Araştırma Makalesi/Research Article

An Exile Memoir by Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz Efendi and Self-Narrative Elements in His Works

Karaçelebizade Abdülaziz Efendi'nin Eserlerinde Ben Anlatıları

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Öz

Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz Efendi (1592-1658), on yedinci yüzyılda yaşamış bir Osmanlı alimi, müverrihi, şairi ve şeyhülislâmıdır. Kariyerini ilmiye makamlarında geçirmiş olsa da, günümüz akademisyenleri tarafından daha ziyade tarih eserleri ile tanınır. Bunların en kayda değerlerinden *Zeyl-i Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr*, on yedinci yüzyıl Osmanlı tarihi hakkında en önemli birincil kaynaklardan birisidir. Ancak şimdiye kadar bu kaynağın kullanımı, olay silsilelerinin yeniden inşasıyla sınırlı kalmıştır. Büsbütün bir ben anlatısı sayılamayacak olsa da, *Zeyl-i Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr*, birinci tekil şahıs kullanılarak yazılmış duygusal pasajlar içerir. Bu eserin başka bir kayda değer özelliği

de, Osmanlı tarihinde intihar düşüncesinin açıkça dile getirildiği muhtemelen en erken eser olmasıdır.

Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz Efendi'nin akademik olarak daha az ilgi çekmiş eserleri de bulunur. Bunlardan biri, 1634-6 yılları arasındaki Kıbrıs sürgününü anlattığı *Gülşen-i Niyâz*'dır. Görece sade bir Osmanlı Türkçesi ile yazılmış bu manzum eser, Karaçelebizâde'nin Kıbrıs'tan sürgün dönüşünde tamamlanmıştır ve hem padişaha ve Allah'a bir yakarış, hem de bir anı niteliği taşır. On yedinci yüzyılda Osmanlı Devleti'nde yazılmış ender sürgün anılarından bir tanesidir.

Bu makale, Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz Efendi'nin *Gülşen-i Niyâz* ve *Zeyl-i Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr*'ını merkeze alarak modernite öncesi Osmanlı topraklarında ben anlatıları alanına bir akademik katkıda bulunmayı amaçlar. Makale, Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz Efendi'nin *Gülşen-i Niyâz* ve *Zeyl-i Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr*'ını, sadece hayatının olay örgülerini inşa etmek için bir bilgi deposu olarak görmez, aynı zamanda bu eserlere on yedinci yüzyılda yaşamış sürgündeki bir Osmanlı aliminin hâlet-i ruhiyesine ve daha geniş açıdan Osmanlı mantalitelerine ve kültürel tarihine bir pencere olarak yaklaşır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz Efendi, Gülşen-i Niyâz, anı, intihar, ben-anlatısı, sürgün

Abstract

Karaçelebizade Abdülaziz Efendi (1592-1658) was a seventeenth-century Ottoman scholar, historian, poet and grand mufti. Having spent most of his career in religious-judiciary posts, he is nonetheless best known to modern academics for his historical writings. Most notably, his chronicle *Zeyl-i Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr* (*Addendum to the Garden of the Righteous*) is one of the most important primary sources on seventeenth-century Ottoman history. However, so far, the use of this historical source has been limited to using it for historical reconstruction. While not an ego-document in its own right, *Zeyl-i Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr* includes passages that convey emotional self-expression in first-person language. Notably, it also includes possibly the earliest explicit mention of suicidal ideation in Ottoman history.

Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz Efendi also has other writings that have attracted less scholarly attention. One such text is *Gülşen-i Niyâz* (*The Rose Garden of Pleas*), narrating his exile in Cyprus between the years 1634-6. Written in verse in a relatively plain Ottoman Turkish and completed after his return from Cyprus, this text can be characterized both as a personal plea to the ruler and to God, and as a personal memoir. It is one of the few exile memoirs in the seventeenth-century Ottoman Empire.

Focusing on Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz Efendi's *The Rose Garden of Pleas* and *Addendum to the Garden of the Righteous*, this article aims to contribute to the field of self-narratives in the premodern Ottoman lands. It approaches Karaçelebizade Abdülaziz Efendi's *The Rose Garden of Pleas* and *Addendum to the Garden of the Righteous* not just as a repository of facts to reconstruct his career, but also as a window into the inner psychological state of a seventeenth-century Ottoman scholar in exile, and a window into Ottoman mentalities and cultural history at large.

