



PERSIAN MANUSCRIPTS III. IN OTTOMAN AND MODERN TURKISH LIBRARIES

Historical background. Turkish libraries today possess the richest and most valuable collection of Islamic manuscripts (henceforth MSS) in the world. They were collected over a long period of time. The Persian MSS in the libraries of Istanbul and Anatolia today were collected from four sources: (1) Persian manuscripts written, translated, and copied in Anatolia. (2) Persian manuscripts brought into Anatolia by immigrant scholars. (3) Persian MSS brought to Anatolia by traders. 4) Persian MSS brought there as booty of the wars and conquests of the 16th and 18th centuries.

The Saljuq conquests, which took place in the second half of the 11th century, and the establishment of the Saljuq sultanate of Rum in the last quarter of the same century spread Islamic culture through Anatolia in a relatively short period. The Saljuqs championed Persian letters, and this led to the spread and production of works in Persia and Anatolia. Soon after this, we can see the beginning of a literary culture in Anatolia in the form of original writings, translations, and copying. We have little information about these activities in the first stages of their development in Anatolia. However, some information may be obtained from the MSS that have survived to the present day. According to our present knowledge, the first Persian book written in Anatolia, about a century before the first Turkish work appeared in this region, is *Kašf*



al-ʿaqaba by Elyās b. Aḥmad of Qayṣariya (Kayseri) at the very beginning of the 12th century (Bayram 1981, p. 13). The oldest extant Persian work reflecting the geography of Anatolia is the autographed manuscript of *Ketāb wojuh al-Qorʿān* by Abuʿl-Faẓl Ḥobayš b. Ebrāhim b. Moḥammad Teflisi, completed in Konya on 24 Şafar 558/1 February 1163 (Atıf Efendi Library, Eki, no. 1316; [FIGURE 1a](#); [FIGURE 1b](#)). This was followed by other MSS in the second half of the 12th century (e.g., Balʿami’s Pers. Tr. of Ṭabari, Āstān-e Qods-e Rażawi Library, no. 7481; Kāqāni’s *Katm al-ġarāʿeb* (*Toḥfat al-ʿerāqayn*, Austrian National Library no. 3118; [FIGURE 2](#) and [FIGURE 3](#)).

In addition to this general flourishing of Islamic culture towards the end of the 12th century, there was also an increase in cultural and educational activities in the *madrasas* of Anatolia, where we can notice the appearance of libraries. It is understood that the madrasa founded by Şams-al-Din Altun-Aba in 1201 in the Saljuq capital of Konya included a library. The books from this library which have survived to the present day were kept for a long time in the Yusuf Ağa Library in Konya and are not to be found in the Konya Manuscript Works Library. Moreover, we know of a number of libraries in Konya, including the *kānegāh* of the Neẓāmiya library, established in 1271 by Abu Senā Maḥmud b. Mostawfi Amir al-Ḥājj, the small mosque complex with inn and public kitchen (*ʿemārat*, Turk.: *imaret*) founded in 1274 by Shaikh Şadr-al-Din Qunawi, the Şadr-al-Din Qunawi Library in which autograph MSS of Şadr-al-Din Qunawi and Moḥyi-al-Din Ebn al-ʿArabi (q.v.) are to be found, and the Dār al-Ḥoffāz libraries in front of the Atābekiya Madrasa established by Qutlu-Malak, the wife of Badr-al-Din Maḥmud, the descendant of Serāj-al-Din Ormavi (Cunbur 1985, pp. 713-14).

In addition to the Konya libraries, we know of a library established in Uluborlu by the Saljuq sultan ʿAlāʾ-al-Din Kayqobād III (r. 1284, 1293-94 and 1301-03). Moreover, there existed a library in Kastamonu, established by the Jāndār-oğullari (Esfandiār-oğullari) inside a large mosque complex in the 14th century during the period of the Anatolian principalities (*beyliks*). If we consider the book-copying activities during those days, we can conjecture that they were carried out in the libraries of the madrasas of cities such as Kayseri and Sivas. Besides these *waqf* (charitable foundation) libraries, there existed also private libraries, owned by certain Saljuq sultans and statesmen. The transmission of Persian culture to Anatolia begun with the foundation of the Saljuq state in the 12th century and gained speed after the Mongol invasion of Persia in the 13th century. Many Persian scholars, writers, and poets fled to



the empire of the Saljuqs of Rum, following the Mongol onslaught on the Iranian lands. These highly educated men played an important role in the revival of Persian culture and literature, which had begun already at the beginning of the 13th century. Subsequently, many works in Persian, dealing with history, literature, philosophy and Sufism, were produced in Anatolia in the 13th and 14th centuries. As a result, Persian became the language of instruction at several madrasas, and Persian words were often used for place-names, personal names, and occupational activities, as well as in certain religious, legal, and official records.

