya*’s vicious intentions,” says Alexander, “that engendered evil and calamity in every era. It has, thus, nothing to do with kings.”²³⁶ Within this context, Alexander refers to a Qur’anic verse, which is also a favourite one used by other contemporary Ottoman mirror writers²³⁷: “[S]urely God does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition.”²³⁸ What should be done, as Alexander recommends, is to remain faithful to *shari’a* and grant posts to deserving men only. He further opens a parenthesis that especially the appointment of *kadı*s should be carefully organized with respect to their adherence to *shari’a*.²³⁹ Following *shari’a* is, in his formulation, the chief reason underlying Ottoman superiority, which has been continuing from its establishment, and will hope to remain until doomsday.²⁴⁰

What Veysî puts into the mouth of Alexander regarding the repetition of evil and calamity in each age denotes a historical vision, which is reminiscent of Ibn Khaldunian notion of inevitable decline in a cyclical theory of history. Ibn Khaldunian historical philosophy that sees history as constantly progressing yet tending to eventually decline along

²³⁵ *Habnâme*, p.33-4: “[M]esned-ârâ-yı ‘adl ü inşâf olan pâdişâhlarımız selâtin-i ‘âlîşân-ı âl-i ‘Osmân zamân-ı şerîflerinde k’abetullaha tâş atılmağ degil beytullahdur diyü t’azîmen mahalle mescidleri öñünden bile tablhane ile geçilmez”

²³⁶ *ibid*, p.44: “Ey pâdişâh-ı ‘âlem devr-i ‘Âdemden bu âna gelince her günü zıkr eylesem her birinde bir vak’a-i ‘azîme zühür itmişdir ki istimâ’ı mücib-i melâldir (...) bu evrâkda meşûr olan meşâib ü beliyât her ‘aşrda re ‘âyânîñ niyyet-i fâsidesinden lâzım gelmişdir. Pâdişâhların bu bâbda medhali yokdur”

²³⁷ See, for instance, *Counsel for the Sultans*, vol.1, p.22; *Usûlü’l-Hikem fi Nizâmi’l-Âlem*, p.248.

²³⁸ “innallahu la yugayyiru mâ bi-kavmin hatta yugayyiru mâ bi-enfüsihim”, Qur’an (13:11), retrieved from *The Holy Qur’an* [the electronic source], tr. by M.H.Shakir, p.117.

²³⁹ *Habnâme*, p.45: “[H]emân pâdişâh-ı ‘âlem dergâhına ehemmi-i umur budur ki hemîşe hablü’l-metîn-i şerî’at-i seyîdü’l-mürselîn şali’allahu te’âla ‘aleyhi’ ve’s-selâm muhkem yapışub menâşibi ehl olana taklîd eyleyüb husûsâ hîdmet-i seccâde-i şerî’at tevcih olunacak kâdileriñ hâkimü’ş-şer’ olmağla istihkâkını yoklayub tevcih idesiniz diyü vükelâ-yı devlete fermân itmekdir”

²⁴⁰ *ibid*: “[D]evlet-i ‘aliyye-i ‘Osmâniye ibtidâ-i emrden ri ‘âyet-i şer’-i şerif itmekle böyle ser-efrâz olmuşdur (...) mādāmki sūdde-i devlet-medâr-ı ‘Osmânî esâs-ı ri ‘âyet-i şer’-i şerif üzre vaz’ olunmuşdur kıyâmete dek rahne-gür ve halel-pezîr olmaz inşa’allahu te’âla”

a particular axis of rise and fall of dynasties/civilizations, seems to be echoed in Veysî's messages.²⁴¹ Traditionally, it is a shared opinion that the influence of Ibn Khaldun on Ottoman literati began by the seventeenth century as Katib Celebi and Naima gave exact references to Ibn Khaldun and his *Muqaddimah*.²⁴² It is, however, argued by Cornell Fleischer without any proof or reference that the earliest date of the Ottoman adoption of Ibn Khaldun is 1598, when Veysî purchased a manuscript of the *Muqaddimah* while he was in Cairo.²⁴³ Nonetheless, as he underlines, one has to bear in mind that the roots of ideas corresponding to those of Ibn Khaldun were already available among Ottoman literati. Mustafa Âlî, for instance, shared much in common with Ibn Khaldun even though it is uncertain whether Ali was familiar with the *Muqaddimah*. In one of his pieces named *Fusul-i Hall ve Akd ve Usul-i Harc ve Nakd* [Season of Sovereignty and Principles of Critical Expenditure], Âlî analyzes the reasons behind “the initial success, gradual decline, and eventual destruction of major Islamic states.”²⁴⁴ Having seen Ottoman state as subject to the historical processes of rise and fall, Âlî appears to be the Ottoman version of Ibn Khaldun prior to Katib Celebi or Naima. In that regard, it is meaningful to remember Franz Babinger's claim that *Habnâme* is a poetical imitation of Âlî's account.²⁴⁵ He, nonetheless, does not specify exactly which piece of Âlî *Habnâme* resembles. Although later scholarship attributes it to *Nushatü's-Selatin* [Counsel for Sultans]²⁴⁶, *Habnâme* seems to share more with *Fusul-i Hall* than *Nushatü's-Selatin* in terms of the philosophy of history they bear. It is, yet, still difficult to label *Habnâme* as an imitation of Âlî's work.

Imitation and lack of originality are two essential characteristics attributed generally to Ottoman mirror for princes. Since most of these writers rely on and refer heavily to common intellectual sources and precedents such as Qur'anic verses, Hadith compilations, or legendary

²⁴¹ Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: an Introduction to History*, ed by N.J.Dawood, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 129-138. see also: Hayden White, “Ibn Khaldun in World Philosophy of History: Review Article”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol.2, no.1, 1959, pp.110-125.

²⁴² Z.Fahri Fındıkoğlu, “Türkiye’de İbn Haldunizm”, 60. *Doğum Yılı Münasebetiyle Fuad Köprülü Armağanı: Melanges Fuad Köprülü*, (İstanbul: [Ankara Üniversitesi] Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi, 1953), p.155.

²⁴³ Fleischer, “Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and ‘Ibn Khaldunism’ in Sixteenth Century Ottoman Letters”, p.199.

²⁴⁴ *ibid*, p. 205.

²⁴⁵ Franz Babinger, “Osmanlı Tarih Yazarları ve Eserleri”, tr.by Coşkun Üçok, (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 2000), p. 168.

²⁴⁶ Orhan M.Çolak, “İstanbul Kütüphaneleri’nde Bulunan Siyasetnameler Bibliyografyası”, *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi*, vol.1, no.2, 2003, pp. 339-378.

stories of well-known figures, modern historians have interpreted this as an indicator for the dearth of originality and innovation.²⁴⁷ Such kind of interpretation can be criticized on two main grounds. The first one is about the function of this reliance upon intellectual precedents. Although modern historians are inclined to view this as a failure and lack of creativity, the preference of the authors might have political implications and social utility, as argued by Rifa'at Ali Abou el-Haj. The pattern of reliance, as hypothesized by Abou-el-Haj, is an indicator of the desire of these writers to show that the arguments they entered had their precedents, and thus "socio-political and economic formation developing before their eyes was not unnatural, but rather, the result of a legitimate change within the framework of a well established tradition."²⁴⁸ How contrived and speculative his interpretation is though, it is quite accurate with respect to Veysi's *Habnâme*, in which the precedented past and immutable nature of world affairs are used as to attest the normalcy of the distressing circumstances. Secondly, as opposed to a general tendency to deliver arguments out of an established tradition, one can find innovation and creativity in especially these writers' stylistic efforts.²⁴⁹ There are some glimpses of evidence that originality was valued in the sixteenth and seventeenth century literary milieu. As Fleischer exemplifies, one of Mustafa Âlî's works, "*Mihr ü Vefa*," was disliked, since it was blamed for duplicating a similar piece of an earlier writer.²⁵⁰ *Habnâme* is quite successful in this term, for the text was welcomed by Veysi's contemporary readers as an example of creative and novel prose.²⁵¹

With this regard, the ways Ottoman mirrors for princes were received and read is one of the crucial aspects that should be taken into account in evaluating Ottoman mirrors for princes in general, and in placing *Habnâme* into this genre in particular. This is, however, a very difficult task, since there is not a substantial literature produced so far on the history of reading in early modern Ottoman milieu.²⁵² We have no or partially reliable answers to such

²⁴⁷ See, for instance, Halil İnalçık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire", p.283; Lewis V. Thomas, *A Study of Naima*, (New York: New York University Press, 1972), passim.

²⁴⁸ Abou-el-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State*, p.41.

²⁴⁹ Christine Woodhead, "Ottoman Insa and the Art of Letter-Writing Influences Upon the Career of the Nişancı and Prose Stylist Okçuzâde (d.1630)", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, no.7-8, 1988, pp. 143-159.

²⁵⁰ Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, p.39.

²⁵¹ see footnote 151 on page 41.

²⁵² In addition to Christoph Neumann's study, see: Derin Terzioğlu, "Bir Tercüme ve Bir İntihal Vakası: Ya da İbn Teymiyye'nin *Siyasetü's-Şer'iyye*'sini Osmanlıcaya Kim(ler), Nasıl Aktardı?", *Journal of Turkish Studies – Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları*, vol.31, no.2, 2007, in memoriam Şinasi Tekin II, pp.247-275.

questions: What percentage of people was literate and involved in the consumption process of literary materials? What might be the indicators of the popularity of a text, i.e. what amount of manuscripts circulating around is sufficient to define a text as popular? How did early modern Ottomans distinguish among an original literary piece and a translated one? What did those writers penning political treatises specifically aim while presenting their pieces to the Palace, if they really presented at all? Was it only the sultan and the top ruling elite that read these texts, or can we speak of a more public audience? How was the reception of these texts? Were they read as a detailed political plan, or as philosophical essays embellished by historical anecdotes? Is there any chance that they were intended for the reading pleasure itself?

The common assumption regarding the audience of these texts is that their primary audience was the Sultan, for these texts were, by nature, written as advice for the sultan. It is however uncertain whether these texts did really reach, and were read by the sultans. In the case of Koçi Beg for example, it is safe to argue that his treatises were read by, first Sultan Murad IV, and then Ibrahim.²⁵³ It is rather unknown whether *Habnâme* was read by the Sultan Ahmed I. Yet, as Emine Fetvacı substantiates in her dissertation on manuscript patronage in late sixteenth century Ottoman Empire, the sultans were not the only residents of the palace that enjoyed the reading of books in the palace library. The court community around the sultan was also an important element of manuscript readership.²⁵⁴ As far as *Habnâme* is concerned, although it is not documented whether the text was directly presented to the palace and the sultan, the text is reported to have been read by one of the most important companions of Ahmed - then grandvizier Nasuh Paşa.

The real question to be posed, however, is how *Habnâme* might have been received by the public audience. I do not want to perpetuate here the traditional discourse manifested in the analyses of Ottoman cultural history through a dichotomy between “high” and “low” cultures, however what is meant by the ‘public audience’ here does only cover the privileged few who had access to means of writing, reading, and attending social gatherings of contemporary literary figures. Veysî, as demonstrated in the second chapter, was one of the prominent figures of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Ottoman literature, which makes his works circulating around then intellectual coterie. It is illuminating to find traces of how *Habnâme* was perceived by the contemporary authors in order to underline the

²⁵³ M. Çağatay Uluçay, “Koçi Bey’in Sultan İbrahim’e Takdim Ettiği Risale ve Arzları”, 60. *Doğum Yılı Münasebetiyle Zeki Velidi Togan’a Armağan: symbolae in honorem Z. V. Togan*, (İstanbul: [s.n], 1955), p.184.

²⁵⁴ Emine Fetvacı, *Viziers to Eunuchs: Transitions in Ottoman Manuscript Patronage, 1566-1616*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 2005, Harvard University, p.26.

idiosyncratic nature of the text among other mirror for princes. Both Nev'izâde Atâ'î and Katib Çelebi, for instance, approach Veysî's text not as a political treatise but rather an original and creative compilation of beautiful stories.²⁵⁵ In a quite similar fashion, Evliya Çelebi, while speaking of Veysî's work without referring to any political connotations, says that it is an illuminated historical account.²⁵⁶ Although we have no statistical and comparable evidence to draw the popularity of texts from the exact number of manuscripts in circulation, *Habnâme* seems to be quite popular in both its own era and the ages to follow. In order to understand its influence and penetration into readership community, one can compare the number of the copies of the *Habnâme* with that of, for example, Âlî's *Fusul-i Hal*. According to Fleischer, with at least 29 extant manuscripts *Fusul-i Hal* was one of the most popular and influential compositions of Âlî.²⁵⁷ In this regard, *Habnâme*'s popularity goes much beyond Âlî's any work that there are more than hundred copies so far indexed. My argument here is that due to its rhetorical features and the finesse of its literary style, *Habnâme* differs from other political treatises in terms of both its popularity and the reception by the audience.

The very end of the *Habnâme* carries the answers of how *Habnâme* differs from contemporary Ottoman mirrors for princes *per se*. When Alexander finishes speaking, Ahmed, whom Veysî defines as Alexander's younger version [*hazret-i padişah-i İskender-gulam*], first thanks Alexander that all the stories he has recounted "swept away all the dust of troubles in his mind and provided a great relief."²⁵⁸ Nonetheless, Ahmed seems wondering about the details of the causes of evils and calamity, and asks Alexander whether it is possible to keep of of their records. Alexander, by pointing to Veysî, tells Ahmed, "all the details of these events are very well known by Veysî, who has dedicated his entire life to learning and studying. Upon your order, he will gladly compose an account including all of them."²⁵⁹ Right

²⁵⁵ Katib Celebi, to a great extent, repeats Nev'izâde's comments verbatim: "Ve bir vakı'anamesi vardır. Kıssa-i Yusuf gibi bedi' ve dilpezirdir.", Katib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, vol.2, p. 108.

²⁵⁶ Evliya Çelebi *Seyahatnâmesi: Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 304 Yazmasının Transkripsiyonu*, dizini, vol.5, p.300.

²⁵⁷ Fleischer, "Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and 'Ibn Khaldunism' in Sixteenth Century Ottoman Letters", p.205.

²⁵⁸ *Habnâme*, p.45-6: "[E]y şâhib-kırân kelimât-ı hikmet-şi'ârınız hâturda olan gubâr-ı teşvîşi bilkülliye giderüb bizi münşerihü's-sadr itmîşdir"

²⁵⁹ ibid, p.46 : "[L]âkin şâhib-kırân -ı 'âlemiñ beyân itdigi kazâyâ ki her pâdişâh zamânında zuhûr iden fitneniñ sebebi ve tafşîli nedir ma'lûm olmadı ol ma'kûle havâdiş ü meşâyibden ne vechle ictinâb lâzım idüğü bilinmek için ricâ olunur ki bu külf-i za'emet irtikâbından kaçılmayub her kıssanıñ tafşîli ve bâişi ne oldıgın serrişte-i takrîre çekmege himmet idesiz didikde cenâb-ı İskender-i Zü'l-karneyn hazretleri dağî rüy-i tevcîhi bu 'abd-i nâçiz tarafına tutub bu bende-i hayr-h'âh ve dâ'i-i bî-iştibâh bende vü bende-zâde-i Veysî sermâye-i 'ömrünü tahşil-i ma'ârifê şarf itmîş kulundur zıkr olunan kaşas-ı pür 'iberiñ aşlını ve faşlını bilür fermân iderseniz mufaşşalan bu hikâyeti silk-i tahrîre çeküb pây-e-i serîr-i â'lâyâ îşâr itmek cânına minnet belki sa'âdetdir (...)"

at that moment, the rooster's crow is heard and Veysî wakes up to the morning, so that the council in his dream is gone.

Taking all these into consideration, it would be better to define *Habnâme* as an unfinished mirror or as a teaser for a forthcoming mirror. As expressed in both the beginning and the end of the text, Veysî has a desire to speak to Ahmed I regarding the causes of recent troubles and his own formulations for required remedies. In other words, he has a desire to write down a full-fledged mirror for princes. For this purpose, he portrays himself as a capable servant to counsel the sultan. However, unlike the contemporary Ottoman mirrors, there is no detailed description of the causes of troubles or the favourable acts to be immediately implemented. Moreover, the text does not stand as well as a piece harshly critical of its time. Instead there are some abstract remarks subtly denoting how important it is to stick to the essences of *shari'a* and principle of justice, and as a reflection of his own occupational biases, to grant judgeships only those who are erudite enough. Nonetheless, the text shares the anxious mood of the era, and it is mainly through the "Sultan Ahmed" character this anxiety is crystallized. However, this anxiety seems to be less related to Veysî's own standing point and his subjective criterion than an objective reality. As expressed at the beginning of *Habnâme*, it is not the bitterness or fear towards losing privileges led by the shifting patterns in bureaucracy, but the recent *Celali* uprisings and detrimental consequences of continuous warfare in both the Austrian and Iranian frontiers that paves the way to the emergence of such a state of anxiety.

Although the depiction of a sultan figure, who, instead of keeping his calmness and determination to manage the problems, is afflicted with pessimistic emotions and fear from the reality around himself, sounds dissimilar to traditionally glorification of the ruler, this way of representation well serves the overall intention of Veysî. My argument here is that, without disregarding the parts dedicated to counselling the sultan in some abstract terms, *Habnâme*'s real aim seems to console and even encourage the young sultan, who in Veysî's representation, has been perplexed with recent incidents. In this regard, the presence of the legendary Alexander figure and his didactic stories, didactic not in the sense of learning how to rule the state justly but rather in the sense of realizing the "ordinariness of troubles"²⁶⁰, constitute the crucial elements of his consoling project.

It is equally legitimate to speculate that Veysî's remarks in *Habnâme* were not only addressed to the sultan but also directed against the contemporary intellectuals, who reflected

²⁶⁰ Tezcan, p.9.

their strong declinist sentiments through their writings. Even though Veysî does not directly refer to specific political treatises, this does not mean that he was unaware of them. As one of the leading intellectuals involved in factional politics, Veysî would have been familiar with the literature of contemporary mirrors. In this regard, his rather soft and appeasing tone in *Habnâme*, and the structure of the narrative based on a conversation in a dream may be interpreted as his own contribution toward the polemical nature of the intellectual life in his age.²⁶¹ On top of everything, however, stands the ‘dream’ tool that enables all the elements of his narrative to function.

²⁶¹ In another political treatise written in the early nineteenth century as a polemical piece, a similar strategy based on contrived dialogues is found. In this account, the anonymous author, in order to justify his own views and position, formulates rhetorical questions and disproves them as to emphasis his perspective. See: *Koca Sekbanbaşı Risalesi*, ed. by Abdullah Uçman, (İstanbul: Tercüman, 1972). See also: Y. Hakan Erdem, “The Wise Old Man, Propagandist and Ideologist: Koca Sekbanbaşı on the Janissaries, 1807”, in *Individual, Ideologies & Society: Tracing the Mosaic of Mediterranean Society*, ed. by Kirsi Virtanen, (Tampere: Juvenes Print, 2001), pp.153-177.

CHAPTER IV

DREAMS, VISIONS & ANXIETY: *HABNÂME* AS A ‘REAL DREAM’

While in the previous chapter certain amount of effort has been exerted to the discussion of *Habnâme* with respect to its position in early modern Ottoman political treatises, this chapter aims to understand the distinctive literary characteristic of the text: its dream form. It may sound, for at least some of the readers, as a meaningless endeavour to strive for understanding the motives behind such a preference of Veysî. One may argue, for example, it is a mere literary tool accidentally devised by its author to convey his thoughts²⁶²; therefore, it would be a futile attempt to grapple with such a question. This is the overall tendency in the secondary literature that, of those who has said a word or two on *Habnâme*, most seems silent on the possible explanations of the dream frame of the text. The remaining few, such as Nuran Yılmaz and Zehra Toska, finds in Veysî a strong critical stance as having erroneously attributed Üveysî’s caustic poem to Veysî, and thus tends to lean ‘the dream form’ towards Veysî’s strategy to conceal his social and political criticism.²⁶³

Another probable objection to the problematization of Veysî’s use of dream as a frame to his text can be posed from a post-structuralist perspective, which underlines the existence of multiple-layered and non-objective meanings of texts. Unlike the claim of old positivist/modernist beliefs in the possibility of accurate and thorough comprehension of the single meaning of the text as well as its author’s fixed authorial intention, post-structuralism points to the problems of reducing the text’s multiplicity into a singular level. In this regard, explaining the form of *Habnâme* with a fixed explanatory model is open to be criticized. However, throughout this chapter various modes of explanation pertaining to the aspects of both authorship and readership, i.e., the cultural/literary context in which the text was

²⁶² Pal Fodor, “State and Society, Crisis and Reform, in the Fifteenth-Seventeenth Century Ottoman Mirror For Princes”, p.227.

²⁶³ Zehra Toska, *Veysî Divanı: Hayatı, Eserleri ve Edebî Kişiliği*, unpublished M.A. thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1985, p.24; Nuran Öztürk (Yılmaz), “Habnâme-i Veysî”, *Bir: Türk Dünyası İncelemeleri Dergisi, Prof. Dr. Kemal Erarslan Armağanı*, vol.9-10, 1998, p.659.

produced and consumed, would be discussed and presented. As Walter Andrews says, consideration of ‘intertextuality’ and ‘sociability’ of each text is the most reliable way that can enable one “to perceive its meaning and appreciate its worth in a reasonable and non-anachronistic manner.”²⁶⁴

Although one might question here the assumption, which presumes that Veysî intentionally regarded the dream form as a medium for what he had to say, this would be a rewarding task in the sense of exploring through early modern Ottomans’ affiliations with dreams. It should not be misunderstood here that Veysî’s text would be utilised as a window to delve into one of the least touched aspects of the historiography on the Ottoman Empire: the dream lore. My argument here, however, goes to say that without understanding the role dreams had played in the early modern Ottoman realm, the dream frame invented in *Habnâme* cannot be properly understood. Yet, two important points have to be disclaimed. On top of everything, one should always bear in mind the fact that it is certainly not possible to talk of a general Ottoman attitude toward dreams without differentiating among certain epochs and geographical spaces as well as social and cultural environments. Secondly and unfortunately, the available literature on the perception of dreams in Ottoman lands through ages is so limited that our assumptions in this chapter reflect more to the general Muslim tradition rather than a particular Ottoman way.

Compared to the number of studies available pertaining to the perception of dreams and dreaming in early modern Ottoman culture, there are more questions waiting to be addressed. What was the place of dreams in the mentalities of early modern Ottoman people? Was there any distinction in the attitudes of, for instance, men and women, urban and rural people, or different social classes? Did they treat dreams as a component of metaphysical/religious realm, and thus assign to them a higher/divine authority; or were dreams approached as an ordinary and habitual phenomenon of their worldly/daily lives? Did they tell their dreams on the breakfast table as it mostly happens in our modern daily lives? To whom did people apply in order to ask for interpretation of dreams? Was there an institutionalized profession like *muabbirlik*, as it was in the case of *müneccimbaşılık*?²⁶⁵ Is it possible to define a new means and spaces of sociability through such conversations based on telling their dreams? To what extent were manuals for dream interpretations popular? Were

²⁶⁴ Walter Andrews, *Poetry’s Voice, Society’s Song: Ottoman Lyric Poetry*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, c1985), p.6.

²⁶⁵ See for instance: Salim Aydüz, *Osmanlılar’da Müneccimbaşılık Müessesesi*, unpublished M.A.Thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1994.

these dream-keys used on a day-to-day basis? What kind of terminology did they use while talking or writing about their dreams? Did they differentiate among such terms, *rûya*, *düş*, *vakı'a*, *hab*, *menam*, *hâyâl*, *ahlam*, *kem düş*, or *kara kaygulu rûya*²⁶⁶, all of which connote to a dreaming activity? Could they distinguish the dreams that were really dreamed and the dreams that were fabricated? Were there any well-established dream patterns setting the norms of acceptable and unacceptable dreams? What about the attitude of *ulema* and religious orders towards dreams and dream interpretation? Is there any possibility to hierarchically arrange the religious orders depending on the level of their interest in dreams?

Although these questions can be multiplied by far, it is not an easy task to provide substantial answers as far as the lack of scholarly attention to the issue is concerned. In one of those earliest scholarly attempts²⁶⁷, Orhan Şaik Gökyay published two separate articles, one on dreams in general and the other on the manuals of dream interpretation in particular.²⁶⁸ In the first article, Gökyay, in an introductory manner, enumerates certain important dream narratives from various genres of Ottoman literature without questioning these narratives' authenticity or purposes of their composition. Likewise, in his other article on manuals of dream interpretation, Gökyay enlists some of those dream-keys that can be found in certain libraries. Another study has been done by Cornell Fleischer, who, in his article on the dreams

²⁶⁶ Although Niyazioğlu, in her article on *kadı* nightmares, briefly discusses the taxonomy of dreams in the early modern Ottoman milieu and argues that, it was unlikely the case that early modern Ottomans differentiated among their dreams and nightmares, there are signs that there was a distinctive terminology used. Niyazioğlu is right at her conclusion that the term '*kabus*' as used in modern Turkish vernacular does not much take place in earlier sources; however, this does not mean that there were no supplementary terms. As Niyazioğlu exemplifies with reference to Nihânî's dream narrative, one such term is *vakı'a-i hevl-nak* (dreadful dream). In *Habnâme*, Veysî, within the context of the story of İbrahim, uses *vahşet-engiz vakı'a* [frightful dream] An equivalent version of the notion as appeared in the tales of Dede Korkut, which might have penetrated into Ottoman cultural and literary life, is *kara kaygulu rûya* (fearful/terrible dream) See: Muharrem Ergin (ed.), *Dede Korkut Kitabı*, (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Yayınları, 2005). Translating *kara kaygulu rûya* into English as either fearful or terrible dream is a preference of Faruk Sümer, Ahmet E.Uysal & Warren S. Walker. See: *The Book of Dede Korkut: A Turkish Epic*, tr. and ed. by Faruk Sümer, Uysal & Walker, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972). In addition to these, the most precise term I have ever encountered in the relevant sources is *kem düş* [evil dream], which is used by an eighteenth century poet Haşmeî in his work *İntisabü'l-Mülûk*. This piece, as showing some literary and thematic similarities to the *Habnâme* of Veysî, will be discussed in chapter five.