Keywords

Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz Efendi, The Rose Garden of Pleas, memoir, suicide, self-narrative, exile

The Ottoman Empire is well-known among historians of early modern Islamic states for having left behind an immense body of archival sources. Whereas historians of other Islamic states have to make do with a limited amount of archival sources and rely more heavily on chronicles and narratives instead, the Ottoman bureaucracy left behind a treasure trove of documents, from tax rolls to financial records and from court registers to a vast amount of bureaucratic correspondence. In this aspect, Ottoman historians are very fortunate compared to their colleagues who specialize in different states and different regions. One type of document that has been until recently understudied in Ottoman lands compared to Western Europe, though, are ego-documents, or documents written in the first person for the purpose of self-expression. Many such texts that were either undiscovered or previously not given much scholarly attention are now being discovered and published.[1] Karaçelebizâde's exile memoir *Gülşen-i Niyâz* (*The Rose*

1 See, for example, Ralf Elger and Yavuz Köse, eds., *Many Ways of Speaking about the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-documents in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish (14th-20th Century)* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010); Selim Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü: Sadreddinzâde Telhisî Mustafa Efendi Günlüğü (1711-1735) Üstüne Bir İnceleme* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2013); Semra Çörekçi, "A Methodological Approach to Early Modern Self-Narratives: Representation of the Self In Ottoman Context (1720s-1820s)" (PhD diss., Istanbul Medeniyet University, 2022). There have also been two conferences convened about Ottoman ego documents in 2020 and 2022, both in Istanbul Medeniyet University, with the third conference scheduled for May 2024 in Skopje. The research group leading this project, led by Selim Karahasanoğlu, has started publishing a biannual journal focused on Ottoman ego documents, *Ceride: Journal of Ego-Document Studies*, in Sum-

Garden of Pleas) is one such text that so far has flown under the radar of historians.

One of the pioneers in the study of Ottoman first person narratives was Cemal Kafadar, who focused on *Sohbetname* (*Book of Companionship*), a diary of a certain Seyyid Hasan (1620-1688), a Sufi dervish and a preacher with a relatively modest career in Istanbul.[2] The diary is dated to the years 1661-5.[3] Seyyid Hasan's diary, however, is notable for omitting what one would ordinarily expect a diary to include: it includes very little in the way of intimate thoughts and comments, soul-searching, emotive content, personal opinions, or critical commentary about broader events. Even though Seyyid Hasan was a Sufi in the Halveti-Sünbüli order who eventually rose to be the sheikh of a convent in the Karamustafapaşa district of Istanbul, the diary also omits his mystical experiences or any details about life in a Sufi order. The diary is instead, as its name denotes, a "log of companionship,"[4] a rather dry list of social gatherings the author was involved in, as well as other mundane aspects of his life such as his food and his sleep. Commenting on Seyyid Hasan's choice of topics as well as his writing style, Kafadar comments:

> His was an extremely well-defined, relatively unproblematic world where inherited social and mental attitudes, as well as institutionalized, socially integrated, financially secure convent-life made possible a slow-paced, non-antagonistic existence which was not conductive to the development of a confessional approach to selfhood.[5]

mer 2023. For Karahasanoğlu's overview of the field in 2021, see Selim Karahasanoğlu, "Ottoman Ego-Documents: State of the Art," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, no. 53 (2021): 301-8. For a report summarizing the findings of the latest Ottoman ego documents conference in 2022, see Semra Çörekçi, "Report on the Symposium "Ottoman Ego-Documents": Towards an Inventory of Ottoman Ego-Documents," *Ceride* 1, no. 1 (July 2023): 183-98.

2 Cemal Kafadar, "Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature," *Studia Islamica*, no. 69 (1989): 121-50. For the full text of this diary, see Aykut Can, "Seyyid Hasan Sohbetname I. Cilt (1071-1072/1660-1661)" (Master's thesis, Marmara University, 2015) and Ayşe Akkılık, "Seyyid Hasan'ın Günlüğü, II. Cilt (H.1073-1075/M.1662-1664), (İnceleme-Metin)" (Master's thesis, Marmara University, 2019). For more recent work about the diary, see Fatma Deniz, "The Use of Space by Sufis in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul in Light of Seyyid Hasan's Diary, The Sohbetnâme" (Master's thesis, Central European University, 2018); Tunahan Durmaz, "Family, Companions, and Death: Seyyid Hasan Nûrî Efendi's Microcosm" (Master's thesis, Sabanci University, 2019); Gülşen Yakar, "Individual and Community, Public and Private: The Case of 17th Century Istanbulite Dervish and His Diary" (Master's thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2019).