As a result of those developments, in the 13th century, Anatolia was thus intensively influenced by Persian culture. Intellectual life developed very effectively in the cities, where scholars copied or created religious works. One of the most important centers at that time was Konya, the flourishing capital of the Saljuqs of Rum and the home to such important personalities as Şadr-al-Din Qunawī, Mawlānā Jalāl-al-Din Moḥammad Rumi, and Solṭān Walad. Other cities in Anatolia too, such as Aksaray, Niğde, Kayseri, Ankara, Kırşehir, Tokat, Amasya, Sivas, Erzurum, Erzincan and Malatya, were significant cultural centers, where many Persian works were either copied or created during the 13th century. These activities even spread across the frontier regions of Anatolia and continued also in the central Anatolian cities at the beginning of the 14th century. From a manuscript kept at the Veliyeddin Efendi Library (no. 1819, fols. 115b) we learn that Ebn al-Fāreż's commentary, which had been written in Arabic, was subsequently explained in the Persian in order to be understood by the madrasa students in the city of Antalya in 1323. Another work, *Merşād al-'ebād*, a famous exposition of Sufism, written in the 13th century by Najm-al-Din Dāya (d. 1256), was copied in 1352 in the mountainous region of "İstinos" (Korkuteli), near Antalya. Jamāl-al-Din Moḥammad b. Moḥammad Āqsarā'i (d. ca. 1389) explained that he wrote his work, *As'ela wa ajweba*, which he dedicated to Ḥāji Şādgeldi (d. 1381-82), the governor of Amasya, in Persian rather than Arabic since the people of that city could understand it more easily (Aya Sofya, no. 69; Riāḥi, p. 25). Yusof b. Moḥammad b. Ebrāhim noted that he translated for the western Anatolian ruler Aydınoğlu 'Isā Beg (r. 1360-90) the Arabic book entitled *Kaşf al-asrār* by 'Abd-al-Salām b. Aḥmad Ġānem (d. 1279-80) into Persian, in order to avoid similar difficulties (Veliyeddin Efendi, no. 1630; Ateş 1945, pp. 127-28; Riāḥi, pp. 25-26), and Ebrāhim b. Ḥosayn Qarşi, translated *Hedāyat al-ġabi fi aklāq al-Nabi* of 'Abd-Allāh b. Moḥammad b. Ja'far into Persian with the same concern (Fatih, no. 5426, fols. 321a; Riāḥi, p. 25). A Persian accounting book, entitled *Qānun al-*



sa'āda, was copied in the last quarter of the 14th century in Sinop, a city on the Black Sea, and thus far away from Central Anatolia (Tübingen, Ms. Or. Oct. 2556). Another anonymous work in Persian, entitled *Resāla-ye jalāliya*, was possibly written at the end of the 14th century in Anatolia (Ragıp Paşa, no. 670, fols. 246a-249b). The books which were brought into Anatolia by immigrant writers had a significant effect on the creation of the extensive corpus of Persian MSS kept at libraries in Turkey, as well as on copying and writing activities in Anatolia. It is well-known that the scholars from the Iranian and Arab lands, who fled from the Mongols into Anatolia during the 13th century, took a considerable number of books with them. Moreover, some of the wandering Turkish dervishes, roaming in Anatolia and spreading a popularized version of Islam among the still numerous Christians, might have had some theological books written in Central Asia and possibly in Khorasan. Scholars of Persian origin who had emigrated to Anatolia continued their activities in the cities of their new home (Aya Sofya, no. 3605), and many of them stayed in contact with their native lands. Students of the scholars active in Anatolia generally consisted of youngsters from princely families and palace officials (Aya Sofya, no. 1670).

Widespread scholarly activities, such as compilation, translation, research, copying, as well as commerce, created a favorable environment for the production of Persian MSS in Anatolia, which was directly affected by Persian culture in the 13th and 14th centuries. The Persian manuscript collections that are kept in Turkish libraries today are essentially the result of the activities of migrant merchants and scholars.

During the period of the Anatolian beyliks, following the collapse of the Saljuq State in the 14th century, the Turkish language gained gradually in importance, and consequently the influence of Persian culture and language weakened in Anatolia to a certain degree. Turkish had emerged as a written language even in the frontier cities like Gölhisār in western Anatolia, as texts in Persian and Arabic, including the Arabic-Persian thematic dictionary *Ketābloğat al-'arabiya al-motarjem be'l-fārsi* (author unknown; see *Eski oğuzcasözlük bahsayış lüğat*, ed. Fikret Turan, Istanbul, 2001) originally written in the 10th century, had been translated into Turkish. This dictionary, in turn, was translated in Gölhisār into the Oghuz Turkic dialect, using the interlinear method under the name of a certain Aq-şehirlü Baqşāyeş b. Čalija. This dictionary constitutes a clear evidence for the shift of preferences from Arabic and Persian towards Turkish (Fatih, no. 5178). However, the Persian



language, was still preferred by the educated classes in central Anatolian cities where Persian cultural influence remained strong as Saljuq customs had been preserved. Therefore, the copying and creating of Persian works continued in central Anatolian cities such as Konya, Aksaray, Kayseri, Sivas, Tokat, and Amasya throughout the 14th and the first part of the 15th century.