²⁶⁷ Since the issue has an exotic side, it has been treated in many popular publications. There are, for instance, various dream interpretation manuals attributed to Ibn Sirin or Nablusi, which currently circulate in the book market. Moreover, although mostly vulgarized and nonacademic in nature, the attempts to explain the role and meanings of dreams from the perspective of both Islamic and Freudian dream lore should be taken into account as well. For such decent accounts, see: Hakkı Şinasi Çoruh, *Rûya Dünyamız: Rûya Nedir? Rûya Tabiri Nasıl Yapılır? Ve Büyük Rûyalar?*, (İstanbul: Kitapçılık Ticaret Ltd.Şti, 1968); M.Yusuf Güven & Osman Fatih Belbağı, *Rûya: Hakikat Penceresi mi? Hâyâl Perdesi mi?*, (İstanbul: Gül Yurdu Yayınları, 2006)

²⁶⁸ Orhan Şaik Gökyay, "Rûyalar Üzerine", *II.Milletlerarası Türk Folklor Kongresi Bildirileri, IV.Cilt: Gelenek Görenek İnançlar*, 1983, pp.183-208.; Gökyay, "Tabirâmeler", *Seçme Makaleler vol.III*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2002), pp.151-168.

of bureaucrats, evince that there are dream-logs recorded by mid-sixteenth century Ottoman bureaucrats, which were probably in circulation among the members of the bureaucracy.²⁶⁹ Mostly divinatory in nature, these personal dream-logs are, for Fleischer, useful in providing the historian with invaluable “panoramic views of the social, cultural, and private psychic lives of individuals that can go far toward telling us the ways and means whereby they interpreted their environment.”²⁷⁰

Similar dream-logs were discovered and published by Cemal Kafadar. In his earlier article on first person narratives in the Ottoman cultural and literary production²⁷¹, Kafadar introduces various dream diaries of a Sufi lady from the seventeenth century and a *sipahi* from the eighteenth century. Kafadar then published the dream diary of this Sufi lady named Asiye Hatun, who seems to have lived in Skopje and sent her dreams to her new sheikh in the form of letters.²⁷² Although Cemal Kafadar prefers to interpret the content of her dreams from the perspective of sexuality and/or gendering, it should not be forgotten that such dreams had an important place, for especially Sufi women, in receiving a complete Sufi education.²⁷³ In addition to these, Dro’r Zeevi has also reserved a separate chapter about how early modern dream manuals, presumably used in Ottoman territory, reflect sexual patterns and norms of the age.²⁷⁴ Furthermore, Elizabeth Sirriyeh has dedicated a full chapter on the perception of dreams and the use of dream interpretation manuals with special reference to the influential Sufi of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century Ottoman Syria, Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulisi.²⁷⁵ He is an important character, for his dream manual, *Tatir al-anam fi Tabir-al*

²⁶⁹ Cornell H. Fleischer, “Secretaries’ Dreams: Augury and Angst in Ottoman Scribal Service”, in *Armağan: Festschrift für Andreas Tietze*, eds. by Ingeborg Baldauf, Suraiya Faroqhi, Rudolf Vesely, (Praha : Enigma Corporation, 1994), pp. 77-88.

²⁷⁰ *ibid*, p.84-5.

²⁷¹ See: Cemal Kafadar, “Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature”, *Studia Islamica*, no.69, 1989, pp.121-150.

²⁷² Üsküplü Asiye Hatun, *Rûya Mektupları*, ed. by Cemal Kafadar. (İstanbul: Oğlak, 1994).

²⁷³ Valerie J. Hoffman, “The Role of Visions in Contemporary Egyptian Religious Life”, *Religion*, 1997, vol.27, pp.45-64, at p.49. Kafadar has recently been heavily criticized in Sufi circles for misinterpreting Asiye Hatun’s experience. See: Melek Paşalı, “Asiye Hatun’un Rûya Mektupları”, *Keşkül*, 2007, vol.11, pp.24-30. For an interesting attempt dedicated to a psychoanalytical investigation of Asiye Hatun’s dream, see: Saffet Murat Tura, “Şeyh ve Ayna”, in *Şeyh ve Arzu*, (İstanbul: Metis, 2002), pp. 11-49.

²⁷⁴ Dro’r Zeevi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500-1900*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), pp.99-124.

²⁷⁵ Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary of Ottoman Damascus: Abd al-Ghanî al-Nâbulusî, 1641-1731*, (London, New York: Routledge Curzon, 2005), pp.57-84.

Manam, was one of the best-sellers in Ottoman realm. Sufi manuals of dream interpretation have also been paid attention; and four manuals from sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were published by Mustafa Tatçı and Halil Çeltik.²⁷⁶ In Robert Dankoff's latest book, there is a brief discussion on the place of dreams and portents in early modern Ottoman mentality with special reference to Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatnâme*.²⁷⁷ More recently, Aslı Niyazioğlu has published an illustrating article on the dream/nightmare of a sixteenth century *kadı*, Nihanî, who is told to have returned to Sufi path of knowledge after seeing in his dream that he was punished in the afterlife.²⁷⁸ Such kind of a dream/nightmare is not peculiar to Nihanî, but as Niyazioğlu says, there are similar anecdotes of contemporary *kadıs* and other *ulema* members narrated in biographical dictionaries. Rather to read those dreams as mere moral advices of the writers of biographical dictionaries, Niyazioğlu poses questions regarding the timing of these narratives and says that such dreams should be evaluated along with the overall social, political, and financial crises of the late sixteenth century, which hit most severely the *kadıs*.²⁷⁹

One might object here the methodological preference that treats of Veysî's dream narrative as commensurate with real dream experiences, since *Habnâme* seems to be rather a literary piece fabricated in line with certain intentions. But is it really possible to be fully certain of the fact that Veysî did not really see such a dream? How can one detect whether a dream is really dreamed or not? This is indeed the fundamental difficulty in studying dreams for historiographical questions. The elusive nature of dreams, which makes it impossible to precisely verify, test and observe them, keeps the historian from drawing a strict line between the dreams that were fabricated and the dreams that were really seen. As Peter Burke states, "[h]istorians need to bear constantly in mind the fact that they do not have access to the dream itself but at best to a written record, modified by the preconscious or conscious mind in the

²⁷⁶ Mustafa Tatçı & Halik Çeltik, *Türk Edebiyatı'nda Tasavvufî Rûya Tabirnameleri*, (Ankara: Akçağ Yay., 1995) see also: Mustafa Tatçı, "Niyazi-i Mısri'nin Tasavvufî Bir Rûya Tabirnamesi", *Türk Folkloru Araştırmaları*, 1989, pp.85-96.

²⁷⁷ Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi*, (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 205-213. For translations of much of Evliya's, and his patron, Melek Ahmed Pasha's dreams, see also: Dankoff, *The Intimate Life of an Ottoman Statesman: Melek Ahmed Pasha (1588-1662) : As Portrayed in Evliya Çelebi's Book of Travels (Seyahat-name)*, (Albany : State University of New York Press, c1991).

²⁷⁸ Aslı Niyazioğlu, "16.yy Sonunda Osmanlı'da Kadılık Kabusu ve Nihani'nin Rûyası", *Journal of Turkish Studies – Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları*, vol.27, no.1, 2007, pp.133-143.

²⁷⁹ Niyazioğlu, "16.yy Sonunda Osmanlı'da Kadılık Kabusu ve Nihani'nin Rûyası", p.137-8.

course of recollection and writing.”²⁸⁰ Since all dreams can only exist as subsequently narrativized accounts of actual visual experiences, i.e. the transformation of obscure images into words in order to turn them into a meaningful communication, it is, by nature, impossible to make a clear-cut division between ‘real dreams’ and ‘fabricated dreams’.

Yet, as Steven Krueger argues in his study on the reception of dreams and dreaming in medieval Europe, it would be equally questionable to assume that the literary artist was apparently familiar with any particular idea and might have used that dream theory in creating a fictional dream.²⁸¹ The author may have utilized such a theory as to create certain “literary effects”, however as Constance Hieatt states, “in order to see how the poets may have tried to make their poetry dreamlike, we must note what a dream was”²⁸² to the poet of that age.

In that matter, this chapter aims to assess to what extent and for what purposes *Habnâme* was like a ‘real dream.’ This is, nevertheless, a demanding undertaking that entails to portray Islamic dream lore, which did inevitably penetrate into Ottoman understanding of dreams. While a great attention is paid to dream, dreaming, and dream interpretation by Qur’an and Hadith, the issue has also a special status in both Sufi literature and philosophical treatment of prominent Islamic scholars. Without understanding the role dreams might have had in the entire Islamic tradition, it is difficult to conceive of what a dream may have meant to a seventeenth century Ottoman *âlim* [scholar]. Within this respect, a comparative reading of Islamic dream paradigm(s) and *Habnâme* as well as Veysî’s opinions on dreams and dreaming interspersed in especially his *Siyer* book would provide insights as to demonstrate to what extent the Islamic understanding of dreams infiltrated into Veysî’s own stance.

²⁸⁰ Peter Burke, “The Cultural History of Dreams”, in *Varieties of Cultural History*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), p.28.

²⁸¹ Steven F. Krueger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, c1999), p.123.

²⁸² Constance B. Hieatt, *The Realism of Dream Visions: The Poetic Exploitation of the Dream Experience in Chaucer and his Contemporaries*, (The Hague ; Paris : Mouton & Co., 1967), p.12-13. Hieatt’s critical question with respect to the medieval literary genre of dream vision should be always kept in mind: “Is it possible that we have been *underrating* or *misinterpreting* Middle English dream visions through missing the significance of *the fact that they are dreams?*” at p.11. All the italics are mine.

IV. 1: Islamic Dream Lore

It hardly needs to be said that the dream has a special status in Islam. Contrary to the little attention that has been paid to the role of dreams in early modern Ottoman world, there is extensive literature on the remarkable epistemological value of dreams in especially early periods of Muslim community. The interest shown in dream and dream interpretation did not of course commence with the birth of Islam. Islamic dream theories indeed developed out of various dream-work traditions including ancient Mesopotamian, Greek, Roman, and pre-Islamic Arabic customs.²⁸³

One important tradition integrated into Islamic dream lore is the ancient Mesopotamian understanding, which stresses upon the divinatory nature of dreams. As Leo Oppenheim's study succinctly demonstrates, dreams were treated with a "scientific" attitude by the ancient Mesopotamian interpreters, since they were essential part of divination.²⁸⁴ As to the legacy of Greek culture, which was, according to Nile Green, "the most direct funnel into Islam"²⁸⁵, one has to mention Artemidorus and his influential dream manual, *Oneirocritica*. This ancient Greek treatise on dream interpretation, which is thought to have been written in the second century and retained its privileged status in European oneirocritical literature up until the nineteenth century²⁸⁶, was translated into Arabic as early as the ninth century by Hunayn b. Ishaq.²⁸⁷ It is, in fact, more than a translation, for Artemidorus was a pagan and his dream manual was rich in terms of references to pagan religious rituals. All such details and elements, which would have been offensive to Muslim readers, were, as John Lamoreaux brings to light, either exterminated or transformed into an Islamic guise.²⁸⁸

²⁸³ Iain R. Edgar, "The Dream Will Tell: Militant Muslim Dreaming in the Context of Traditional and Contemporary Islamic Dream Theory and Practice", *Dreaming*, vol.14, no.1, 2004, p.24.

²⁸⁴ A. Leo Oppenheim, "Mantic Dreams in the Ancient Near East", in *The Dream and Human Societies*, eds. by G.Edmund von Grunebaum & Roger Caillois, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p.342.

²⁸⁵ Nile Green, "The Religious and Cultural Roles of Dreams in Islam", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 2004, vol.13, no.3, p.288.

²⁸⁶ Christine Walde, "Dream Interpretation in a Prosperous Age: Artemidorus, the Greek Interpreter of Dreams", in *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*, eds. by David Shulman and Guy G. Stroumsa, (New York : Oxford University Press, c1999), p.125.

²⁸⁷ John C. Lamoreaux, *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation*, (New York: State University of New York Press, 2002), p.8.

²⁸⁸ *ibid.*

The importance of Artemidorus lies in his typology of dreams, which is, to a great extent, recited in Islamic dream lore. He basically categorizes dreams into two major groups: *oneiroi* and *enhyponia*. The first type of dreams [*oneiroi*] is those predictive dreams significant for the knowledge of the future. Whereas *enhyponia* refers to those insignificant dreams mostly led by a present anxiety or other bodily desires of the dreamer.²⁸⁹ This typology is more or less reiterated by Macrobius, who was another important dream theorist from fifth century Roman Empire. Although Macrobius identifies five distinct kinds of dreams, his main thematic model rests upon a clear dichotomy between the ‘true dreams’, which were divinatory in nature and did provide the dreamer with “knowledge from beyond the realm of mundane experience”; and ‘false dreams’, which were mainly caused by present physical and mental conditions.²⁹⁰

As a continuation of a cultural tradition in the Mediterranean world, the dream sustained its special position from the very beginning of Islam. The first revelation that Prophet Muhammad received had come through his visionary experience in which he encountered with the archangel Gabriel. During the first six months, revelation through dreams and visionary experiences is considered to have continued. This six-month period is the chief reason behind the *hadith* attributed to the Prophet: “Dreams constitute one forty-sixth part of prophecy.”²⁹¹ Various accounts of dreams and visions regarding not only the Prophet Muhammad’s experiences but also Joseph’s life-story or the anecdote pertaining to Ibrahim’s sacrifice of Ismail appear in the Qur’an. Moreover, various verses of the Qur’an corroborate the credibility of dream experiences as to say that the soul is uplifted into the God’s presence during dreams.²⁹²

Richer than Qur’an in terms of its references to dream and dreaming, Hadith provides extensive evidence relating to the elevated status of dreams among early Muslims. There are various sayings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, all of which are exhibitiv of the importance given to dreams. No matter how the affluence of these traditions casts doubts over the authenticity of these sayings, the existence of such statements - be they original or forged -

²⁸⁹ S.R.F. Price, “The Future of Dreams: From Freud to Artemidorus”, *Past and Present*, 1986, vol.113, at pp.10-12.

²⁹⁰ Steven F. Kruger, *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*, pp.21-23.

²⁹¹ Sara Sviri, “Dreaming Analyzed and Recorded: Dreams in the World of Medieval Islam”, in *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*, eds. by Shulman and Stroumsa, p.252.

²⁹² Marcia K. Hermansen, “Visions as ‘Good To Think’: A Cognitive Approach to Visionary Experience in Islamic Sufi Thought”, *Religion*, 1997, vol.27, p27.

mirror the value given to dreams in early Muslim community. In one of those statements as narrated in all the Hadith collections, the prophet Muhammad is said to have informed his believers on the day before his death that “when I am gone there shall remain naught of the glad tidings of prophecy, except for true dreams.”²⁹³ The statement, thus, secures dreams’ vital nature as saying that revelation would continue through dreams. In this regard, dreams were regarded tantamount to an extension of prophecy.

Another well-known tradition asserts that seeing the Prophet in a dream is accepted as equal to his actual appearance. Tackled by many subsequent Islamic philosophers regarding the ontological possibility of such an incident, the statement, “Whoever has seen me in a dream has certainly seen me in wakefulness”,²⁹⁴ was useful in securing the reliability of dreams. In many of the Sufi dreams, which will be mentioned below, the prophet Muhammad was seen by the young Sufi as to serve guidance to the novice.

To see the Prophet in dreams were in fact not rare instances. There is, however, another tradition attributed to the Prophet with regard to the concerns over the plethora of such dreams narrated and publicized among the believers: “He who lies about his dream will have to tie a knot in a small barley corn on the Day of Judgment”.²⁹⁵ This attests to the prohibition of dream-fabrication that took place in the early Islamic community. Since dreams’ prophetic nature, which was guaranteed by other statements, might have boosted the dreams circulating within the community; a safety belt might have been required.

As to the taxonomy of dreams in the early Islamic dream theory, one can speak of a classification reminiscent of that of Artemidorus or Macrobius. There was, first of all, a basic differentiation made between ‘true dreams’ which can be briefly summarized as “glad tidings from God”, and ‘false dreams’, which were considered to be caused by the devil or originated in the self due to the dreamer’s desires, ambition and confusion.²⁹⁶ While the latter one including day-residue dreams and satanic intervention were deemed to be insignificant and to have no predictive value, the former one of God-given dreams was thought to provide knowledge about the unknown. This also gives an indication of dreams’ distinctive position in

²⁹³ Lamoreaux, p.4.

²⁹⁴ Leah Kinberg, “Literal Dreams and Prophetic Hadits in Classical Islam: A Comparison of Two Ways of Legitimation”, *Der Islam*, 1993, vol.70, p.285.

²⁹⁵ *ibid*, p.286.

²⁹⁶ G.Edmund von Grunebaum, “Introduction: The Cultural Function of the Dream as Illustrated by Classical Islam”, in *The Dream and Human Societies*, eds. by Grunebaum & Caillois, at pp.7-8.

Islam, since all the means to obtain knowledge about the unknown [*alam al-gayb*] such as magic, sorcery or any other means of divination were allegedly prohibited by Qur'an, Hadith and Islamic jurisprudence though; divination based on dreams enjoyed a relative independence and acceptance.²⁹⁷ Moreover, it should be pointed out that, the importance given to dreams and dream interpretation was, from the beginning of Islam, not only pursued by unorthodox and peripheral sectors of the folk, but rather guaranteed by the central and orthodox body of Islamic law and scholarship.²⁹⁸ In order to differentiate among true and false dreams, a special terminology was adopted. While *rûya* was used to refer to those dreams inspired by God, *hulm* was preferred for the expression of those false and/or complicated dreams resulting from either the passions and preoccupations of the self, or the Satan.²⁹⁹

A further classification can also be made with regard to the true dreams. The criteria on such a distinction depends on the nature of dreams, whether they were symbolic or literal. While the symbolic dreams, which have been composed of signs in order to deliver its message such as the dream of Joseph as recounted in Qur'an, require interpretation; literal or message dreams are rather "self-explanatory."³⁰⁰ The thematic model upon which these literal dreams depend is the appearance of a person to the dreamer and his/her delivering a message. This person is frequently someone who has died either in a distant or recent past, and who might or might not have been personally known by the dreamer.³⁰¹ The dream, in which the prophet Muhammad is seen, is an important example of such dreams, where the prophet provides guidance or conveys his warnings to the dreamer. The prophet is, however, not the only source of guidance notwithstanding the fact that he is the utmost authority in helping the dreamer to escape from his/her perplexed status. As manifested by one of the sayings attributed to Ibn Sirin, the legendary founder of the Muslim tradition of dream interpretation, "whatever the deceased tells in sleep is truth, for he stays in the world of truth."³⁰² In this

²⁹⁷ For a comprehensive study devoted to the divinatory practices in early Islamic community, see: Emile Savage-Smith(ed.), *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 2004).

²⁹⁸ Lamoreaux, p.41.

²⁹⁹ Toufic Fahd, "Ru'yâ", *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.)

³⁰⁰ Leah Kinberg, *Morality in the Guise of Dreams: A Critical Edition of Kitab Al-Manam (Ibn abi al-Dunya)*, (Leiden: Brill, 1994), p.45.

³⁰¹ Elizabeth Sirriyeh, "Dreams of the Holy Dead: Traditional Islamic Oneirocriticism versus Salafi Scepticism", *Journal of Semitic Studies*, vol.45, no.1, 2000, p.63.

³⁰² Kinberg, "Literal Dreams and Prophetic Hadits in Classical Islam: A Comparison of Two Ways of Legitimation", p.289.

regard, dreams of the dead and souls of the sages of the past were regarded to be of great importance, for the deceased bears the true knowledge from the world of truth [*dar ʿil-hakk*] into the world of living.³⁰³ Beside the prophet Muhammad or other Qur’anic figures, guidance can originate from deceased relatives, friends, teachers, and especially from saints and Sufi sheikhs.

IV. 2: Sufi Dreams

The reception of dreams in early Muslim community as means to obtain divine knowledge is the primary factor behind the strong interest of mysticism in dreams and visionary experiences.³⁰⁴ Since the Sufi world-view upholds the idea that the self and the world are illusory phenomena beyond which one has to transcend in order to “attain a taste of divine reality”³⁰⁵, dreams have been regarded with great esteem among Sufi circles as to help them to reach such a transcendental state. Accounts of and on dreams are interspersed in various genres of Sufi literature such as diaries of dreams and visionary experiences, the narratives of Sufi initiation dreams mostly recounted in biographies and folk tales, or mystical-philosophical treatises written in order to theorize epistemology and ontological reality of dreams.

Dream diaries of Sufis can be regarded as a literary genre in its own right. Kathryn Babayan, for instance, names these first-person accounts as *hʷabnama* without further providing any example entitled as such.³⁰⁶ Similar to the function of dreams in medieval European hagiography³⁰⁷, they mostly served to verify turning points of a Sufi on the path of progress towards his/her sainthood. In this particular kind of accounts, the dream or visionary

³⁰³ Sirriyeh, “Dreams of the Holy Dead: Traditional Islamic Oneirocriticism versus Salafi Scepticism”, p.63.

³⁰⁴ Sviri, “Dreaming Analyzed and Recorded: Dreams in the World of Medieval Islam”, in *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*, eds. by Shulman and Stroumsa, p.252.

³⁰⁵ Derin Terzioğlu, “Man in the Image of God in the Image of the Times: Sufi Self-Narratives and the Diary of Niyazi-i Mısrî (1618-94)”, *Studia Islamica*, no.94, 2002, p.139.

³⁰⁶ Kathryn Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs: Cultural Landscape of Early Modern Iran*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, c2002), p.315. Cemal Kafadar has also discovered a similar dream diary entitled *Düşnâme* belonging to not a Sufi but an eighteenth century *sipahi*. See: Cemal Kafadar, “Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature”, *Studia Islamica*, no.69, 1989, p.130.

³⁰⁷ Jacques Le Goff, “Dreams in the Culture and Collective Psychology of the Medieval West”, in *Time, Work and Travel in the Middle Ages*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992) p.203.

experience usually includes a conversation between the dreamer and an exalted personality, such as the Prophet Muhammad, a deceased Sufi or saint, or the living *pir* of the dreamer.³⁰⁸ Literary in character as argued by Kinberg, these dreams function as communicating various messages, advice and admonitions to the dreamer. Along this way, the novice is enabled to progress in his/her “spiritual self-reckoning”, which is a fundamental aspect in Sufi education.³⁰⁹ The account of twelfth century mystic, Ruzbihan Baqli of Shiraz, the *Kashf al-asrar* [the Unveiling of Secrets], is one of the most famous Sufi dream diaries, in which Baqli had seen not only the Prophet Muhammad but also the God in human form.³¹⁰ Similar to Ruzbihan Baqli’s account, fifteenth century North African Sufi, Muhammad al-Zawawi al-Bija’i, recorded a total of 109 dreams sporadically seen between 1447 and 1457. In all these dreams spoke Zawawi with the Prophet Muhammad; and it was the command of the Prophet to compile these dreams in a book, which was then named *Tuhfat al-Nazir wa-Nuzhar al-Manazir* [The Gift of the Seer and the Promenade of Sights]. There is a monograph on this account written by Jonathan G. Katz, where the author argues that these presumably spiritual dreams point to earthly concerns, for they reflect Zawawi’s “narcissistic” desires to become a prominent enlightened mystic and to win public recognition with regard to his status as a *veli*.

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Concerning to the Ottoman realm, one can illustrate Asiye Hatun’s dream-log as an example of autobiographical dream accounts of Sufis. As far as Cemal Kafadar’s information on the content and the author of this dream-log is concerned, this Sufi woman was from mid-seventeenth century Skopje, where Veysî had spent most of his professional career as a *kadı*. Via her dreams that were sent as letters to her new sheikh, Muslihiddin Efendi, Asiye Hatun had probably received a Sufi education without establishing direct personal contacts with him. The interesting thing for our purposes is the fact that there is a special reference to a certain Veysî in Asiye Hatun’s dream-log. In one of those dreams, it has been recounted that Asiye Hatun had seen the deceased Veysî Efendi in her dream. The setting of this dream is as follows: In her dream, two women came to inform Asiye Hatun that they married her to a man

³⁰⁸ Toufic Fahd, “Ru’yâ”, *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.)

³⁰⁹ Nile Green, “The Religious and Cultural Roles of Dreams in Islam”, pp.303-4.

³¹⁰ Carl Ernst, *Ruzbihan Baqli: Mysticism and the Rhetoric of Sainthood in Persian Sufism*, (Surrey : Curzon Press, 1996), pp.17-111. See also: Nazif Hoca, *Ruzbihan al-Bakli ve Kitab Kaşf al-Asrar’ı ile Farsça bazı Şiirleri*, (İstanbul : İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1971).

³¹¹ Jonathan G. Katz, *Dreams, Sufism, and Sainthood: The Visionary Career of Muhammad Al-Zawawi*, (Leiden: Brill, 1996).

from *sipahi* class. Embittered to what she heard of, Asiye Hatun resisted hard against those women. Following their departure, the deceased Veysî Efendi came and told Asiye Hatun not to suffer anymore, for he married her to *Sheikh* Muslihüddin Efendi. Since this sheikh was the one, to whom Asiye Hatun was trying to entreat, she became extremely happy upon Veysî Efendi's statements.³¹²

Although it is not fully certain whether Veysî Efendi in Asiye Hatun's dream is Veysî of *Habnâme*'s writer, we can assume this so because as marrying Asiye Hatun in her dream, he appears as operating his judgeship that he actually does in his real-life. Additionally, as far as the date of these dreams' recording is concerned, Veysî's influence and remembrance was likely to continue within a decade after his death. It is of equal validity to speculate that Veysî's prominence as an important Sufi might have been a factor in his presence in the dream of a Halveti disciple.