3 Kafadar, "Self and Others," 124.

4 Kafadar, "Self and Others," 141.

5 Kafadar, "Self and Others," 146.

Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz Efendi (1592-1658) was a contemporary of Seyyid Hasan, and indeed, it is possible that the two might have brushed past each other in the streets of Istanbul, prayed in the same mosques, listened to each other's sermons, or directly known each other from the polite and learned circles of the city. In terms of his personal writing, however, Karaçelebizâde's exile memoir *The Rose Garden of Pleas*, about his exile to Cyprus in the years 1634-6, is everything Seyyid Hasan's diary was not. In contrast to the dry, non-emotional tone of Seyyid Hasan, Karaçelebizâde's *The Rose Garden of Pleas* is written in a very emotive tone, and is rife with anxiety, self-doubt and pessimism. In contrast to the "extremely well-defined, relatively unproblematic world" of Seyyid Hasan, Karaçelebizâde writes of his uncertainty of his future, and of rivalry, enemies and intrigue. In contrast to Seyyid Hasan's financial security, Karaçelebizâde writes of a high-stakes, cutthroat world of competition around offices, where careers are made and unmade rapidly. For Karaçelebizâde, career security is built on sand and even security of life is not always a given.

The drastic difference between the two ego documents, written only three decades within each other, by two men both in the religious bureaucracy (*'ilmiye*) class, can possibly partly be attributed to the different temperaments of their authors. However, the major difference is surely in the different career paths, and thus in the different social environments, of the two authors. To quote a recent study of emotions in the Ottoman Empire, "emotions were not understood as belonging to the inner space of humans and requiring self-reflection to be expressed, but rather as something always expressed through their relationships and practices".[6] Therefore, it is not surprising that a more competitive social environment would engender both more feelings of anxiety, self-doubt and rivalry, as well as more explicit expressions of these feelings.[7] Indeed, following a career as a Sufi

6 Nil Tekgül, *Emotions in the Ottoman Empire: Politics, Society, and Family in the Early Modern Era* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023), 24.

7 Tekgül notes that "expressions of emotions in [Ottoman ego documents] are almost non-existent, and the absence or rarity of emotions is still puzzling for Ottoman historians." Tekgül, *Emotions*, 38-9. It is worth noting that the only example of emotive content Tekgül brings up, the diary of a scholar named Zaifi who was employed in Ottoman religious bureaucracy, has the overarching themes of "a sense of distress about his career and envy and jealousy about his peers in the strictly hierarchical path of learning", hence showing the importance of the social environment in the generation and expression of such emotions. Tekgül, *Emotions*, 40. The similarity between Zaifi's and Karaçelebizâde's environments and expressed emotions is noteworthy. For another example, also see Michael Douglas Sheridan, "'I Curse No One Without Cause': Identity, Power, Rivalry and Invective in the Early 17th-Century Ottoman Court" (PhD diss., Bilkent University, 2018).

in a convent would be a more modest, but also a much more stable path than aiming to rise to the top of the clergy hierarchy, to posts such as the judge of Istanbul, the military-judge (*kazasker*) of Rumelia, and the chief mufti (*şeyhülislâm*). Karaçelebizâde pursued, and indeed succeeded at, achieving these ranks–but only for a short, fleeting time, and at the cost of security, stability, and evidently, peace of mind.