Persian MSS in Ottoman libraries. Although we possess insufficient information on the first Ottoman libraries, some MSS belonging to the private collections of Murad (Morād) I (r. 1360-89) and Çelebi Sultan Mehmed (Čalabi Solţān Moĥammad, Moĥammad I, r. 1403-21) have survived to the present day. It is remarkable that most of these books were written in Arabic. On the other hand, only one out of three of the MSS contained in the private library of Murad II (r. 1421 and 1446-51 [author: see Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties*, p. 239]) is in Persian (Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Library, Revan no. 1726). The MSS belonging to the private library of Mehmed II (r. 1444-46 and 1451-81) have survived in large numbers, but the majority of the collection consists of Arabic works on religious subjects.

It has been said above that, due to the advance of the Arabic and Turkish languages, the influence of the Persian language declined during the late 14th and early 15th centuries, which coincided with the initial stages of the Ottoman Empire. However, the Ottoman sultans paid again more attention to Persian during the reigns of Bayezid (Bāyazid) II (r. 1481-1512) and Selim I (r. 1512-20). These Ottoman sultans received a good education during their youth, in which they learned Arabic as a scientific language and Persian as the perfect language for literary expression. As a result many of the subsequent Ottoman sultans, too, showed an interest in Persian literature and even wrote Persian poems themselves. Prince Cem Sultan (Jam Solţān) (d. 1495), Selim I, Süleyman (Solaymān) I the Magnificent (r. 1520-66), Prince Bayezid (d. 1562), and Murad III (r. 1574-95) wrote Persian poetry, collected in *divāns* (poetry collections), which have survived to the present day (Aydın, pp. 45-56).

The great interest shown in Persian language and literature by the Ottoman sultans resulted in the collection of a great many Persian works in the Ottoman palace library. Most of them are in the fields of literature and history. Mehmed II and his successor Bayezid II carried out written communication with ‘Abd-al-Raĥmān Jāmi (d. 1492), the pre-eminent Persian mystical poet of that era, who dedicated his *Selselat al-đahab* to Bayezid II (Āşir Efendi, no. 159), which led to his great fame in the Ottoman domains. Original and invaluable copies of the works of Jāmi kept in Istanbul libraries prove how



great his reputation was among the Ottomans. No other Persian poet or writer's work was translated and copied to the same extent as that of Jāmi (FIGURE 4a; FIGURE 4b).

Mehmed II established a library in the city of Manisa during his youth as a prince, and later on in the city of Edirne during the initial years of his reign. Following the conquest of Istanbul, he established the first Ottoman library within the compound of the 'Old Palace'. This library was later moved to the 'New Palace'. The Ottoman sultans established a considerable number of libraries as charitable foundations (*waqf*), which existed alongside the private ones, for the benefit of the madrasa students and the public. The first foundation library was established in the Eyüb (Ayub) Institution following the conquest of the city of Istanbul. Another library on a small scale was also established within the Zeyrek madrasa and the Shaikh Vefa (Wafā) Institution, and another was established at the in Aya Sofya (Hagia Sophia), which was converted into a mosque following the Ottoman conquest. The MSS kept at the Aya Sofya and Zeyrek madrasas were transferred to the Fatih Institution in 1471. We do not have sufficient information about the MSS of the first libraries established in Istanbul. However, such libraries would almost certainly also have had Persian manuscripts considering the cultural attitudes of the era (Ünver, 1946, pp. 15-16). Libraries were also established in provincial Ottoman cities such as Edirne, Bursa, Skopje (formerly Üsküp, in Macedonia), Amasya, Konya, Afyon and Beyşehir in the second half of the 15th century. However, such libraries belonged to madrasas, which were engaged mainly in the teaching of religious subjects, and therefore most of their MSS were written in Arabic.

A large number of Persian MSS prepared for the private libraries of Mehmed II, Bayezid II, Prince Qorqud (d. 1513), the unfortunate highly cultured eldest son of Bayezid II, and Prince Ahmed (Aḥmad), brother of Qorqud and Selim, have survived until the present day in good condition. Bayezid II made great efforts to enrich the library that had been established by his father Mehmed II in the Topkapı Palace by adding to it MSS dedicated to himself. It is known that Prince Qorqud, himself an accomplished scholar and poet, also owned a rich personal library. There exist also some MSS that had been copied for the private libraries of Selim I and his son Süleyman the Magnificent.