Sufi initiation dreams, which are in fact very close to the experiences narrated in dream diaries as discussed above, appear as well in other genres such as biographical accounts and folk tales. In this kind of symbolic narratives, the experience of a disciple or a Sufi-would-be of finding his/her *pir* is couched in a framing story of dream. With all due possible exceptions, there seems to be a traditional form of narrative, in which the dreamer sees one or two Sufi saints that s/he does not know before. They are mostly dressed in white or like the Prophet Muhammad, and are engaged in a particular activity symbolizing spiritual life, to which they invite the dreamer to participate. The dreamer usually experiences a feeling of relief owing to presence of his/her guides.³¹³

Those Ottoman biographical dictionaries of poets and ulema written especially from the late sixteenth century are rich in terms of such initiation dreams, albeit their deviations in content and form. Aslı Niyazioğlu argues in her dissertation on the biographical dictionary of Nevi'zâde Atâ'î that, the turn of the seventeenth century points to a significant difference.³¹⁴ According to Niyazioğlu, while in earlier biographical accounts, social engagements was the primary motif used in narrating initiation stories of poets or *ulema* members, by the late sixteenth century, "meetings in the other (worldly) realm seem to have been preferred over these social encounters, indicating the development of a new kind of relationship between the

³¹² Kafadar, *Mütereddit bir Mutasavvıf*, p.70.

³¹³ Katherine P. Ewing, "The Dream of Spiritual Initiation among Pakistani Sufis", *American Ethnologist*, vol.17, no.1, 1990, at pp.60-61.

³¹⁴ Aslı Niyazioğlu, *Ottoman Sufi Sheikhs Between This World and Hereafter: a Study of Nev'zâde Atâ'î's Biographical Dictionary*, p. 196.

sheikh and his disciples.”³¹⁵ Niyazioğlu defines this period as “the valorization of otherworldliness among the ulema and sheikhs of this period”, and interprets it as a refuge from the distressing atmosphere of the age.³¹⁶

The same motif is also visible in Turkish folk stories, in which dream stories take place while recounting the initiation rites in mystical brotherhoods or Alevi-Bektaşî orders.³¹⁷ In his study on the uses of dream motif in Turkish folk stories, İlhan Başgöz illustrates that there are various fixed aspects of dream stories. First of all, the dream always follows a physical or mental trouble which was causing anxiety in the hero before s/he saw the dream. Moreover, in most cases the dream occurs while the hero sleeps nearby a holy site such as graves or fountains. Last but not least, those holy persons serving as spiritual guides offer to the dreamer one or three cups of wine [*aşk badesi*] or a beautiful maiden as symbolizing their invite for initiation ritual. Following his/her accomplishment of the task, the dreamer becomes heated with flame and fire, and remains in a troubled state for almost a week. Afterwards s/he is visited by an old woman carrying a *saz* and pulling its strings. Upon his/her hearing of the melody, the dreamer opens up his/her eyes and begins to be able to play the *saz*, to sing, and to improvise poetry, whereby s/he earns her/his revealed name and becomes “a poet inspired by God [*hak aşığı*].”³¹⁸

With regard to the epistemology of dreams, there are various ideas and theories systematized by leading figures of Islamic spiritual thinking such as Shihab al-Suhrawardi (d.1191) or Ibn Arabi. The former one may be especially crucial with respect to Veysî’s understanding of dreams, for Veysî is, as discussed in the second chapter, considered to have established connections with Zeyniyye *tariqa*, which was a sub-section of Suhrawardiyya.³¹⁹ Suhrawardi is generally regarded as the architect of a mystical-philosophical system, of which dreams and visions played a crucial role. According to Suhrawardi, dreams and visions are matters of a “third world halfway between the world of sensible perception and the world of

³¹⁵ Niyazioğlu, p.196-7.

³¹⁶ *ibid*, p.204.

³¹⁷ Umay Günay, *Aşık Tarzı Şiir Geleneği ve Rûya Motifi*, (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 1986).

³¹⁸ İlhan Başgöz, “Dream Motif in Turkish Folk Stories and Shamanistic Initiation”, in *Turkish Folklore and Oral Literature: Selected Essays of İlhan Başgöz*, ed. by Kemal Silay, (Bloomington, Ind. : Indiana University, c1998), pp.11-24, at pp.12-13.

³¹⁹ Reşat Öngören, *Osmanlılar’da Tasavvuf: Anadolu’da Sufiler, Devlet ve Ulema (16. yüzyıl)*, (İstanbul: İz, 2000), pp. 185-204.

pure abstraction.”³²⁰ This intermediate realm of existence, signifying the dimensions of both material and spiritual, visible and invisible, and the divine and humane, is referred to as *alam al-mithal*.³²¹ The importance of dreams and visions is thought to have derived from the fact that they help the dreamer in bridging the gap between these two opposing realms. Such ideas have also been accepted as an integral part of Sufi culture in the ages to follow. Thirteenth century Andalusian mystic Ibn Arabi, for instance, is one important bearer of this idea as having insisted on the existence of a separate imaginal world notwithstanding the fact that he employs a terminology different from *alam al-mithal*. For Ibn Arabi, this intermediate realm is called *barzakh*, which refers to a limbo-land between the mortal realm and the spirit world.³²²

Suhrawardi is not only important for his mystico-philosophical system embracing dreams and other visionary experiences, which might have impacts on Veysî's own understanding of dreams. More interesting than a probable familiarity of Veysî with the ideas of Suhrawardi, he might have directly inspired from Suhrawardi's description of his own dream vision, in which he met and talked to Aristotle on philosophical matters.³²³ In his dream, Suhrawardi and Aristotle strike a conversation on some epistemological problems such as the sources of true knowledge and the means to obtain it. At certain point, Aristotle begins to extol Plato as saying that no philosopher can be compared to him. Suhrawardi wonders whether he finds any of the Islamic philosophers worthy of esteem, but Aristotle does not pay any attention. When Suhrawardi counts some earliest mystics such as Bayazid-i Bistami or Sehl b. Abdullah Tustari, Aristotle agrees with Suhrawardi that they are worth to mention owing to their wisdom and erudition.³²⁴ Through this imaginal conversation, Suhrawardi is considered to convey his rejection of the philosophical systems of some eminent Islamic philosophers such as Avicenna or Farabi, for Aristotle's emphasis, not on these figures but earlier Sufis, is interpreted as so.

³²⁰ Henry Corbin, “The Visionary Dream in Islamic Spirituality”, in *The Dream and Human Societies*, eds. by Grunebaum & Roger Caillois, p.406.

³²¹ Amira Mittermaier, “The Book of Visions: Dreams, Poetry and Prophecy in Contemporary Egypt”, *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, vol.39, 2007, pp.231.

³²² Sviri, “Dreaming Analyzed and Recorded: Dreams in the World of Medieval Islam”, in *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*, eds. by Shulman and Stroumsa, p.257-8.

³²³ M.Y.Hairi, “Suhrawardi's An Episode and a Trance: A Philosophical Dialogue in a Mystical Stage”, in *Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism*, ed. by Parwiz Morewedge, (New York: Caravan Books, 1981), pp. 177-189.

³²⁴ Hairi, p.187.

Here, dream is used by Suhrawardi as a tool to pen a treatise underlining and legitimizing his own philosophical stance, and Aristotle as an authoritative figure guides him in his attempt. The use of dreams in order to provide legitimate answers to the dreamer's concerns is not only peculiar to such philosophical discussions. There are various examples, in which such literal dreams are utilised as to provide solutions to theological and judicial problems, or to create a poetic inspiration upon the poets.

Choosing among the schools of law or following the righteous Caliph are among the examples showing how dreams can function as solving a dispute and legitimizing the dreamer's selection.³²⁵ In the case of, for instance, an early Muslim jurist who wanted to copy books of *ra'y*, he sees in his dream the Prophet Muhammad and asks him whether he should compile the *ra'y* of Abu Hanifa. The Prophet says no. The dreamer asks again whether he should write down the *ra'y* of Malik, and the Prophet gives the same answer. The jurist questions next about al-Shafi's *ra'y*, but in this case, the Prophet says that Shafi's teachings are sound answers to those who oppose the Sunna. Upon this dream, the dreamer goes to Egypt and copies the books of al-Shaf'i.³²⁶

With regard to literary invention and poetic inspiration, there are numerous instances in which Sufi poets and writers have received inspiration through dreams, or at least attributed to dreams the reason of composing their accounts. One of the well-known examples of such an inspiration is Ibn Arabi's *Fusul al-Hikam* [Wisdom of the Philosophers]. Ibn Arabi tells at the beginning of this relatively short piece that he received the entire book in his dream, in which the Prophet told him, "This is the book of the Fusus al-Hikam; take it and bring it out to the people who will benefit by it."³²⁷ If we are to remember Mustafa Ali's *Nushat us-Selatin* [Counsel for the Sultans], we can see Âlî as resorting to a similar legitimizing function of dreams, since he tells the reader in the introduction of his book that he decided to compose his account upon his dream in which certain holy men informed him how beneficial and virtuous act this would be.

The nomenclature of dreams in Islamic dream lore can provide insights in understanding the 'state of betweenness' that many Sufi philosophers mean to. Although the *rûya* is used as a generic term to denote the dream experience, there are various other ways of

³²⁵ Leah Kinberg, "The Legitimization of the *Madhahib* Through Dreams", *Arabica*, 1985, vol.32, pp.47-79.

³²⁶ Kinberg, "The Legitimization of the *Madhahib* Through Dreams", pp.70-71.

³²⁷ Annemarie Schimmel, *Halifenin Rûyaları: İslamda Rûya ve Rûya Tabirleri*, (İstanbul: Kılbalcı Yayınevi, 2005), p.299.

description. These are, yet, not synonyms but rather nuanced concepts, each denoting to a different range of experience. To begin with, *rûya* is, owing to its Arabic roots (r-a-y), primarily associated with ‘sight’ and ‘seeing.’³²⁸ On such a ground, however, it is difficult to separate the experience of nocturnal visions from waking visionary experiences including thinking in visual or imaginative ways. In this regard, there is a distinction made at the basic level that while those that occur during sleep are defined as *rûya* or *hab*; *vakı’ a* is preferred to refer to those that occur while awake or in a state of semi-wakefulness.³²⁹ Although *vakı’ a* means psychic occurrences that mostly befall the Sufi when s/he is in isolation³³⁰, the difference between *vakı’ a* and *rûya* does not stem from the diverse nature of these experiences. As in *rûya*, the seer in the *vakı’ a* is not present in the world of sensible perception. In this regard, the border between *rûya* and *vakı’ a* can be drawn not on the basis of what is seen but rather when it is seen, whether awake or asleep.

There are various literary plays employed by the authors in order to depict the moment of crossing the boundary from the material world into the imaginal one. In, for instance, Evliya Çelebi’s *Seyahatnâme*, which is replete with various dream narratives of both himself and his patron Melek Ahmed Pasha, Evliya begins his travelogue with the famous dream in which the Prophet Muhammad himself bestows on him blessing. The interesting thing in this narrative, however, is the fact that Evliya depicts this moment of transition as a state between sleep and wakefulness [*beyne'n-nevm ve'l-yakaza*].³³¹ Despite the fact that there is no significant difference between *rûya* and *vakı’ a* with regard to validity and authenticity of what is seen, the state of betweenness can be read as a literary strategy apt for the intentions of the authors. As argued by Peter Brown in his study on medieval European dream poetry, through this betweenness, conveys the author his/her desire

to focus on the state of being between sleep and wakefulness, death and life, inertia and excitation, natural and artificial states, experience and authority, salvation and damnation, being lost and finding direction, solitude and sociability, private and public, male and female, health and sickness, constraint and liberation, alienation and integration. Of course, the middle ground which the dream vision thus opens up is by its nature constantly shifting, elusive, open to renegotiation.³³²

³²⁸ Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary of Ottoman Damascus: Abd al-Ghanî al-Nâbulusî, 1641-1731*, p.62.

³²⁹ Hossein Rıza, “Roya”, *Encyclopedia Iranica*.

³³⁰ Katz, *Dreams, Sufism, and Sainthood: The Visionary Career of Muhammad Al-Zawawi*, p.214.

³³¹ Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, vol.1, ed. by Seyit Ali Kahraman & Yücel Dağlı, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1996-), p.9.

The range of vocabulary used to denote visionary experiences is not restricted only to *rûya* and *vakı'a*. There are various others such as *mukashafa* [unveiling], *ilham* [inspiration], *mushahada* [witnessing, apparition], *marifa* [gnostic knowledge], *vahy* [revelation], or *tajalli* [theophany of God] each of which designates a distinct level of attainment.³³³ *Mukashafa*, for instance, refers to the disclosure of hidden realities to the seer. While it sounds similar to *rûya* and *vakı'a*, there is a fundamental difference in *mukashafa* that unlike the former ones that occur when the seer is absent to the material world, *mukashafa* occurs while the seer is still present.³³⁴

An immediate comparison of Veysî's *Habnâme* to Hasan Kâfî el-Akhisarî's *Usûlü'l-Hikem fi Nizamü'l-Alem* [Philosophical Principles Concerning the Order of the World] can be expository of this difference. As discussed in the previous chapter, Hasan Kâfî el-Akhisarî utters at the beginning of his account that the causes behind the corruption and decline of the empire were 'unveiled' to him by God when he was deeply thinking of them. Here, Hasan Kâfî remains in the present and his account does not include a narrative of transition to a higher realm. In Veysî's *Habnâme*, however, the author depicts how he was overcome by sleep while he was, like Hasan Kâfî, pondering the contemporary situation of the society which filled him with sorrow and despair. Upon this moment of transition, Veysî finds himself in an environment completely different from his present (worldly) situation. Such a distinction in the terminology used by Veysî and Hasan Kâfî may attest to the fact that these writers were aware of the nuances among the relevant terms, and thus their selectivity of words is not coincidental.

Tajalli is another remarkable experience that a Sufi could have. The term actually has dual meanings. On the one hand, *tajalli* refers to theophany of the God through various levels such as beauty and perfection of the God and/or his names, the term is also used as to mean the manifestation of divine truth in the heart of the Sufi.³³⁵ Keeping account of the *tajalliyat* is a frequent activity in Sufi sainthood, and one can find similar accounts in Ottoman realm.

³³² Peter Brown, "On the Borders of Middle English Dream Visions", in *Reading Dreams: The Interpretation of Dreams from Chaucer to Shakespeare*, ed. by Peter Brown, (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.45.

³³³ Marcia K. Hermansen, "Visions as 'Good To Think': A Cognitive Approach to Visionary Experience in Islamic Sufi Thought", p.28.

³³⁴ Katz, *Dreams, Sufism, and Sainthood: The Visionary Career of Muhammad Al-Zawawi*, p.214.

³³⁵ Necdet Tosun, "Azîz Mahmud Hüdâyî'nin *Tecelliyât* isimli Eseri ve Tasavvufta Ruhî Tecrübelerin Aktarılması Geleneği", in *Azîz Mahmud Hüdâyî Uluslararası Sempozyumu Bildirileri*, vol.I, ed. by H.Kamil Yılmaz, (İstanbul: Üsküdar Belediye Başkanlığı, 2005), p.223.

Among these accounts, Aziz Mahmud Hüdai's is the most famous one. In his *Tecelliyat*, which was written first in Arabic and then rendered into Ottoman Turkish as early as the seventeenth century, Aziz Mahmud Hüdai kept his experiences including *ilham* [inspirations], *mushahada* [apparitions] and *kashf* [unveilings].³³⁶ In addition to *Tecelliyat*, Hüdai did also compile a book named *Vakı'a't*, which contains his conversations, both in real plane and dreams, with his master, Sheikh Üftade Efendi.³³⁷ It is worth to note that the dreams and visions that Hüdai had seen were collected not in *Tecelliyat* but in *Vakı'at*. This also gives us an indication that there seems to have been a clear sense of distinction among different types of visionary experiences.

IV. 3: Dreams and Anxiety

An additional room should be reserved for a discussion on the correlative nature of relationship between anxiety and dreams, which would be helpful in contextualizing dreams in their own historical circumstances. Here credits should go to Sigmund Freud, whose stress upon the dreams' role in revealing the psychological/cultural atmosphere of the individual/society will be borrowed. Nevertheless, except this point my analysis will not be Freudian. The attempts of combining psychoanalysis and history together under the roof of psychohistory had lost its once popularity long ago, for the historians became aware of the grave problems underlying the methodology of such an approach. First of all, historians realized how erroneous it would be to implement modern preconceptions of psychoanalytical dream theory upon pre-modern societies.³³⁸ Secondly, the status of Freudian dream theory, which has been eclipsed by the rise of neurobiological explanations that harshly question the belief in symbolic character of dreams, further entailed the divorce of psychoanalysis and history.³³⁹ This study, therefore, should not be interpreted as an endeavour to remarry them, since I do share with Freud only the general idea that dreams may occupy a significant place in cultural and psychological analysis.

³³⁶ Tosun, p.225.

³³⁷ Terzioğlu, "Man in the Image of God in the image of the times: Sufi self-narratives and the diary of Niyazi-i Mısrî (1618-94)", p.145; Ziver Tezeren, *Aziz Mahmud Hüdai*, (Ankara: Kültür & Turizm Bak. Yayınları, 1987), p. 51.

³³⁸ S.R.F. Price, "The Future of Dreams: From Freud to Artemidorus", pp.4-5.

³³⁹ Price, p.9.

Anxious state of the dreamer before s/he falls into a dream is in fact a typical motif encountered in wide variety of traditions such as early Islamic and Sufi dream lore, dream vision genre of medieval Europe, and even twentieth century dream accounts written in Hitler's Germany or Stalin's Russia. In all these narratives, dreams follow the dreamer's pre-sleep state of perplexity whereby they function as to provide a sense of relief from agony. The question to be asked is, whether it is possible to determine historical zones of anxiety in the light of the concentration of such dream accounts.

One potential zone for Islamic history, according to Fazlur Rahman, is post-Abbasid period, when the philosophy of "*alam al-mithal* increases in importance and forms an integral part of Sufi spiritual culture."³⁴⁰ For Rahman, as a community in a political suspense, socio-economic instability and overall deterioration, interest shown by Sufis to imaginative powers extended as means to secure refuge. This might have also been the case in the post-Süleymanic Ottoman Empire, as discussed above with special reference to Aslı Niyazioğlu's study. Niyazioğlu's point can further be expanded by the critical use of dreams in Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatnâme*. Rich in terms of dream narratives, *Seyahatnâme* provides glimpses of evidence in order to understand how dreams could be consulted as a medium to overcome the existing anxiety. According to Robert Dankoff, most of Evliya's dream narratives are "pointed" in line with the role Evliya Çelebi assigns to them.³⁴¹ They mostly function as tools of offering comfort to Evliya and his patron, Melek Ahmed Paşa, whenever he or his patron is in a trouble. Similar interest in dream narratives of Sufis can also be seen in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when the increased interaction between Western/European way of life and Islamic traditions began to create an inconsistency and anxiety, of which Sufis and many other Muslims did suffer.³⁴² In all these cases, dreams both reflect the distressing experience that the dreamer had as well as his/her effort to alleviate it.

Apart from Sufi dreams, famous dream vision genre of medieval Europe is a fertile ground to detect the visibility of anxiety. The scholars working on this genre share, more or less, the idea that the late medieval flourishing of dream poetry emerged in response to the social, economic, political and religious circumstances of the age.³⁴³ According to Peter

³⁴⁰ Fazlur Rahman, "Dream, Imagination, and Alam al-Mithal", in *The Dream and Human Societies*, eds. by Grunebaum & Caillois, p.419.

³⁴¹ Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Çelebi*, p.209.

³⁴² Jonathan G. Katz, "An Egyptian Sufi Interprets His Dreams: 'Abd al-Wahhâb al-Sha'rânî', 1493–1565", *Religion*, vol.27, 1997, pp.7-24; Ewing, "The Dream of Spiritual Initiation among Pakistani Sufis", p.59.

³⁴³ A discussion on the main features of this genre is done below.

Brown, the social impacts of plague, prolonged wars, religious schism and peasant revolts might have imbued the poets with a sense of melancholy and inwardness, and thus influenced their poetic sensibilities.³⁴⁴ Agreeing with William Bouwsma, who argues for the disintegration of hierarchical social structure by the late medieval period, Brown states, “society itself was in a state where boundaries were breaking down under the pressure of severe (...) crisis. What the dream vision provided was a radical means of representing (...) both those experiences and the pervasive sense thereby produced of being in a state of transition.”³⁴⁵

Finally, Soviet Russia under Stalin or Nazi Germany is replete with personal diaries and memoirs containing dreams that reflect state of uncertainty and confusion. Mostly political in nature, the concentration of such accounts in these eras is not fortuitous, but demonstrative of the fact that dreams of people in Nazi Germany or Stalin’s Russia reflect how the impacts of totalitarianism become manifest in their psychological and behavioural patterns.³⁴⁶ This is actually not an unexpected consequence inasmuch as dreams are considered as mirrors of their historical and cultural conjunctures.

What then are we to conclude from all these discussions for contextualizing Veysî and *Habnâme*? What is the extent of cultural reference Veysî might have brought to his text? What was it Veysî strove for in his such preference? One of the safest things to argue is that Veysî might have resorted to the popularity of dreams in the milieu he was living in. As discussed in the chapter dedicated to his biography, Veysî had intimate relations with Nev’izâde Atâ’î or Aziz Mahmud Hüdai, whose writings unequivocally demonstrate an evident interest toward dreams. In this respect, it would not be erroneous to claim that Veysî shared the literary-cultural predilections of his environment. Moreover, as far as the deep curiosity of Ahmed I about dreams, through which he had established ties with Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi to have him interpret them, is concerned, it is equally legitimate to anticipate from Veysî that he may have gambled with good intentions that a dream-like text was a potential hook for tempting Ahmed’s interest and securing his patronage. Since artistic production was shaped more by the personal tastes of patrons rather than those of the artists, *Habnâme*’s dreamlike nature can be interpreted within this context as well.

³⁴⁴ Brown, “On the Borders of Middle English Dream Visions”, in *Reading Dreams: The Interpretation of Dreams from Chaucer to Shakespeare*, ed. by Brown, p.30-32.

³⁴⁵ Brown, pp.44-45.

³⁴⁶ Irino Paperno, “Dreams of Terror: Dreams from Stalinist Russia as a Historical Source”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol.7, no.4, 2006, pp.793-794.

Although we have no substantial evidence whether Ahmed I read the piece and rewarded Veysî, we know for certain that *Habnâme* acquired a great popularity in both his age and the subsequent periods. Is there any possibility that the popularity and prestige of dreams were the primary cause behind the wide circulation of *Habnâme*? If the dream and dream interpretation were quotidian facets of daily life, and they were regarded to be important aspects of early modern Ottoman culture³⁴⁷; Veysî might have addressed to the relatively broad readership, which were ready to ‘buy’ such an account. Furthermore, since the text was recognized in the periods following its composition as *Vakı’anâme* although there is not a direct reference in the text, this may indicate the value/place associated to Veysî’s account by the contemporary readership. That is to say, *Habnâme*, in especially its earlier reception, might have been perceived by the contemporary readers not as a hackneyed historical/political account, but rather as an embellished narrative creating a real dream effect, with which they were highly familiar.

Beyond this aspect regarding the consumption and reception of the text, *Habnâme*’s dream-frame can also be discussed from the perspective of Veysî’s acquaintance with Islamic dream theory that assigns divine value to dreams as explained above in detail. We have sufficient evidence rendered from Veysî’s other writings, such as his *Siyer* book, that Veysî had an extensive knowledge about Islamic dream lore. In his *Siyer*, for instance, he is entangled with a lengthy theological discussion on dreams, visionary experiences, and prophecy. As an attempt to disprove the arguments against the ontological reality of the Prophet’s journey [*Miraj*], Veysî says that those who assume the Prophet’s journey as his visionary experience, confuses *rûya* and *rü’yet*. For Veysî, they did identify *Miraj* as a *rûya*, for the event was, depending upon a misinterpretation of a Qur’anic verse, likened to *rûya* in terms if its happening at night within a sudden moment. He even demonstrates his familiarity with theories of ancient Greek philosophers and scientists such as Euclid, Ptolemy and Aristotle that he expresses the reason of his composing such a passage as to disprove the claims of their adherents calling for the physical impossibility of *Miraj*. In addition to these, as a clear indication of his awareness with the taxonomy of dreams, Veysî uses different terms such as *menamat-ı sadıka*, *rûya-yı salıha*, or *hab-ı bidari* while recounting different dream accounts of early Muslims.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁷ Dro’r Zeevi defines Ottoman culture as a ‘dream culture’, in the sense that, “true or imaginary, every change in daily life was believed to have had a counterpart in dreams or to possess an otherworldly dimension.” See: Zeevi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500-1900*, p.108.

Another working hypothesis that must be kept in mind is that Veysî might have attempted to benefit from the narrative structure of Sufi dreams. Reminiscent of Sufi initiation dreams or dream diaries, in which influential deceased figures guide the dreamer in his/her dream, Veysî's *Habnâme* seems to perpetuate such a cultural/literary template. In the mode of *Habnâme*'s emplotment, main characters are cast similar to the aforementioned dream narratives: Ahmed I as the young and inexperienced person who needs guidance, and the Alexander as the influential person serving to guide the former one. Here, we can speak of an arrangement putting Ahmed I and Alexander into a configuration of the *pir* and *his young disciple*. Veysî is, therefore, not among the main characters of his dream plot, although he is the original dreamer. He, rather, appears as an outsider functioning as the initiator of the narrative. The role he has to have, as far as the model is concerned, is therefore transferred to Ahmed I. In that regard, *Habnâme* can be re-named as the dream of Ahmed I seen not by himself but Veysî. Contrariwise, Alexander's position remains the same as the role of the Prophet Muhammad, or saints or *pirs* or any other influential figure in Sufi dream narratives. His role is, nevertheless, transformed from a spiritual realm into a more mundane, if not secular, sphere. More stringently put, the Alexander stands in *Habnâme* as a paragon that provides guidance not in religious terms, but in terms of earthly concerns such as politics, statecraft, and philosophy of history.

