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# The Venues of Musical Performances in the Early Eighteenth Century and the *Rûznâmes* of Mahmud I (r. 1730–1754)

Hande Betül Ünal

## Abstract

The *rûznâmes*, daily records documenting the activities of the Ottoman sultans, remain an overlooked and underutilized source in both broader historiography and the study of Ottoman music, which is often characterized by a scarcity of written material. While not traditionally considered as musical treatises, they possess the potential to serve as valuable sources capable of providing significant insights into the musical landscape of the period in which they were written. Focusing on the musical elements provided by the *rûznâmes* written for Mahmud I (r. 1730–1754), this study seeks to elucidate the preferred venues for musical performance, both on a personal level for Mahmud I and within the context of the administrative elite during the early eighteenth century. By examining these records, it aims to uncover certain practices and shifting patterns over time, as well as to offer glimpses into Mahmud I's engagement with Mevlevi rituals and practices.

**Keywords:** Mahmud I, *rûznâme*, Ottoman music, eighteenth century, venues

**On Sekizinci Yüzyıl Başlarında Müzik İcrasının Mekânları ve I. Mahmud (hük. 1730–1754) *Rûznâme*'si**

## Özet

Osmanlı sultanlarının faaliyetlerini belgeleyen günlük kayıtlar olan *rûznâmeler*, hem tarihyazımında hem de genellikle yazılı malzeme azlığı ile nitelenen Osmanlı/Türk müziği çalışmalarında göz ardı edilmiş ve yeterince istifade edilememiş kaynaklardır. Doğrudan müzik metinleri olarak kabul edilmemeseler de, yazıldıkları dönemin müzik dünyasına dair değerli bilgiler sunma potansiyeline sahiptirler. I. Mahmud için kaleme alınan *rûznâme* metinlerinde sunulan müzikle alakalı unsurlara odaklanan bu çalışma, müzik icrası için tercih edilen mekânları, hem I. Mahmud'un kişisel tercihleri hem de on sekizinci yüzyıl başlarındaki yönetici elit bağlamında aydınlatmayı amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, bu kayıtları inceleyerek, müzikli eğlencelerle ilgili belirli alışkanlıkları, zaman içinde değişen mekân tercihlerini ortaya çıkarmayı, bununla birlikte I Mahmud'un Mevlevi ritüel ve pratikleriyle ilkişisine dair ipuçları sunmayı hedeflemektedir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** I. Mahmud, *rûznâme*, Osmanlı müziği, on sekizinci yüzyıl, müzik mekânları

Music, by its very nature, is an intangible art form, and its written documentation was considerably less prevalent in premodern Islamic societies compared to its Western counterparts. The scarcity of documents poses one of the significant challenges for someone who's interested in studying Ottoman music history. Thus, it becomes essential to explore varied and perhaps unusual sources to gain insights into the music of a given period, whether they are solely musical treatises or not. In line with this perspective, the questions of what kind of sources can be utilized in the investigation of the history of Ottoman music, and how can the diversity of these sources be expanded are waiting to be answered. At this point, the genre of *rûznâme*, which pertains to the records of a sultan's daily activities, emerges as a potential source that has not received adequate attention in both general historiography and music history, despite its potential significance.

Hande Betül Ünal  
University of Cambridge  
ghbu2@cam.ac.uk  
ORCID: 0000-0003-0919-8845

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This paper is produced from my master's thesis. G. Hande Betül Ünal, "Tunes from a Sultan's Diary: Musical Performances and Musicians in the *Rûznâmes* of Mahmud I (r. 1730–1754)" (master's thesis, Sabancı University, 2021). I would like to express my gratitude to the two anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments, as well as to Emily C. Arauz and K. Mehmet Kentel for their kind support and suggestions throughout the publication process. Needless to say, the shortcomings are entirely my own.

164 Two notable exceptions to this argument come from the works of Selman Benlioğlu and Tülay Artan. First, Benlioğlu used the *rûznâmes* of Selim III for the earlier period of his study, while his dissertation (later published as a book) examined the peculiarities of musical patronage during the reigns of Selim III (r. 1789–1807) and Mahmud II (r. 1808–1839). His further investigations into Selim III's affiliation with the Mevlevi order within the context of Sufi ceremonies and his visits to Sufi lodges heavily rely on the *rûznâmes* of Selim III. Furthermore, while not exclusively focused on music, Tülay Artan's studies on the *rûznâmes* of Mahmud I touch upon certain musical elements. Utilizing the *rûznâmes*, Artan analyzes the evolving culture of entertainment on the shores of the Bosphorus in the early eighteenth century, with particular emphasis on the concepts of "contemplation" (*temâşâ*) and "amusement" (*tevakkuf*).<sup>1</sup>

In this study, by asking whether and how these records provide data on and can be useful in writing the history of Ottoman music, I focus on the *rûznâmes* of Mahmud I (r. 1730–1754),<sup>2</sup> who was one of the longest reigning among Ottoman sultans for nearly a quarter of a century, yet who remains a relatively neglected subject of court studies.<sup>3</sup> In addition to historiographical negligence, he has rarely and insufficiently attracted attention even from the most prominent scholars in the field of Ottoman music history,<sup>4</sup> despite the sultan having been a musician himself and a patron of musicians. By scrutinizing the contents of Mahmud I's *rûznâmes*, which cover a considerable portion of his reign, I seek to determine the extent to which these records provide valuable data for reconstructing the history of Ottoman music. Specifically, the focus is placed on the locations where musical performances for the sultan took place. Considering his dual role as both a musician and a patron, exploring his most favored musical places holds particular significance. This investigation promises to shed light on one facet of musical practice during the first half of the eighteenth century and hopefully contribute to our understanding of the musical landscape of Istanbul during this period. While the boundaries between music in the city and music at court were not impermeable and were often intertwined, it is important to note that this study concentrates primarily on musical practices within the court setting, as the primary sources are derived from the records of a sultan.

### Mahmud I as a Patron of Music and Musician

Before moving on to the main focus of this study, it may be useful to briefly mention Mahmud I's relationship with music in order to better understand whose daily practices we are talking about. Like his predecessor Ahmed III (r. 1703–1730), Mahmud I was an enthusiastic patron of the arts. Although he was interested in several forms of art such as poetry,<sup>5</sup> calligraphy, and engraving; his interest in music is at the forefront of this study. It seems that

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1 See Selman Benlioğlu, "Osmanlı Sarayında Müsikinin Himâyesi: III. Selim ve II. Mahmud Dönemi" (PhD diss., Marmara University, 2017); Benlioğlu, "Sarayda Düzenlenen Tarikat Ayinleri Işığında III. Selim'in Tekke Müziğiyle İlişkisi," *Sakarya Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 20, no. 37 (2018): 1–20; Benlioğlu, "Ruznameye göre III. Selim'in Mevlevihane ve Mukabele Ziyaretleri," in *Şehvar Beşiroğlu'ya Armağan*, ed. Namık Sinan Turan and Şeyma Ersoy Çak (Istanbul: Pan Yayınları, 2019), 341–352. See also Tülay Artan, "Architecture as a Theatre of Life: Profile of the Eighteenth Century Bosphorus" (PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1989); Artan, "Contemplation or Amusement? The Light Shed by Ruznames on an Ottoman Spectacle of 1740–1750," in *Entertainment Among Ottomans*, ed. Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 22–42; Artan, "I. Mahmud Saltanatında Boğaziçi Eğlenceleri: Temâşâ, Tefekkür, Tévakkuf ve 'Şehr-i Sefâ,'" in *Gölgelenen Sultan, Unutulmuş Yıllar: I. Mahmud ve Dönemi (1730–1754)*, ed. Hatice Aynur (Istanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2020), 92–159.

2 Due to the changing personnel in the position of *sır kâtipliği*, there are different *rûznâme* texts of Mahmud I that were kept by different secretaries.

3 A significant contribution to the literature on the period of Mahmud I can be found in a recently published edited volume that includes articles on various subjects related to the reign of Mahmud I. Hatice Aynur, ed., *Gölgelenen Sultan, Unutulmuş Yıllar: I. Mahmud ve Dönemi (1730–1754)* (Istanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2020). Also, for a monograph that primarily focuses on the domestic and foreign policies of Mahmud I, see Uğur Kurtaran, *Sultan Mahmud I ve Dönemi* (Ankara: Atif Yayınları, 2014).