To summarize Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz's career, he was born into a family of scholars and judges going back at least four generations, serving in the higher echelons of the Ottoman religious hierarchy. His father and grandfather reached the rank of the judge of Istanbul, one of the highest ranks one could achieve. His family also amassed a great amount of wealth and properties in Istanbul and Bursa. Born in 1592, Karaçelebizâde would end up having a more successful, but also more turbulent, career than that of his ancestors. He married one of the granddaughters of Hoca Sadeddin Efendi (d. 1599), an advisor to Murad III (r. 1574-95) and an eventual chief mufti. He was a student of another chief mufti, Sunullah Efendi (d. 1612). Early in his career, he taught in various medreses in Istanbul, Eyüp, Bursa and Edirne. He was involved in the Fatih Mosque uprising in 1623, for which he was demoted and exiled to Bursa. He served in various judgeships between 1624-1634, moving up from the provincial town of Yenişehir, to Mecca, to Edirne, and then to Istanbul. In 1634 he was exiled to Cyprus for setting a price ceiling (*narh*) that was too low for ghee, leading to a ghee shortage in the capital as ghee sellers opted to sell their produce in the black market–possibly to European traders–instead of selling at low official prices. It was this exile that led him to write *The Rose Garden of Pleas*, the exile memoir that this paper primarily focuses on. He was allowed to return in 1636, but was unemployed for four years until Murad IV's death in 1640, and remained on his family property in Istanbul, writing a variety of historical and religious works. His career afterwards was even more turbulent: he was involved in the palace coup that overthrew İbrahim (r. 1640-8) and enthroned Mehmed IV (r. 1648-87) in 1648, being the person to personally help the young sultan to sit on the throne. He was a close confidant of the young ruler Mehmed IV, and an ally of his mother Turhan Sultan (d. 1683), but a bitter rival of his influential grandmother, Kösem Sultan (d. 1651). His machinations in the palace gained him the title (*pâye*) of chief mufti in 1649, becoming the first person to gain the title of chief mufti before actu-

ally being employed in that post.[8] He went on to actually become the chief mufti in 1651, reaching his career aspiration. Unfortunately, he would enjoy his position for only about four months. In the same year, he was involved in yet another uprising by the artisans of Istanbul, the reverberations of which resulted in the murder of Kösem Sultan in the palace. He was exiled for the third and final time to the Aegean island of Chios in 1651 because of his leadership in this revolt, a charge he emphatically denied in his historical works, as we will see later. In 1652, because of Venetian naval attacks in the Aegean, he was allowed to move to Bursa to his family property. In the final years of his life, he spent the wealth he amassed by constructing a water infrastructure and ornate fountains in Bursa. He also wrote an Ottoman chronicle detailing events that he personally witnessed, *Zeyl-i Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr* (*Addendum to the Garden of the Righteous*), which this paper will also utilize. He died in Bursa in 1658.[9] I would like to emphasize his tumultuous career as well as his networks and many connections, because it is relevant to interpreting his memoir as an ego document.

The Rose Garden of Pleas, Karaçelebizâde's exile memoir from Cyprus from the years 1634-6, was written in rhyming couplets, in the *mesnevi* poetry format. Excluding duplicate entries, there are fifteen extant copies in the Presidency of Türkiye Manuscripts Institution (Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı) database that I have been able to locate,[10] indicating that it was a popular text. The length of the text is about 1,800 couplets, although there is variation between copies and there are manuscripts where

8 The practice of receiving a title (*pâye*) of a post, before actually being appointed to that post, was common for regular judgeships (*kadı*) from the late sixteenth century onwards, as the number of candidates exceeded the number of vacant judgeships in the empire. However, the highest position in the religious bureaucracy, the position of the chief mufti, was generally left exempt from this common practice. For the position of the chief mufti, this only happened twice during the entire history of the Ottoman Empire: for Karaçelebizâde in 1649, and for Feyzullah Efendi's (d. 1703) son Fethullah Efendi (d. 1703) in 1702. Both of these occurrences demonstrate exceptional cases of patronage, in Karaçelebizâde's case by Sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1648-87), and in Fethullah Efendi's case, his father Feyzullah Efendi (who was the chief mufti at the time, and in effect attempted to appoint his son as his successor). See Michael Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics and the Ulema Household* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 92; Fahri Unan, "Pâye," in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, accessed on 19 January, 2024, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/paye--rutbe; and Mehmet İpşirli, "Şeyhülislâm," in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, accessed on January 19, 2024, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/seyhulislam.