Despite the fact that Alexander functions as a guide in non-spiritual terms, his being an influential deceased associates *Habnâme* with dreams that were believed to communicate messages from the unknown. The important thing here is that the messages purported by the late Alexander seem to come from a source beyond a sensible experience. This makes what Alexander says, or what is put in his mouth by Veysî, more special and striking than a regular resort to Alexander figure as an ideal ruler as done in many other mirrors for princes. In this sense, we can see a complex literary structure in Veysî's *Habnâme*: he not only uses Alexander as a role model for the sultan as many others did, but also and more importantly, personifies Alexander through a dream form as to make him to strike a realistic conversation with the sultan. To put it more precisely, Alexander's presence in his dream is likely to be Veysî's decision to use dreams' authoritative power over the potential audience including Ahmed I himself.

Beside the issue of Veysî's possible authorial intentions while penning *Habnâme*, the text equally fits well into the explanatory framework of dreams-anxiety correlation. As

³⁴⁸ Nuran Öztürk, *Siyer Türü ve Siyer-i Veysî: Dürretü't-Tâc fî Sîreti Sâhibi'l-Mi'râc*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Erciyes Üniversitesi, 1997, passim.

discussed thoroughly in the previous chapter, *Habnâme* seems to be written more to console than to counsel the sultan. As far as the historical conjunctures, during which this text was written, are concerned, one can understand the increased level of anxiety among contemporary intelligentsia and bureaucrats, whose relative security was to be threatened by the increase in population levels, *Celali* revolts, the cessation of territorial expansion, and shrinking of the number of available posts. Veysî did in fact begin his account with a description of his anxious state by giving references to the problems in his social and political environment. The dream frame may have, thus, provided him with a sense of temporary relief, as it is mostly the case in Evliya Çelebi's employing of dream narratives. The question to be posed is whether Veysî did only want to alleviate himself and the sultan, or was it the case that *Habnâme* was written to say to all those contemporary thinkers imbued with similar anxious feelings that there was no need to panic. For such an apologetic standing point, the dream form of the text might have again been an intended choice, for we have seen that dreams could be resorted in Islamic tradition as to impose its authoritative power for a final settlement in philosophical/theological disputes.

CHAPTER V

TOWARDS CONCEPTUALIZING A NEW GENRE? *HABNÂME* AS A ‘PURE FICTION’

An equally valid question beyond treating *Habnâme* as a ‘real dream’ is whether there is a possibility to define a new literary genre in the Ottoman-Turkish literature of which *Habnâme* is among the salient examples, and even the pioneer work. In order to assess *Habnâme* within such a context, both debates on the ‘dream-vision’ genre, which was one of the most popular forms in medieval European literature, and a selection of texts from especially nineteenth and twentieth century Ottoman-Turkish literature written in a dream-form including “Rûya”s of Namık Kemal and Ziya Paşa will be resorted throughout this chapter.

Although this *problematique* has been generally neglected in the related literature, certain attempts have been done to conceptualize such a special genre.³⁴⁹ In, for instance, the most comprehensive study written so far by M.Kayahan Özgül, the author tends to define the genre as “political dreams,” of which *Habnâme* is named as the prototype.³⁵⁰ Through enumerating numerous other examples mostly from the nineteenth and twentieth century Ottoman-Turkish literary production including the pieces of Ziya Paşa, Namık Kemal, Mizancı Murad Bey, Ruşenî or Ahmed Emin Yalman, Özgül delineates that these political dreams were written to create certain effects such as consoling the reader, criticizing the contemporary society and politics, or conveying utopian ideals of their authors.³⁵¹ In the light

³⁴⁹ One of the most non-sensical approaches to the problem of literary genres in the Ottoman literature is to categorize them into two main groups as those of verse and those of prose without putting much effort to scrutinize the critical differences between the particular examples of each body. Moreover, in those more reliable studies, such as Günay Kut’s comprehensive article on the classical Ottoman literature, no such specific genre regarding these dream-narratives is defined. If one is to apply to Kut’s categorization, s/he can identify Veysî’s *Habnâme* at most as a prose story. See: Günay Kut, “The Classical Period in Turkish Literature”, in *The Ottoman Civilisation*, eds. by Halil İncılık & Günsel Renda, vol.II, pp.526-567.

³⁵⁰ M. Kayahan Özgül, *Türk Edebiyatında Siyasi Rüyalar*, (Ankara: Hece, 2004).

³⁵¹ Özgül, *Türk Edebiyatında Siyasi Rüyalar* p.19.

of his categorization, Veysi's *Habnâme* is situated as a political dream of a consoling character.

Illuminating in terms of paying attention to a hitherto neglected portion of Ottoman-Turkish literature though, Özgül's conception carries certain controversial points. The most fundamental problem regarding the way Özgül defines the genre is its name. If we are to define these literary pieces written for certain intentions as "political dreams", what kind of terminology is left to use in explaining those dream narratives, such as the famous dream story of Osman, the eponymous founder of the Ottoman principality, recounted in Âşıkpaşazâde's account or many other similar royal dreams dispersed in various chronicles? These dreams also show certain political intentions influenced by the overall political atmosphere of the narrator's age as well as his factional position. In this regard, what is the line that strictly differentiates these scattered dream stories from the "political dreams" of Özgül's formulation? Beside, how can one claim to explain with the same terms those texts from both early seventeenth century and the post-Tanzimat period without keeping into account a possible transformation of political language, values, norms, *id est* mentalities?

Beside Özgül's suggestion, there is another proposal to classify those literary pieces written in dream-form irrespective of their content whether political, religious or philosophical. The term, *habnâme*, is suggested by both Mustafa Kırıcı and Gencay Zavotçu as to define the texts written as if their authors narrate a dream.³⁵² While for Kırıcı, Veysi's *Habnâme* is the first example of this genre, Zavotçu argues that the earliest example was *Risale-i Habıyye* of Ömer Fuadi Efendi, the fifth sheikh of the Şabaniyye tarîqa, who wrote his account in 1581-2.

In Ömer Fuadi's text, the author recounts that while he was reading the dream story of Züleyha in the book of *Yusuf ü Züleyha*, he yearned for a similar love experience Züleyha had lived. While thinking over this, he turns into sleep and meets a beautiful girl; but right at this moment, he awakens. Upon his awakening, he begins his search to find the girl in his dream and finally finds her in Kastamonu where Ömer Fuadi himself was born.³⁵³ As a true representative of Sufi initiation dreams, Ömer Fuadi's discovery of his dream girl is the symbolic narration of his attachment to the sheikh of Şabaniyye, Abdülbaki Efendi who

³⁵² Mustafa Kırıcı, "Fantastik, Postmodern bir Habnâme yahut Nazlı Eray'ın Yoldan Geçen Öyküsü", *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi - The Journal of International Social Research*, 2007, vol.1, pp. 149-155; Gencay Zavotçu, *Türk Edebiyatında Hab-name ve Ömer Fu'adi'nin Habıyye Risalesi*, (Kastamonu: Hazret-i Pir Şeyh Şaban-ı Veli Vakfı Yayınları, 2007).

³⁵³ Zavotçu, pp. 101-111.

resided in Kastamonu. It is, indeed, doubtful for two main reasons to accept Ömer Fuadi's text as the earliest example of this genre. First, there had already been similar initiation dream narratives interspersed in, for example, biographical dictionaries of poets or folk tales, which contradicts Zavotçu's claim regarding Ömer Fuadi's piece. Secondly, although one can speak of a similar cultural and literary template visible in both Veysî's *Habnâme* and Ömer Fuadi's *Risale-i Habiyye*, it is still difficult to define them as representatives of the same genre.

For a more reliable assessment of the main features of the genre, discussions on the medieval European literary form of dream vision can shed light. It would, of course, be problematic to directly apply medieval European literary genre into the Ottoman setting albeit its understandable attraction. However, what is intended here is just to underline the structural and thematic similarities of Ottoman-Turkish examples to the European dream-vision genre for an accurate identification of the chief pillars that Ottoman dream-framed accounts bear.

The vision poetry was, as argued by Kathryn Lynch, "the genre of the middle ages" popular in especially between twelfth and fifteenth centuries.³⁵⁴ Among the prominent examples of this genre, one has to name the anonymous *Roman de la Rose*, Chaucer's *The Book of Duchess*, *The Parliament of Foules*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and Langland's *Piers Plowman*. There is a wide-ranging scholarly attention in Anglo-American tradition to the analysis of this genre from various perspectives, which can make an Ottoman (literary) historian become envious of. It has passed over well-nigh forty years since Bernard Lewis brings to the attention that *Habnâme* of Veysî can be the Ottoman version of Langland's *Piers Plowman*³⁵⁵, but there is no such a comparative study available either for Veysî's *Habnâme* or for any other dream narrative in the entire Ottoman-Turkish literature. This is, in fact, not surprising as long as the lack of interest in Ottoman historiography toward dreams in general and *Habnâme* of Veysî in particular is taken into account.

The dream vision is, first and foremost, the first person account of a dream. The narrative is introduced through presenting the dreamer as a character, and usually concluded by a description on the dreamer's reawakening as a complete reminder - either explicit or tacit - to the reader that all the stories, dialogues and characters that they have read "is and always was located in the mind of a dreamer whose secret longing, distress or distraction has caused

³⁵⁴ Kathryn L.Lynch, *The High Medieval Dream Vision: Poetry, Philosophy, and Literary Form*, (Stanford University Press, 1988), p.2.

³⁵⁵ Bernard Lewis, "Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline", *Islamic Studies*, vol.1, 1962, p.74.

his dream.”³⁵⁶ One important motif common in most of the examples is this anxious state of the dreamer before he falls into the sleep. In the prologue section of the narrative, the message is transferred to the reader that the dreamer was distressed or concerned about some problems. This is, however, not directly recounted but rather projected through a depiction of the dreamer’s seclusion and solitude. As expressed by Peter Brown, “a dreamer is by definition alone, solitary, and separated from social activity.”³⁵⁷ The sources of his suffering may vary from pain of love or mourning to a deeper and spiritual kind of depression.³⁵⁸ In any case, this anxiety forms the stepping-stone of the entire dream report.

The moment of transition from this state of anxiety into the refreshing atmosphere of the dream landscape is the key literary mechanism of this genre. Turning into sleep embodies, in Hans-Jürgen Bachorski’s terminology, a “fictionality path” connoting to this shift from wakefulness to sleep.³⁵⁹ Via this “fictionality path”, the author is considered to invite the readers to a complicated literary game where dreams and reality are intermeshed. In other words, the dream to be narrated is presented not as a pure fabrication and forgery, but rather the reader is invoked “to regard certain events and narrative strategies as possible, but by no means everything in the account as true.”³⁶⁰ Although we can talk about a shift from the actual world to the world of dreams, the boundary between these two should not be thought as a mark of rupture. The dream report is, in fact, a divergent version of the waking experiences; hence, the line between these two realms should be interpreted as “a party wall within the same house, a wall with a connecting door.”³⁶¹

The interplay of dream and fiction is indeed an apparent characteristic visible not just in medieval European dream vision genre but also in, for instance, Borges’s stories or David Lynch’s filmography. I do not want to here expand the range of the topic up to modern and post-modern uses of dreams in artistic production, but suffice it to say, there always has been a close connection between the kind of symbolism found in dreams and that of the works of

³⁵⁶ Stephen J. Russell, *The English Dream Vision: Anatomy of a Form*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, c1988), p.128.

³⁵⁷ Brown, “On the Borders of Middle English Dream Visions”, in *Reading Dreams: The Interpretation of Dreams from Chaucer to Shakespeare*, ed. by Brown, pp.28-29.

³⁵⁸ Russell, *The English Dream Vision: Anatomy of a Form*, p.116.

³⁵⁹ Hans-Jürgen Bachorski, “Interpreting Dreams in Medieval Literature”, in *Dreams & History: The Interpretation of Dreams from Ancient Greece to Modern Psychoanalysis*, eds. by Daniel Pick & Lyndal Roper, (London ; New York : Routledge, 2004), p.60.

³⁶⁰ *ibid.*

³⁶¹ Brown, “On the Borders of Middle English Dream Visions”, pp.33-34.

art³⁶². As in better expressed by Ferial Ghazoul Hopkins's words, "dreams and literature are cut from the same fictional tissue."³⁶³

Succinctly illuminating this aspect, an eighteenth century fiction from the Ottoman literature is of great value. This text named *Muhayyelat-ı Ledünn-i İlahi* and written by Giritli Aziz Efendi is an idiosyncratic account covering both features of ages-old Mesopotamian story-telling tradition as well as the modern (and even post-modern) short story techniques. This is why it is considered as a bridge between the old/classical literature and the modern one of post-Tanzimat era.³⁶⁴ The most interesting thing for our purposes, however, is Aziz Efendi's selection of word to entitle each chapter of his book: '*hâyâl*.' This is remarkable as to hint that *hâyâl*, as a word reminiscent of dreaming process, is associated with fiction in early modern Ottoman cultural milieu. Within this respect, the question becomes more meaningful whether Veysî's text was written and read as a pure fiction.

As to the reasons and advantages of the use of dream frame as means to narrate the story, the scholars enlist numerous explanations that mainly concentrate upon the anticipated effects of dreams on the audience. According to Peter Brown, such a frame might have been utilised for its success in rousing a curiosity on the readership. Since dream is and was a common experience deemed with great esteem, appealing to this commonality and speciality might have been the chief reason.³⁶⁵ Moreover, there are other advantages of the use of dream frame with regard to especially the writing process of the authors. Beyond providing authoritative and impressive judgments by benefiting from the presumably divinatory power of dreams, the dream frame, as Constance B. Hieatt states, serves as a "unifying device, tying together seemingly unrelated material"³⁶⁶, such as meeting of Alexander the Two-Horned and the Sultan Ahmed I in Veysî's vision. Hieatt adds to her model of explanation a second aspect

³⁶² Brown, p.59. Sigmund Freud wrote a separate article on the strong similarity between works of art and dreams. He says that it is possible "to compare the imaginative writer with the day dreamer, and of poetical creation with the day-dream". See: Sigmund Freud, "Creative Writers & Day Dreaming", in *Authorship: From Plato to the Postmodern: A Reader*, ed.by Sean Burke, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), pp.54-62.

³⁶³ Ferial Ghazoul Hopkins, "The Nature and Function of the Dream Motif in Turkish Folk Literature", *I.Uluslararası Türk Folklor Kongresi Bildirileri II.Cilt: Halk Edebiyatı*, 1976, p.132.

³⁶⁴ Zeynep Uysal, *Olağanüstü Masaldan Çağdaş Anlatıya: Muhayyelât-ı Aziz Efendi*, (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2006).

³⁶⁵ Brown, "On the Borders of Middle English Dream Visions", p.25.

³⁶⁶ Constance B. Hieatt, *The Realism of Dream Visions: The Poetic Exploitation of the Dream Experience in Chaucer and his Contemporaries*, p.11.

that stresses upon the frame's serving for "cutting short an episode."³⁶⁷ As far as dreams' nature of instantly happening and short lasting, which was also explained by Veysî in his *Siyer*, is considered, Veysî might have resorted to dream frame for narrating a short, immediate and striking record. There are in fact signs of this aspect inside *Habnâme*, for Veysî explicitly expresses in the text his desire to write later a longer and full-fledged account.

Before comparing *Habnâme* of Veysî to a selection of texts from the nineteenth and twentieth century Ottoman literature, a transitory example written in mid-eighteenth century should be paid attention. Although its author, Haşmetî, writes openly at the end of his account that his prose is entitled *İntisabü'l-Mülûk*, this text is quoted in the relevant literature as *Habnâme* or *Vaki'anâme*.³⁶⁸ In his dream vision, Haşmetî finds himself with a group of non-Ottoman rulers such as the Indian shah, the *imam* of Yemen, the Chinese emperor, the kings of Russia, Austria, Britain, Holland and France, all of whom are willing to show their desires to be men of the sultan Mustafa III by paying homage to him.³⁶⁹ While they are all in the presence of Mustafa III, the sultan sees Haşmetî at the end of the group and asks him why he steps remote from those rulers. Speaking in a typical self-depreciating manner, Haşmetî says that he is not worth to party such exalted personas for he is only a poor poet. Following his statement, Mustafa III stands up from his throne and declares that since he chooses Haşmetî as the sultan of the poets [*sultanü'ş-şuara*], he has every right to come nearer and join the group. Furthermore, the sultan appoints Haşmetî to the chief financial office of Haremeyn. Haşmetî becomes extremely happy when he is exposed to the sultan's benevolence, yet expresses his fear that what he hears can be a dream. Right at this moment, Haşmetî wakes up to the morning.

As the title, content and the dating of the text verifies, Haşmetî's dream is a clear manifestation of his search for recently enthroned sultan's patronage. In that regard, we can speak of a similarity between Haşmetî's evident intention to provide royal patronage of Mustafa III and Veysî's probable aspiration for that of Ahmed I. What is, yet, more

³⁶⁷ Heatt, p.11.

³⁶⁸ Haşmeti, *İntisabü'l-Mülûk*, in *Haşmet Külliyyatı*, eds by Mehmet Arslan & İ.Hakkı Aksoyak, (Sivas: Dilek Matbaası, 1994), pp. 456-470.

³⁶⁹ It is noteworthy to see in Haşmetî's text a kind of perception that shows how certain occupations and characteristics are identified with a specific country. While, for instance, the *imam* of Yemen expresses his desire to be the chief coffee-maker [*kahvecibaşı*], the Chinese emperor wishes to be the chief porcelain-maker [*çinicibaşı*], the Russian to be the chief fur-maker [*kürkçübaşı*], the Dutch to be the gardener [*bağçevan*], and the British to be the chief supplier of gunpowder [*barutçubaşı*] of Mustafa III. Haşmeti, pp.457-461.

interesting for us is Haşmetî's statements at the end of his account. As an invaluable documentation for the perception of differences between 'real' dreams and 'fabricated' ones, Haşmetî says that he has turned his real dream into a counterfeit by embellishing it with various details and expressions.³⁷⁰ Such a detail is remarkable as to adduce that the line between a real dream and a fabricated one might not necessarily depend on a distinction between a dream that was seen and that of constructed. It may be, as in Haşmetî's case, a matter of an embellished version of a real dream. Therefore Veysî's *Habnâme* is open to this question whether it was really seen and then written later in a bombastic language by Veysî.

In terms of both its narrative and thematic structure, Haşmetî's text is the only available literary piece from pre-Tanzimat era that sounds like Veysî's *Habnâme*. In the course of almost a century, there is no sign for the existence of such a relative text. The next example came from Ziya Paşa who wrote a short piece in the mid-nineteenth century, which is likely to be the most similar account to *Habnâme* of Veysî. As far as the interest of Ziya Paşa or other Young Ottomans towards the writings of the Ottoman classical culture is considered - they did not only resort to the mirror for princes tradition as argued by Şerif Mardin³⁷¹, but also dealt with the classical Ottoman literature on which Ziya Paşa and Namık Kemal, for instance, wrote their comments and critical remarks³⁷² -, we can safely assume that Ziya Paşa was quite aware of Veysî's *Habnâme*. It can even be further claimed that, when the surprisingly similar thematic and structural elements as well as the story line of these two texts are taken into consideration, Ziya Paşa's *Rûya* is directly inspired, and even imitated, from Veysî's prose.

Like Veysî, Ziya Paşa begins his narrative with a description of his anxiety led by the calamitous news he has just read in the newspapers regarding the recent situation of the Ottoman Empire. He was in London while writing his dream, and as he narrates, he goes to Hampton Court by his own and sits on a bank alone. Similar to Veysî's utterance of his deep desire to talk to the sultan Ahmed I, Ziya Paşa expresses the readers his long-held wishes to speak to the sultan Abdülaziz. While uttering these, the landscape suddenly changes and Ziya

³⁷⁰ Haşmeti, p.470: “[G]ördüğümüz suret-i vak’ıyı (...) ziver-i ağuş-ı tefekkür ve cilve-ger-i ayine-i tasavvur edip (...) bir mikdar siyab-ı bezle-i ta’birat ve pelas-pare-i taksirat libasıyla sahte ve perdahte bir sûret verilip, “İntisabü’l-Mülûk” ismiyle müsemma vü mülakkab (...) eyleyüb, tebrik-i saltanat-ı seniyyeleri için (...) afitab-ı cihan-tab-ı inayet-husrevhaneleri, ufuk-ara-yı iltifat buyurulmak babında kerem ü ihsar (...) padişah efendimiz hazretlerindedir.”

³⁷¹ Şerif Mardin, *Yeni Osmanlı Düşüncesinin Doğuşu*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2006), p.95.

³⁷² For the polemic between Ziya Paşa and Namık Kemal regarding their opposing views on classical Ottoman literature, see: M.Kaya Bilgegil, *Harâbat Karşısında Namık Kemal*, (İstanbul: İrfan Yayınları, 1972).

Paşa finds him in Boğaziçi inside the palace of Beşiktaş, where the sultan is walking out the garden.³⁷³ He begins to converse with Abdülaziz, and informs him why he was dismissed from his office and forced to go to Europe due to the grand vizier Ali Paşa's intrigue. In a way reminding classical mirror for princes literature, Ziya Paşa articulates his own views on actual politics and sorts out his own 'to do and to avoid' list necessary for the sake of revoking the current depreciated status of the empire. He even compares, as most of the authors of classical mirrors for princes did, his own age and twenty five years before that he finds Ali Paşa as fully responsible for all the corruption, nepotism, financial problems, misery of people, territorial contraction and the loss of prestige of the Ottoman Empire in the eyes of the European powers.³⁷⁴ He demands from the sultan to dismiss Ali Paşa from the office of grand vizierate. Upon his persuasion of what Ziya Paşa has told him, Abdülaziz decides to dismiss Ali Paşa and entrusts Ziya Paşa to inform Ali about his dismissal. Ziya Paşa then goes to the house of Ali Paşa and apprises him of the sultan's decision. He then awakens by the shout of the gatekeeper in the Hampton Court and realizes that all he has seen is just a dream.³⁷⁵

As indicated in the paragraph above, *Habnâme* of Veysî and Ziya Paşa's *Rûya* share much in terms of introductory description of an anxious state, expression of their desires to meet and talk to the Sultan, and pronouncement of their thoughts on the political conditions of the state. However, it should not be overlooked that there are important, yet inevitable, differences among these pieces. While in Veysî's *Habnâme*, the author is not a direct participant to the dialogue between Alexander and Ahmed I; Ziya Paşa, on the contrary, begins to discuss, in a straight and down to earth manner, certain problems and issues with the sultan Abdülaziz. Although he shows his deep respect to Abdülaziz as kneeling down and crying before him³⁷⁶, Abdülaziz is not depicted as an exalted, sacred, and unreachable figure. In Veysî's *Habnâme*, however, a certain distance between Ahmed I and Veysî is always maintained, which in fact reflects the nature of early modern political culture exhibiting itself through the length of distances as argued by Bernard Lewis.³⁷⁷ Nonetheless, with respect to the harsh and pointed criticisms as well as a detailed prescription that appears in Ziya Paşa's

³⁷³ Ziya Paşa, *Rûya*, in *Yeni Türk Edebiyatı Antolojisi*, vol.II, at pp.109-110.

³⁷⁴ *ibid*, pp. 115-121.

³⁷⁵ *ibid*, p.128.

³⁷⁶ This point was vehemently criticized by Namık Kemal, for Kemal got upset to see Ziya Paşa expressing his desire to beg and cry before the sultan. Quoted in M.Kayahan Özgül, *Türk Edebiyatında Siyasi Rüyalar*, p.30.

³⁷⁷ Bernard Lewis, *Political Language of Islam*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

Rûya, the text deserves more to be labelled as a mirror for prince than Veysî's *Habnâme* is worthy of.

Despite its strong political character, Ziya Paşa's *Rûya* has been generally appraised for its literary assets. Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar, for instance, defines the text as the first successful story in the entire Turkish literary history, and praises it for its ability to reflect the psychological aspects of the characters.³⁷⁸ Beside, Nihad Sami Banarlı accepts the piece as the first reportage of the Ottoman-Turkish literature.³⁷⁹ In addition to these, Engin Kılıç, in his fruitful analysis of the nineteenth and twentieth century Ottoman-Turkish utopias, questions whether Ziya Paşa's *Rûya* is the earliest example of this utopia genre. However, he reaches to the conclusion that since the text seems to be written not for an articulation of a future projection, but rather for repairing his image in the eyes of the sultan³⁸⁰, it cannot be a utopia.³⁸¹

Within this context of utopias as argued by Kılıç, we see, especially after the *Rûya* of Namık Kemal, a new way of utilising dreams as a frame to convey the authors' futuristic ideals and representations. In this regard, it can be said that while Ziya Paşa's *Rûya* is the latest example perpetuating some fundamental motifs of earlier dream visions such as being written as expression of personal desires like soliciting the sultan's donation, or carrying insights more about present and past rather than future, Namık Kemal's *Rûya* signifies the beginning of a new understanding. This novelty stems from the fact that the dream began to be associated with future and progress. It sounds somewhat contradictory, for it has been insistently argued in the previous chapter that the dream, in especially Islamic understanding, is thought to have divinatory power and to bear knowledge from the unknown. However, one should be careful not to necessarily identify the 'unknown', as it is meant in Islamic tradition, with the 'future'. It is, without any doubt, true that the 'unknown' symbolizes the realm beyond the conceivable reality, however this realm has rather a mystical, divine and non-secular quality. The future, as mostly understood by the late nineteenth and early twentieth

³⁷⁸ Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar, *19. Asır Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, (İstanbul: YKY, 2006), p.306-7.

³⁷⁹ Nihad Sâmi Banarlı, *Resimli Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi: Destanlar Devrinden Zamanımıza Kadar*, (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1998), p. 876-7.

³⁸⁰ Şerif Mardin has also pointed out that Ziya Paşa's *Rûya* reflects his attempt to prove to the sultan that he was distant from the rebellious ideas of the Young Ottomans. See: Şerif Mardin, *Yeni Osmanlı Düşüncesinin Doğuşu*, p.385.

³⁸¹ Engin Kılıç, "Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Edebî Ütopyalara Bir Bakış", *Kitap-lık*, 2004, vol. 12, no.76, pp.73-88, at p.74.

century dream-writers, on the contrary refers more to secular, material, and progressive values.