4 For some of the works of these scholars, see Walter Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court: Makam, Composition and the Early Ottoman Instrumental Repertoire* (Berlin: VWB, 1996), 33, 34, 104; Feldman, *From Rumi to the Whirling Dervishes: Music, Poetry, and Mysticism in the Ottoman* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022), 165; Cem Behar, *Musikiden Müziğe* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2017), 167; Behar, *Şeyhülislâm'in Müziği: 18. Yüzyılda Osmanlı/Türk Musikisi ve Şeyhülislâm Es'ad Efendi'nin Atrabül'Âsâr'ı* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2010), 10, 15, 76, 171; Behar, *Kadim ile Cedid Arasında* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2022), 237–239. Despite these rare and often repeated references to Mahmud I, it must be underlined that no independent musicological study has yet been conducted in which he was the main actor.

5 He wrote poems under the pen name "Sebkati."

Mahmud I was not simply attracted to music but also had knowledge of it. The French dragoman Charles Fonton (1725–1795?)—a contemporary of Mahmud I who spent most of his life in the Ottoman Empire and provides detailed insights into various aspects of musical life in eighteenth-century Istanbul—acknowledges Mahmud I’s musical talent in his treatise.<sup>6</sup> He stated, “I heard that the sultan on the throne who is a musician himself, could keep the *usûl* with his knees<sup>7</sup> during the musical performances (*huzur fasılları*) and only great musicians can deserve his appreciation.”<sup>8</sup>

As we learned, Mahmud I displayed great attentiveness to the *makâm* of any song or composition he heard, demonstrating an understanding of the similarities and nuances between them.<sup>9</sup> Şeyhülislâm Esad Efendi (d. 1753)—the compiler of the first and the only biographical dictionary (*tezkiye*) of musicians of the Ottoman Empire around 1730 entitled *Atrâbü'l-Âsâr fî Tezkireti Urefai'l-Edvâr* (The joys of the works in the biographical dictionaries of those who know the rules of music)<sup>10</sup>—was occasionally invited by Mahmud I to perform the compositions he had written. Nonetheless, Esad Efendi’s tenure as *şeyhülislâm* was short-lived, and he was dismissed from his position around 1748–1749. Rumor has it that one of Esad Efendi’s performances displeased Mahmud I and led to his dismissal.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, in his comprehensive article, İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı mentions that a song composed by Ahmed Refi Efendi—a poet, composer, and a *musâhib* of Mahmud I and his predecessor Ahmed III—who had been exiled to Edirne, was heard and appreciated by Mahmud I. Mahmud I’s appreciation allowed Ahmed Refi Efendi to return to Istanbul.<sup>12</sup>

Mahmud I was actively involved in musical practices, as noted by Fonton. While there is no evidence of his vocal compositions, we have knowledge of several instrumental compositions attributed to him.<sup>13</sup> These compositions primarily fall into the *peşrev* and *saz semâisi* forms, indicating his mastery of music composition. He is also known as the inventor of a *makâm* known as “*ârâm-ı dil*”<sup>14</sup> and we know that he knew how to play the *tanbûr*.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the instruments brought to him or specially crafted for him further demonstrate Mahmud I’s curiosity and interest in music. Yirmisekizçelebizâde Mehmed Said Efendi (d. 1761), who held various state positions such as ambassador and grand vizier, recognized Mahmud I’s fondness for music, and presented him with a harpsichord (known as *klavsen* or *klavsenk*),<sup>16</sup> which he brought from France. Also, Uzunçarşılı mentioned a *tanbûr* adorned with gold and diamonds that was allegedly commissioned for Mahmud I.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to his active involvement and interest in music, Mahmud I also promoted the composition of works on music. Treatises written during or shortly after his reign are testament to his support for music and musicians. To illustrate this, Kemânî Hızır Agha (d. 1760?), a court musician and close associate of Mahmud I, authored a treatise on musical theory called *Tefhîmü'l-Makâmât*. Although he witnessed the reigns of six sultans from Ahmed III to Selim III, it was during Mahmud I’s rule that he reached the pinnacle of his

6 The original title of the treatise in French is *Essai sur La Musique Orientale Comparée à La Musique Européenne* and was translated into Turkish by Cem Behar who included it in his book. Behar, *Musikiden Müziğe*, 137–171.

7 A fundamental aspect of learning any instrument or singing in the Ottoman musical tradition is the acquisition of knowledge of rhythmic cycles. This knowledge is usually acquired before or during the learning process and is considered essential.

8 *Ibid.*, 167.

9 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, “Osmanlılar Zamanında Saraylarda Musiki Hayatı,” *Belleten* 41(1977): 97.

10 The transliteration of the *Atrâbü'l-Âsâr* into the Latin alphabet was made by Cem Behar. For a comprehensive analysis, together with the text, see Behar, *Şeyhülislâm’ın Müziği*.

11 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* 4, no. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2011), 335.

12 Uzunçarşılı, “Osmanlılar,” 97.

13 For a list of these pieces, see *ibid.*, 98.

14 Although there is no clear evidence of Mahmud I’s invention of this *makâm*, the absence of any other compositions in the same *makâm*, apart from a *peşrev* and a *saz semâisi* attributed to Mahmud I, strengthens the argument that the sultan himself was its inventor. Yakup Fikret Kutluğ, *Türk Mûsikisinde Makamlar* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2000), 282.

15 Uğur Kurtaran asserts that he also acquired sufficient proficiency in playing the violin, impressing masters with his skills. However, no other sources confirming this information have been found. Kurtaran, *Sultan Mahmud I*, 13.

16 An illustration of this instrument can be found in the treatise of Hızır Agha. Hızır Agha’s treatise is now located in the Topkapı Palace Museum Library (TSML). As a more accessible source, the illustrations of the instruments can be found in the article of Ersu Pekin, “Hızır Ağa’nın Çalgıları: Tefhîmü'l-Makâmât in Resimlerini Okuma Denemesi,” in Aynur, *Gölgelenen Sultan*, 235.

17 Uzunçarşılı, “Osmanlılar,” 100–101.

166 productivity. He wrote that he performed a *peşrev* that he had composed in a newly invented *makâm* of *vech-i arazbâr* and a newly invented *usûl* of *müsebba* in front of the sultan. His performance captivated Mahmud I, who not only praised him but also showered him with gifts and rewarded him with “a handful of gold” for his innovative composition, *makâm*, and *usûl*.<sup>18</sup>

Another musician at Mahmud I’s court was Tanbûrî Küçük Artin, an Armenian *tanbûr* player also known as Arutin or Harutin. Around 1736, he was assigned to accompany the ambassador Mirahor Mustafa Pasha (d. 1756) and traveled to the court of the Iranian ruler Nader Shah in Kandahar, present-day Afghanistan. After spending six years with Nader Shah and embarking on a journey to India, Artin returned to Istanbul where he composed an untitled treatise in Ottoman Turkish using Armenian letters, focusing on the practical theory of Ottoman music in the eighteenth century.<sup>19</sup> There is no doubt that Mahmud I’s encouragement as a patron of music served as a source of inspiration for musicians and music writers of his age, leading to an environment of creativity and innovation in the musical realm.

### **Rûznâmes as Historical Sources and the Rûznâmes of Mahmud I**

The term *rûznâme*, deriving from Persian, is composed of the words *rûz* (day) and *nâme* (letter, a written message), refers to records of daily events, serving as itineraries, journals, diaries, or daybooks.<sup>20</sup> While the *rûznâme* as a genre documented daily events in various fields ranging from astronomy to finance, in the context of this study it refers to the journals, court diaries, and daybooks that document the daily activities of the sultans, regardless of the significance of the days or events. The entries in these sources relate to the sultan’s official or private life and were written by the sultan’s personal secretaries known as *kâtib-i esrâr* or *sr kâtibi*, who were among the aghas of Has Oda (Privy Chamber) in the *enderûn* (inner court).

A sultan’s daily schedule is organized either over hours or according to five daily prayer times.<sup>21</sup> Despite the often superficial and repetitive prose style, they record and briefly describe activities within (*suriçi*) and outside of the city walls (*surdışı*), places he visited during pleasure outings (*biniş*, *biniş-i hümayûn*, or *biniş-i saltanat*),<sup>22</sup> and other locations he visited throughout the day.<sup>23</sup> In addition to documenting the places the sultan visited, *rûznâmes* also record his meetings with officials such as grand viziers or ambassadors and the ceremonies he had attended—whether they were open to the public (such as Friday greetings [*Cuma selamlığı*], eid festivities, or processions) or more intimate. Moreover, various urban matters such as natural disasters like fires and earthquakes, births and deaths of prominent individuals, official appointments, religious holidays and holy nights, and significant developments in foreign and domestic policy are usually included. The sultan’s daily affairs, as documented by official scribes in state documents, however, should not be expected to provide entirely accurate or revealing accounts, as they were tailored to serve the interests of the sultan and the state. However, despite potential selectivity in their content, they can still provide a wealth of information across various fields of study and warrant further exploration.