The invaluable MSS that are kept in the several numerous libraries of Istanbul have their own histories as well. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient information about their origin. Despite a few pieces of research evaluating



Istanbul libraries, the adventures which these books must have undergone are still unknown to us today.

As a result of the examinations carried out on MSS kept at Istanbul libraries, it can be affirmed that there was a great increase in the number of works copied during the 15th and 16th centuries (Özgüdenli and Erdoğan 2004, pp. 63-84). Most of these MSS were copied in the Iranian lands rather than in the Ottoman regions. Another important point is that a large number of MSS prepared for the private libraries of the Il-khanids (Rašid-al-Din Fażl-Allāh, Ġāzān Khan), Āq Qoyunlus (Ḥasan Beg, Ya'qub), Timurids (Šāhroḡ, Bāysonḡur, Ḥosayn Bayqarā, Uluḡ Beg) and Safavids (Esmā'il I, Ṭahmāsb I, 'Abbās I) ended up in the Istanbul libraries. There are also some manuscript collections kept in Istanbul libraries that had been originally prepared and created for local royalties in Persia. Many of these invaluable MSS might have been sent to the Ottoman Palace as gifts. However, this cannot be generalized and therefore it is not always easy to explain how MSS copied in some Persian or Central Asian city, such as Tabriz, Shiraz, Isfahan, Yazd, Herat or Bukhara, have made their way to the libraries of Istanbul. Their fascinating journey has not yet been studied extensively.

Determining the location where MSS were copied is rather difficult when no record of the copy is contained in the MSS themselves. The following figures indicate the origin of the Persian MSS, based on the research carried out in Istanbul libraries. From a total of 120 MSS, 73 (58%) were copied in areas that had been under Persian cultural domination (Persia, Afghanistan, Transoxiana, and India), 38 (30%) were copied in the Turkish-dominated areas of the Ottoman Empire (Anatolia and parts of the Balkans) and 14 (11%) in Arabic-speaking areas (Iraq, Syria and Arabian Peninsula; see Özgüdenli and Erdoğan 2004, p. 74). The following figures refer to the original location of the copy: Istanbul (16), Shiraz (12), Tabriz (7), Herat (6), Baghdad (5), Yazd (3), Isfahan (3), Bukhara (3), Shirvan (3) and Kerman (2).

In the Istanbul libraries, there are many MSS attributed to famous calligraphers, aside from illuminated MSS with miniatures. In this regard, we may mention the following: Solṭān-'Alī Mašhadi (see Eqbāl, pp. 87-93), Moḥammad Qawām Širāzi (Bayāni, III, p. 815), Šāh- Maḥmud Nišāburi (Bayāni, I, pp. 295-96), Moḥammad Ḥosayn Tabrizi and 'Emād Ḥasani (see Istanbul University Library, FY, nos. 480, 497, 504, 1425-27, 1437; Türk ve Islām Eserleri Müzesi Library, no. 1913, 1940). There were also many Arabic MSS kept in Turkish libraries written and copied in the Iranian lands and within

the Persian cultural setting (see Arabic *majmu'a* copied in the Neẓāmiya Madrasa of Nishapur in 544/1149-50, and Kastamonu City General Library, no. 127).

The question is how these MSS, originally belonging to the Il-khanid, Āq Qoyunlu (qq.v.), Timurid, and Safavid dynasties, reached the Ottoman libraries. A significant number of the Persian MSS kept in Istanbul libraries was obtained over the course of several centuries during Ottoman military campaigns. As a result, a large manuscript collection was established in the Topkapı Palace. It consisted mainly of books obtained from newly conquered territories, in particular from Syria and Egypt, which had been conquered in the early 16th century, during the reign of Selim I. Other MSS were added to this from various private collections. The MSS that formerly belonged to the Mamluk sultan Qānṣawh II Ġawri (r. 1501-17) and were subsequently kept at the Istanbul Libraries (Topkapı Palace Library Hazine, no. 1519; Süleymaniye Library, Reisülküttap, no. 402) may be cited as an example of such an addition by conquest. Moreover, several pieces of armour belonging to Āq Qoyunlu royalty, as well as some private written correspondence kept at the Topkapı Palace Museum, verify that valuable items were seized from the Qara Qoyunlus, Āq Qoyunlus, and Safavids by the Ottomans and delivered to the imperial capital Istanbul. Additionally, archival documents testify that in 1514, after the battle of Čālderān (q.v.) and the subsequent occupation of Tabriz by the Ottomans, most of the famous local artists were removed to Istanbul by the order of Selim I. It is most certain that a great number of invaluable MSS was also taken to Istanbul along with other items, as happened in the case of Syria and Egypt. There exists some evidence for this from two documents kept at the Istanbul libraries. The first one is a copy of *Tāriḳ-e firuzšāhi* by Ḥāji Moḥammad b. Ḥāji 'Ali Biḡāmi, by the hand of the well-known calligrapher Moḥammad Qawām Kāteb Širāzi, written for the private library of Shah Ṭahmāsb I (r. 1524-76; Aya Sofya, no. 3055; [FIGURE 5](#)). The second work is a *majmu'a* kept in Istanbul's Süleymaniye Library, which was previously owned by Shah Esmā'il I (r. 1501-24, q.v.), the founder of the Safavid empire and was later donated by Shah 'Abbās I (r. 1587-1629) to the library located within the shrine complex of Shaikh Šāfi-al-Din in Ardabil (Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa, no. 725). The black paint on the record of the pious foundation (*waqf*) of 'Abbās I is very interesting ([FIGURE 6](#)). The aforementioned two MSS are evidence of the acquisition of some works by Ottoman libraries from the Safavid palace and the endowment libraries by means not yet identified. It is likely that many of the MSS were acquired in a similar way.