According to Engin Kılıç, albeit its shortcomings in expressing in detail how to attain this ideal future, Namık Kemal's *Rûya* can be categorized as a quasi-utopia.³⁸² In his dream narrative, Namık Kemal, similar to earlier examples, begins with a long depiction of his anxious state due to all the misery and troubles filling up the world.³⁸³ He, then, sees a beautiful young woman among the clouds, with whose face Kemal seems to be familiar. Through a close examination of her face, Namık Kemal realizes that she was the divine symbol of freedom [*hürriyetin timsal-i semavîsi*].³⁸⁴ The freedom as manifested through this woman, climbs up a rock and begins her long harangue. She accuses society of being lazy, of losing their intellectual capacity to think, of looking at the past instead of future, and of staying back at the race of civilizations. Ironic enough, in his *Rûya*, sleeping is always pejoratively associated with underdevelopment, stasis, and decline.³⁸⁵

When the clouds around the young woman fades out, the landscape below, which symbolizes the future of the Ottoman Empire in Namık Kemal's imagination, becomes visible. What Namık Kemal sees is an empire enjoying the utmost material, intellectual and political achievements. While it is composed of prosperous and wealthy cities, well-established and solid buildings, railroads and other naval and air transportation facilities, people of this society are wise and intelligent. In its political system, liberties of all kind are guaranteed and the principle of the division of powers is respected. Libraries, school, museums, telegraph machines, and vacation places are so widespread that each house has these facilities.³⁸⁶

Namık Kemal's *Rûya* was influential not only on Turkish speaking Ottoman intellectuals but also on some Arab writers especially after the text was translated into Arabic

³⁸² Kılıç, p.75.

³⁸³ Namık Kemal, *Rûya*, in *Yeni Türk Edebiyatı Antolojisi*, vol.II, at pp.251-3.

³⁸⁴ Namık Kemal, *Rûya*, p.255.

³⁸⁵ *ibid*, p.256: “Uyuyunuz, uyuyunuz! Gaflet-i hayatı hab-ı memâta tebdil için bundan kolay tarik yoktur”; p.259: “Hurşid-i ma’rifet magribden doğdu. Medeniyet-i kadimenin sabah-ı kıyameti yetişip geliyor, demir yollar ‘dâbbetü’l-arz’dan nişan veriyor, maarif bütün esrar-ı tabiatı fâş ediyor, telgraf yerin damarlarını bozuyor, yeni silâhların sadası musallat olduğu devletin başına sûr-ı İsrâfil hükmünü gösteriyor, hâlâ mı uyuyacaksınız? Rûz-ı mahşerde mi uyanacaksınız?”

³⁸⁶ Namık Kemal, *Rûya*, pp.264-6.

following the restoration of constitutional monarchy in 1908.³⁸⁷ 1908 is, as it signifies a sea change for many other aspects, a turning point for the proliferation of similar utopian pieces in both Turkish and Arabic. In one of the most significant examples of these texts written in 1913 under the title *Rûyada Terakki ve Medeniyet-i İslamiyeyi Rûyet*, the author Mustafa Nâzım Erzurumî portrays his utopian ideals. Having recourse to the typical introductory description of his deep sorrow and anxiety due to the catastrophic experiences of the Balkan Wars, he meets an old man coming from four hundred years earlier, and makes a journey with him to the Istanbul of four hundred years later. As a highly industrialized, technologically superior city replete with countless factories, bridges in Bosphorus, and diverse kinds of machinery usage, Istanbul reflects the author's ideal society.³⁸⁸

Albeit not the latest representative of the Ottoman-Turkish utopian genre, Ruşenî's *Rûya* will be the final example to be introduced and discussed within the confines of this chapter. In his short piece written in 1915, Ruşenî dreams of a society century later when the Islamic states enjoy a great prosperity and welfare. It would be in fact erroneous to speak of Islamic states, because as explained in his *Rûya*, there is a Union of Islamic states dominant in Anatolia and Arabic peninsula as well as Africa and India.³⁸⁹ Like the details in the works of Namık Kemal or Mustafa Nazım Erzurumî, libraries, museum, opera buildings, statues, bridges, railroads, airplanes are purported as the main indicators of a developed civilization. However, the most significant aspect of Ruşenî's *Rûya* is its serving for propagandizing pan-Turkist, pan-Islamist and irredentist political views. According to Ruşenî, without the efforts of Turks, no progress would be accomplished. Moreover, as a product of his intellectual climate, he states that all the non-Muslims should be eliminated, and the society should be composed merely of Turks and Muslims. In his ideal state and society, for instance, there is not a single non-Muslim inhabitant living and working in the country.³⁹⁰

As to conclude the discussion of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Ottoman utopian genre that utilises dream as a frame, it can be argued that these narratives, unlike the works of Veysî, Haşmetî and Ziya Paşa, give priority to voice their authors' ideal

³⁸⁷ For one of those similar texts written in Arabic by an anonymous Iraqi writer, see: Erol Ayyıldız, *Arapça Bir Rû'ya Fantezisi* [sic], *Tercemesi ve Namık Kemal'in "Rû'ya"sı ile Mukayesesi*, (Bursa: Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi, [t.y.]).

³⁸⁸ Kılıç, p.77.

³⁸⁹ Emel Akal, "Bir Osmanlı Bilimkurgusu: Ruşenî'nin Rûyası", unpublished paper, *XI International Congress of Social and Economic History of Turkey*, 17-22 June 2008. I am grateful to Emel Akal for allowing me to use her conference presentation for my thesis.

³⁹⁰ *ibid.*

social, political and ideological visions existing certainly in the future. Although one can still speak of a representation of ideal rule and society with respect to Veysî's *Habnâme* or Ziya Paşa's *Rûya*, for they, more or less, convey some subtle arguments; these later utopias mark a significant difference in terms of their theme-baggage and emphasis on collectivity. Heavily influenced by the intellectual climate of their age, notions such as progress, science, technology and development are their preferred vocabulary. Moreover, these notions are deemed with great esteem not for each author's individual/personal pursuits, but rather for rousing a collective spirit. Nonetheless, as Engin Kılıç succinctly summarizes, they succeed in depicting their ideal future with numerous details though, they lack to show how to reach their ideal destinations.

Due to these reasons it is difficult to classify all these narratives into a single genre. While the earlier works including that of Veysî, Haşmetî, and to some extent, Ziya Paşa can be categorized as a separate corpus, those pieces written after the *Rûya* of Namık Kemal share few points with the former corpus. Although Veysî's *Habnâme*, owing to the extent of its popularity, might have inspired the succeeding generations in their own dream-framed narratives, one has to acknowledge the inevitable change of content and purpose shaped by the different conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century political and intellectual environment.

CONCLUSION

This study has striven for a literary-historical analysis of a single text written in the early seventeenth century by one of the most prominent literary figures in the entire history of the Ottoman literature. What has been analyzed in this thesis is a single literary piece though, the wider dimensions, which are crucial in contextualizing the text and making sense of the multiple layers of its meaning, have also tried to be addressed. Since Veysi's *Habnâme* stands at the intersecting point of several perspectives including political, cultural, and literary atmosphere of its time, a study based on *Habnâme*'s analysis entails to take each dimension into account.

Such a task is not only meaningful to better understand the text, but also worth to provide a picture on the intellectual climate of the post-Suleymanic Ottoman Empire. In the historiography on the Ottoman Empire, this era has largely been referred to as a sea change no matter which term – 'decline' or 'transformation' - has been preferred. While most of the recent studies tend to point out the transformation the empire experienced through utilizing documentary first-hand sources, the remnants of the conventional approach, which was inclined to designate the empire's decline via exploiting the writings of the contemporary Ottoman literati, have still existed. These political writings, which have been defined in several ways such as *nasihatnâmes* [advice literature], *ıslahat layihaları* [reform treatises] or mirror for princes, have still been investigated without employing a comparative perspective and caring much for the required contextualities, particularities, and literary inventions of each text and its author. Hence, the methodology that sees these texts as mines for information on (the decline of) Ottoman politics, finances, and society sustains its dominant position.

Without neglecting the value of early modern Ottoman political writings in portraying the contemporary socio-political and financial situation of the empire, this thesis has attached itself more to the approach represented by the recent studies of Cornell Fleischer, Cemal Kafadar and Douglas Howard, and basically argues that these political treatises in question can best reveal the intellectual and psychological climate, discursive preferences, and literary strategies prevalent at the time these texts were written. The need for studies on particular

pieces, thus, is crucial in enlightening why and how each author did write. Did he perpetuate the dominant declinist discourse of his age? What repertoire of features and literary conventions/rules did he share? If he reacted against this literary and intellectual atmosphere, in what ways did he detach himself? What was the role of ‘invention’ in this genre of Ottoman political treatises? How about the role of political expectations, factional positions, and patronage ties of the authors? How might these factors have influenced the representation of each author in their writings?

The first chapter has sought to present these questions as an interpretive framework for studying Ottoman political writings in general, and Veysi’s *Habnâme* in particular. Through an elaborate discussion on both the question of the genre’s name and various methodological suggestions of how to exploit these materials, it has been offered, i) rather to use *nasihatnâme* or *islahat risaleleri*, the term ‘mirror for princes’ seems to be the most appropriate way of addressing this corpus of texts, ii) a methodology combining both an excavation of the author’s personal predilections and social position as well as an intertextual reading of his text is required.

In line with this methodological outlook, the author of *Habnâme* has been introduced first. After a brief summary of his family and earlier career as derived from contemporary biographical dictionaries of *ulema* and poets, the greater attention has been paid to Veysi’s connections, possible patronage ties including the Sultan Ahmed I, and his apparent Sufi tendencies, all of which might have influenced the way he inscribed *Habnâme*.

His biography has been followed in the third chapter by a close reading of *Habnâme* in contrast with contemporary political treatises. Since the text has mostly been neglected in the current literature as compared with Âlî’s *Nushatü’s-Selatin* [Counsel for Sultans], Hasan Kâfî el-Akhisarî’s *Usûlü’l-Hikem fi Nizamü’l-Alem* [Philosophical Principles Concerning the Order of the World] or Koçi Beg’s treatises, the top priority has been given to introducing the content of *Habnâme* with extraction of long passages and detailed footnotes. Nonetheless, several important themes and motifs such as the depiction of a deteriorated empire, preoccupation with the actual politics, obsession with an idealized past, emphasis upon the notion of justice, and call for adherence to *kanun* [dynastic law] and/or sharia, which were, more or less, shared by many Ottoman mirrors, have been discussed with regard to the historical referents these concepts have. Corollary to its rather unprecedented message and content, the exceptional position of *Habnâme* within the genre of Ottoman mirror for princes has been crystallized. In that regard, this chapter has questioned the traditional literature, which tends to see *Habnâme* as a typical example of Ottoman advice literature.

The fundamental aim in the following two chapters is to problematize Veysî's use of dream as a frame in his narrative. Did Veysî intentionally invent such a dream story? If yes, what might have been the reasons behind his device? In what ways did such a strategy enable him in his anticipated influences? Did he try to 'haunt' his potential patron through manipulating his possible fondness of dreams? Did he plan to use the authoritative force of dreams? Was this dream his method of reacting against the misery of his time or of appeasing those intellectuals who were filled with declinist sentiments? What other motivations could have played a role in his preference?

While the limited scholarship on Veysî and his *Habnâme* mostly disregards such questions, they have a pivotal role in this thesis. Yet, this study has no claim of providing accurate answers regarding how dreams were perceived and used in the early modern Ottoman cultural and political milieu. What has been attempted, at best, is to pose hitherto overlooked questions pertaining to the dream and dream writing in the history of Ottoman Empire, and to provide an initial framework based largely upon the studies on early Islamic and medieval European dream traditions.

Islamic dream lore is of utmost importance in discussing *Habnâme*, for Veysî, as an Islamic scholar [*âlim*], might have been familiar with the special position the dream occupied in Islam. As discussed at length in chapter four, the Qur'an, Hadith collections, Islamic philosophers and Sufi mysticism attest to the dream's mantic and authoritative power that makes the dreamer attained to the knowledge of a higher realm. Interspersed in various genres such as dream diaries, dream dialogues, visions and Sufi initiation stories, dream narratives had a well-established tradition in Islamic *belles-lettres*. It would, however, not be telling to rigidly separate 'real' dreams and fabricated dream narratives, since the area between the dream that was really seen and the dream that was invented as a literary piece is highly blurred.

Nevertheless, this blurred area provides a fertile ground to discuss *Habnâme* as both a real and a fabricated dream. In this sense, while in chapter four *Habnâme* has been treated as a real dream, the final chapter has accepted *Habnâme* as a pure fiction and attempted to analyze it in comparison with its literary relatives from later period Ottoman-Turkish literature. In this chapter, a selection of literary pieces written in a dream-form from the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries such as that of Haşmetî, Ziya Paşa, Namık Kemal and Ruşenî have been introduced and evaluated for the purpose of answering the question whether it is possible to define in the history of the Ottoman literature a new genre similar to the dream-vision genre of medieval European literature. The chapter has been concluded that while the earlier

examples show some similarities to the narrative structure of Veysî's *Habnâme*, after the *Rûya* of Namık Kemal, dream-form begins to serve as a means to convey utopian ideals shaped by positivist, materialist and progressive tendencies of their authors. In that regard, although dream-form is their common literary strategy, it is difficult to categorize all these texts into a single group.

There are, unquestionably, various missing points which have been either totally disregarded or can only be partly touched in this preliminary attempt. First, a thorough examination of archival sources that could provide a final control on the veracity of knowledge regarding Veysî's career line and connections is needed. Moreover, as one of the leading intellectuals and prolific authors of his time, Veysî and his oeuvre have still waited the interest of literary and intellectual historians. Without portraying a full picture of Veysî through scrutinizing his entire literary production, all the efforts to interpret *Habnâme* would be incomplete.

To portray the world of a single intellectual is not only worthwhile for itself. This can also shed light upon how the intellectuals from 'the age of transformation' perceived and reacted against the changing conditions of their time. Since in the historiography concerning the Ottoman Empire, the emphasis upon 'the human factor' is usually forgotten under the strong structuralist tendencies studying social, political and financial matters at grand levels, such kinds of 'perception studies' are heavily required to "add human flesh" and contribute to a more total picture of the Ottoman Empire.

More important than these, studying the role that dreams played in the mentalities and daily lives of Ottoman people can throw light upon several dimensions. Since the dreams can only exist in a narrative form, it is legitimate to take dream accounts as relevant first-hand sources in order to explicate how people constructed their narratives, and to what extent socio-cultural and historical conjunctures infiltrated these bodies of texts. Moreover, although it may sound rather odd, 'dream map' of the Ottoman Empire can be sketched through a dissection of dream narratives from diverse geographical zones and time spans. By means of such a study, one can check, for instance, whether by late nineteenth century dreams lost their privileged status due to the impacts of modernization, rationalization, positivism, and scientificity.

Beside a comparison based on the perception of dreams, additional comparisons are in fact required between sixteenth-seventeenth centuries and later periods of the Ottoman history in order to better understand the level of change, if any, in political philosophy and language, economic mentality, or cultural traits and traditions. Although the lines drawn between ages

have certain practical benefits for the historians, it is indeed dangerous to assume these borders as rigid. Such a presumption may unfortunately lead the historian to miss to see some striking similarities, continuity, and transposition of the past's legacy.

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APPENDIX: THE TRANSCRIPTION OF HABNÂME-İ VEYSÎ³⁹¹

Ḥ^vâb-nâme-i Veysî

* Bi'sm'illâhî'r-raḥmâni'r-raḥîm *

Nesîm-i çemen-ârâ-yı ḥamd ü şenâ * Ol pâdişâh-ı cihân-âferîn ḥazretleriniñ tarâvetbaḥş-ı ḥadîka-i taḳdîsi olsun ki * Cûybâr-ı şemşîr-i selâṭîn-i 'adl-âyîn ile rûy-i zemîn-i lâlezâr emn ü emân eyledi * Ve şebçerâg-ı şükr ü sipas ol tâcbaḥş-ı şâhân-ı cihân ol sultân-ı gaybdân cenâbınıñ pîrâye-i iklîl-i temcîdi olsun ki * Cevher-i tiğ-i cihangîr-i mülûk ile hemîşe işlâḥ-ı mizâc-ı kâinat itdi * Ve leâli-i şalât ü selâm ol ḥâmil-i livâ-ül-ḥamd-i şefâ'at ḥazretleriniñ nişar-ı ḥâk-pâ-yı 'arş-peymâsi ola ki * Leme'an-ı şemşîr-i şerî'atle 'âlemden zulumet-i zulumât gidüb gumrâhan ve aşḥâb-ı şakâvet anıñla râh-ı müstaḳime mühtedî oldılar * Ve zîver-i tâc-ı iḳbâl aşḥab ü âl ḥazerâtına ola ki * Her biri bir tiğ-i elmas-gün-i mercan-rîz-i gâzâ ile hûn-i a'dâ-yı dînden sâha-i zemîni hemreng-i kân-ı Bedaḥşân kıldılar.

[p. 3]

* Beyt *

*Ḥayr-ḥ'âh-ı devlet-i ḥâkân-ı Keyḥusrev-i serîr
Dâ'î-i iḳbâl-i Veysî ya'nî el-'abdü'l-faḳîr*

Bu ḥavâdis-i 'âlem-i kevn ü fesâdı mülâḥaza kıldıkca ve eşnâ-yı tefekkürde deryâ-yı mâl-ḥulyâya ḥaldıkca böyle gevher-keş-i silk-i temennâ olub fikr iderken dirdimki "Bu eyyâmda pâdişâhımız şehinşâh-ı felek-bârgâhımız ḥalife-i rûy-i zemîn sahinḳırân-ı Sikender-ḳarîn zibende-i tâc ü taḥt şehriyâr-ı firûze-baht âftâb-ı cihân-efrûz merriḥ-i düşmen-süz cihangîr-i Cemşîd-nazîr tâcdâr-ı Erdeşîr-şemşîr

* Beyt *

*Şehenşâh-ı Cem-ḳadr 'âlî-tebâr
Peder-ber-peder Ḥusrev-i tâc-dâr*

Ḥâḳan-ı mesned-ârâ-yı devlet-i sermedü's-sultân bin es-sultânü's-sultân Aḥmed Ḥân bin es-sultân Meḥmed Ḥân *eyyeda'llâhü te'âlâ 'azzeḥü ve eyyede ve şeddede esâse salṭanatıhi ve şeyyede* ḥazretleriniñ riḳâb-ı kâmyâb-ı hümâyûnlarına yüz sürüb bilâ-vâsiṭa sa'âdet-i mükâlemeye nâ'il olaydım yâḥûd gâhî tefâḳud-i aḥvâl-i fuḳara için teğayyür-i tavır-ı pâdişâhî itmekle geşt ü güzâr-ı şehir ü bâzâr iderken bârî rast geleydim ve müteğâfilâne ḥiṭâb idüb "aḥvâl-i 'âlem perîşân oldı ve eşḳiyâ ta'addisi kemâlin buldı" diyeydim

[p. 4]

ve zu'm-ı fâsidim üzre tedbîr-i işlâḥ-ı memlekete müte'allik nice kelîmât-ı muḳaddemât 'arz ideydim diyü bu efkâr-ı perîşân ile bir gice küşe-nişîn-i zâviye-i miḥnet ve ḥaste-ḥâl-i gumûm-i 'uzlet idim. Nâgâḥ derîçe-i çeşm-i cihân-bînime perde-i gâflet aşılub merdüm-i dîde

³⁹¹ This transliteration of *Habnâme*'s 1876 publication by Şeyh Yahya Efendi printing house is, except some minor differences, entirely relied upon Hayriye Deryan's senior thesis.

günöde-i mehd-i rāhat olub seyyāh-ı cihāngir-rūh temāşā-yı şehristān hayāl iderken nāgehān bir t̄ā'ife-i celilü'ş-şāne rāst geldim ki her biriniñ nāşiye-i hālinden nūr-i sa'ādet lāmi olub her biri bir sīmā-yı dilārā ile hırāmān olarak bir bağçe-i firdevs-nişāne yetdiler ki hezār haşmet ü veķār ile birer kürsī-i zer-nigārda ķarār eylediler. Bu faķır daħi sā'ir hūddām ile hıdmet iderek ya'nī sāye-mişāl 'aķablarınca giderek maķām-ı hıdmetde tırdum. Bālā-nişīn-i meclis olan devlet-mendiñ işāretiyle sebze-i ķemen-zār üstüne oturdum. Meger ol āftāb-ı sadr-nişīn olan İskender-i Zü'l-ķarneyn olub yemin ü yesārında nücüm-ı zāhire gibi leme'ān idenler selātin-i māziyye-i Āl-i 'Osman *ķaddesa'llāhü esrārahüm* hāzerātı imiş. Bu eşnāda āşār-ı mevkib-i sultānī ya'nī kevkebe-i devlet-i Aħmed Hānī *e'azzehu'llāhu te'ālā fi'd-dāreyni* zuhūr idüb 'ālem-i zāhirdeki gibi ālāy ālāy ķāvuşān-ı şevket-nümāy ve zümre-i sipāh-ı encüm-iştibāh ve yeñiķeriyān-ı zerrin-külāh ve āgāyān-ı serāser ķaftān ve vezīrān-ı Şüreyyā-ıķtırān bi-ħaşebi'l-merātīb

[p. 5]

yerlerinde tırub hāzret-i pādīşāh-ı encüm-sipāh gelüb semend-i berķ-reftār-ı āsmān-ı kirdārından indi.

* Beyt *

Furūd-āmed ez-esb şāh-ı cihān

Mesīhā, bezīr-āmed ez-āsmān

Dā'ire-i meclisden hāric İskender-i Zü'l-ķarneyn tarafına muķābil bir muraşsa taht-ı zer-beft sāyebāne cülüs itdi ve hāzret-i Zü'l-ķarneyn ile mükālemeye başladı. Bu bende-i nāçiz daħi hāzret-i Zü'l-ķarneyn gibi maţla'-ı Hāverān-ı şarkdan Kayrevān-ı mağribe varınca 'ālemi musaħħar-ı şemşīr-i fermānı eylemiş bir pādīşāh-ı hāķīm-meşrebiñ kelīmāt-ı hıķmet-āyīniñ istimā'a itmek ne sa'ādet-i 'uzmādır. Huşuşā pādīşāhımız rüy-ı zemīn hālifesi ola da aniñla mükāleme eyliye diyü nihāl-i gül gibi serāser gūş oldum ve rüy-ı teveccühü nılüfer-şıfat cemāl-i hūrşīd-mişāllerine tıtdum ve ol meclis-i ferāh-baħşīñ şafāsından sāir aħvālimi ferāmūş itdim. Gāh hāzret-i Zü'l-ķarneyn tahrik-i zebān-ı m'uciz-beyān idüb hāzret-i pādīşāh-ı 'ālem tevcīh-i sāmīa'-ı iz'ān buyururlar, gāh pādīşāhımız leb-i dürr-nişārın şeker-rīz idüb hāzret-i İskender ol nebāt-ı kelīmātdan şīrīn-mezāk olurlardı. Giderek cevāhir-i kelām bu semte işār olundı ki pādīşāhlar 'ālemiñ ķalbidir ķalb ki müstāķīmü'l-aħvāl

[p. 6]

olmayub hādd-i i'tidālden münħarīf ola be-her-hāl beden iħtilāl-pezīr olur. İmdi pādīşāhlara 'adl ü dād sermāye-i sedāddır. Merħamet ü inşāf sebebi cem'ıyyet-i reāyādır ve cevı ü i'tisaf bāiş-i perīşān-ı berāyādır denildikde pādīşāhımız *zıllu'llāh-ı fi'l-'ālem* hāzretleri bir āh çekdi ki az ķaldı gül-berg-i ruhsār-ı lāle-renginden jāle-mişāl ķaţarāt-ı sirişķ-i dīdeyi rīzān iderler. Bir miķdār tevaķķufdan soñra

* Beyt *

Şeh-i kāmırān ħusrev-i Cem-cenāb

Zī-deryā-yı leb-riħt der-ħoş-āb

Didi ki: Ey şāhib-ķırān-ı 'ālem taķrīr-i dilpezīriñ üzre pādīşāhlara 'adl ü dād pīrāye-i sa'ādet olduğı ma'lūmdur ve ol pādīşāhki ser-ķeşme-i inşāfdan bī-naşībdır 'ayn-ı ināyet-i Hāķ'dan maħrūmdur. Ammā müşķil budur ki imdād ü 'avn-ı hāzret-i rabbü'l-erbāb *celle celālihu* ile bir zamānda tahtgāh-ı salţanata cülüs eyleyesin ki gāh hāne-i 'ālem serāser hāreb ü yebāb ve hāķıñ āteş-i fitne-i eşķiyā ile cigerleri kebāb ola. Ceddım merħüm ü mağfūrın-leh Hūdāvendigār-ı a'zam sultān Murād Hān *ţayyeba'llāhu te'ālā şerāhu* ķal'-ı şecere-i rafz ü ilhād için memālik-i Kızılbaş-ı bī-dīne rāyet-i hümāyün-sāye-i sultānī birle 'asāķir-i deryā-ħurūş gönderiliden berü bu āna dek kırķ yıla ķarıbdır şark u ğarba

[p. 7]

ser-dârlar ya'nî kahr-ı a'dâ-yı dîn için sipâh-sâlâr gönderilip bir yıl sefer terk olunmamağla nice mekrühâtlar ihtiyâr olunub meşelâ menâşib-i 'aliyye ve merâtib-i seyfiyye nice nâ-ehl âdeme düşmekle, rüy-ı zemînde güşe-be-güşe kıyâmetler kopup her yıl zehâb u ıyâb-ı 'asâkir tekâlifinden re'âyâ ile 'asker miyânesine 'azîm 'adâvet-i fitne-engiz düşüb giderek muhâşama-ı lisân muhâkeme-i seyf ü sinâne mü'eddî olmağla aşl-ı hilkatinde şecere-i şekâvet merkûz olanlar seçilüb çıkub fitne nâmına olan eşkiyâ sürbe sürbe olub sürbe nâmına olan sürbelerin birkaçı yek-pâre biriniñ kaldırdığı râyet-i ma'kûse altına cem' olub biri birine mu'in ü zahîr olarak yek-pâre tabl-hurûc velvelesin âsmâne yetirib celâlîniñ şî'ârın izhâr eylediler. *Ve âbâ'an ceddin* hânedânımız hayr-h'âhı olan kullar, uğur-ı hümayûnda baş ü cân oynatmağla munkarız olub sefer zarûretiyle kulluk silkine mülhak olan kullar daği ni'met-i pâdişâhiyi bilmeyib celâlîniñ tavrın kollarıb memâlik-i mevrûse-i 'Osmânî bu kadar zamândan berü pây-mâl-ı eşkiyâ olmağla hânümân-ı re'âyâ suzân ü perîşân olmuştur. Kul ki benim kulumdur baña tâbi' ve fermân-ber olmayıcak baña şemşîr-i 'adl ü dâd ile şıyânet-i ra'ıyyet ve zabt u rabt-ı memleket nice kâbil olur? Ey şâhib-kırân! Hâzret-i sultân-ı gaybdân *celle celâlihu* serîr-i

[p. 8]

salâtanat-ı 'Osmânîyeyi baña böyle 'âlem harâb iken âmâde itmeyüb ma'mûr u âbâdân iken müyesser ideydi zabt-ı memleket ve hâll u 'akd-ı umûr-ı ra'ıyyet nice olur, görüleydi ve şemîm-i şafâ-bağş-ı 'adl ü inşâf ile dâmen-i âhîrî'z-zamân kıyâmete dek mu'attar olaydı diye pâdişâh-ı 'âlem kelâmına hatm-ı hıtâm urduğda, hâzret-i Zü'l-karneyn daği semt-i tahkîka imâle-i licâm-ı kelâm idüb müte'accibâne buyurdılar ki: Ey pâdişâh-ı 'âlem! Ser-rişte-i takrîre çekdiğîñiz cevâhir-i kelâmîñızdan münfehim olunur ki bu kâr-hâne-i 'âlem pâdişâhân-ı pîşîn zamânında ma'mûr u âbâdan olub hemân siziñ zamân-ı devletiñizde harâb u yebâb oldı. Ya'nî selâtîn-i mâziyye eyyâmında bu zîr destân-ı ra'ıyyet âsûde-i güşe-i ferâğ olub hemân siziñ eyyâm-ı sa'âdetiñizde her biri bergeşte-hâl-i şahrâ-yı belâ ola *Kâle Lâ vallâhi ve bi-rabbi'l-Ka'beti*. Bu dolâb-ı âsmân meydân-ı kudretde ser-gerdân olalı hâl-i 'âlem bir tavr üzre karar itmemiştir. Ey pâdişâh-ı civân-baht! Bî-vefâ dünyâ eger benim bildiğim dünyâ ise ne bir pâdişâh zamânında hergiz ma'mûr u âbâdân olmuştur ve ne halk-ı 'âlem onuñ şerrinden amân bulmuştur. Zamânımızda harâb didiğimiz dünyâ ne vakitte ma'mûr u âbâdân idi.