18 Ersu Pekin, “Hızır Ağ’a’nın,” 219.

19 For Artin’s original text and an in-depth examination of his treatise, see Eugenia Popescu-Judetz, *Tanburi Küçük Artin: A Musical Treatise of the Eighteenth Century* (Istanbul: Pan Yayıncılık, 2002).

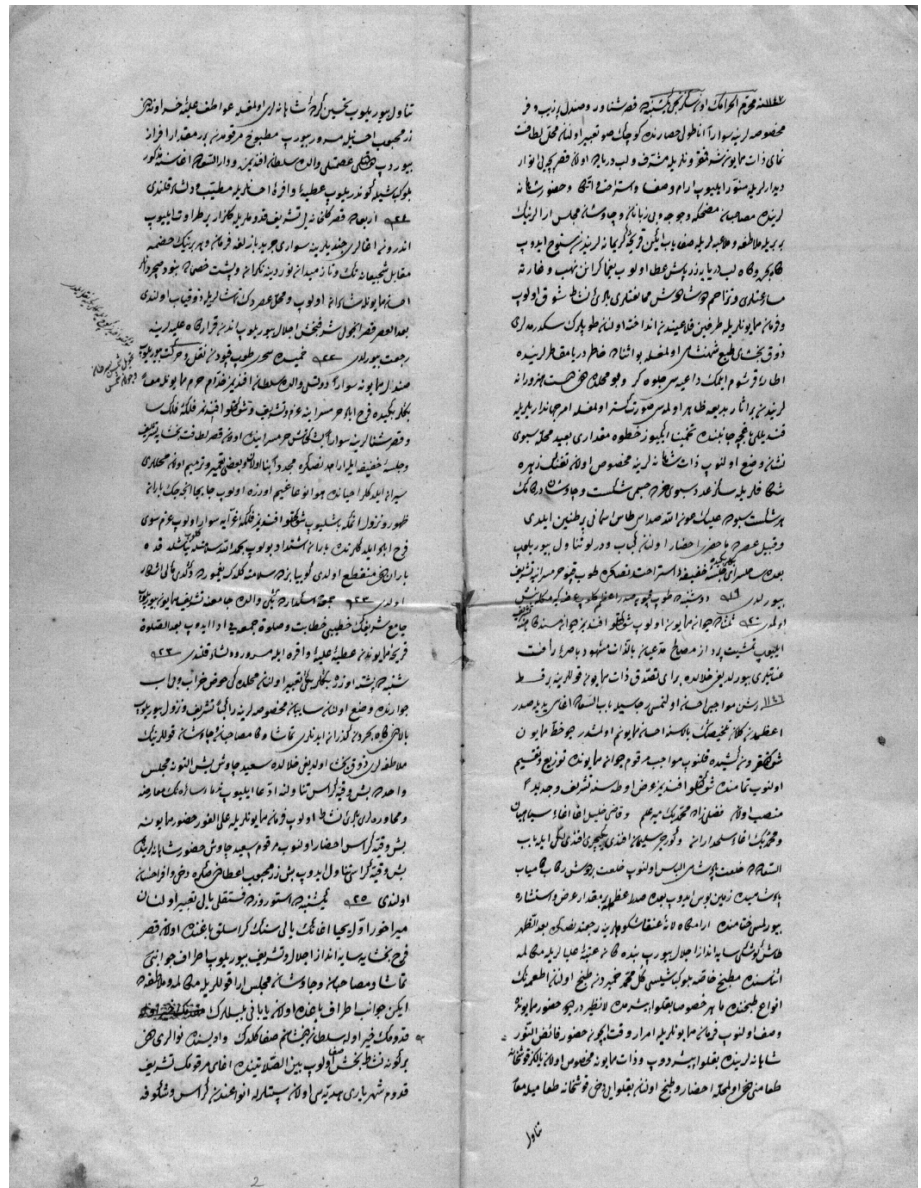
20 The translation of the term *rûznâme* into English poses challenges. Tülay Artan refers to them as “journals,” Selim Karahasanoğlu distinguishes them as “court diaries” from regular diaries, while Christine Woodhead uses the term “daybook.” Artan, “Contemplation,” 23; Selim Karahasanoğlu, “Ben-Anlatıları: Tarihsel Kaynak Olarak İmkânları, Sınırları,” in *Turkish History Education Journal* 8, no. 1 (2019): 214; and Christine Woodhead, “Rûznâmedji,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. P. Bearman, T. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W. P. Heinrichs, 2nd ed., Brill Online, accessed June 20, 2023, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912\\_ismam\\_SIM\\_6356](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ismam_SIM_6356).

21 Fikret Sarıcaoğlu, “Rûznâme,” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2008) 35: 278–281. These daily prayer times are *fajr* (sunrise prayer), *dhuhr* (noon prayer), *asr* (afternoon prayer), *maghrib* (sunset prayer), and *isha* (night prayer).

22 *Biniş* is the term for short-term excursions of the sultans on horseback or by boat. For more information on *biniş*, see Abdülkadir Özcan, “Biniş,” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1992) 6:184–185.

23 Ibid.

Figure 1: The initial page of the 1734 *rûznâme*. BOA, TS.MA.d.10732 (18 Muharrem 1147 [June 20, 1734] – 9 Cemazeyilahir 1147 [November 6, 1734]).



The earliest surviving copy of a *rûznâme* dates to the reign of Mahmud I, of which we have an almost uninterrupted series of records (fig. 1). In this study, the text covering his ten-year reign from 1740 to 1750, along with scattered notes from 1730–1731 and 1734 (which is likely a part of a larger text) will be examined.<sup>24</sup>

24 These texts were transliterated by the students of Münir Aktepe at Istanbul University between 1965–1974 as graduation theses: Özcan Özcan, “Kadı Ömer Efendi: Rûznâme-i Sultan Mahmud Han-ı Evvel (1157–1160 / 1744–1747)” (graduation thesis, Istanbul University, 1965); Yavuz Oral, “Kadı Ömer Efendi: Rûznâme-i Sultan Mahmud Han-ı Evvel (1153–1157 / 1740–1744)” (graduation thesis, Istanbul University, 1966); Kamuran Bayrak, “Kadı Ömer Efendi. Rûznâme-i Sultan Mahmud Han-ı Evvel (1160–1163 / 1747–1750)” (graduation thesis, Istanbul University, 1972); and Ştkan Çınar, “Patrona Halil İsyân’ına ve I. Mahmud Devrine Ait Bir Tarihçe” (graduation thesis, Istanbul University, 1974). Differing from these theses, the transcription provided in this paper is limited to the *rûznâme* of 1734, the translation of which was published later by Kaan Doğan. Doğan, *Sır Kâtibi Ahmet Ağa: Sultan I. Mahmud’un Günlüğü* (Istanbul: Libra Kitap, 2021). Moreover, it’s important to note that Selman Soydemir’s doctoral thesis, which was in progress for several years but has been completed and made available recently, not only contains a comprehensive transcription of the *rûznâmes* of Mahmud I (written by seven different scribes, each in different libraries) but also informs us of newly discovered texts from the years 1148 (1735)–1152 (1739) and 1165 (1752)–1168 (1754). These newly discovered pieces have the potential to enrich our existing knowledge of the subject. Soydemir, “Sultân I. Mahmûd Rûznâmeleri (1730–1754) İnceleme ve

168 According to the *rûznâmes* of Mahmud I, the sultan's daily activities follow a rather routine pattern. He was evidently frequently on the move leaving his primary residence (Topkapı Palace) or the other places where he was staying, either by boat or on horseback, depending on the destination, to visit pavilions, kiosks, or gardens within the vicinity of Topkapı and its surroundings, as well as those along the shores of the Bosphorus, Golden Horn, or in the vicinity of Istanbul. He engaged in activities such as observing horse races, *cirid* competitions, gunshot practices, swimming and running competitions, playing *tomak*, hunting, watching passing ships and boats,<sup>25</sup> and above all, attending musical performances, which are of particular interest to this study. Before, after, or during these entertainments, which typically lasted until the afternoon (*asr*) prayer, Mahmud I would have meals and drink coffee. It was customary for him to return to his place of residence before sunset.

