



BEDLĪSĪ, ḤAKĪM-AL-DĪN EDRĪS

BEDLĪSĪ, MAWLĀNĀ ḤAKĪM-AL-DĪN EDRĪS B. ḤOSĀM-AL-DĪN 'ALĪ (d. 926/1520), scholar, historian, poet, and statesman under the Ottoman Sultan Salīm I (916-26/1512-20). Edrīs was born and educated in [Bedlīs](#), where his father, probably a Kurd, was a respected scholar and Sufi, a disciple of 'Ammār b. Yāser. Edrīs became *dīvān* secretary and eventually chancellor (*mowaqqe'*, *nešānjī*) to the Āq Qoyunlū Sultan Ya'qūb (r. 883-96/1478-90) (Bedlīsī, 1860-62, I, p. 342; Sa'd-al-Dīn, II, p. 566; Hammer-Purgstall, II, p. 290, citing Abu'l-Faẓl's *Dayl*; Taşköprüzade, p. 190). In 907/1501-02 Edrīs declined Shah Esmā'īl's invitation to service and fled Tabrīz for Istanbul, where the following year Sultan Bāyazīd II (r. 886-918/1481-1512) commissioned him to compose in Persian a history of the Ottoman house "from its establishment in 710 [1310-11] until the present." Edrīs presented this work, the *Hašt behešt*, by 912/1506, but Bāyazīd did not deliver the promised rewards because jealous courtiers claimed that the history praised the kings (*kosravān*) of Iran. Five years later (917/1511), following the death of his chief enemy, the grand vizier Kādem-'Alī Pasha, the bitter Edrīs was granted long-awaited permission to go to Mecca, where he remained for a year until the newly-enthroned Sultan Salīm (r. 918-26/1512-20) invited him back to court. Edrīs wrote a conclusion (*kātema*) in verse to the *Hašt behešt* and returned to Istanbul to present the work to Salīm, whose intimate he became (Sükrī, pp. 133-35, citing *Hašt behešt*, *kātema*; Bedlīsī, 1860-62, I, p. 432).

Salīm took Edrīs with him on his 920/1514 campaign against the Safavid Shah Esmā'īl. For about two years after the battle of Čālderān in that year Edrīs



remained in Dīārbakr; because of his knowledge of the Kurds and his prestige within these former Āq Qoyunlū dominions Salīm gave him special authority (including blank firmans) to persuade the Sunni Kurdish begs to accept an Ottoman allegiance and to expel Safavid forces from the region. Edrīs won over twenty-five chieftains and brought most of Kurdistan under Ottoman control. He further organized these territories into districts, some of them to be administered directly by the Ottomans, some by Kurdish appointees, and five by autonomous Kurdish princes who retained hereditary rights while acknowledging Ottoman suzerainty. After the conquest of Mārdīn Edrīs joined Salīm in Cairo and was handsomely rewarded for his successes (Saʿd-al-Dīn, II, pp. 299-323; Moṣṭafā-ʿAlī, fols. 211b-15b; Hammer-Purgstall, II, pp. 432-57). In Egypt Edrīs warned Salīm of abuses being perpetrated in the new province by several high officials, and while returning to Istanbul Salīm appointed Edrīs's son Abu'l-Faẓl *qāẓī* of Tripoli (Hammer-Purgstall, II, pp. 518-19; Monajjembāšī, p. 495). Abu'l-Faẓl later became chief treasurer (*bāšdaftardār*) of the Ottoman empire.

Edrīs died in Istanbul two months after his sultan, in Ḍu'l-ḥejja, 926/November-December, 1520. He was buried at Ayyūb at the mosque established there by his wife Zaynab Kātūn (Babinger, citing Abu'l-Faẓl's *Dayl*; Ayvānsarāī, I, p. 262).

Although he was noted as a poet and calligrapher, Edrīs's fame rests largely on the command of Persian chancery style he exhibited in the *Hašt behašt*. This treatment of the reigns of the first eight Ottoman sultans was the first comprehensive and formally commissioned Ottoman dynastic history, and it served as the model for later Turkish-language chroniclers, starting with Ebn Kamāl (Kamāl-Pāšāzāda, d. 940/1534). The book is divided into an introduction (*ṭalī'a*), eight chapters (*katība* or *daftar*), each devoted to the reign of a single sultan, and a conclusion (*kātema*) giving the account of the civil war, which culminated in the accession of Sultan Salīm; there is also an account of his pilgrimage to Mecca and subsequent recall to Istanbul. Edrīs's son Abu'l-Faẓl composed a continuation (*dayl*) carrying the narrative through the reign of Salīm I, and he also edited a separate *Salīm-nāma* that his father had left unfinished (Babinger, pp. 95-97). Despite its importance for Ottoman and Anatolian history, the *Hašt behešt* is still unpublished; one ʿAbd-al-Bāqī Saʿdī made a Turkish translation (of uneven quality) in 1146/1733-34. In addition to these historical works Edrīs composed some fifteen translations (Arabic to Persian) and treatises, including commentaries on the *Foṣūṣ al-ḥekam* of Ebn



‘Arabī, the *Golšan-e rāz* and *Ḥaqq al-yaqīn* of Shaikh Maḥmūd Šabestarī, and the *Ḳamrīya* of Ebn al-Fāreż.

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(Cornell H. Fleischer)