Meger hâzret-i ebu'l-beşer Âdem '*aleyhi's-şelâtu ve's-selâm* ile hâzret-i Havvâ bu 'âlem-i hâke hubût itdikde her biri bir iklîme düşüb üç yüz yıl kadar giryân u nâlân

[p. 9]

ve bergeşte-hâl-i beyâbân olub mededkârî-i 'inâyet-i rabbi'l-'âlemîn ile dâmen-i 'Arafâtta buluşub bilişüb bahtâ-yı gayr-ı zî-zer'de küşe-nişîn-i târem-i tavaştun olunca mı 'âlem ma'mûr u âbâdân idi

⟨Veyâhüd⟩ çâr-cihet-i sâhire ve muğtenim-i ni'am-ı ilâhî ve tarâvet-yâfte-i nâ-mütenâhî iken Kâbil birâderi Hâbili küşte-i hançer-i gadr idüb ol şe'âmet-i katl ile miyâne-i evlâd-ı Âdeme düşen âteş-i tefrîka cümlesin iki fırka idüb ol iki gürûh-ı enbûhuñ biri kâfir biri müselmân olmağla şemşîr-i bâr-ı fitne vü fesâd iki yüz seksen yıl kadar aralarında derkâr olub nice yüz biñ üftâde-i hâk ü helâk olan Âdem kanından rüy-ı zemîn kaşşâb dükkânına döndükde mi dünyâ ma'mûr u âbâdân idi

⟨Veyâhüd⟩ ol şe'âmet-i küfr ü fesâddan 'âlem diger-gün olub ya'nî pîrâye-i rüy-ı zemîn olan eşcar ü mezârî'de 'alâka-i hayr ü berekât munkatı' olub meşelâ sünbüle-i şa'ir ve hüşe-i gendüm şüşe-i hurmâ-yı Mısrî ile berâber iken bu şekle girdikde ol matla'-ı dîvân-ı nübüvvet hâzret-i Âdem '*aleyhi's-şelâtu ve's-selâm* harâbe-i 'âlemden feryâd idüb

* Şi'ir *

*Tagayyere-ti-bilādu ve men 'aleyhā
Ve vechü'l-arzı muğbarun kabihun*

[p. 10]

*Tagayyere küllü zī-ta 'min velevnin
Ve kalle beşāšetü'l-vechi'l-melīhi
Fevā esefā 'alā Hābili ibney
Katilun kad tedemmenehū'd-darīhu*

Deyu cevāhir-i kelimātı nazm yollu nazma çeküb nice yıllar bu basit-i ğabrā çerāğāhından ki nüfus-ı vahşiyeyi süziş-i feryād idüb ve zārī zārī sūzān u giryān olduğda mı dünyā ma'mūr u ābādān idi

«Veyāhūd» şadr-ı dīvān-ı nübüvvet hazret-i Şit 'aleyhi's-şelātu ve's-selām hazretleri cenāb-ı ni'me'l-me'ābına müsellemler olduğda Kābil-i hūn-riz evlādından nice yüz biñ buğat-ı keferesāye-i livā-yı dālālete müctemi' olub hazret-i Şit 'aleyhi's-şelātu ve's-selāmdan dem-i Hābili maṭlāb itmekle iki yüz yıl āteş-dān-ı harb u kıtāl miyānelerinde şerāre-feşān olub āhirü'l-emr meded-kārī-i cünūd-ı mücennede-i melā'ike ile Kābil-i hūn-h'ārı ahz idüb 'aynü's-şems demekle ma'rūf mevzi'de āğuşte-i hāk ü helāk idince rüy-ı zemīni hūn-ı la'l-gün-ı ādemiden hemreng-i lāle-zār itdiklerinde mi dünyā ma'mūr u ābādān idi

«Veyāhūd» mesned-i celilü's-şān hazret-i risālet Nūh neciyyu'llāh cenābına teslim olundukda halk-ı 'ālem şarķan ve ğarban putperest olub tekzīb-i Neciyyu'llāh için irtikāb itdikleri fesādāt u küfriyyāt ile ne'üzūbi'llāh

[p. 11]

dokuz yüz elli yıl saḫā-i 'ālemden sāyebān-ı emn ü emān gidüb her kārde hükm ğālibin olmağla ğüşe-be-ğüşe kıyāmetler kopub āhirü'l-emr eziyyet-i süfehā-yı kavmdan taķāt-ı beşeriyeye-i Nūh taķ olmağla (*rabbi lā tezer 'ale'l-'ardı mine'l-kāfirine deyyerā*) kelām-ı mu'cizi beyāna getirdikde deryā-yı kaḫr-ı zī'l-celāl telāṭuma başlayub ğazāb-ı cabbār-ı zī'l-intikām rākib-i sefine olanlardan mā'adā rüy-ı 'ālemde zī-rūḫ komayub ba'de't-tūfān nice zamān 'izām-ı remīm-i kefereden rüy-ı zemīn taḫta-i remmāle döndükde mi 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

«Veyāhūd» Hūd 'aleyhi's-şelātu ve's-selām teşrif-i hil'at-i nübüvvet ile ser-efrāz olduğda kavm-ı 'Ād ki tūl-ı kāmēt ve ziyāde batş u vefret-i kuvvet ile sā'ir maḫlūkatden mümtāz olmağın her biriniñ āşūbı ḫaddin aşub kimi şedīd ve kimi şidād birer semte tağallüb ile her fācir-i pelīd fā'il-i māyürīd olub kendini var iden ḫallāk-ı cihān-āferini ferāmūş itmişler idi. Hazret-i Hūd 'aleyhi's-şelātu ve's-selām ol putperestleri tarīķ-i müstakīme komak için elli yıl (*leyle ve nehāren*) da'vet-i ḫaķ eyledi. Ancak Loķmān bin 'Ād ve Mürşid bin Şa'd ismiyle mevsūm iki kimesne imān getirüb onlar daḫi zir-i kilīm-i ihfādān izhāra ķādir olmadılar. Hazret-i Hūd 'aleyhi's-şelātu ve's-selām ol kavm-ı zāll ü muzill-i imānından me'yūs

[p. 12]

olub pertāb itdikleri tīr-i bārān-ı eziyyet ü cefādān sīne-i bī-kīnesi ğırbāl-i belāya döndükde helākleri için rüy-ı tazarru'u seccāde-i niyāza şalub

* Nazm *

*Ey ferāzende-i firūze revāk
Şemse-i zer-keş-i jengal-i taķ*

Gönce-i teng dil-i bağ-ı tū-em
Lāle-i sıhte-i dağ-ı tū-em
Bāng ber-silsile-yi 'ālem zen
Sīn-i Ān silsile-rā berhem zen
Nāmzed kon be-zemīn zelzele-hā
Zān ez-ān 'aliyhā sāfil-hā

vefret-i 'alevv-i nā'ire-i sūzāndan kubb-e-i nuḳre-kūb-ı āsmān, tennūr-ı bāzgūn-ı āteşin olmağla yedi yıl āsmāndan hayāt katarāt ve zemīnden ḥubūb-ı mevrū'āt bi'l-külliyye münkatı' oldı. Aḥirū'l-emr ol kefer-e-i ḥōd-re'y zu'mlarınca çāre-cūy-ı belā-yı āsmānī oldılar. Şonra Mekke-i mūkerremede bīgane-ḥāne-i Ḥudā olan şanemlerinden reşha-i feyz-i 'ināyet recāsına ādemler gönderüb muntazır-ı bārān-ı iḥsān olduklarında taraf-ı fā'izü'ş-şeref-i Ka'beden bir pāre ebr-i siyāh nümāyān olub menba'-ı bārān-ı raḥmet olmaḳ mülāhazasıyla cümlesi şādān u ḥandān

[p. 13]

ve rakş-kūnān dest-efşān müteveccih-i ebr oldılar. Meger ol şakḳā-yı beriyye-i zemīn şandıkları ebr-i siyāh menşe'-i tūfān-ı şarşar-ı pūr-āteş-pāre-i ḡazab imiş. Ol kavm-ı cabbār ki zūr-ı bāzūda kemer-gāh-ı kūhe el ursalar yerinden ayırırlar idi. Bu rütbede iken ol bir pāre ebre tākāt getiremeyüb bu kadar pelid ü şedid tarfetü'l-'aynda berk-i lertzān gibi k'ar-ı cehenneme menāzil ile gıtdiler. Ḥazret-i Hūd 'aleyhi's-şelātu ve's-selām ile Loḳmān bin 'Ād ve Mürşidden gayrı bir kimse kalmayıb ol sipihre çıkmış şeddādī binālar 'ādī şehirler zātü'l-'imād gibi muraşşā' gülşen sarāylar ve mükellef mu'allā kaşırlar muşavver kāşāneler müzeyyen şanemḥaneler nice yüz yıl kadar kā'an şafşafān ḥarāb u yebāb ḳaldıkda mı 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

⟨Veyāḥūd⟩ Şāliḥ peygamber 'aleyhi's-şelātu ve's-selām mesned-ārā-yı taḥtgāh-ı nübüvvet oldukda gürūh-i merdūd-i āl-i şemūd kuvvet-i şedid ve batş-ı mezid aşhābı olmağla taḥtana-i küfr ü 'inādı kungüre-i āsmāne yetüb kavm-i i'āde işābet iden ḡazab-ı zi'l-celāli añıldıkca anlar bir ālay zu'afā-yı bī-mecāl idiler bir yele taḥammül idemediler bizimki beş kabīle etfāl ü nisādan mā'adā yetmiş biñden ziyāde dilāverler merdān-ı zūr-āverlerimiz vardır on kere yüz biñden ziyāde şaf der şaf şiken ya'nī pehlivān-ı merd-efkan ādemiz diyu cenāb-ı ḥazret-i Şāliḥe

[p. 14]

ve ḥazret-i zū'l-intikāma her gün nāsezā kelimāt-ı ḥaltıyyeye cesāret iderlerdi. Ḥazret-i Şāliḥ peygamber 'aleyhi's-şelātu ve's-selām bu vech üzere iki yüz yıl da'vet-i ḥaḳ idüb bir seng-i siyāhdan tevellüd iden nākatullah gibi mu'cize-i bāhireden şonra Cünd' bin 'Amr ile zu'afā-yı kavmden ancaḳ bir kimse imāna gelüb bākisi merkez-i tuḡyānda şābit ḳadem idi. Muḥāfaza-i nākatullahda itdikleri mevaşik u 'uhūddan şonra ḳatline iḳdām itdikleri için ḡazab-ı 'aziz ü muḳtedir *celle celālihu* āsarı zuhur idüb üç güne dek ol küffār-ı ḥāksārīn çehreleri ḡarib renklere 'acib şekillere girüb dördüncü gün zu'l-batşı's-şedid emrile ḥazret-i cabrāil 'aleyhi's-selām bast-ı cenāḥ-ı ḳahr itdikde taḡlar gibi āteşler saçılıb bu ḳadar yüz biñ küffār-ı Şemud tarfetü'l-'aynda yanub ḥākister oldukda ḳarārgāhları olan medāyin ve etrāf ü eknāfindaki bāḡ ü bostān ü mezāri' ü gülistān ile nice yüz yıl 'ibret-nümāy-ı 'ālemiyān oldukda mı 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

⟨Veyāḥūd⟩ Ḥazret-i İbrāḥim 'aleyhi's-şelātu ve's-selām perdenişin-i rahm-i māder iken zulm-i zulmāt-ı Nemrūd-ı merdūd rüy-ı zemīni şarḳen ve ḡarben kaplayub ḥāşā şümme ḥāşā ilahü'l-'ālemīn benim diyu ḥalḳ-ı cihāñ ādemīn zār ü zebūn itdikde ḥazret-i ḥalīlu'llāhīñ āvāze-i zuhur-ı nübüvveti kāinātı velveleye virdikde bir gice

[p. 15]

şanemhâne-i muraşşa-i Nemrudî serirlerinden sernigün olub āsmānda dahī nice mehībū'ş-şekl nücūm-ı mehāil nümāyān olduğundan mā'adā Nemrūd-ı la'īn dahī nice vahşet-engiz vākı'a görüb erbāb-ı t'abirden istikşa itdikce bu eyyāmda akreb-i akribānızdan mehdi vücūda gelecek mevlūddan vücūduñuza ve tūmtūrāk-ı uluhhiyetiñize rahne-i zarar ü gezend irişmek görünür diyü cevāb virdiklerinde la'īn-i bī-dīn baş korkusuna düşüb evvelā benim oğlum akrebdır diyü kendi ferzendini katl itdikden sonra zu'munca ihtiyāt-ı 'azīm eyleyüb etfāl-ı bī-günāh-ı halka sell-i seyf itdikde āşahh-ı akvāl üzre yüz elli biñden ziyāde tıfl-ı ma'sūm maqtūl-ı seyfi hayf oldukdan sonra rüy-ı zemīnde ne kadar hāmile hātūn var ise rahmindeki cenīñ katl olunsun diyü etraf-ı bilāda cellādān-ı bī-emān gönderüb nice yüz biñ muhaddere-i 'işmet-penāh-ı perdenişin rahminde olan cenīn-i bī-günāh ile katl olunub hūn-ı ma'sūmān-ı mazlūmān ile şekl-i müdevver-i zemīn beyza-i hamrā-i küffāra döndükde mi 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

⟨Veyāhūd⟩ Hāzret-i İbrāhīm 'aleyhi's-selātu ve's-selām hīrāmān-ı ravza-i vücūd olduğda cenāb-ı nübüvvet-meābına kavm-i Nemrūd eziyyet ü cefāya başlayub huşuşā ta'līm-i şeytān-ı la'īn ile varṭa-i mancınık-ı nārdan sonra ifrāt-ı tecabbür ü 'ināddan

[p. 16]

tertīb-i cüyüş-i āhen-püş idüb cenāb-ı hālilü'l-rahmān ile ser-āgāz-ı harb ü kıtāl itdikde ol kahhar-ı cabbār-ı zū'l-celāl ez'af-ı maḥlūkātından peşse-i nāçiz nev'ine 'asker-i Nemrūda qarşū tertīb-i şufuf-i nizedārān diyü emr buyurduğda bölük bölük ālāy ālāy 'asker-i ba'uza saf-ārā olub nigāhbānlık ile düşmen-endāzlığa başladıklarından cünūd-i Nemrūda zelzele-i havf ü hirās düşüb bir peşse-i nātüvānın Nemrūda şalub ol dahī Nemrūduñ üstüne hücum itdikde Nemrūd-ı la'īn ol sinegiñ mehābetine tākāt getüremiyüb sarāyına girizān olub hālvethānesine girdi ve sedd-i bāb eyledi ve lākin fāidemend olmayub āhirü'l-emr ol peşse burnu sūrāhından kubbe-i dimāgına girüb raksa başladı. Ol la'īn kırk gün kırk gice ser-i nikbet-medārın taşdan taşa urub başına taş tokunduğca fi'lcümle ihsās-ı rahat itmegile ser-i bī-devletine bir tokmağcı ta'yīn eyleyüb perde-i dimāga halel virmez derecede darb-ı hafif ile darabāta şürū' idüb ziyāde darb ziyāde rāhata bā'ış olmağın taleb-i izdiyād-ı darb iderek hīdmetkār 'āciz kalub şabāh-ı rüz-ı kıyāmete dek hāb-ı 'azābdan baş kaldırmamak mülāhazasile Nemrūduñ başına bir şāhāne darb urub mel'ūnu derekāt-ı cehīme gönderdikden sonra

[p. 17]

çār-cihet-i reb'-i meskūnda Nemrūdperest olan küffār-ı haksārīñ her birine bir peşse-i za'if musallaṭ olub birer niş-i ciger-riş ile mel'ūnları siyāsetgāh-ı cehenneme gönderüb puşte-i peşse-küştelere rüy-ı zemīn kerpiçci dükkānına döndükde mi dünyā ma'mūr u ābādān idi

⟨Veyāhūd⟩ bu zulmet-ābād-ı dünyā mezālīm-i Fir'avn-ı zālīm ile teng ü tār olub küfr ü tuğyān serhadd-i nihāyete yetdikde ve hāzret-i rabbü'l-'ālemin Mūsā bin 'İmrān 'aleyhi's-selātu ve's-selāmīñ pertev-i āfitāb-ı cihāngir-i vücūdun zuhūra getürdükde Fir'avn-ı bī'avn zevāl-i mülke müte'allik vākı'alar görüb cümleden biri bir gice seyri şahrā-yı menām iderken bir civāñ-ı dil-āşüb-ı mevzūn-endām elinde bir a'sā-yı āteş-fişān gelüb Fir'avnīñ başına urub bu kadar yıllardan berü seni halk iden fātrü'l-semāvātu ve'l-ārṣ hāzretleriniñ perverde-i n'imet ve ber-āverde-i ātifeti iken ferāmūş-i en'ām-ı perverdigār itdiñ ve 'ālem-efrāz-ı tuğyān olub vādī-i dālālete gitdiñ didikde havf-ı a'sādan feze'-i 'azīm ile bīdār olub vākı'asını eşhābına t'abire nakl itdikde cümlesi birden cevābları şu oldu ki an-karīb bir mevlūd-i akıbet-mahmūd şadr-nişin-i manışşa-i vücūd olsa gerekdir muḳtezā-yı hāl seniñ ve kavminiñ helāki ānīñ elinden muḳadder olsa gerekdir didiklerinde ol

[p. 18]

la'în-i bî-dîn bir kaç günlük hayât-ı bî-şebâtiñ gamına düşüb evvelki günde on iki biñ hâmile 'avret ile yetmiş biñ tıfl-ı ma'sûm-i 'âcizi t'ume-i şîr-i şemşîr eyleyüb ikinci gün yüz biñden ziyâde muhtemelü'l-haml hevâtîn-i 'ismet-âyîni isķâf-ı cenîn için havâle-i cellâdân-ı bî-râhme emr idüb işkence-i pençe-i 'azâbdan cümlesi âlûde-i hâk ü helâk olduđdan sonra eķrâf-ı 'âleme dahî katl-i eķfâl-i bî-günâh için zaleme-i bî-şafakat gönderüb böyle ma'sûm ve mazlum-ı bî-günâh olan kızular kanîle rûy-ı zemîn dükkân-ı kaşşâba döndükde mi 'âlem ma'mûr u âbâdân idi

«Veyâhüd» Hazret-i kelîmu'llah ibrâz-ı yed-i beyzâ ve izhâr-ı m'ucize-i 'aşâ idüb sahare-i ş'ubede-bâz tâc-ı islâm ile ser-efrâz olduđda gayret-i câhiliye-i Fir'avnî benî İsrâile izhâr-ı 'azamet için (بامامان ابن لی صرحا) âyet-i kerîmesi mişdâkıncâ bir kaşr-ı 'âlî binâsına fermân idüb zevele-i ırğâd ve 'amele-i ferhâddan mâ'adâ elli biñ mi'mâr-ı kârdan üstâd leyl ü nehâr kûşîş-i tâmla yedi yılda ancak şûret pezîr-i tamâm olub bir vechile safâ-bahş ü 'âlemgîr olmuşdı ki 'Âd ü Şeddâd degil belki felek-i hezâr-dîde aña müşâbih kaşr-ı cihân-nümâ görmemişdi. Fir'avn-ı la'îniñ böyle mu'allâ kaşrda murabba-nişîn-i mesned-i istiķlâl olması hâtır-ı enver-i kelîmu'llaha şakîl gelüb hazret-i qahhâra niyâzmend

[p. 19]

olub berbâd ü fenâ olmasını tazarru' itdikde dergâh-ı sulţân-ı lâyezâlden 'alâmet-i kabûl-nümâyâñ olub yevm-i zînet-i Fir'avnîdeki kavm-i pür-levmine 'arz-ı tecemmüller itdigi gündür. Ol günde ne kadar Fir'avnperest la'în vâr ise cümlesi kaşr altına cem' olmak lâzım idi. Ol rûz-ı kâfir-sûzda hazret-i cabbâr-ı zi'l-intikâm emrile Cabrâil 'aleyhi's-selâtu ve's-selâmüñ gûşe-i cenâh-ı ğâzabı ol binâ-kerde-i ru'ûnet-i Fir'avnî olan darü'l-ğurûru esâs-ı lâzımü'l-indirâsından şöyle kaşf eyledi ki tãrfetü'l-'aynda yigirmi kere yüz biñ kâfir kuşte-i hamîr-mâye-i 'azâb-ı düzağ oldu. Fir'avn-ı la'în bu âşâr-ı ğâzabullahı sihre nisbet itmekle mü'minân-ı benî İsrâili gûşe-be-gûşe tuşe-i mûr ü mâr itmek için nice yıllar sell-i seyfi-tuğyân itdikde rûy-ı deşt ü hâmûn seylâb-ı hûn-ı âdemîden şafağ-gün olduđda mı 'âlem ma'mûr u âbâdân idi

«Veyâhüd» cabbârân-ı benî İsrâil tâb ü tüvân-ı mâl-i Firavân ile kuleh-gûşe-i ğurûru kûbbe-i âsmâne yetürüb sermest-i sahbâ-yı 'inâd olmağla peyğamber-i vaķt olan Şu'ayîb 'aleyhi's-selâtu ve's-selâmüñ rıbka-i itâ'atiñ pîrâye-i fahr itmediklerinden mâ'adâ râyet-efrâz-ı fısk ü fesâd olduđları için ol fâtrü'l-semavâtu ve'l-ârz celle celâlihu fermân-revâ-yı hıttâ-i Şâm Buhtunnaşr nâm seffâk-i bî-bâk-i fettaki anlara muşallať idüb müselleme

[p. 20]

ķabza-i isti'dadı olan tiğ-i bî-dirîğ-i tuğyâñ ki dâs-ı sertîz-i mezra'-i 'ömr-i Yehüddur. Mercan-rîz-i ğablü'l-verîd-i Yehüd olub beytü'l-muķaddeseye gelince hûn-i Yehüddan yollar şakâyık-zâre döndükde mi 'âlem ma'mûr u âbâdân idi

«Veyâhüd» mâl-dârân-ı Yehüd beytü'l-muķaddese ki 'ibadetğâh-ı kadîmdir dâhil olanlar ğanîmet-i emn ü emâna nâil olurlar diyü hezâin-i emvâl-i şâyegânla penâh getürmişler idi anlar dahî perverde-i dest-i kahr ü ğâret olub meşelâ hîzâne-hâne-i beytü'l-muķaddesede endühte-i himmet-i Süleymânî olan tuhef-i ğirân-mâye-i baħr ü berden mâ'adâ ekser dâver-i mülûk-i İsrâilden çeşm-i cihân-felek görmedigi gencîne-i cevâhir ki 'ahd-i ba'iddan maħzûn-i ğazîne-i kuds idi. Andan rivâyet-i şahîha üzre yetmiş biñ ğarvâr sîm ü zer şanduka-i ağlaķ-ı cevâhir semîne-i cevher Buhtunnaşrîñ dâhil-i taşarrufu olduđdan sonra 'ale't-taħķîķ sekiz kere yüz biñ Yahüdî t'ume-i şemşîr-i belâ olub tiğ-i elmâs-günden 'ibâdu'llahı geķirüb fevvâre-i şemşîrden lâyenķati' cûşân olan seylâb-ı hûn-ı âdemîden bir ğürûh âsiyâb itmege Buhtunnaşr

kaşem itmifidi. Sāhire-i arāzī-i muqaddeseniñ her vādisinde degirmenler dönüb hün-i kırmızı-i insāndan hār-ı muğaylan yerine naħl-i erguvān olduķda mı ‘ālem ma‘mūr u ābādān idi