### Music of the *Rûznâmes*

The *rûznâmes* of Mahmud I provide plenty of data both directly and indirectly related to musical entertainments. When we take a step back and look at this data, a pattern emerges: With a few exceptions, there are almost no recorded musical performances during the first years of Mahmud I's accession (from 1730 to 1731), which was marked by a rebellion. During the relatively short period (four and a half months) covered by the 1734 *rûznâme*, however, there was a considerable increase in the number of musical performances organized. The most significant growth in the frequency of musical performances occurred between 1740 and 1744. This almost five-year period, particularly 1741 and 1742, documents numerous performances with Mahmud I's participation. It is challenging to determine whether this increase was due to the scribe's choice or if Mahmud I was more actively involved in these types of entertainments during this period. In contrast, between 1745 and 1749, we observe a gradual decrease in the frequency of musical performances. Especially in the last two years, the recorded musical performances are few. Although the same *sır kâtibi* maintained the records between 1740 and 1750, there is a noticeable difference in content between the first and second half of the decade. The only exception to this trend is the Mevlevi ceremonies. While the number of so-called "secular" *fasıls*<sup>26</sup> decreases in the second half, it is difficult to ascertain whether the same trend applies to Mevlevi ceremonies since Mahmud I's visits to Mevlevi lodges remained consistent across both halves.

Although these performances predominantly took place during the daytime, the only exception to this pattern were moonlit nights, known as *kandîl*, during which the sultan and his retinue would revel until the early morning hours. These festive nights were more frequent in the summer and spring seasons but were not uncommon even in winter. Apart from the month of Ramadan, the *rûznâmes* provide records of the sultan's musical gatherings throughout the entire year.<sup>27</sup>

### The Venues of Music

Perhaps the most frequently mentioned detail about these musical performances, and therefore the one that provides the most comprehensive information, is the venues hosting these performances. Given Mahmud I's frequent presence at various gatherings, the places he visited were varied. The rest of this study delves into these places, categorizing them according to their location or owner (table 1, fig. 2), and thus shedding light not only on Mahmud I's favorite music venues but also on his favorite summer and winter destinations, as well as his changing visiting habits.

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Çeviriyazı Metin" (PhD diss., Istanbul University, 2022).

25 For a comprehensive analysis of Mahmud I's passing ships and boats, see Artan, "Contemplation."

26 Throughout his 1996 book, Walter Feldman used the term "secular" (e.g., "secular art music," "secular music," "secularization") to refer to a form of music without having religious connotations. Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court*. What is meant here by "secular *fasıl*" is that the music had wordly lyrics (if it's a vocal genre) and was not performed in religious places like mosques or *tekkes*. Regarding the term *fasıl*, Cantemir mentioned three types of *fasıls* in use in the eighteenth century: instrumental (*sâzende faslı*), vocal (*hânende faslı*), and joint instrumental-vocal (*hânende ve sâzende müşterek faslı*), each featuring distinct musical forms, which were performed in a specific order. Kantemiroğlu [Dimitrie Cantemir], *Kitâbu İlmî'l-Mûsikî alâ Vechi'l-Hurûfât, Mûsikîyi Harflerle Tesbit ve İcra İlminin Kitabı*, ed. Yalçın Tura (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2001).

27 Except for a Mevlevi ceremony on 8 Ramazan 1160 (September 13, 1747), there is not a single reference to musical performances that was held in this holy month.

	1143 (1731)	1147 (1734)	1153 (1740)	1154 (1741)	1155 (1742)	1156 (1743)	1157 (1744)	1158 (1745)	1159 (1746)	1160 (1747)	1161 (1748)	1162 (1749)
<b>Topkapı Waterfront Palace</b>			8	6	3	4		2	4	1		1
Mahbûbiye				1	8	1	2	2	6			
İncili				1					1			
Şevkiye					1			1	1			
Sepetçiler						1						
Yalı Kiosk												1
Soğukçeşme							1					
Orta Kiosk										1		
<b>Rumelian Shore of the Bosphorus</b>												
Beşiktaş/Çırağan		1		2	1	2	2					
Gülşenâbâd	1											
Neşatâbâd		1		2	2		2	1				
Mahall-i Taksim					1							
<b>Asian Shore of the Bosphorus</b>												
Büyük Çamlıca		1										
Beylerbeyi				1	1							
Kuleli					1							
Şerefâbâd					2			1				
Göksu		3		3	2							
Sultaniye Garden		1										
Yemişçi Garden					2		1					
<b>Golden Horn</b>												
Bahâriye			1	2	2		1		2	2		
Sadâbâd			2	4	3	2	2	2		1		
Karaağaç Garden				1	1	1						
Tersane Garden				1	1		2					
<b>Vicinity of Istanbul</b>												
Kasr-ı Vidoz/Vidos			1									
Valide Sultan's Farm / Alibey or Alibeyköy Farm		3		1		3	2					
Veziir Garden				2								
<b>Palaces and Gardens of "Ricâl"</b>												
"Numân Paşa kullarına akd olunan sultan sarayı"												
"Mahall-i Halife-i Kozbekciyan"			3									1
Palace of the Grand Vizier			1	2	1		1			1		
"Kasr-ı Mehmed Pasha"	1			3			1					
İshak Ağa's Garden/Palace					3			1	1			
Ağa Garden					1				1			
"Cedid Ağa bahçesinde darü's-saade ağasının müceddeden binâ eylediği kasır"									2			
"Bostancıbaşı ağanın mandıra tabir olunan mahalde vâki kasrı"							1					

Table 1: The distribution of locations and the corresponding visitation frequencies, as documented in the *rûznâmes*, is delineated based on chronological categorization.





Figure 2: A map representing the approximate locations of the music venues associated with Mahmud I. It should be noted that certain venues, no longer extant in the contemporary context, are herein accompanied by their anticipated locations.

### Topkapı Waterfront Palace

Unsurprisingly, the Topkapı Palace, located at the tip of the peninsula and housing various kiosks, served as the primary venue for Mahmud I's musical entertainment. Although the *rûznâmes* often lack explicit details about the specific buildings in which these performances took place, it is clear that a wide range of musical events took place within the imperial palace, especially during the winter months, as it was the sultan's winter residence.

Among the prominent locations mentioned within the boundaries of Topkapı Palace, Mahbûbiye Palace, which was constructed during Mahmud I's reign and often referred to as "the new palace" in the *rûznâmes*, stands out as the most favored gathering place for musical engagements.<sup>28</sup> Numerous references highlight its significance such as violin performances by a dervish from Bursa, the vocal performance of a singer named Uşşakizâde together with his son,<sup>29</sup> and *miraciye* recitations by Sheikh Abdülbâki Dede and his dervishes from the Galata Mevlevi Lodge,<sup>30</sup> who were all rewarded by Mahmud I. Interestingly, while Mahmud I's visits to Mahbûbiye are evident in 1742 and 1746 (with eight and six visits respectively, see table 1), references to the palace are completely absent in the years 1747, 1748, and 1749, towards the end of the decade.<sup>31</sup>

28 For a study on Mahbûbiye, refer to Esin Emel, "Le 'Mahbubiye', un palais ottoman 'alla franca'," In *L'Empire ottoman, la république de Turquie et la France*, Varia Turcica 3 (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1986), 73–86; and for a description of this newly built palace by a contemporary source, see Süleyman İzzî Efendi, *İzzî Tarihi (Osmanlı Tarihi 1157–1165 / 1744–1752)* (Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2019), 418–420.

29 "Divânihâne-i Mahbûbiye'ye şâye-bahş ve Bursavî kemân-zen bir dervîş fasl-ı kemân ve hitâmında ihsân-ı hümâyûn ile mesrûru'l- fuâd [sic] buyurdular." 16 Şevval 1159 (November 1, 1746). Özcan, "Kadı Ömer," 121. And "Hânende-i Bîrûndan Uşşâki-zâde ve oğlu bazı sâza muvafakat ile âgâze ve istimayla eğlenilüb mezbûrân mazhâr-i ihsân olub." 10 Zilkade 1155 (January 6, 1743). Oral, "Kadı Ömer," 157.