9 On Karaçelebizâde's family and career, see Ali İhsan Karataş, *Şeyhülislâm Karaçelebizâde Abdülaziz Efendi (Hayatı-Eserleri-Vakıfları)* (Bursa: Bursa Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2015), 13-74 and Franz Babinger, "Ḳara-Čelebi-Zāde," in *Encyclopedia of Islam, First Edition*, accessed on 31 July, 2023, https://doi.org/10.1163/2214-871X_ei1_SIM_3912.

10 None of the copies are autograph copies. For this paper, I utilized an undated manuscript from Süleymaniye Library, Mihrişah Sultan Collection, no. 252, along with the reconstruction of Bindal Arslan.

certain sections are missing or abridged. Some of the manuscripts have poetry appended to the main body of the memoir; where relevant, these poems will also be analyzed.[11] There are two Turkish master's theses that attempt to reconstruct the text.[12] It is also used and cited, without a full reconstruction, in a study about *sergüzeştname*s, or poetry in narrative form with autobiographical elements.[13] Other than these three studies, it does not seem to have attracted any scholarly attention, and I have not seen it utilized or analyzed anywhere else, with the exception of concise entries in biographies of Karaçelebizâde that list his works.

The text itself opens up with a praise of Allah, of the Quran, and of Prophet Muhammad. It then explains the reason for Karaçelebizâde's exile in vague terms, as him being the target of intrigue and schemes by his rivals. Karaçelebizâde, on his end, explains how he was driven to do evil in response to their schemes:

> My ancient enemies found me unguarded
> And the backbiters were in unison with them
> They opened the gates of duplicity and subterfuge
> They set up their traps and sowed their seeds
> (…)
> Committing all sorts of duplicities,
> In accord they hunted me down
> Two strong enemies, against helpless me
> Like bandits they led me astray
> (…)
> I gave in to my carnal passions,
> And took the road of mischief.
> (…)
> The devil was the teacher of all duplicity
> But even he admired my subtle plans![14]

11 Karaçelebizâde's poetry has been compiled by Sacide Erdoğan, "Ḳara Çelebi-Zāde 'Abdü'l-'azīz Dīvānçesi (İnceleme-Metin-Çeviri)" (Master's thesis, Marmara University, 2020).

12 Fatma Bindal Arslan, "Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülazîz Gülşen-i Niyâz (Tenkidli Metin-İnceleme)" (Master's thesis, Atatürk University, 1996) and Abdullah Begeç, "Kara Çelebi-zade Abdülaziz Efendi'nin Gülşen-i Niyaz'ı (İnceleme-Metin)" (Master's thesis, İnönü University, 2001).

13 Halûk Gökalp, *Eski Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Sergüzeşt-nâmeler* (Istanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2009).

14 "*Beni gâfil bulub 'adû-yı kadîm / Hemzebân oldı aña nefs-i la'îm / Hiyel ü mekr bâbını açdı / Dâmlar kurdı dâneler saçdı (…) Eyleyüb nice gûne hîle vü kayd / İttifâk ile itdiler beni sayd / Yoldan azdırdı-*

The text then alternates between bemoaning the sorrows of exile, praying to Allah for relief, imploring the sultan to forgive him, and Karaçelebizâde alternating between lamenting his own sinfulness, again in vague terms, and submitting to his fate and declaring the need for hope in Allah. One such section about the troubles of exile is as follows:

All I commit is disobedience
All I undertake are always mistakes
My prosperous household is in ruins
This poor one is overtaken by the sorrow of weariness
On one hand, the anguish of leaving my homeland
On the other, the troubles of emigrating my domicile
On one hand, the flames of estrangement from my children
On the other, my concern for my sorrowful mother
On one hand, separation from my beloveds and relatives
On the other, the terror of struggling for my life
On one hand, the hangover of the wine of dismissal
On the other, my ridicule among the people
On one hand, the dread of the might of the sea
On the other, fear of the power of my enemies.[15]

The sorrow of exile and a sense of isolation and melancholy is also attested in other poetry of Karaçelebizâde, appended to some of the manuscripts of *The Rose Garden of Pleas*:

Have mercy on me, oh God, for I am done for
Between the sorrow of exile and the passion of love for my homeland.[16]

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lar olub rehzen / Ben za'îfa iki kavî düşmen (...) Nefs-i emmâreye olub münkâd / İhtiyâr eyledüm tarîk-i fesâd (...) Hiyel-âmûz-ı küll iken şeytân / Oldı fikr-i dakîkime hayrân." Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 147-49.