Most of the Persian MSS kept at the libraries in Istanbul and Anatolia are on literary topics. The most popular works of Persian literature in the Ottoman lands were Persian divans of Persian and Ottoman poets. On the basis of the number of works copied, one might assume that Jāmi was perhaps the most popular Persian poet in Ottoman court circles. History books such as the *Rawzat al-ṣafā* of Mirkvānd, the *Tajziat al-amṣār wa tazjiat al-aṣār* of Šehāb-al-Din ‘Abd-Allāh Waṣṣāf, and the *Hašt behešt* of Edris Bedlisi (q.v.) were also sought for (FIGURE 7 and FIGURE 8a; FIGURE 8b). Elegantly-styled letters were the third most popular genre after literature and history books. The most popular works in this category were by Rašid-al-Din Waṭwāt (d. 1182-83), the chief secretary of the K̄vārazmshahs.

Copying of Persian books for the private libraries of Ottoman sultans decreased gradually after the 16th century, while, by the 17th century, translation activities from Persian into Ottoman-Turkish had steadily increased in Anatolia. Many works, including the aforementioned *Rawzat al-ṣafā* and the *Tajziyat al-amṣār*, were translated from Persian into Turkish for Ottoman readers. The following first decades of the 18th century may even be defined as the “golden” period of the Ottoman libraries, as very extensive libraries, such as Aya Sofya, Nuruosmaniye and Şehit Ali Paşa, were founded in this period (see Erünsal 1998, pp. 19-29). Persian MSS preserved in the Istanbul libraries were classified according to the transcribers, although some of them had copied more than one or two works. According to the related records affixed to these MSS, transcribers sometimes copied the same work in different forms (see Özgüdenli and Ergoğan 2004, p. 72).

There are also several autographs among the works of literature and history. For example, at the libraries of Istanbul there are works by the hand of some of the most proficient Persian writers, such as Abu’l-Faṭḥ Moḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abi Bakr Kārtāni, Waṣṣāf, Ḥāfeẓ-e Abru, Jāmi, Edris Bedlisi, ‘Aṭā’-Allāh b. Faẓl-Allāh Jamāl Ḥosayni, Ḥasan Beg Rumlu, Şā’eb Tabrizi, Kamāl b. Jalāl Monajjem Yazdi, and Mirzā Ḥabib Eṣfahāni.

Persian MSS in the libraries of modern Turkey. Turkish libraries possess the richest collection of Islamic MSS in the world. This priceless treasure consists of approximately 250,000 MSS, written in Arabic (160,000), Ottoman-Turkish (70,000) and Persian (13,000). Their total number could well reach up to 600,000. To this we have to add the *majmu’as* and thousands of pamphlets and reports that are preserved in archives, as well as the MSS in private collections. Approximately 220,000 volumes of those MSS are kept in the



libraries and museums of the Turkish Ministry of Culture. Although there are still no systematic catalogues, it is nevertheless possible to say that only 6-7 percent of those MSS are in Persian. They are, however, far more significant in terms of their age, originality, and value as pieces of art rather than their sheer number. Most of the MSS in Turkish libraries fall into the categories of Persian language, literature, history, and culture. Their distribution as per cities and libraries is as follows:

A. Manuscript collections of the Istanbul libraries. Approximately 146,000 MSS out of the total number of 250,000 MSS kept in the Turkish libraries are in Istanbul. Accordingly, it is safe to state that Istanbul is the host of the largest collection of Islamic MSS in the world.