30 Two of the Mevlevi ceremonies mentioned in the *rûznâmes* are particularly notable. On 6 Şevval 1153 and 26 Receb 1154 (December 25, 1740, and October 7, 1741), the sheikh of Galata Mevlevi Lodge, Abdülbâki Dede, visited Topkapı Palace with his two dervishes, and the sultan gifted them dervish clothing (*libâs-ı dervîşân*) in return. While it is not specified whether those dervishes performed a *semâ* on the first day (which was the night of *mirâç*), we know that Mahmud I watched the *semâ* they performed on the second day. The presence of the dervishes at the palace is significant as it indicates that the Mevlevi ceremony served not only as worship and *zîkr* but also as a visual demonstration.

31 Towards the end of the decade, we observe a general decline in the number of musical performances attended by

In addition to Mahbûbiye, the *rûznâmes* briefly mention several other kiosks or palaces within the Topkapı Palace grounds, including Şevkiye, İncili, Soğukçeşme, Sepetçiler, Orta Kiosk,<sup>32</sup> and Yalı Kiosk, in relation to the sultan's musical gatherings. However, compared to the detailed and frequent references to Mahbûbiye, mentions of these places are relatively rare.

### **Bosporus**

Topkapı Palace is followed by the Bosporus in terms of the number of mentions, as both the Rumelian and Anatolian shores are home to palatial settings. Although not as extensively documented as Topkapı, the *rûznâmes* contain a significant number of references to musical performances on both shores. This can be attributed to the gradual shift of the imperial seat from Topkapı to the Bosporus waterfront during the eighteenth century, where an imperial processional stage was established.<sup>33</sup> While Shirine Hamadeh describes this stage as “the conquest of the Bosphorus,” Tülay Artan draws an analogy with “the theatre of life on the Bosphorus” in reference to the Rumelian shore, which witnessed a series of ceremonial and ritual festivities.<sup>34</sup>

### *The Rumelian Shore*

Of the buildings along the Bosporus, the Beşiktaş Waterfront Palace, which has not survived to today, stands out as the primary location for Mahmud I's musical gatherings. The palace, which included several kiosks and palaces, was initially constructed during the reign of Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617) and expanded over time, resembling the growth of Topkapı Palace.<sup>35</sup> It served as a summer retreat during the reigns of Ahmed III and Mahmud I. Since the last days of Ahmed III's reign, Beşiktaş had already become the preferred imperial summer palace, likely due to its proximity to Topkapı Palace, to the extent that the court of Topkapı relocated there during the summers (*göç* or *göç-i hümâyûn*).

According to the *rûznâmes*, Beşiktaş Palace and the *yalı* or palace of Çırağan,<sup>36</sup> the Gülşen-âbâd Kiosk (adjacent to the Çırağan Palace),<sup>37</sup> and the Mevlevi lodge within the palace,<sup>38</sup> were where Mahmud I attended his musical performances until 1745. Except for his visits to the Mevlevi lodge which stood next to Çırağan, Mahmud I visited these places, which served as a significant hub of musical activity during that era,<sup>39</sup> not only during spring and summer but also in the winter months, despite being known as summer palaces.<sup>40</sup>

There are numerous references in the *rûznâmes* to the Mevlevi ceremonies attended by Mahmud I, with a significant number of these ceremonies taking place in the Mevlevi lodge located within the Beşiktaş Palace, rather than those in Galata, Yenikapı, or Kasımpaşa. While specific details of these ceremonies, such as the repertoire and performers remain unknown, it is evident that Mahmud I participated in Mevlevi ceremonies at least a few times a year in 1734, and between 1741 and 1748. However, there are no records of such visits between 1730–1731 and 1748–1750. Examining the timing of these visits, it becomes apparent that they coincide with

Mahmud I. This could be because they were simply no longer organized or, more likely, because the scribes stopped recording them. The available data do not allow us to say anything definitive in this regard.

32 Orta Kiosk, which is situated in Topkapı (*Topkapı'da vâki Orta-köşk*), may be one of the mansions within Topkapı. I would like to express my gratitude to Selman Soydemir for providing some information about this building.

33 For the relocation of the imperial seat of power, see Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasure: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007), esp. chap. 1, chap. 2.

34 Ibid., 17; Artan, “Architecture.”

35 Artan, 353.

36 It was built by Damad İbrahim Pasha (d. 1730), the son-in-law of Ahmed III and the grand vizier.

37 “Çırağan Yalısı ittisâlinde olan Gülşen-âbâd Yalısı'na teşrif.” BOA, TS.MA.d.10732., 5b–6a. (20 Safer 1147 [July 22, 1734]).

38 For a miniature depicting the *semâ* and showing the interior of the Beşiktaş Mevlevi Lodge in the Philadelphia Free Library, see Barihüda Tanrıkorur, “Türkiye Mevlevihanelerinin Mimari Özellikleri” (PhD diss., Selçuk University, 2000), 3:112.

39 On the involvement of the Mevlevi order with the culture of Istanbul during the eighteenth century, see Feldman, *Rumi to the Whirling Dervishes*, 46–47.

40 In her recently released book exploring the public sphere in seventeenth-century Ottoman society, Aslihan Gürbüzal argues that the Mevlevi order, in connection with their revival during the seventeenth century, served not only as a manifestation of religious belief but also as a means of political “self-fashioning” which played a role in legitimizing the increasing political influence of emerging ruling elites. Gürbüzal, *Taming the Messiah: The Formation of an Ottoman Political Public Sphere, 1600–1700* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2023), especially between 124–155.

Date	Days	Venue
28 Muharrem 1147 (June 30, 1734)	Wednesday	Çırağan
20 Safer 1147 (July 22, 1734)	Thursday	Çırağan
21 Rabiulahir 1154 (July 6, 1741)	Thursday	Çırağan
28 Rabiulahir 1154 (July 13, 1741)	Thursday	Çırağan
27 Cemazeyilevvel 1154 (August 10, 1741)	Thursday	Çırağan
11 Cemazeyilahir 1154 (August 24, 1741)	Thursday	Neşatabad
26 Receb 1154 (October 7, 1741)	Saturday	Topkapı
9 Şaban 1154 (October 20, 1741)	Friday	Mahbûbiye
22 Cemazeyilevvel 1155 (July 25, 1742)	Wednesday	Çırağan
7 Cemazeyilahir 1155 (August 9, 1742)	Thursday	Çırağan
11 Cemazeyilevvel 1156 (July 3, 1743)	Wednesday	Çırağan
16 Cemazeyilahir 1156 (August 7, 1743)	Wednesday	Çırağan
23 Cemazeyilahir 1156 (August 14, 1743)	Wednesday	Çırağan
8 Receb 1156 (August 28, 1743)	Wednesday	Çırağan
12 Cemazeyilahir 1157 (July 23, 1744)	Thursday	Çırağan
11 Receb 1157 (August 20, 1744)	Thursday	Çırağan
25 Receb 1157 (September 3, 1744)	Thursday	Çırağan
8 Cemazeyilevvel 1158 (June 8, 1745)	Tuesday	Çırağan
29 Cemazeyilevvel 1158 (June 29, 1745)	Tuesday	Çırağan
7 Cemazeyilahir 1158 (July 7, 1745)	Wednesday	Çırağan
28 Cemazeyilahir 1158 (July 28, 1745)	Wednesday	Çırağan
20 Receb 1158 (August 18, 1745)	Wednesday	Çırağan
10 Cemazeyilahir 1159 (June 30, 1746)	Thursday	Çırağan
24 Cemazeyilahir 1159 (July 14, 1746)	Thursday	Çırağan
20 Şaban 1159 (September 7, 1746)	Wednesday	Çırağan
26 Cemazeyilahir 1160 (July 5, 1747)	Wednesday	Çırağan
11 Receb 1160 (July 19, 1747)	Wednesday	Çırağan
23 Şaban 1160 (August 30, 1747)	Wednesday	Çırağan
8 Ramazan 1160 (September 13, 1747)	Wednesday	Çırağan
22 Cemazeyilahir 1161 (June 19, 1748)	Wednesday	Çırağan
14 Receb 1161 (July 10, 1748)	Wednesday	Çırağan
3 Zilkade 1162 (October 15, 1749)	Wednesday	Çırağan

Table 2: The days and places of the *Mevlevî* ceremonies attended by Mahmud I.

the summer or spring months, particularly in June, July, August, September, and occasionally October, when the weather was pleasant and its location (as positioned among waterfront palaces on the shores of Çırağan) which is likely to be used as an excursion spot (*mesîre*) allowed Mahmud I to relax and engage in contemplation, particularly during the summertime (table 2).<sup>41</sup>