15 *"Dâ'imâ ma'siyetdür eyledigüm / Hep hatâdur hemîşe işledigüm / Münhedim oldı hâne-i ikbâl / Kapladı ben garîbi gerd-i melâl / Bir yana ıztırâb-ı terk-i vatan / Bir yana derd-i hicret-i mesken / Bir yana hirkât-i gam-ı evlâd / Bir yana fikr-i mâder-i nâ-şâd / Bir yana firkat-i ehibbâ vü hᵛîş / Bir yana bîm-i cân ile teşvîş / Bir yana hayret-i humâr-ı 'azl / Bir yana halk-ı 'âlem itdüği hezl / Bir yana kahr-ı heybet-i deryâ / Bir yana havf-ı satvet-i a'dâ."* Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 173.

16 *"Teraḥḥum eyle İlāhī beni tamām ėtdi / Keş-ā-keş-i ġam-ı ġurbet hevā-yı ḥubb-ı vaṭan."* Erdoğan, "Divançesi," 125.

Midway through, there is also a clearly didactic section, where Karaçelebizâde addresses the reader and gives moral advice. The manuscript I utilized has sidenotes marking the moral theme of the couplets, which are written by the same hand that wrote the manuscript, implying a didactic purpose for the text. The themes are usually (but not always) a word or a noun phrase that is also repeated in the couplets. The themes can be both positive, things one must do; or negative, things one must avoid.

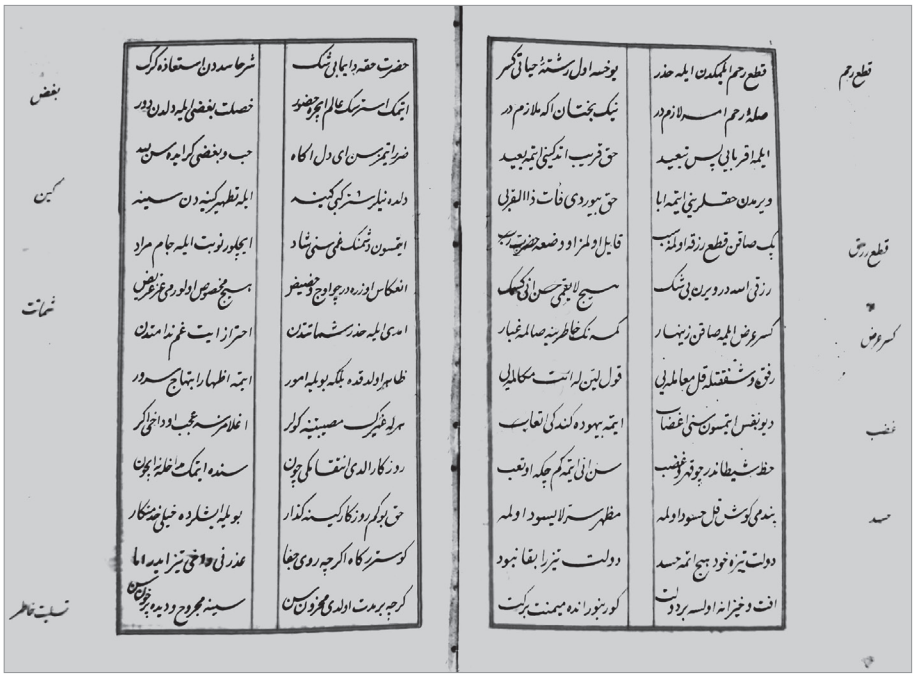

Image 1

Süleymaniye Library, Mihrişah Sultan collection, no. 252, page 24b-25a. The side notes, beginning from the top right corner, are *kat'-ı rahm* (obstructing mercy for someone), *kat'-ı rızk* (obstructing someone's livelihood, wealth), *kesr-i 'ırz* (attacking someone's honor), *gazab* (fury), *hased* (jealousy), *buğz* (enmity, holding a grudge), *kin* (hatred), *şemâtet* (being happy at someone's misfortune, schadenfreude), and *tesliyet-i hâtır* (placating someone else, keeping someone happy).

