



## ḤEKMAT BEY

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**ḤEKMAT BEY** (Hikmet Bey), 'ĀREF, Ottoman *šayḵ-al-eslām* (supreme authority in religious matters) from 1262/1845 to 1270/1854 and poet in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian, one of the last major exponents of classical Turkish poetry (b. Istanbul ?1201/1786; d. Istanbul, 1275/1859). He was the son of Ebrāhim 'Eṣmat Bey, who served as *qāẓi al-askar* (chief military judge) and *naqib al-ašrāf* (representative at Istanbul of the Prophet's descendants) during the reign of Selim III. 'Āref Hekmat's date of birth is not known for certain, although sources (e.g. Mantran) have suggested the date of 1201/1786.

In around 1229/1814, 'Āref Hekmat Bey performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, after having completed his education. Upon his return, he served as a *qāẓi* (judge) in Jerusalem (1231/1816), Egypt (1236/1820), and Medina (1239/1823). In 1244/1828, he was appointed as the *qāẓi* of Istanbul. 'Āref Hekmat also served as a senior administrator in Rumelia in 1245/1829 to superintend the census that was being taken. After his return in 1246/1830, he dealt with the affairs of the Prophet's descendants as the *naqib al-ašrāf*. In 1250/1834, he resigned from this post, and later, in 1254/1838, he served as the *qāẓi al-askar* (chief military judge) of Anatolia. In 1255/1839, 'Āref was appointed to the Majles-e Wālā-ye 'Adliya, a law-court established to deal with cases involving high-ranking officials. Finally, on 2 Du'l-ḥejja 1262/21 November 1845, he was appointed *šayḵ-al-eslām*, a position which he held for some seven and a half years. During his retirement 'Āref Hekmat devoted himself to his studies at his well-stocked personal library. He decided to move to Medina in his old age and even arranged for the transfer of his entire library to a new building that he



had specially constructed there for this purpose. However, he died in Istanbul before making the move to the Hejaz himself, on 16 Ša‘bān 1275/21 March 1859. The library is still located in Medina, some twenty-five kilometers away from the Gate of the Archangel Gabriel (*Bāb Jebri*), towards the direction of Mecca from the Mosque of the Prophet (*al-Masjed al-nabawi*). It contains numerous important works in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish.

‘Aref Hekmat knew Arabic and Persian well enough to write poetry in both languages. As one of the last representatives of traditional poetry, his work shows the influence of predecessors such as Nafi‘ (d. 1044/1635), Nabi (d. 1124/1712), and Nadim (d. 1143/1730).

Works: 1) *Divan*. His collected poems in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish have been compiled by Moḥammad Ziver (Istanbul, 1283/1867). 2) *Majmu‘at al-tarājem: dayl lil-Kašf al-zonun*. Although the original work has not survived, ‘Ali Amiri’s Arabic copy can be found at the Millet Library (‘Ali Amiri, *Tāriḳ*, no. 788). It presents the biographies of scholars, religious figures, and poets in alphabetical order. 3) *Taḍkera-ye šo‘arā*. This work, which was never completed, consists of the biographies of 203 Turkish poets who lived between the years 1000/1592 and 1252/1837, listed according to their pseudonyms. The sole manuscript of this work can be found at the Millet Library. 4) *Ḳolāšat al-maqālāt fi majāles al-mokālamāt*. This is a collection of his father’s speeches (Istanbul University Library, TY, no. 5832). 5) *al-Aḥkām al-mar‘iya fi’l-arāzi al-amiriya*, the regulations for title deeds dated 1263/1847. A copy can be found at the Istanbul University Library (*İbnülemin*, no. 2958), and it has been published three times in Istanbul (1265/1848, 1267/1850 and 1269/1852).

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