41 Baha Tanman states that Mevlevi lodges in Istanbul were located outside of densely populated areas and served as excursion spots (*mesîre*). The Galata Mevlevi Lodge was built in a hunting ground, the Yenikapı lodge was situated in a

Turning our attention back to the venues of musical performances, aside from the buildings within the Beşiktaş Palace, one of Mahmud I's frequent destinations on the Rumelian side of the Bosphorus was the waterfront mansion of Neşâtâbâd at Defterdar landing in Ortaköy. Neşâtâbâd was constructed during the reign of Ahmed III by Damad İbrahim Pasha and subsequently passed among female members of the imperial family during the eighteenth century.<sup>42</sup> According to the *rûznâmes*, Mahmud I visited Neşâtâbâd as often as he did the Beşiktaş Palace to spend time with music. It was here where he listened to a singer named Çömlekçioğlu singing *Türkmânî türkîs* until midafternoon.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, the venue witnessed one of the ritual ceremonies of the Mevlevi dervishes that Mahmud I observed, along with a ney-player's performance from the city.<sup>44</sup> All references to this place are restricted to the summer months (specifically, June, July, and August) indicating its status as a summer palace during Mahmud I's reign. The final reference to a musical venue on the Rumelian coast is Taksim, where water from a reservoir was distributed to various parts of the city. No further details are provided about this part of the city, except that Mahmud I visited the Mahall-i Taksim in the midafternoon and enjoyed *sâz u âğâze*.<sup>45</sup>

### *The Asian Shore*

Apparently, like the Rumelian coast, the opposite side of the Bosphorus was equally favored by Mahmud I. The *rûznâmes* mention palaces or kiosks on the Asian shore such as Büyük Çamlıca, Beylerbeyi, Kuleli, Şerefâbâd (in Üsküdar), along with the gardens of Sultaniye (located between Paşabahçe and Beykoz) and Yemişiçi (in Beylerbeyi). However, the waterfront mansion in Göksu, situated at the entrance of the Göksu River, was perhaps the most frequently chosen location by the sultan, especially during the summers of 1734, 1741, and 1742.

These performances in Göksu were occasionally witness to unusual and so-called "picturesque" scenes. For instance, a reference mentions an exceptionally overweight man who displayed remarkable swimming skills and even sang while swimming in the Göksu River, earning him a reward for his performance.<sup>46</sup> This man was not the only one singing in the water. A group of musicians (*serhengân*) gathered in a boat in front of the kiosk at Göksu, serenading the audience within the kiosk under the enchanting glow of the full moon.<sup>47</sup> Considering the absence of electricity during that era, the illumination from the full moon must have had a profound effect, allowing one to imagine the vividness of this picturesque scene. About one month later, the musicians entertained listeners in the kiosk with their music. The next month, the musicians entertained the audience in the kiosk once again, this time accompanied by dwarves who were probably part of the show.<sup>48</sup> As Artan suggests, "Singers, mutes, and dwarves performing on the water more probably constituted a novelty, at least for the court of Mahmud I."<sup>49</sup>

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garden, the lodge in Kasımpaşa was located on a slope of a valley adorned with flower gardens and orchards, the Üsküdar Lodge was constructed in an area with garden mansions, and the Bahâriye Lodge was established among the mansions on the shores of Bahâriye in Eyüp. These secluded spaces were later occupied by the city's population, particularly in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Tanman, "İstanbul Mevlevihâneleri," *Journal of Ottoman Studies* 14 (1994): 178-179.

42 Artan "Architecture," 366.

43 "Neşâd-âbâd'a şeref-bahş ve hânende Çömlekçi-oglu fasl ve edâ-yı asra dek eğlenilüb filike [sic]-nişin-i muâvedet oldular." 12 Cemazeyilahir 1158 (July 12, 1745). Özcan, "Kadı Ömer," 56.

44 "Neşâd-âbâd'a teşrif ve revzeneden dervîşânın devr ü semâlarını müşâhede." 11 Cemazeyilahir 1154 (August 24, 1741). Oral, "Kadı Ömer," 65. "Neşâd-âbâd'a teşrif ve pişgâh-ı şevket-meâbda bâzice-i satraç ve taşra neyzenlerinden bir neyzen ve bazı sâz muvafakâtiyle fasl u istimayla evkât-güzâr." 5 Cemazeyilahir 1155 (August 7, 1742). Ibid., 126.

45 "Vakt-i asrda mahall-i Taksîm'e teşrif ve badehü bazı sâz u âğâze ile eğlenilüb." 14 Cemazeyilevvel 1155 (July 18, 1742). Ibid., 123.

46 "Yirmi sekizinci yevm-i ahadde Göksu'ya teşrif ve bir semiz kimesne fenn-i sibâhatte mahâreti olmağla deryâda bazı beste âğâze idüb mazhar-i ihsân oldu." 28 Rabiulahir 1155 (July 2, 1742). Ibid., 120.

47 "Göksu'ya teveccüh ve leb-i deryâda vâki kasra sâye-endâz-ı iclâl . . . pişgâh-ı kasrda derûn-ı zevrakda serhengân fasl u âğâze idüb eğlenildi." 4 Cemazeyilevvel 1154 (July 18, 1741). Ibid., 59-60.

48 "Göksu'ya şeref-bahş-ı iclâl . . . serhengân [ve] cüceyân zevraka süvâr ve pişgâh-ı kasrda fasl-ı sâz badehü nisâr-ı zer olunub." 2 Cemazeyilahir 1154 (August 15, 1741). Ibid., 64.

49 Artan, "Contemplation," 31.

Artan stated in 1989 that during Mahmud I's reign, the pleasure palaces were relocated from the Golden Horn and Kağıthane to the Bosphorus.<sup>50</sup> In her 2020 work, she further argues that while Ahmed III favored Sadâbâd Palace<sup>51</sup> due to its seclusion, Mahmud I's preference was Göksu. Thus, although not totally abandoned, the popularity of Sadâbâd and other palaces and gardens on the shores of the Golden Horn waned during Mahmud I's reign. Their reduced popularity, despite undergoing restorations in the years following 1730, was restored during the reign of Mustafa III (r. 1757–1774).<sup>52</sup>

Although the Bosphorus, and in particular the courts of Göksu and Beşiktaş, were the main venues for Mahmud I, the *rûznâmes* reveal numerous musical performances, especially in the palaces of Sadâbâd and Bahâriye, and in the gardens of Karaağaç and Tersâne (all within the boundaries of the Golden Horn), which gained prominence during the reign of Ahmed III. These instances highlight the significance of the Golden Horn as the third most frequently mentioned venue for Mahmud I's musical gatherings, following Topkapı and the Bosphorus. From 1740 onward, Mahmud I attended performances in Sadâbâd and Bahâriye multiple times, fifteen and ten times, respectively. While there does not appear to be a specific preferred time or season for visits to the Golden Horn, he and his retinue primarily visited these places and participated in musical entertainments during the spring, but their presence is also documented during the winter months.

### *The Vicinity of Istanbul*

In addition to the central locations within the city, there were several other venues in the vicinity of Istanbul where these gatherings took place. Among them, a few sites stand out due to their frequency, namely Kasr-ı Vidoz, Vâlide Sultan's Farm, Alibey or Alibeyköy Farm, and Vezir Bahçesi, which apparently became notable destinations for Mahmud I and his retinue.

Among them, the farm belonging to Mahmud I's mother, Saliha Sultan, commonly referred to as *vâlide sultan* (queen mother), appears to be the most frequently visited site by Mahmud I in the vicinity of Istanbul. In the multiple references to Saliha Sultan's farm in Alibeyköy, it is alternatively referred to as Vâlide Sultan's Farm or Alibey/Alibeyköy Farm. Although there is limited detailed information about the specifics of these performances, these visits predominantly occurred during the spring months. Another noteworthy reference is made to Kasr-ı Vidoz, about which there is scarce information in the chronicles apart from its proximity to the Davud Pasha Palace.<sup>53</sup> According to the *rûznâmes*, on February 1, 1741, singers gathered in a boat (or boats) in the pool at Kasr-ı Vidoz, while onlookers from the palace listened to their songs.<sup>54</sup> This event, along with the mention of musicians singing from boats in the Göksu River, demonstrate that it was not an uncommon practice during Mahmud I's era for musicians in boats to perform in front of palaces for the enjoyment of those inside.

