



JALĀLZĀDA, MOŞTAFĀ ÇELEBI

JALĀLZĀDA, MOŞTAFĀ ÇELEBI, also known as “Koja Nişancı” (Kvāja Neşāncī), Ottoman historian and administrator (b. Tosya, ca. 895-900/1490-94; d. Istanbul, 975/1567). It is surmised that he was born in the Tosya district of the city of Kastamonu. The eldest son of the judge Qāzi Jalāl-al-Din, he began his education in Tosya, before continuing at the *madrassa* in the court of the Fetih Mosque in Istanbul (Aşık Çelebi, f. 134a). Upon completion, he was appointed as the Secretary of the Council of State, before being assigned to the post of private secretariat of Piri Pāšā. Following the retirement of the latter in 929/1523, he became the private secretary of Piri Pāšā’s successor as Governor General of the Rumeli provinces, Ebrāhim Pāšā.

After the rebellion of Aḥmad Pāšā in 1524, he went to Egypt with Ebrāhim Pāšā. There he contributed to the preparation of the statutes designed to regulate the affairs of Egypt. Upon his return in 931/1525, he replaced the minister of foreign affairs, Ḥaydar Čalabi (*Ṭabaqāt al-mamālek*, p. 129b). After serving for ten years in this post, Jalālzāda joined Süleyman the Magnificent’s Baghdad campaign in 951/1534, and later in the same year he was appointed as the *neşāncī* (officer whose duty it was to inscribe the Sultan’s imperial monogram over all imperial letters). He is famous for excelling in this post, which he held for twenty-three years before his retirement in 964/1551, after which he devoted most of his time to his scholarship. For a short period, Jalālzāda served in the *motafarreqa* office (the department of the police dealing with petty offenses, licenses, etc.), and he also took part in Süleyman the Magnificent’s Zigetvar campaign in 974/1566. After the latter’s death, he



served as the *neşāncī* of his son, Selim II, for thirteen months. He died in Istanbul in Rabi' I 975/ October 1567. The area around the mosque where “Koja Nişancı” is buried is called “Nişancı” after him.

Works in Turkish, Persian and Arabic: (1) *Ṭabaqāt al-mamālek wa darajāt al-masālek*. This work is a chronicle of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent's reign and gives information about the organization of the Ottoman state and its institutions. It is comprised of 35 sections and 375 sub-sections. The sections recounting the campaigns in Mohāj, Rodos and Karabāg, which are particularly prominent, exist also as separate manuscripts. The *Ṭabaqāt al-mamālek* has been translated into German by Petra Kappert (1974), and has been published as a facsimile edition (ed. Kappert, 1981; for details of manuscripts, see *ibid*, pp. 42-50). (2) *Salim-nāma*, a chronicle covering events from Selim I's governorship in Trabzon until his death. It has been published by Ahmed Uğur and Mustafa Çuhadar as *Selim-Nâme* (Ankara, 1990). (3) *Manşur-Şāh-nāma*. Even though Bursalı Tahir claims that Jalālzāda refers to this work in another work of his own, no copy of this work have yet been found. (4) *Dalā'el-e nobowwat-e moḥammadi wa šamā'el-e fotowwat-e aḥmadi*, a translation of the Persian biography of the Prophet Moḥammad, *Ma'āref al-nobowwa fī madārej al-fotowwa* by Mo'in-al-Din Ḥāj Moḥammad Farahi, popularly known as Mollā Meskin. The translation was dedicated to Sultan Süleyman and presented to him as a gift at Edirne in 956/1547. (5) *Estānbol wa ma'bad-e Āyā-Sofya*. This work, which has been translated by an unknown Persian author, is about the Ayasofya Mosque. There is a single copy of this work at the Istanbul Municipal Library, but its attribution to Jalālzāda is uncertain.

Although a complete set of his letters have not survived, the letter Jalālzāda wrote on behalf of Süleyman the Magnificent to Shah Tahmāsp demonstrates his talent in this genre. He did not write any poetry apart from the occasional verses he included in his prose works. An anthology of poetry that he had compiled can be found at Süleymaniye Library (*Aşir Efendi*, no. 1004), and he is also attributed with two minor religious works, called *Hadiat al-mo'menin* and *Jawāhir al-aḳbār*.



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