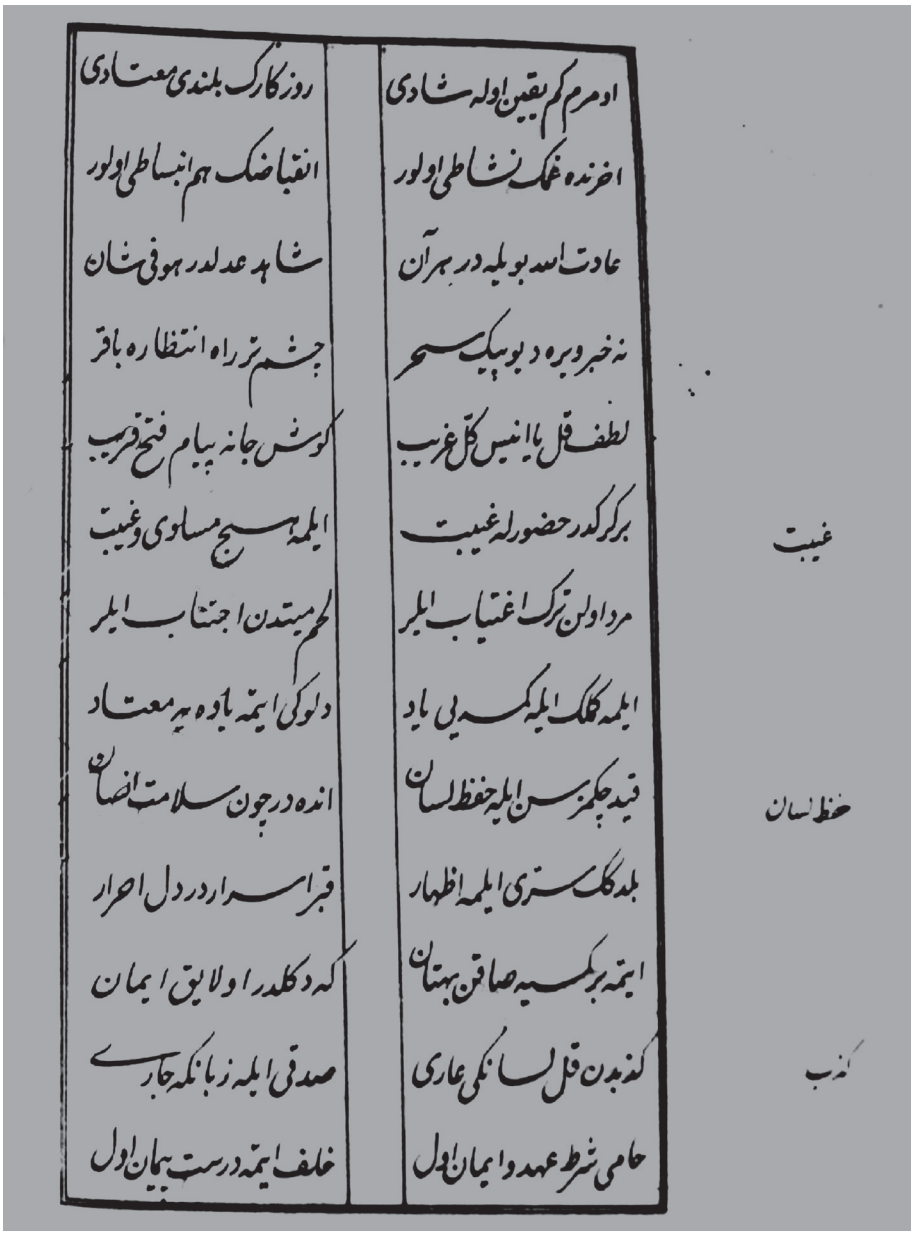

Image 2

Süleymaniye Library, Mihrişah Sultan collection, no. 252, page 25b. The sidenotes marking the didactic themes are *gıybet* (backbiting), *hıfz-ı lisân* (protecting one's tongue), and *kizb* (lying).