### *Palaces and Gardens of "Ricâl"*

Lastly, let us now turn our attention to the palaces and gardens owned by state dignitaries, or *ricâl* (deriving from the Arabic meaning "men"), who appear to be interested in music and organized musical gatherings for the sultan to attend. According to the *rûznâmes*, the number of palaces belonging to dignitaries visited by Mahmud I increased gradually between 1740–1750. Notable among them was Mahall-i Halîfe-i Kozbekciyan (the place of the *kozbekeci*),<sup>55</sup> Sadr-ı Azâm Sarayı, Kasr-ı Mehmed Pasha, İshak Agha Yalısı, Agha Bahçesi, the palace

50 Artan "Architecture," 54.

51 For a comprehensive study on Sadâbâd, see Sedat Hakkı Eldem, *Sa'dabad* (Istanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1977).

52 Artan, "I. Mahmud," 127, 142.

53 *Ibid.*, 124.

54 "Kasr-ı Vidoz'a teşrif ve havuzda olan zevraka nev-be-nev hânende-i serhengân vaz ve fasl u âğâze ile kesb-i safâ." 15 Zilkade 1153 (February 1, 1741). Oral, "Kadı Ömer," 28. The word Oral wrote as "Kotuz" is Vidoz or Fidoz. I thank Selman Soydemir for informing me.

55 *Kozbekci* is one of the servants in the chief harem eunuch's office.

prepared for Numan Pasha,<sup>56</sup> the Bostancıbaşı's pavilion situated in a dairy,<sup>57</sup> and the newly constructed pavilion in Cedid Agha Garden by the chief harem eunuch,<sup>58</sup> mentioned in our material. Within this group, some evidence suggests that Mahmud I visited the palace(s) of the grand vizier(s) most often for musical gatherings.<sup>59</sup> This is not surprising, given that the grand vizier was the official with whom the sultan had the most contact and spent the most time. However, it's difficult to pinpoint a specific location for the palace of the grand vizier(s), as sixteen different grand viziers served during Mahmud I's twenty-four-year reign.<sup>60</sup>

The second most frequently mentioned location in this category is Kasr-ı Mehmed Pasha, which may have belonged to a grand vizier, although the true owner remains unknown. Despite its association with grand banquets in the late seventeenth century and its designation as Sancak Kiosk as part of the Davud Pasha Palace, the exact date of its construction remains undisclosed.<sup>61</sup> As mentioned above, the *rûznâmes* often discuss the enjoyment of music by Mahmud I and his retinue without giving detailed information and without naming the performing musicians. However, there are some exceptions to this rule, and Kasr-ı Mehmed Pasha is one of them. An occasion is mentioned when a florist named Çiçekçi Salih Efendi visited the palace, offered narcissus (*zerrîn*), and engaged in conversation, during which Mahmud I discovered Salih Efendi's expertise in both floristry and *ilm-i mûsikî*, prompting him to request a musical performance. This encounter took place at Kasr-ı Mehmed Pasha and concluded with Salih Efendi presenting his gift to the sultan.<sup>62</sup>

Another place mentioned in the *rûznâmes* for musical entertainment is the mansion of İshak Agha in Hünkar İskelesi, Beykoz. İshak Agha served as the treasurer of customs (*gümrükçü*) during the reign of Mahmud I and built a garden and a public fountain in the same area. It is therefore plausible to assume that the "agha garden" mentioned in the *rûznâmes* is the one built by İshak Agha. There are several references to musical performances taking place either in İshak Agha's mansion or in his garden. Most of these references are found in the *rûznâme* of 1742 and coincide with the spring or summer months.<sup>63</sup>

56 "Åhar [Ahur/Ahır?] kapı kurbunda vâki Numân Paşa kullarına akd olunan sultan sarayına teşrif." 27 Muharrem 1162 (January 17, 1749). Bayrak, "Kadı Ömer," 59. I do not know who the Numan Pasha in question was, but the commander-in-chief (*ser-asker*) of Bender (a city in Moldova) during the Ottoman-Russian War in 1738–1739 had the same name. Uğur Kurtaran, "Sultan Birinci Mahmud Dönemi Osmanlı-Rus Siyasi İlişkileri," *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı: Belleten* 79, no. 285 (2015): 597.

57 "Beylik mandırada bostancıbaşı ağasının ziyâfeti olmağla mahall-i ta'dâd-ı ganemde [sic] olan kasra teşrif ve ihsâ-i azim sâye-bâna sâye-bahş ba'dehu tenâvül-i ta'am ruhsat-dâd-ı rimâye-i sürb [sic] ve fasl u sâz ile edâ-yı asra dek eğlenilüp." 5 Rabiulahir 1157 (May 18, 1744). Oral, "Kadı Ömer," 240. *Bostancıbaşı* is the head of the Bostancı Ocağı, who was responsible for the security of the Bosphorus and the nearby islands. These individuals also performed duties such as being at the helm of the sultan's boat and discharging death warrants of those who were ordered to be executed. Selman Soydemir states by personal communication that although it is certain that the dairy in question is on the Asian side of Istanbul, it may be around Kadıköy-Haydarpaşa or Bostancı districts. It was where state-owned sheep are raised by the incumbent *bostancıbaşı*. Here, from time to time, the *bostancıbaşı* gives a feast in honor of the sultan on the occasion of the sheep counting.

58 "Cedid Ağa bahçesinde darüssaâde ağa kullarının müceddeden binâ eylediği kasra teşrif ve fasl ile eğlenüp." 11 Zilkade 1159 (November 25, 1746). Özcan, "Kadı Ömer," 124.

59 As a contemporary source, chronicler İzzî Efendi also confirms the musical performances of the sultan that took place at the palace of the grand vizier on October 1, 1745, and January 13, 1747. İzzî Efendi, *İzzî Tarihi*, 125, 336.

60 In the *rûznâmes*, when the palaces of grand viziers are mentioned in the context of Mahmud I's musical entertainments, those who were in this seat at those times (in other words, the grand viziers whose palaces Mahmud I had visited) are probably as following: Nişancı Hacı Ahmed Pasha (d. 1753), Hekimoğlu Ali Pasha (d. 1757), Seyyid Hasan Pasha (d. 1748), and Boynueğri Seyyid Abdullah Pasha (d. 1761).

61 Artan, "Contemplation," 29.

62 "Gülşen-âbâd nâm yalıya mürür ve etrâf u eknâfi temâşâ ve andan yek-digere mûsil tarîk-i fevkânî nihâyetinden veled-i merhûm Genç Mehmed Paşa Yalısı dahî seyrân ve selâmlığında vâki kasr-ı kebîrde bir mikdâr istirâhat hâlinde Çiçekçi Sâlih Efendi nâm pîr-i rûşen-zamir tabla ile zerrîn arz itmegin emr-i şerifleriyle huzûr-ı hümâyûnlarına duhûle murahhas ve sukûfephâ-yı mezbûre esâmî ve nevâdirinden bazı meretebe suâl ve cevâbî mûteâkib mezbûrun fenn-i şukûfelerinden gayri ilm-i mûsikiden behre ve haberi olduğu samiazer[?]-i âlileri olmağla ruhsat-ı âğâze ile itmâm-ı faslî tamâmdan sonra hediye-i şükûfe-i zerrîn-i pîr atâyâ-yı zerrîn-i padişâh-ı âlem-gîr ile hüsn-i [sic] mukâbele si-yâkında yine Gülşen-âbâd'a avdet." 15 Şaban 1143 (February 23, 1731). Çınar, "Patrona Halil," 34. In the 1731 *rûznâme*, "Genç Mehmed Pasha Yalısı" is written (Ibid., 34), rather than "Kasr-ı Mehmed Pasha." It is quite possible that these two venues are the same.

63 One of these references are worth mentioning in terms of revealing the location of this place, the title of İshak Agha and musical performances there: "Hünkar İskelesi olmağla marûf mahalle karîb sahil-sarây-ı gümrükçüye şeref-bahş ve badehü edâ-yı zuhr esbe süvâr ve İshak Ağa'nın hânesinde vâki kasr-ı mürtefi'a teşrif ve gilmanân-ı Enderûn'a ruhsat-dâd-ı bâziçe-i tomak ve istimâ-i hânendegân ve sâzendeğân-ı Enderûn ile evkât-güzâr ve badehü edâ-yı asr tenâvül-i taam ve İshak Ağa'nın çukadarı Türkîmânî [sic] Türkî âğâze idüb." 24 Rabiulahir 1155 (28 June 1742). Oral, "Kadı Ömer," 119.