‹Veyāhūd› ol fitne-i bāgiyye-i Yehūd mütemerridleri zīr-i livā-yı dālālete cem‘ olub ħazret-i Yahyā-i

[p. 21]

ma‘sum ile Ş‘abān-ı mazlūm ‘aleyhi’s-şelātu ve’s-selāmları katle iķdām itmelerile ħazret-i qahhār-ı zī’l-intikām iki def‘a daħī şemşir-i hūnriz-i Buħtunnaşrı hānümān-ı Yehūda ħavāle idüb def‘a-i ūlāda beytü’l-muqaddesede degil pīrāmen-i dāmen-i ‘ālemde ism-i Yehūd itlāk olunacaķ şahş komayub def‘a-i şāniyede ol medāyin-i sürūr ve ‘işretgāh-ı ma‘mūru ħāk-i siyāha yeksān idüb nümüne-i kâ‘an şafşafān olduķda mı ‘ālem ma‘mūr u ābādān idi

‹Veyāhūd› ħazret-i ruħ-baħş-ı kelām İ’sā ‘aleyhi’s-şelātu ve’s-selām şadr-ı dīvān-ı risālete teşrif idüb hezār gūne anları d‘avet-i dīn-i ħaķ idüb beytü’l-muqaddesi maķdem sa‘adet mültezimleri ile maħsūd-i felek-i çār-ı mīn itdüklerinde benī İsrāil mu‘ānidleri rūy-ı inkārdan āteşzen-i ħırmen-i şer ü şūr olmağa başlayub giderek mükālemeleri müşacereye müeddī olmağla zu‘m-i fāsīd-muħāl endişeleri üzre katl-i ruħu’llaha kaşd itdikleri için ħazret-i cabbār-ı şedīdül-intikām ve cenāb-ı ħazret-i ‘azīz-i mennān ruħu’llahı varṭa-i hücum-i cühūdāndan ħalaş idüb bālāhāne-i zerrīn-saķf-ı āsmāne ref‘ eyledi. Muķtedā-yı şerzeme-i cühūd olan İşyu‘ nām kāfiri hemreng-i şuret-i mesīhā göstermekle ol bed-baħt-ı kuştenīyi cellādan-ı

[p. 22]

bī-rahma aħz itdirüb kenāre-i siyāsetgāha getürdüklerinde İşyu‘-i Yahūdī her ne kadar gūş-ħırāş-ı feryād olub bre meded hāy ben İ’sā bin Meryem degilim sizin emr-i dīnde müşkil-küşānız olan İşyu‘ benim diyegördiyse de kimse iltifāt itmiyüb mühimmāt-ı şalb-i siyāsete ihtimām-ı küllīden soñra kilāb-ı ħadīdü’l-enyāb-ı benī İsrāil gūşe-be-gūşe dendān-ı sertiz-i hūn-ālūdlariyle gezüb ne kadar İ’sāperest ya‘ni mü‘min ve muvaħħid vār ise şad-pare itmekle arāzi-i muqaddese dükkān-ı kaşşāba döndükde mi ‘ālem ma‘mūr u ābādān idi

‹Veyāhūd› mesīhā-yı mu‘ciz-demden tā‘ahd-i ħāce-i ‘ālem seyyidü’l-‘arabi ve’l ‘acem nebi-i ekrem ve muhterem rahmetül-‘ālemin olan Muħammedü’l Muştafa şali’allahu te‘āla ‘aleyhi’ ve’s-selām efendimiz ħazretlerine gelince beş yüz yıl eyyām-ı cāhiliyette ki hengām-ı herc ü merc idi ne bir şāhib-i ‘adālet pādīşāh var idi belki ħüküm gālibiñ olmağla her gūşede bir şaķī ‘ālem-efrāz-ı tuğyān olmağla āteş-i ciger-süz-i fesāddan ‘ālem yanmış idi. Meşelā Küleyb bin Vāil nām bir ‘Arabıñ ħimāyesinde Besūs dimekle ma‘rūf bir ‘avretiñ devesi bir ħamāme āşiyānesi bozmağa gelüb ol şütür-i nātüvānı katl itdikde akrabāsından Cesās bin Merre nām bir Fāris-i nīze-güzār yetişüb bir zaħm-i sinān-ı cānistān ile Küleybi pāymāl-i şütür-i merg idicek kabīle-i ‘Arab miyānesine

[p. 23]

āteş-i fitne şerer-fişān olub giderek cem‘-i kabāi’-il-i ‘Arab iki bölük olub bir āşiyān-ı mürğden ötrī ‹Mışra‘› Bu meydān-ı felāketde nice başlar yuvarlandı feħvāsınca kırk yıl miķdārı şemşir-i hūn-riz-i ħarb ü kıtal hūn-efşān olmağla ħāk-i diyār-ı ‘Arab edīm-i gülgüne döndükde mi ‘ālem ma‘mūr u ābādān idi

‹Veyāhūd› ħazret-i sultānü’s-şakāleyn ve seyyidü’l-ħafīkeyn şehsüvār-ı ‘arşa-i levlāk ve ‘ālem-efrāz-ı meydān-ı (لمسا خلقت الافلاك) gül-i gülzār ve (ما ينطق عن الهوى) ve bülbül-i güyā-yı (ان هو الاوحى يوحي) imām-ı enbiyā Muħammedü’l-Muştafa şali’allahu‘aleyhi’ ve’s-selām

hazretleri rüy-i ‘âlem serâser hâristân-ı şer ü şür olmağla kimse menhic-i müstakîm-i hidâyete mühtedî olmayub her kabîle ahâlîsi mahlûkâtından birine ya’nî kimi şüya ve kimi âteşe ve kimi tâğa ve kimi tâşa ‘ibâdet ya’nî tapârken bu kadar erâzil-i bed-nihâd-ı dâlâlet-i i’tiyâdî tarîk-i dâlâletden döndürüb mihrâb-ı islâma serfürü itdirinceye dek bu kadar muhâcirîn ü enşârîñ dest ü tîgleri düşmen kanından pençe-i mercâna döndükde mi ‘âlem ma‘mûr u âbâdân idi

‹Veyâhüd› hazret-i seyyidü’l-mürselîn ve hâtemü’n-nebiyyîn hürşîd-i sipîhr-i sa‘âdet ve mâh-ı şehri-şiyânet hâce-i ‘âlem efendimiz *şali’allahu te‘âla ‘aleyhi’ ve’s-selâm* hazretleri bu serây-ı teng-i fenâdan serîr-i beğâyâ hürâm itdikde şadr-ı mesned-i hilâfet hazret-i

[p. 24]

şiddîk-ı ekber Ebübekr *radıallahû‘anhû* cenâbına yetdikde zâhiren ‘amâme-i islâm olan serfirâzân-ı har-meşrebân-ı ‘Arab kâffeten mürted olub güşe-be-güşe müslim olanları katle teşmîr-i sâ‘id-i ihtimâm itdiklerinden mâ‘adâ Müseylemetü’l-Kezzâb ve Esvedü’l-‘Ayn ve Tuleyhâtü’l-Esedî nâm eşkiyâ-yı bed-nihâd ile Seccâh nâm bir kezzâbe ‘avret da‘vâ-yı nübüvvet idüb her biriniñ livâ-yı dâlâlet ihtivâsına erâzil-i ‘Arabdan yüz ellişer biñ kadar mübâriz cem‘ olub sâha-i darü’l-nübüvvet-i Medîneye hücum itmezden muqaddem hazret-i şîr-i bîşe-i şadâkat şiddîk-ı ekber *radıallahû‘anhû* ol gumrahân-ı dâlâlet pişgâhına safderân-ı islâmdan ‘askerler ta‘yîn idüb ve ihtimâm iderek bir günde on iki sancağ kaldırub her biriñ şîr-i mest gibi bir aşhâb eline virüb rüy-ı zemîne taraf taraf saldırdı. Ve nice kuşaklı pehlevânlar ile huşûsâ Hâlid bin Velîd gibi bahâdır ve sâir dilâverân-ı islâmla müddet-i hilâfetde bir ân ve bir sâ‘at güşe-nişîn-i ârâm olmayub düşmen-i dîn-küştelere rüy-ı zemîn mâidekeş-i mihmânhâne-i mâr ü mûr ve simât-güster-i ziyâfetgâh-ı vuḥuş ü tıyûr oldukda mı ‘âlem ma‘mûr u âbâdân idi

‹Veyâhüd› müttekâ-yı hilâfet-i islâm Fârûk-u meni‘ü’l-cenâb ‘Ömer bin el-Ḥattâb *radıallahû‘anhû* hazretlerine tevcih olduğu sâ‘atden belki tâz-ı tâbüt oluncaya dek

[p. 25]

kemer-bend-i gazâ olub İrân ü Tûrâna ve Hind ü Yemen ve Mağrib zemîne muttaşıl râyât-ı zâfer-rehber gürüh gürüh ‘asker gönderüb halk-ı ‘âlem âsüde-ḥâl olmamış iken Muğayre bin Ş‘ubenin ebû Lülû dimekle ma‘rûf Fîrûz nâm bir gulâmı ‘ale’sşabâh şadâ-yı hayy-ı ‘ale’lfeleḥ şafâ-baḥş-ı erbâb-ı şalâh olurken hazret-i ‘Ömer *radıallahû‘anhû* sâha-i mescidde âlüde-i şeker-ḥ‘âb olan kavmi *tâziyânetü’l-selâtu hayr min el nevm* ile bîdâr iderken ol la‘în-i ateş-mizâc şerâre-i nâr gibi yerinden sıçrayub ‘Ömer bin el-Ḥattâb hazretleriniñ sine-i bî-kinesine dört yerinden muhkem zaḥm-i zehr-âlüd urub ve hançer der-dest gürizân oldukda eşnâ-i tarîkde on üç müslümânı daḥî mecrûh-i hançer-i gâdr idüb kendi daḥî giriftâr-ı kemend-i aḥz olmak muqarrer olıcak gerden-i hayâtın maḥtu‘-i hançer-i helâk itdikde hazret-i Fârûk-ı selabet-meâb kılâde-i taḥlîd-i hilâfeti e‘âzım-ı eşhâbdan lâyıık-ı mesned-i hilâfet altı kimseniñ gerden-i ihtimâmına ta‘lîk eyledikde tarîka-i şûrâ üzre qarârdâde olanı mesned-nişîn-i hilâfet idinceye dek üç gün rüy-ı zemîn tamâm ḥalîfesiz turduḡda mı ‘âlem ma‘mûr u âbâdân idi

‹Veyâhüd› bârgâh-ı bülend-eyvân-ı hilâfet cenâb-ı emirü’l-mü‘minîn ‘Osmân bin ‘Affân ile müşerref oldukda eṭrâf-ı ‘âlemde mesned-nişîn-i hükümet olan erâzil-i

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benî Umeyyeniñ şe‘âmet-i mezâliminden eşkiyâ-yı Mısr ü Hicâz ü ‘Irâk cem‘ olub ravza-i firdevs-eşer-i hazret-i Şafi‘-i rûz-ı maḥşer *şali’allahu te‘âla ‘aleyhi’ ve’s-selâm*ñ hiçâb itmeyüb dârü’l-hilâfet-i ‘uzmâya hücum eylediler rivâyet-i şahîha üzre tamâm kırk gün muḥâşara olunub bi’lâhare dervâze-i haremserâ-yı ḥalîfe-i seyyidü’l-mürselînden fürce-i

duhūl buldular bülbul-i bedi'ü'l-lehce-i nāṭıkası gülberg-i muşhaf-ı kerîmden tilâvet-i kelāmullāh iderken gonca-i devletmendiñ nihāl-i beden-i hırāmānından ayırub nāḥaḳ yire hūn-i zi'nnuireyn ile şahāif-i beyzā-yı kelāmullahı evrāk-ı lāle-i nu'mān gibi l'al-reng itdiklerinde mi 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

⟨Veyāhūd⟩ rütbe-i hilāfet minber-i münevver-i vekālet vücūd-i bāhirü'l-cūd olan şir-i hudā 'Aliyyü'l-Murtaza *rađıallahū'anhū* ile müzeyyen olduğda tarfetü'l-'ayn rüy-i rāḥat görmeyüb gāh yevm-i Cemelde muḳatele ve gāh Nehrivanda ḥavāricle gāh Şıffinde Mu'āviye ile muḳābele idüb bu mu'ārık-ı cigersüzda yalnız eşhāb-ı resūl'ullāhdan elli biñe qarib bahādırān-ı muhācirin ve mübārızān-ı enşārdan 'alef-i şemşir-i şehādet olduğundan mā'adā yüz biñden ziyāde 'ibadullāh ser-çeşme-i tiğ-i ābdan sīrāb-ı hīzāb-ı helāk olub memālik-i islāmiyāndan sāyebān-ı emn ü emān bilkülliye mürtefi' oldı ve nāmūs-i dīn-i islāma şeyn verir ol ḳadar ḥālāt zuhūr itmişdi ki

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zıkrı mücib-i melāl olmağın tayy olundı. Bu eşnāda bī-inşāfān-ı şān-ı hudā-nāşināsān eşhābından biri hil'at-i hilāfeti dūş-i hulle-pūş-i emirü'l-mü'minīn şafder-i gālīb 'Alī bin ebū Ṭālibden hal' idüb Mu'āviyeye ilbās itmek için ḥükm idüb ol ḥüküm rivāyet olundığı üzre ḥükümet-i mülk-i Mısr ricāsile resūl-i ḥudāniñ ḥaḳḳ-ı şarihin nez'-i engüşterī ider gibi yemin-i meymenet-ḳarīninden çıkarub Mu'āviyeye virmekle nice yüz yıl ḥaḳḳ-ı 'ālem degil belki felek-reng-i nīl libās-ı mātem giyüb erāzil-i Şām ve süfehā-yı benī Umeyyeden al-i 'Alī gördüğü zaḥm-i şemşir-i eziyyet ü cefādan cereyān iden hūn-i cigerlerinden arz-ı ḥicāz lāle-sitāne döndükde mi 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

⟨Veyāhūd⟩ Mu'āviye 'ālem-efrāz-ı saltanat olmaḳ arzūsuna düşüb müşkil-küşā-yı şūr-engiz olanlara mürāca'at eşnāsında eyālet-i Mısrı 'Amr bin 'Aşa ṭ'ame ya'nī ocaḳlık virüb anlar daḫī 'asākir-i melaḥ-şumār ile ihāta-i medīne-i Mısr idb fi'lḥāl ḥākim-i Mısr olan Muhammedi ki şıddıḳ-ı ekber ve yār-ı gār-ı seyyidü'l-beşer Ebübekr *rađıallahū'anhū* ḥazretleriniñ ciger-güşesidir şayd-ı kemend-i ḳahr idüb ol cān-ı 'ālemi bir mürde-i bed-mu-yi ḥimār içine ḥabs itdi ve bir tennur-i sūzānda biryān itdikden soñra kināne-i Mısrda siḥām-ı cihād olan aşhāb-ı resūl'ullāhdan

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ğayri küberā-yı dīn-i mübīnden ne ḳadar Ş'ia-i şāh-ı merdān vār ise ḳatlı-i 'ām idüb hūn-i şehīdān-ı islāmıla Mısr hem-reng-i sürḥāb olduğda mı 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

⟨Veyāhūd⟩ Mu'āviyeniñ oğlu Yezīd-i pelīd ve fācir-i 'anīd vücūd-i ḥabāset-ālūdile bigayr-i ḥaḳḳın şadr-ı hilāfeti mülevves idüb (الناس على دين ملوكهم) mısdāḳınca zamānında aşhāb-ı fücūr kāmran ve erbāb-ı dīn mübtezel ü mühān olduğından mā'adā ḥazret-i nūr-i çeşm-i Fāṭimetü'z-Zehrā ve cigergüşe-i 'Aliyyü'l-Murtaza merdüm-i dīde-i Muştafā sultānū'ş-şühedā serdār-ı şehīdān-ı Kerbelā ḥazret-i Ḥüseyn bin Aliyyü'l-Müctebā ḳatliyçün erāzil-i 'Irāḳ-ı 'Arabdan zir-i livā-yı menḥūsuna mücteni' eşḳiyā-yı āteş-nihād mutāba'at-ı ibni Ziyādla beriyye-i cigersüz-i Kerbelāda hemrāh-i Ḥüseyn-i mazlūm ile aşhāb-ı resūl'ullāhdan ve ğayriden ne ḳadar nüfūs-i zekīye vār ise ṭ'ume-i tiğ-i elmās-gün-i şehādet itdiklerinden soñra ser-i sa'ādetmend-i Ḥüseyn-i mazlūm-ı beden-i nezāket-perverinden şemşir-i zulm ile cūdā idüb ehl-i beytten perde-nişin-i ḥaremserā-yı iclāl olan havatin ve ebkār ve etfāli zelil ü ḥaḳir ve maḳhūr ü esir eyleyüb perverde-i zerrin-sivār-ı halhal olan muhaddereler berhemzede-i bend-i zencir olmağla gün görmemiş nāzeninān-ı ḳāsırātü't-tarf başı açık yalın ayak yezīdperest olanlar rāķib olmaḳ vech

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üzre bunlar ise yayān envā‘-i tezlük ile tā Şāma degin getirüb ol l‘al-i gūşvāre-i benāguş-i ‘arş olan ser-i hūn-ālūd-i Hüseyn-i mazlūmu bir taş-ı zerrīn ile pīşgāhe getirüb biḥamdillah gazve-i Bedrde kuşte-i tīg-i ḡadr olan ecdādımıznıñ intikāmını āl-i Aḥmedden aldım diyü fahr ü mübāhāt eyleyüb hemān mecālis-i ṭarab tertīb idüb ‘ayş ü nūşa meşḡul ve ehl-i imānıñ nevāib ü aḫzānı kemāle yitüb pāymāl-i huyul ü cimāl fasāka ve fecere olduğundan mā‘adā hūn-i şühedā-i ş‘ia-i şāh-ı merdān ile ḥāk-i siyāh-ı zemīn-i Kerbelā naṭ‘-ı gülgün ve seccāde-i erḡuvān-gün olduğda mı ‘ālem ma‘mūr u ābādān idi

‹Veyāḥūd› mülük-i benī Ūmeyye ki Mu‘āviyeden mā‘adāsı on üç kimsedir ol silsileden emīrū‘l-mū‘minīn ‘Ömer bin ‘Abdü‘l-‘azīz ve Yezīdīn oğlu Mu‘āviyeden mā‘adāsıñ şeb ü rüz endişeleri tertīb-i esbāb-ı fışk ü fücūr ve icād-ı muḡaddemāt-ı şer ü şūr olduğundan ḡayri ḡatl-i aşḡāb-ı resūl‘ullaha bahāne-cuyul ve yārān-ı seyyidū‘l-mürselīn ḡaḡḡında bed-gūylar ve muḡarnes eyvanlarına ḡaṭṭ-ı muḡarrer-i zernişānla *e‘azzebi‘llāhu te‘āla* sebb-i vasi-yi seyyidū‘l-mürselīni naḡş-ı kitābe-i taḡşīn itdiklerinden mā‘adā minberlerde b‘ade‘l-ḡuṭbe ‘aḡbeh-i elfazil muḡaffa ve müsecca‘ sebb ü l‘an-i imām itdiklerinde seng-i siyāh-ı ḡāre ‘araḡrīz-i ızṭrāb olub

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nice yıllar ehl-i islām cum‘a namāzından ve cemā‘atden kesildikde mi ‘ālem ma‘mūr u ābādān idi

‹Veyāḥūd› Yezīd müdde‘i-i ḡilāfet-i islāmiye iken medīne-i resūl-i rabbū‘l-‘ālemīne ‘asākīr-i şaḡāvet meāşir gönderüb livā-i menḡūs ü ma‘kūsunu müslim ibni ‘Uḡbeniñ eline virüb üç gün üç gece medīne-i resūl‘ullahı ‘askerine baḡışlayub sāye-neşīnān-ı ravza-i resūl olan müslimīni ḡatl ve māl ü mülklerin nehb ü ḡāret ve perde-nişīn-i ‘ismet olan muḡadderāt ü benātı bildikleri gibi taşarruf idenlere Yezīd-i la‘īn ḡazret-i resūl‘ullahdan ḡicāb itmeyüb āferīn yüzüñüz āḡ ve ḡılıcıñız kesḡīn olsun diyüb teraḡḡiler ve ḡil‘atler virüb hūn-i küştegān-ı islāmıla şehir-i Medīne dükkān-ı baḡḡam-fürūşa döndükde mi ‘ālem ma‘mūr u ābādān idi

‹Veyāḥūd› mülük-i benī Ūmeyyeniñ telviş-i mesned-i ḡilāfet-i islāmiye idenlerden Velīd bin Yezīd bin ‘Abdü‘l-melik bir gün meclis-i levh ü ṭarabda neḡamāt-ı çeng ü ḡāy eşnāsında ḡulaḡına āvāze-i ezān-ı şerīf girüb mıṭrıba-i meclis olan cāriye-i ḡāniyesine ki ol meclisde nüdemāsı mahzarında zinā idüb ikisi daḡī cünüb idi gel imāmet eyle namāz ḡılalum diyü fermān eyledi aşḡāb-ı meclis ve kendi daḡī hamrdan ābdest aldılar ve ol ḡaḡbe-i rüzḡār-ı sermestiñ ser-i menḡusuna imāmāne bir ‘amāme şarub seccāde-i miḡrāba geçürdi ya‘nī hem cünüb ve hem

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sarḡoş bir fāḡişe-i rüzḡāra imāmet itdirdi cāriye daḡī her rek‘atda bir güne naḡş-ı şī‘r okuyub selām birdikde tekrār kenār-ı miḡrābda bir daḡī zinā idüb ḡaḡḡaha-i istihzā-yı dīni dāimā terāne-i meclis-i üns iden melik-i zındıḡ-meşreb zamānında mı ‘ālem ma‘mūr u ābādān idi

‹Veyāḥūd› ol melik-i bī-dīn bir gün şadr-nişīn-i taḡḡāh-ı gurūr iken muşḡaf-ı şerīfden tefe‘ül idüb (وخاب كل جبار عنيد) āyet-i kerīmesi geldikde tehevvr-i Fir‘avnīden ḡazabnāk olub *e‘azzebi‘llāhu te‘āla* evrāḡ-ı muşḡaf-ı kerīmi girībān-ı imānı gibi pāre pāre eyleyüb cabbār-ı rabbū‘l-erbāb ile ḡuşūmeti mutāsammın bu nazm-ı nā-ma‘ḡūli inşā ve inşād eyledi

* Beyt *

اتو عد كل جبار عنيد
فها انا ذاك جبار عنيد
اذا ماجعت ربك يوم حشر

ya'nī ey muşhaf cabbār-ı 'anīd diyü beni mi k'orkudırsın imdī ben ol cabbār-ı 'anīdim ki maḥşergāh-ı kıyāmetde rabbiña vardıkda giribān-ı çakle feryād idüb yārab Velīd beni pāre pāre itdi diyü şikāyet eyle dedi böyle olan zındık-ı dālālet-āyīn zamānında mı 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

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«Veyāhūd» Ḥaccāc-ı zālīm-i bī-rahm ü bī-dīn benī Ümeyye ümerāsından 'ibadullaha şiddet-i ye's ile musallat bir ğaddār-ı küştenī olmağla ḥāverān-ı maşrıkdan kayrevān-ı mağriba gelince rūy-i zemīni zulmet-i zulmīle mālāmāl eylemişdi kendi ḥuzūr-ı müstevcibu'n-nufūrunda cellādān-ı bī-āmān elinden şerbet-i şahādet ićen ehl-i islām iki yüz biñden ziyāde ve eşnā-yı cengde kuşte-i tiğ-i ğadr olan 'ibadullah 'adedini ancak defātir-i kirāmū'l-kātibīn muḥit iken kendi şadr-nişīn-i dārū'l-ğurāb-ı ceḥīm olduĝda ḥıttā-i eyāleti zindanlarında maḥbūs yigirmi sekiz biñ mazlūm ü bī-günāḥ bulunmuş idi. Ol zālīm-i ḥüdā-nāters k'abettullah vācibū'l-ihtirām iken üstüne vāfir 'asker çeküb ḥarem-i beytullaha nāzır cabel-i ebū Kabīs zirvesine mancınık k'urub emīrū'l-mū'minīn 'Abdullah bin Zübeyr ḥazretlerin muḥāşara ile taraf taraf çarḥ-ı cenge serāğāz olunub nice günler emr-i muḥāşara mütemādī olub bir gün 'Abdullah ḥacerū'l-esved altında tahrime-bend-i namāz iken mancınık ḥālet-i ruku'a müşādif olub miyānım şikest itmekle 'asker-i Ḥaccāc-ı la'īn dāḥil-i ḥaremullah olmağda iken 'Abdullah iğerü vālidesi Esmā bint Ebūbekrū'ş-şıddik ḥazretine ki laqabı zatu'n-niḥākeyndir girüb şikeste oldıĝım bildirüb ve ser-çeşme-i şefkatinden reşḥāt-ı

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naşihat taleb itdikde benim cigergüşem Ḥaccāc gibi bir kāfire fermānber olmağdan pāymāl-i ḥāk-i helāk olmağ yegdir hemān sīrāb-ı şerbet-i şehādet olmağla himmet eyle didikde çıkub şemşir-i burrānla meydān-ı kārzārda cenge mübāşeret ve nice yüz kelb-i 'aķūru kanāre-i cehenneme gönderüb kendiler daḥi kenāre-i ḥavz-i kevsere ḥıramāne pervāz eyledi. Esmā bint şıddikīn oğluna naşihati sāmī'a-i Ḥaccāc-ı zālīme yetişüb emīrū'l-mū'minīn ḥazretleriniñ cesed-i pākini şalb idüb tā vālidesi ricā itmeyince indirmeyesüz diyü çavuşlarına fermān itmegın iki yıl maşlūb tırdı. Zatu'n-niḥākeyn ise iki yerden ğayret kuşāğın kuşanub er gibi bu vechile ḥarāret-i mevt-i velev mezāk-ı ğayretine şekerden leziz gelmekle ol tarafa iki yıl iltifāt itmeyüb bir gün ol semtden geçerken cigerpāresin ḥālā berdār görüb daḥi bu ḥatīb minberden inmesin mi didikde ol sāt Ḥaccāc-ı zālīm istirkāk idüb bu mertebe daḥi şefā'atdir diyü indirüb ḥāk ile yeksān medfūn eyledikde baḥā-yı k'abetullahıñ kumlarını ādem kāmından ḥurde-i mercāna döndüren zālīm-i bī-dīn zamānında mı 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

«Lākin» mesned-ārā-yı 'adl ü inşāf olan pādişāhlarımız selātīn-i 'ālīşān-ı āl-i 'Oşmān zamān-ı şeriflerinde k'abetullaha

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tāş atılmağ degil beytullahdır diyü t'azīmen maḥalle mescidleri öñünden bile tablhane ile geçilmez *fel'illahū hamdū ve'l-minne*

«Veyāhūd» destgāh-ı ḥilāfet-i 'uzmā āl-i 'Abbāsa müsellemler olduĝda tañtāna-i devletleri ḥatıra gelmez bir fitne-i 'azīme ikāz idüb k'ur'an maḥlūk mıdır yoḥsa kādīm midir diyü gulāt-ı mutezileden bir iki bī-dīn hevāsına tābi' olmağla 'ibadullahı imtiḥān mişillü kādīmdir diyü tarīk-i müstakīme gidenleri dīvānında eşedd-i siyāsetle katl iderdi. Ekābir-i 'ulemādan Aḥmed bin Hanbeli *radıallahū 'anhū* ḥazretlerini Me'mūn ḥalīfe maḥbūsen getirüb 'aķd-i meclis-i münāzara olunmadan Me'mūn kuşte-i tiğ-i reybu'l-menūn olub evreng-i ḥilāfet mu'taşım

bi'llaha müyesser olduğda imām-ı müşārünileyhi maḥalli-i münāzaraya getirüb kelāmullah maḥlūk mıdır yohsa kādım midir diyü su'āl olunduğda ol daḥī cevābında allahıñ ilmi maḥlūk ise kelāmı da maḥlūkdur didikde cellādān-ı zebāniye meşreb ihzār olunub ol meclise ol zāt-ı 'azimü'ş-şānı mertebe-i 'aḳlden sākiṭ oluncaya dek kırbaç-ı ş'übān-endām ile darb eyleyüb envā'-i işkenceye mübāşeret itdikde 'asākir-i islām 'ulemāya bu ḥaḳaret nedir diyü çenber-i itā'atden ḥurūc ideyazdılar. M'utaşım billah bīm-i cāna düşüb eğerçi def'-i dağdağa için imāmıñ başını zānusuna alub gül-i ruḥsārına gülāb-efşān olmuşıdı.