The Süleymaniye Library holds the first rank (FIGURE 9a, FIGURE 9b, and FIGURE 10), with its total number of 67,571 MSS, of which some belong to endowment (*waqf*) collections (50,006 Arabic; 11,978 Ottoman-Turkish; 3,544 Persian; 81 in other languages). The other libraries and institutions follow accordingly: Istanbul University Library with 18,602 MSS (9,943 Ottoman-Turkish; 6,963 Arabic; 1,615 Persian), Turkish Islamic Works Museum Library 16,381 MSS (15,858 Arabic; 359 Turkish; 164 Persian), Topkapı Palace Museum Library with 13,073 MSS (9,043 Arabic; 3,090 Turkish; 940 Persian), Bayezıt Devlet Library with 11,120 MSS (9,107 Arabic; 1,569 Turkish; 443 Persian), Millet Library with 8,765 MSS (5,728 Arabic; 2,528 Turkish; 509 Persian), Nuruosmaniye Library with 5,052 MSS (3,667 Arabic; 919 Turkish; 466 Persian), Istanbul City Municipality Atatürk Library with 4,138 MSS (3,836 Turkish, 258 Arabic; 44 Persian), Köprülü Library with 3,790 MSS (3,284 Arabic, 390 Turkish, 139 Persian), Atıf Efendi Library with 3,228 MSS (2,615 Arabic; 518 Turkish; 95 Persian), Hacı Selimağa Library with 2,952 MSS (2,226 Arabic; 595 Turkish; 131 Persian), Murad Molla Library with 2,337 MSS (2,129 Arabic; 126 Turkish; 82 Persian), the library of Istanbul's Archeological Museum with 2,116 MSS (1,304 Turkish; 633 Arabic; 179 Persian), Yapı Kredi Cultural Center Sermet Çifter Library with 1,171 MSS (totally works 1,761: 1,389 Turkish; 274 Persian; 98 Arabic), and Ragıp Paşa Library with 1,274 MSS (1,165 Arabic; 68 Turkish; 41 Persian).

B. Manuscript collections of the libraries in Anatolia. Approximately 104,000 MSS are kept in Anatolian libraries. Among them, the libraries of Ankara, Turkey's capital city, comes first with a total of approximately 38,000 MSS. The distributions is as follows: Ankara University School of Language, History and Geography Library 15,059 MSS (8,084 Arabic; 5,801 Turkish; 926 Persian),



National Library 8,813 MSS, Ankara City Adnan Ötüken Public Library 5,259 MSS (2,640 Arabic; 1,300 Persian; 1,252 Turkish; 67 in other languages), Department of Religious Affairs Library 4,800 MSS, and Ankara University School of Theology Library approximately 2,000 MSS. The libraries situated in the central Anatolian city of Konya contain approximately 15,000 MSS. Important manuscript libraries are the following: Yusuf Ağa Library 5,142 MSS (4,656 Arabic; 375 Turkish; 109 Persian; 2 in other languages), City Municipality Koyunoğlu Museum and Library 4,468 MSS (2,112 Turkish; 2,060 Arabic; 296 Persian), Regional Manuscript Library 3,363 MSS (3,053 Arabic; 529 Turkish; 75 Persian; 6 in other languages), and Mevlânâ Museum Specialist Library 2,298 MSS.

Other Anatolian cities holding significant numbers of Persian MSS are: the libraries in Bursa 13,875 MSS (11,155 Arabic, 1,315 Turkish; 405 Persian), the Manisa City Public Library 5,144 MSS (4,201 Arabic; 672 Turkish; 271 Persian), the Kastamonu City Public Library 4,256 MSS (3,439 Arabic; 660 Turkish; 157 Persian), the Public Library of Çorum City 3,494 MSS (2,891 Arabic; 555 Turkish; 48 Persian), the Selimiye Library of the city of Edirne, in European Turkey, 3,309 MSS (2,701 Arabic; 469 Turkish; 125 Persian, 14 in other languages). The National Library of Izmir, in Anatolia, 3,052 MSS (1,423 Arabic; 1,439 Turkish; 190 Persian), Kütahya Vahid Paşa City Public Library 3,086 MSS (2,473 Arabic; 420 Turkish; 192 Persian; 1 in another language), Diyarbakır City Public Library 3,001 MSS (1,629 Arabic; 1,321 Turkish; 51 Persian), Burdur City Public Library has 2,312 MSS (2,027 Arabic; 232 Turkish; 57 Persian). Finally, there is also the Kayseri City Râşid Efendi Library with 1,965 MSS (1,587 Arabic; 283 Turkish; 95 Persian) and many official and privately-owned libraries. To this one should add the libraries in Cyprus, outside Turkey, which contain an important collection of 2,255 MSS (1,948 Arabic; 211 Turkish; 96 Persian).

C. Catalogue studies. Initial researches on the cataloguing of the MSS kept in Turkish libraries began in the second half of the 19th century. The first collective catalogue was prepared in handwriting between 1851 and 1854 in order to determine the numbering of the MSS kept in the Istanbul libraries. The library regulation prepared by Münif Paşa contains some provisions regarding the preparation of an index (*defter*) for MSS. ‘The Index of Ragıp Paşa Library’ (*Ragıp Paşa Kütüphanesi fihristi*) was published in 1868, based on the earlier handwritten index prepared by ‘Abdu’r-rahman Nacim (‘Abd-al-Rahmân Najim) in 1279 /1862-63.