176 By extending the scope beyond the Bosphorus, Hamadeh explains this phenomenon with the rise of Damad İbrahim in 1718, where the establishment of new suburban palace gardens marked a shift in palace patronage. It was extended beyond the sultan himself to include various members of the ruling entourage, such as grand viziers, *kethüdas*, grand vizierial deputies, grand admirals, military commanders, high-ranking bureaucrats, palace officials, courtiers, and even imperial princesses and queen mothers. This flourishing patronage spread to previously unexplored waterfront suburbs, from Kağıthane on the Golden Horn to Tophane on the edge of the Bosphorus, downstream to distant Yeniköy, across the canal to Beykoz, and as far as the Üsküdar peninsula.<sup>64</sup> In short, this picture shows that the musical activity carried by the sultan and his retinue from Rumelia to the Asian shores of the Bosphorus reached elite households and the patronage of the arts and artists was no longer the monopoly of the sultan,<sup>65</sup> but that high-ranking bureaucrats could also become patrons.

In confirmation of Hamadeh's argument, Rhoads Murphey described a period that began with the reign of Ahmed III in 1718 and lasted, with some interruptions, until the outbreak of wars with Russia in 1768 as "Pax Ottomanica"—a period of approximately fifty years, including the twenty-four-year reign of Mahmud I. This era was characterized by a more relaxed domestic atmosphere and the emergence of new cultural expressions, closely linked to the growth of a prosperous bourgeoisie capable of adopting a semi-imperial lifestyle.<sup>66</sup> The expansion of the middle class and increasing urbanization led to the breaking of the sultan and his family's monopoly on artistic, cultural, and architectural patronage and demonstrated a widening base of support for artistic endeavors, as evidenced by the fact that the scope of musical entertainment extended beyond the sultan's palace to elite households, as can be seen in the example of our source.

## Conclusion

Wherever people can gather, it is plausible to assume that there will be music as a source of pleasure. In the Ottoman context, we already knew that music—in different functions and forms—was performed in places where people gathered, such as coffee houses, public baths, mosques, Sufi lodges, gardens, houses, mansions, and no doubt, the palace itself. This study does not claim to be innovative in this respect. However, it may not always be possible to know these venues in enough detail to be able to identify and visualize them geographically.

In addition to the primary focus of this research—to assess the potential of both the *rûznâme* genre as a whole and specifically the *rûznâmes* of Mahmud I as valuable sources in the writing the Ottoman music history, and its contribution to the broader narrative of Ottoman musical heritage—Mahmud I's *rûznâmes* are useful sources in pinpointing these locations within the city and offer a comprehensive and intricate narrative by shedding light on where, for what reasons, and sometimes by whom music was performed during that era.

Regarding the venues of the musical performances, to briefly summarize, it can be said that Mahmud I's music performances took place at a variety of different venues. This variation demonstrates how mobile Mahmud I was in contrast to his predecessor, Ahmed III. While Ahmed III, who was reputed for his thalassophobia, wanted to move away from Topkapı Palace, he first preferred the Tersâne and Karaağaç Gardens on the shores of the Golden Horn, as well as Sadâbâd, which was a secluded place far from the coast.<sup>67</sup> While the Topkapı Palace and the Golden Horn retained their significance, it is evident that the Bosphorus emerged as a vibrant hub of entertainment during Mahmud I's reign. Although the newly constructed Mahbûbiye in Topkapı and the recently restored Sadâbâd, symbolically associated with the reign of Ahmed III, are frequently mentioned, there are also numerous references to Göksu and

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64 Hamadeh, "City's Pleasure," 25.

65 Artan, "I. Mahmud," 131.

66 Rhoads Murphey, "Westernisation in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire: How Far, How Fast?," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 23 (1999): 125. For consumption patterns and economic life in the Ottoman Empire sixteenth century onwards, refer to Donald Quataert, ed., *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550–1922: An Introduction* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000).

67 Artan, "I. Mahmud," 106.

Neşâtâbâd, located on the Asian and Rumelian shores of the Bosphorus. This shift can be attributed to the increasing settlement and development on both shores of the Bosphorus during the eighteenth century, which attracted both the Ottoman dynasty and affluent *İstanbul* seeking an escape from the problems of the city. While visits to the shores of the Bosphorus had been relatively rare before in the *rûznâmes*, there was a marked increase in 1741 and 1742.

Just following the everyday footsteps of a single individual, this source reveals that music in the first half of the eighteenth century was not something performed in a few main centers but had a very natural spread in various corners of the city. Behar's latest book argues that the proliferation of music venues in the eighteenth century had two important consequences: first, music became more visible to the public, and second, there was a growing demand for new music and performers to meet the expanding and diversifying needs of audiences.<sup>68</sup> While this argument sounds quite plausible, this phenomenon appears to be twofold: just as the proliferation of music venues had affected the visibility of music in society, and stimulated the need for new music and musicians; similarly, the increasing visibility of music and the growing demand for new music and performers must have directly led to an increased need for new performance places. The places mentioned here, however, must be seen as just a small part of this proliferation, which was reflected in the ruling elite.

Perhaps the most striking and characteristic manifestation of this spread and proliferation can be seen in the example of "floating boats" as an unconventional music performance place. To the best of current knowledge, the idea of singers (sometimes accompanied by mutes and/or dwarfs)<sup>69</sup> gathering on a boat in front of the sultan's mansion or palace, and performing for their patron and his family at the time of the full moon—mentioned above—first appeared during the reign of Mahmud I, as we learn from the *rûznâmes*.<sup>70</sup> These performances (as well as some others), which took place in the open air, may have reached the ears of the inhabitants of the nearby Bosphorus, prompting them to attend, whether as invited and active participants or not. This picture of relatively larger-scale music performances, both in terms of audience and the scale of organization, raises the question of whether the well-known character of Ottoman music as "chamber music"—that is, a performance by a maximum of ten to twelve performers in a room-sized venue (it could also be open air) for a small number of listeners<sup>71</sup>—may have expanded to some degree during this period.

Apart from the main focus of this study, the venues of music performance, the *rûznâmes* are also capable of providing detailed information on various aspects of music, such as what kind of music the sultan listened to, what instruments and musicians were present at these gatherings, or what was the sultan's attitude towards these musicians and their performances. Although the references to music are often articulated in general terms such as "he [the sultan] spent time with music and enjoyed himself"<sup>72</sup> without giving further details, there are occasional cases where specific details of the music performances can be gleaned from the *rûznâmes* of Mahmud I, such as the fact that *türki/türkü/türkmânî türkü* is the only genre (apart from some religious genres) that is clearly mentioned in the *rûznâmes* that Mahmud I listened to, and many non-Muslim musicians, including still well-known ones such as Şive-lioğlu, Corci, and Zaharya, were able to perform for the sultan on an almost equal footing with their Muslim counterparts (usually together), or the Mevlevi dervishes were invited to Topkapı Palace to perform their ritual ceremony (*semâ*). Although these are beyond the limited scope of this study and deserve a much larger one, it is worth looking more closely at other information about music performance which may help us to develop a different view of certain—sometimes stereotypical and false—assumptions about the practice and culture of Ottoman music.<sup>73</sup>

68 Behar, *Kadîm*, 240.

69 "Göksu'ya şeref-bahş-ı iclâl . . . serhengân [ve] cüceyân zevraka süvâr ve pîşgâh-ı kasrda fasl-ı sâz badehû nisâr-ı zer olunub." 2 Cemazeyilevvel 1154 (August 15, 1741). Oral, "Kadı Ömer," 64.

70 Artan, "Contemplation," 31; Artan, "1. Mahmud," 125.

71 Behar, *Osmanlı/Türk*, 43–66.

72 Some of these expressions: *fasl-ı mûsikî ile emrâr-ı vakt, bir iki saz ile ârâm, musiki fasıllarıyle eğlenilüp, fasl ve âğâze ile evkat-güzâr, hânendeğân ve sâzendeğân ile emrâr-ı vakt olunup, bazı saz ve âğâze ile eğlenilüp, istima-ı saz ve bazı fasl ile eğlenilüp.*

73 For my master's thesis, in which the entire study is devoted to the question "What we can learn from the *rûznâmes* of Mahmud I?," see Ünal, "Tunes from a Sultan's Diary."



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