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Ehl-i dīvān perīşān olduğdan soñra zindāne gönderüb iki yıl dört āy esir-i bend-i zindān iken etrāf-i reb'-i meskūna emirler gönderilüb kırk yıla qarīb gūşe-be-gūşe katl ü işkence-i 'ibādullahdan cellādān-ı bī-rahma melāl gelüb 'aks-i ḥün-i şehidān ile ḳubbe-i āsmān ḥayme-i gülgūna döndükde mi 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

«Velākin» pādīşāhlarımız āl-i 'Osmān *sebbet'allahū āsās devletihūm* ḥazretleriniñ zamān-ı şerīflerinde şerī 'at-ı seyyidü'l-enāma muḥālif vaz'a ikdām ile katl-i 'ām-ı ehl-i islām itmek degil ṭāife-i Yahūd ü naşārādan bir zımmi'-i nāçiziñ şer'en katli lāzım gelse ḳudāt-ı islāmdan biri ḥükm idüb yazdığı ḥüccet-i şer'iyeyi ḳadı-'asker muṭābıḳ-ı şerī'at-i ğarrādır diyü pāye-i serīr-i sultāniyyeye 'arz idüb şüreti defter-i ru'ūse ḳayd olunub aşl-ı ḥüccet ḥıfz olduğdan soñra siyāset oluna diyü zābiṭa-i şüret-i ru'ūs virilmeyince katl olunmaḳ muḥāldir *fel'illahū hamdū ve'l-minne*

«Veyāḥūd» ḥulefā-yı 'Abbāsiyeden ebū C'aferü'd-Devānekīye imāmımız imāmü'd-dünyā ebū ḥanīfe ḥazretleriniñ itdiği naşihat-i dīn ü dünyādan rencide-ḥātır olub imāmıñ yanında taḳlīd-i ḳazā muḥāl iken teklīf-i ḳabūl-i ḳazā eyleyüb imtina' idecek *e'azzebi'llāhu te'ālā* ol imām-ı zīşān ḥazretlerini ḥabs-i medīdle fermān idüb

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vezir-i nāpāydārı olan ibnī ebū Cīre nām zālimiñ velīni'meti olan bednām efendisi görüb āferīn bu bābda ihtimām-ı küllī itmek lāzımdır deyüb imām-ı 'alīü'l-ḳadr cenāb-ı kerīmlerin maḥbusda cum'adan ve cemā'atden maḥrūm ü memnu' idüb tā ḥıramān-ı ravza-i cinān oluncaya dek ya'nī rūḫ-i pūr-fütūḫların teslīm itdirinceye degin ıtlāḳ itdirmeyen zālīm-i bī-dīniñ velvele-i zulmi çār-cihet-i 'ālemi tutub nice yıllar ṭarabḫāne-i zemīnden ḥ'āb ü rāḫatı ḳaldıran bī-dīniñ zamānında mı 'ālem ma'mūr u ābādān idi

«Velākin» serīr-ārā-yı devlet-i ismāmiye olan pādīşāhlarımız şehriyārān-ı 'Osmānī zamān-ı şerīflerinde imām-ı 'azam *raḳıallahū'anhū* mezhebini ihyā ider 'ulemā-i 'āmilīn degil imām-ı 'azam tācıdır diyü destārın ḳabardub gezdiren 'ālimān-ı ṭarīḳ-i 'ilmiñ birine qarşü söyleyen ādemi taḫḳir-i 'ulemā itdiñ diyü maḳām-ı ḳatle getirürler *fel'illahū hamdū ve'l-minne*

«Veyāḥūd» Mu'taşım-ı 'Abbāsiniñ veziri Müeyyidü'd-dīnü'l-'Alḳāmī ki rāfiż-i sebbāb ve teberrā-yı aşḫāb olmağla āl-i 'Abbās ḥükümetine taḥammül idemiyüb ḥuḳūḳ-i ni'metine küfrān ile memālik-i Ḥıtā vü Ḥuten sultānı Hülāgū ḥānı teşḫir-i mülk-i Bağdāda taḫrīk idüb meşelā dervīş-simā bir şahs-ı nātrāşı rāzı idüb başını pāk ü müsellā tırāş eyleyüb ve kendi ḥatṭı ile ey ḥān-ı ḥānān-ı Türkistān

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eger memālik-i 'Arab ü 'Acem ve Rūmu zamīme-i mülk-i mevrūs itmek irādesi cāiz ise gur-re-i şehri filānda 'asker-i melaḫ-şumār-ı tātār ile taḫrīk-i rikāb idesiz ki *inş'aallahū te'āla* ḳabza-i şemşire el degmeden fermān-revā-yı İrān ü Tūrān olmağı bu 'abd-i nāçizden bilesiz

diyü yazdı ve ol haṭṭı sūzen-i sertiz ile igneleyüb derviş-i giysüdār şekline girinceye dek ḥabs idüb ba‘dehü gönderdi. Derviş ḥānıñ bārgāhına varub tenhāca girdi ve bāşın tırāş idüb kırā‘at itdirdikden soñra ḥān daḥī hırş ü tama‘a düşüb bu resm üzre va‘d eyledi ki mülk-i Bağdādı her ne vaḳt ister iseñ saña ḳayd-ı ḥayāt ile vireyim diyü taḥrīr eyledi. ‘Alḳamī-i ḥāin daḥī muḳaddemāta başlıyub meşelā pādişāhlara lāzım olan māl ü ḥazīnedir bu ḳadar ‘asker neye lāzımdır diyü ḳaṭ‘-i mevācib eyliyüb ve ne ḳadar zehāir-i sultānī vār ie isrāf ü itlāf eyleyüb leyl ü nehār ḥalifenin mizācına muvāfiḳ ve hevāsına mülāyım evza‘ ile ḥıyānete başladı. Hülāgū ḥānıñ deryā-yı ‘askeri serpintisi serḥadd-i memālikine yetdikde serḥadd-i ümerāsından gelen feryādcıları toḡru tenhāsına indirmekle nābedīd ü nāpeydā iderdi. Ḥavāli-i Bağdāda urduḳları āteş-i nehb ü ḡaretiñ dūd-i şerer-

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ālūdun ḥalīfe kendi görüb su‘al itdikde ol ḥāin şuret-i ḥaḳdan feryād idüb pādişāhım memālik-i ma‘mūrene Hülāgū gibi bir düşmen-i bī-āmān deryā misüllü ‘asker-i āteş-fişānla müteveccih olub ḥavāli-i dārü’s-selāma gelinceye dek serḥad muḥāfazasında olan ümerānızdan bu vaḳt olıncaya dek feryādnāmeler gelmiye böyle küfrān-ı ni‘met izḥār iden ḥāinleriñ cezāsın şemşir-i sertiz-i siyāsete ḥavāle buyurmıyub da ḳanḡı düşmeniñizi siyāset idersiz diyü elinden ḥaṭṭ-ı ḥümāyūn alub ümerāya maḥfi ḥaberler gönderüb böyle zamānda siziñ gibi ḥayr-ḥı‘āh ḳullarınıñ ḳatline emr iden pādişāha vezir olmadan Hülāgū ḥāna esir olmaḳ yegdir siziñ gibi dilāverleri ḳatleden ḥalāş itdirinceye deḡin az ḳaldı ki baş virem didi ve bu güne niçe bāṭıl ü hezeyān sözleri irtikābla şuret-i ḥaḳdan görünüb anları yekpāre dāire-i itā‘atden ḥurūc itdirdikde anlar daḥī Hülāgū ḥāna cümlesi mülḥaḳ oldular Hülāgū ḥān şahrā-yı Bağdāda ḳarb-ı tınāb-ı bārgāh itdikde dervāze ḳapanub etrāfında fi’lḥāl āşār-ı ābādānī ḳalmadı kırḳ güne ḳārib muḥāşara eşnāsında ibnü’l-‘Alḳamī Hülāgū ḥān aḡzından tezkereler peydā idüb benim ‘azimet-i ḥitta-i Bağdāddan murādım ancaḳ cenāb-ı emirü’l-mü‘minin ile mınṭıḳ-bend-i ḳarābet olmaḳdır. Necl-i kerimleri

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Ebübekre perde-nişin-i nihānhāne-i ḥān olan kerimemi namzed idüb miyānımızda kemer-i muşādaḳatı muḥkem itmekdir dinilmegin ḥalīfe didikleri yādigār daḥī inanub çünki kazıyye böyledir münāsib-i ḥāl budur ki āyın-i ḥilāfet ile bārgāh-ı ḥāna varub dārü’l-ḥilāfet-i ‘uzmāya da‘vet eyleyüb tertīb-i esbāb-ı ziyāfet eyleyevüz diyü ḥalīfe ve sāir erkān-ı devlet düḡün ālāyı şeklinde zer ü zīvere ḡarḳ olub ḳal‘a ḳapusın açdılar. İki cānibe ‘asker-i tātār şaf durdılar ḥalīfe iki şehzāde-i āzādesini ki Ebübekr ve ‘Abd’ürrahmāndır ‘alem-i serefrāz gibi öñüne alub muḳarrebān-ı ḥazret ve evliyā-yı devlet ve vücūh-i ‘ulemā-yı ‘izām ve sipāh-ı dilāverān-ı felek-iḥtişāmdan kevkeb-i enbūh ve mevkib-i pürşükūh ile ‘āzim-i bārgāh-ı ḥānī olub dervāze-i şehir-i ‘adem ya‘nī Bağdād ḳapusından ḳıkdılar

* Beyt *

آه من عزيمة بغير ايباب
آه من حسرة على الاخبار

İbnü’l-‘Alḳamī şādmān ve ḥandān pīşgāh-ı otāḡa indi ve derūn-i bārgāha girüb dāmen-būs-i iclālden soñra pādişāhım baña lāzım olanı ya‘nī ḥalīfe-i rüy-i zemīn olan pādişāhı ve evlādını erkān-ı devleti ile tav‘an meydāne getürdüm siz daḥī

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siz düşeni idersiz deyince cümlesi meydāne cem‘ olub neye uğradıḳların bilmeyüb şadır olan fermān mücibince ḥalīfe cellād başı ḥaymesinde mefḳūf ṭurub gözi ḳarşusunda refiḳleri t‘ume-i şemşir-i siyāset ḳılındıḳdan soñra ḥalīfeyi maḥall-i me‘mūrede bir kürsī üzerine iclās itdirüb evvelā iki şehzādesini gözi öñinde ḡaltān-ı ḥūn-i şahādet itdiler. B‘adehü ḥavāş ḥazretinden

Süleymān şāhı ve erkān-ı devletini bir bir ‘arza-i tīg-i siyāset eyleyüb sâ‘irlerin hunhārān-ı tātār lenhātü’l-başarda ‘alef-i şemşir-i ābdār eylediler ve kendin üç gün maħbūs eyleyüb işti‘al-i āteş-i cu‘dan ta‘am istedikde Hülāgū kendi otağına getürdüb oturdukdā bir kāseyi altun-ı meskūk ile mālāmāl eyledi ta‘am getürür gibi peşkir ve kaşık ile önüne koyub bir kaç gündür acsıñız buyuruñ diyü hān iltifat itdikde hālīfe girih-güşā-yı hānde-i ta‘accüb olub zer-i meskūk me‘kūlāt maķūlesinden midir ki miħmāniñıza teklif idersıñız didi hān daħi vāsıta-i tercemān-ı beligü’l-beyān ile ey hālīfe-i mağrūr çünki zer me‘kūlāt maķūlesi olmadığı ħod ma‘lūmuñdur yā niçün ħazīnelerin mālāmāl idüb ‘askeriñe bezl itmediñ ki kavü’l-ķalb olub ‘askerimi ħavāli-i mülküñden def‘ ideydiñ bārī māl yerine vāfir zāħire vü gulāl-i maħzūn itmiş olaydıñ böyle ķal‘a-i

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müstāħkemde fāriğü’l-bāl oturub ‘avān ü enşārıñ seni böyle varṫa-i helāke düşmege māni‘ olurlardı diyü tevbiħden soñra meydān-ı siyāsetde āğuşte-i ħāk ü helāk olmaķ için işdar-ı fermān olunduķda şemşir-i hānī ħūn-i āl-i ‘Abbās ile l‘al-gūn olmaķ münāsib degildir diyü hālīfeyi bir çuval içine koyub nemed-nālān şeklinde erāzil-i tātār yemīn ü şimālinden leked ile helāk eylediler. Hālīfe-i rüy-i zemīni helāk eyledikten soñra şehr-i Bağdād ki zātü’l-‘imād-ı ħurrem-i ħayrū’l-bilād iken ol ‘asākir-i bī-şumār āteş-i şiddetden ħarāb ü yebāb olub serā-perde-i ħilāfetde ne ķadar gün görmemiş nāz-perver vār ise bir ālāy erāzil-i tātār ħaymelerinde ve soķaķlarda taşarruf oldunduķdan mā‘adā nefsi Bağdāda üç yüz yetmiş biñ ādem kuşte-i tīg-i ‘udvān olub serħadd-i Çinden darū’s-selām-ı Bağdāda gelinceye dek memālik-i İrān ü Tūrāndan endāze-i elfāz-ı ħesābdan bīrūn burīde-i şemşir-i tuğyān olan ümem-i layuad ü layuhsa kellelerinden rüy-i zemīn bozulmuş büstāna döndükdē mi ‘ālem ma‘mūr u ābādān idi

‘Veyāħūd’ ol vezīr-i ħāin velīni‘metine itdigi ħıyāñet kıyāmete dek naķs-ı şāħife-i rüzgār olub itmām-ı merām itdikden soñra ‘ahd-ı pişin üzre ħükümet-i Bağdāda yerliğ taleb itdikde hān tertīb-i dīvān idüb ‘alā rūsü’l-eşhād ol ħāin-i bed-nihāda ħıṫāb

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idüb sen abā’an ced bu hānedāniñ perverde-i iħsāni ve ber-āvürde-i in‘ām-ı bikerāni iken ve bizim ile sābıķa-i ħuķūķuñ yoğiken hālīfeniñ mülk-i nevrūşunu ve ‘asker-i deryā-hurūşunu pāymāl itdürüb bu ķadar yüz biñ kere ümemi şemşir-i ġadr ile helāk itdirdikden soñra velīni‘metine rahm itmiyüb benim gibi bir bī-āmān elinde bu rütbe şiddet-i siyāsetle ķatl itdirde sen seniñ gibi hāinden ne ħayr mütevakkadır eger saña v‘ad-i emān sebķ itmemiş olaydı seniñ encāz-ı v‘adiñi zebān-ı şemşire ħavāle iderdim didikde dīvānda olan tātār ü moğol cümlesini vāhiden b‘ade vāhid çehre-i ibn-i ‘Alķamīye tükürdüb envā‘-i tevbiħ ve ħākāretten soñra cümleñiñ şefā‘atiyle Bağdād şubāşısınıñ yanında ‘ases manşıbı ile şerefyāb olsun eger ibā iderse ķatl olunsun didikde ol daħi ķabül idüb ‘aseslik ‘unvānile menşūr ve zamān-ı ķalilde nābūd ü nāpeydā ħāk ile yeksān olduķda mı ‘ālem ma‘mūr ü ābādān idi

‘Veyāħūd’ ħulefā-i Fāṫımiyye nāmīle meşhūr olan āl-i ‘Ubeydden ħākim biemrillah didikleri naķizü’l-ķalb ħākim-i zālīm zamānında ħāṫır-ı nev‘-i beşere ħuṫūr itmez mefāsıd ü mezālīm zuħūr idüb meşelā ekşer eyyāmda bizzāt kendi es‘ār-ı sūk-ı Mışrı yoķlamak için bir ‘azīm heykel ħimārı olub şı‘ār-ı ħilāfet ile ol ħimāre süvār olurdu. Mināre şeklinde daħi mefredü’l-aza siyāh bir

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‘Arabı vār idi ki yānına alub erkān-ı devlet ve vüzerā-yı ‘ālī-menzilet önüne düşerlerdi. Meşelā baķķālīñ biriniñ mizāni nāķış çıķsa tiz cezāsı tertīb olsun diyü ibrām iderdi. Derdmendi kendi nazargāhında meydāna yāturub ol heykel-i dırāz ü bālā mel‘ūn-i ‘ifrit-simā

‘Arab ile livāta itdirirdi. Ol derdmend dahī feryād idüb ve ol mel‘ün ‘Arabıñ mübāşeretinden ve derdmendiñ feryādından şafāyāb ve mesrūr olurdu gayri küfriyyatı tursun böyle vaz‘-ı nā-hancārından şād ü hāndān olan Fir‘avn-ı bī-hayā zamānında mı ‘ālem ma‘mūr ü ābādān idi

‹Veyāhūd› serir-i pādişāhī Mehmed hān-ı Hārezm şāhla müşerref olduḡda deryā-yı tuḡyān olan Cengiz hān tarafından gelen bāzırgānlara gūyā cefā olunmaḡla ‘asākır-i bī-şumār-ı tātār ile Cengiz-i hūnriz memālik-i Īrān ve Tūrāna deryā-yı āteş gibi yürüyüb sulṡan Mehmed her kaçan muḡābele itdiyse maḡlūb olub āhirü’l-emr kendisi ve ehl-i beyti ve vāldesi ‘umūmen haşekiyān-ı haremserāy ile ve dāire-i ‘aḡla şıḡmaz ḡazāin ü cevāhir ile yağma-gerān-ı tātār eline düşüb memālik-i vesī‘a-i Hārezm şāhda olan ricāl kılıcdan geḡub cevāmi‘ ve mesācid āḡur-ı devābb ve ‘umūmen ‘ulemā-yı islām ve meşāyih-i kirām erāzil-i tātār atlarına ḡidmetkār oldılar. Şarḡen ve ḡarben zī ruh maḡūlesinden tā‘ife-i nisvāndan gayri

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ḡalmamışdı. Meger irādet-i rabbü’l-‘ālemīn ol nāmurādlarıñ dahī ‘alef-i şir-i şemşir-i helāk olmasına ta‘alluḡ itmiş bu eşnāda bir tātār-ı hūnhār bir za‘ife ‘avreti ḡatl ile taḡvif itdikde ol za‘ife ‘avret niyāz eyleyüb āmān elimde bir dürr vār idi senden ḡavf idüb yutmuşdum bir laḡza ārām eyle ḡıḡsun al ve beni āzād eyle didikde tātār-ı bī-raḡm dahī ol za‘ifeniñ fi’l-hāl şanduka-i sīnesin ḡanḡer-i ḡahr ile ḡāk idüb ol dürr-i şahvār-ı bulduḡda ḡürūh-i mekrūh-i tātār tuḡyub bu diyār ‘avretleriniñ ḡarnında ‘ālā incüler bitermiş diyü ol ḡün aḡşāma deḡin yigirmi biñden ziyāde za‘ife-i bī-gūnāhiñ sīne-i ḡayātını ḡāk eylediler aşlı yoḡmuş deyinceye dek ḡıḡta-i Īrān ve Tūrānda cins-i nisādan ḡalmıyub şahrā-yı ‘ālem selḡḡāneye döndükde mi ‘ālem ma‘mūr ü ābādān idi

‹Elḡıssa› Ey pādişāh-ı ‘ālem devr-i ‘Ādemden bu āna gelince her ḡünü zıkr eylesem her birinde bir vak‘a-i ‘azīme zuḡūr itmişdir ki istimā‘ı mūcib-i melāldir. Nihāyet-i mertebe geḡen bellü olmamaḡla meşāib-i ḡüzeşte dahī bilinmez bu evrāḡda meşṡūr olan meşāib ü belıyyāt her ‘aşrda re‘āyāniñ niyyet-i fāsidesinden lāzım gelmişdir. Pādişāhların bu bābda medḡali yoḡdur nitekim rabbü’l-‘ālemīn ḡur’an-ı bāhirü’l-burhānında buyurmuşdur *bi’sm’illāhi’r-raḡmāni’r-raḡīm inna’llahū lā yuḡayyirū mā bi-ḡavmin hatta yuḡayyirū mā bi-enfusihim mişḡāḡınca*

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hemān pādişāh-ı ‘ālem dergāhına ehemmi-i umur budur ki hemişe ḡablü’l-metīn-i şerī‘at-i seyyidü’l-mürselīn *şali’allahu te‘āla ‘aleyhi’ ve’s-selām* muḡkem yapışub menāşıbu ehl olana taḡlīd eyleyüb ḡusūsā ḡidmet-i seccāde-i şerī‘at tevcih olunacaḡ ḡādileriñ ḡākimü’ş-şer‘ olmaḡla istiḡḡākını yoḡlayub tevcih idesiniz diyü vūkelā-yı devlete fermān itmekdir zīrā devlet-i ‘aliyye-i ‘Oşmāniye ibtidā-i emrden ri‘āyet-i şer‘-i şerif itmekle böyle ser-efrāz olmuşdur. Zamān-ı salṡanat-ı Kiyūmersden bu āna gelinceye dek bir pādişāh-ı āl-i ‘Oşmān pādişāhları gibi re‘āyet-i cānib-i şer‘-i şerif itmek üzre işdar-ı aḡḡām itmemişdir. Selāṡin-i ‘izām-ı āl-i ‘Oşmān her emrde yazılan maddeyi yedi sekiz kerre şer‘iye ircā‘ itmek ḡānunlarıdır mādāmki sūdde-i devlet-medār-ı ‘Oşmāni esās-ı ri‘āyet-i şer‘-i şerif üzre vaz‘ olunmuşdur ḡıyāmete dek raḡne-ḡir ve ḡalel-peḡzir olmaz *inşa’allahu te‘āla*

* Beyt *

این ان اساس نیست که گردد خلل پذیر
لو بست الجبال لو انشقت السماء

diyüb ḡazret-i Zū’l-ḡarneyn kelām-ı ḡikmet encāmına ḡitām virdikde ḡazret-i pādişāh-ı Īskender-ḡulām dahī tevcih-i ḡitāb idüb ey şāḡib-ḡırān kelimāt-ı ḡikmet-şī‘ārınız

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hâtırda olan ğubâr-ı teşvîşi bilkülliyeye giderüb bizi münşerihü's-şadr itmişdir ve lâkin şâhib-kırân -ı 'âlemiñ beyân itdiği kazâyâ ki her pâdişâh zamânında zühûr iden fitneniñ sebebi ve tafşîli nedir ma'lûm olmadı ol maķûle havâdiş ü meşâyibden ne vechle ictinâb lâzım idügi bilinmek için ricâ olunur ki bu külf-i zahmet irtikâbından kaçılmayub her kışşanıñ tafşîli ve bâişi ne oldıgın serrişte-i takrîre çekmege himmet idesiz didikde cenâb-ı İskender-i Zü'l-ķarneyn hâzretleri dahî rûy-i tevcîhi bu 'abd-i nâçîz tarafına tutub bu bende-i hayr-ķvâh ve dâ'i-i bî-iştibâh bende vü bende-zâde-i Veysî sermâye-i 'ömrünü taħşil-i ma'ârife şarf itmiş ķulundur zıkr olunan ķaşas-ı pür 'iberiñ aşlını ve faşlını bilür fermân iderseñiz mufaşşalan bu hikâyeti silk-i tahrîre çeküb pây-i serîr-i â'lâya işâr itmek cânına minnet belki sa'âdetdir der iken gülbeng-i ğoros-u şubh 'âlemi bîdâr idüb meclîs bu mertebede ķaldı. سيد الانام و آله اكرام . قلم اخبار سيد و سر بشكست الحمدالله على الاتمام و صلى الله على