A commission was established between 1884 and 1885. It consisted of Tahsin (Taḥsin) Efendi, Selim Sabit Efendi, Ahmed Hamdi (Aḥmad Ḥamdi), Mustafa (Moṣṭafā) Efendi, Aristokrit Efendi in order to prepare the indexes for the Istanbul libraries during the reign of Sultan ‘Abdü’l-Hamid (‘Abd-al-Ḥamid) II (r. 1876-1909). Based on the researches of this commission, the work known as ‘Indices of the Ḥamidian Period’ (*Devr-i ḥamidi fihristleri*) was published, which arranged the MSS kept in 64 Istanbul libraries in terms of their subjects into forty books (see Turgut Kut, pp. 221-27). A report prepared by Ahmed Zeki Bey (later Pasha) (1867-1934), second secretary to the Egyptian prime minister and himself an eminent scholar, regarding the preparation of general indices was presented to the Ottoman grand vizier in 1909. In this report, deficiencies of the previous indexes were indicated, along with a detailed description regarding the future preparation of indexes. The work consists of twenty-one articles which examine the preparation methods of indexes in detail. Shortly after this report, Ahmed Muhtar (Moḳtār) Bey, Inspector of the Ministry of Endowment (*waqf*) Estates, was appointed to prepare a collective catalogue of the Istanbul endowment libraries. However, nothing serious came out of this project.

Following the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, the preparation of the manuscript catalogues was resumed and a classification committee was established in 1927. However, the activities of this committee continued for only six months, but led, in 1933, to the formation of a second classification committee, led by the late German scholar Hellmut Ritter, which published later *The Catalogues of Turkish Manuscripts* (referring to those kept in the Istanbul libraries). The first scientific and systematic catalogue in seven volumes of the Ottoman-Turkish, Persian and Arabic MSS in the Topkapı Palace Library was published between 1961 and 1969 by Fehmi Edhem Karatay, who had studied library science in France. The Persian section of this catalogue includes and introduces 940 unique and important MSS.

The catalogue of the Köprülü Library, which houses one of most the important Islamic MSS collections in the world, was prepared by Ramazan Şeşen, Cevat İzgi and Cemil Akpınar and was published in 1986. The Persian MSS catalogue of Istanbul University was published by Tawfiq Hāšempur Sobḥāni and Ḥosām-al-Din Āqsu/Hüsamettin Aksu in 1995 in Tehran.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, several systematic catalogues and related studies have been published by the Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) at Istanbul, an institution affiliated to the Organization of



the Islamic Conference (OIC). They provide a good introduction to the manuscripts kept at the Istanbul libraries, focusing especially on Ottoman science literature. Of special relevance are the following: “The Catalogue of Islamic Medical Manuscripts in Turkey” (1984), “History of Ottoman Astronomy Literature” (I-II, 1997), “History of Ottoman Mathematics Literature” (I-II, 1999), “History of Ottoman Geography Literature” (I-II, 2000), “History of Ottoman Music Literature” (2003), and “History of Ottoman Military Literature” (I-II, 2004) (for the original titles of these books see Bibliography (General Studies)).

A few systematic catalogues that have been published for MSS are kept at the Anatolian libraries that are affiliates of Istanbul libraries. Initial researches regarding this subject were introduced at the 22nd International Congress of Orientalists held in Istanbul in 1951. Subsequently, booklists of the respective inventories of some Anatolian libraries, such as those in Bursa, Kayseri, Akşehir, Bolu, Gülşehir, Nevşehir, Niğde, Ürgüp, Konya, Manisa, and Akhisar, were prepared. The Persian MSS catalogue of the Konya Mevlânâ Museum Library, for instance, has been prepared by Abdülbâkî Gölpınarlı (1900-82, q.v.) in four volumes. Gölpınarlı had also prepared the subject catalogue of the MSS belonging to this museum and of the endowment MSS, which was eventually published in two volumes in 2003, more than 20 years after his death. The catalogues of Persian MSS kept at the Manisa and Bursa libraries have been published by Tawfiq H. Sobhâni in Tehran in Persian language (in 1987 and 1989, respectively).

More catalogues of MSS-collections of libraries in Istanbul and Anatolia have been published in recent years. Among them are the following: Râşid Efendi Library in Kayseri (I, 1982; I-II, 1995), Department of Religious Affairs Library (I-II, 1988-94), National Library in Izmir (I-IV, 1992-97), Atatürk Library in Istanbul (1989-2001), Emel Esin Library (1995), Sadberk Hanım Museum Library (1997), Koyunoğlu Library (1997), Military Museum Library (1998), Turkish Language Association Library (1999), and Yapı Kredi Sermet Çifter Research Library (2001).

However, it has to be noted that some of those catalogues mentioned have not been prepared in accordance with modern scholarly standards, because of a lack of qualified personnel. Moreover, some of those studies are based on wrong and insufficient information, and some catalogues do not have even basic indexes. Therefore, the problems surrounding the quality of the available catalogues are among the major obstacles for scholars working on



MSS in Turkey.

D. Selective catalogues and reviews of manuscripts. Some selective catalogues and introductory studies, written on MSS in general or for private purposes, play an important role for the identification of the MSS in Istanbul.

Generally speaking, since the middle of the 19th century, Western scholars had been aware of the importance of the Islamic MSS in the libraries of Istanbul. Some of those MSS have been the subject of a number of articles since those days. The first scholarly study on the Persian MSS in Istanbul libraries was carried out by Paul Horn in 1900. The Persian historical MSS in the Istanbul libraries were introduced by Felix Tauer between 1931 and 1932 in a series of five articles (see Bibliography).

In 1956, in anticipation of the 2,500th anniversary of the foundation of the Persian monarchy, a commission consisting of Helmut Ritter, Herbert W. Duda, and Ahmed Ateş was established by UNESCO to prepare a catalogue of the Persian poetry MSS kept in the Istanbul libraries. The first part of this catalogue was prepared by Ateş (d. 1966), listing Persian MSS in the Nuruosmaniye and Istanbul University libraries (Ateş, 1968). Persian MSS written in verse and kept at the Esad Efendi Library have been introduced by Duda within the same project (Duda, 1964). Persian poetry MSS belonging to the Ismail Saib Sencer and Raif Yelkenci collections of the Ankara University School of Language, History and Geography have been the subject of an unpublished MA thesis by Filiz İmecik in 1966 and those at the Aya Sofya Library were studied by Fatemeh Mohadjeri as a Ph.D. dissertation (1973). The catalogue of Persian poetry MSS in the Fatih Library, prepared by Ritter (d. 1971), was published after his death (Ritter 1986). Arabic and Persian anonymous *enşâ* collections (MSS collections of letters, documents or state papers) kept in Istanbul libraries have been introduced by Jürgen Paul (Paul 1994).

Along with the introductory reviews already mentioned, there are studies that are more specialized. Ritter, for instance, has made important contributions introducing several Arabic and Persian MSS of the Istanbul and Anatolian libraries. Some of his articles under the title of “Philologika” were reproduced by Fuad Sezgin (in *Beiträge* II, pp. 1-682). Ateş, too, has made significant contributions in this field. Subsequently, Turkish and Iranian scholars, such as Zeki Velidî Togan, Süheyl Ünver, Mojtabâ Minovi, Adnan Sadık Erzi, Tahsin Yazıcı, Ramazan Şeşen, Orhan Bilgin, Günay Kut, Mikâil Bayram, and Tawfiq



Hāšempur Sobhāni, contributed other important articles.

E. The project of the “Collective Catalogue of MSS in Turkey” (Türkiye Yazmaları Toplu Kataloğu, ‘TüYATOK’). A long-term project was commenced in 1978 by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in order to publish the “Collective Catalogue” of Islamic MSS in Turkey. It progressed rather slowly due to an insufficient number of qualified personnel and financial limitations. So far, it has published twenty-six volumes of catalogues, introducing 28,182 MSS (about 11% the total number), which, together with 3,384 MSS listed in the National Library Catalogue (6 vols., Ankara, 1987-2001), brings the total number of catalogued MSS to 31,566. Many of those manuscript-libraries that have yet not been included in scholarly catalogues have, nevertheless, some inventory records and basic indexes. Such records, however, are in many cases insufficient and suffering from various other defects, which often make them of little use to the researcher.

Although many of the un-catalogued libraries do not have a systematic inventory, researchers are often able to have access to the MSS or use the microfilms and CDs in the Istanbul libraries. However, it can be very difficult to use the libraries in Anatolia and to obtain microfilms and CDs from them. The case is similar is the case with regard to the preservation and restoration of the MSS.

F. Computer-supported programs. With the admittance of a project presented to the Fund for National Promotion of the Prime Ministry in 1998, the cataloguing and computerizing of 15,059 MSS (some 30,000 works) in the Library of the School of Language, History and Geography of Ankara University commenced in May 1999. As part of the project, the bibliographical preparation works have been continued and information from library-cards is currently being transferred to computers. The long-term objective is to provide scholars with internet-access to MSS and bibliographical records (Atılğan, pp. 158-59).

Despite all those efforts, only a small number of Islamic MSS in the Turkish libraries could have been processed. Many of the Turkish libraries lack a systematic catalogue. Moreover, some of the invaluable libraries have not prepared identification cards. In many of those libraries researchers still have to refer to the library registers designed during the Ottoman era. Since there does yet not exist a collective catalogue covering all of the Istanbul libraries, it is at present impossible for the scholar to make sufficient use of such



invaluable works of art. A steady progress of the computerization-project is therefore highly desirable.

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