There are intermissions where Karaçelebizâde talks about Cyprus, where he praises the people of Cyprus for being pious and for having treated him well.[17] Early on in the text, some couplets also talk about the process of his exile, in ways we can corroborate from other sources. In one example, Karaçelebizâde says he received one dispatch after the other, and exhorts the reader to not ask what the original dispatch was.[18] Naima (d. 1716), the eighteenth-century chronicler, narrates that when Murad IV learned about the ghee shortage of Istanbul, he was outraged and ordered the execution of the judge responsible for this. Karaçelebizâde was loaded up a ship and was going to be thrown overboard and executed by drowning near the Prince Islands southeast of Istanbul. But at the last moment, one of Karaçelebizâde's patrons in the palace, Vezir Bayram Paşa (d. 1638), interceded with the sultan. Karaçelebizâde's punishment was changed to exile to Cyprus, and this second dispatch was received when the ship had already taken sail, *en route* to Karaçelebizâde's planned execution by drowning.[19] It is this dramatic incident that the text alludes to. Alluding to the same incident, Karaçelebizâde also writes that his exile was related to prices.[20] However, most of the text is about Karaçelebizâde's internal state, thoughts, and emotions, as well as his advice to the reader, rather than concrete details of his story. There is a final section at the end, where Karaçelebizâde says he received auspicious news, and praises the sultan for ending his exile.[21] It is probable that parts of the main body of the text were written while he was in exile, but the text was evidently finalized after he returned to Istanbul.

In the didactic sections, Karaçelebizâde emphasizes that one needs to avoid things like revenge, envy and wrath multiple times, which is a major theme of the text. Here are some sample couplets:

17 "*Kıbrısîler hod itdiler ifrât / Gösterüb ben fakîre neşât.*" Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 238.

18 "*Hatt-ı mensûh gelmedi 'amele / Nâsih ile 'amel olundı hele / Hatt-ı mensûhun aslını sorma / Sîneye bir zahm da sen urma*". Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 172.

19 Naima Mustafa Efendi, *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, vol. 2, ed. Mehmet İpşirli (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007), 788.

20 "*Oldu ma'rûz-ı dergeh-i 'âlî / Emr-i es'ârda var ihmâli*". Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 163.

21 Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 279-93.

Do not have any passion for revenge,
Cut the bonds of enmity with mercy.[22]
Listen to my advice, and do not be jealous:
Do not beget yourself your own discontent.[23]
Expunge the embroidery of pride from the tablet of your heart,
And always have modesty temper your soul.[24]
Do not be wrathful, even if they swear at you,
Kiss their hands, even if they beat you.[25]
My goal is not to achieve revenge,
But it is not a sin to narrate my condition.[26]

Later on, Karaçelebizâde laments his own sinfulness in self-doubt and shame, and calls for submission to Allah:

Oh God, I have no good deeds!
I am a covetous, miserable, bankrupt man.
Others bring forward their submission to you,
The gift of this lowly one is shame.
All my time is wasted for nothing,
My hours went by in disobedience.
If it were possible to recover what is gone,
I would expend the coin of my life to your path.[27]

Karaçelebizâde's stance towards worldly authority is somewhat ambiguous. Certain parts of the work appear like they completely disavow authority, and even sound like a criticism against submitting to worldly authority and the sultan:

22 "*Eyleme ahz-ı intikâma heves / 'Afv ile rişte-i husûmeti kes*." Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 217.

23 "*Pendümi gûş kıl hasûd olma / Mazhar-ı sırr-ı lâ yes'ûd olma*." Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 221.

24 "*Levh-i dilden gurûr nakşını sil / Nefse dâ'im tevâzu'ı hû kıl.*" Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 218.

25 "*Gazab itme söğerler ise dahi / Ellerin öp döğerler ise dahi.*" Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 210.

26 "*Garazum ahz-ı intikâm degül / Saña hâlüm dimek harâm degül*." Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 164.

27 "*Yâ İlâhî elümde yok 'amelüm / Müflis-i bî-nevâ-yı pür-emelüm / Gayrılar saña 'arz ider tâ'at / Bu hakîrüñ hediyyesi haclet / Oldı beyhûde cümle evkâtum / Ma'siyet üzre geçdi sâ'atum / Bezl iderdüm yoluña nakd-ı hayât / Mümkin olsa tedârik-i mâfât*". Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 194.

If the sultan willed, without hesitance
you would give away your life.
But you wouldn't give a poor man a piece of bread,
Unless he was dying of hunger.
God the Righteous is your Creator and your Provider,
Is servitude to anyone else proper, o idiot!
You wished for favors from others again and again,
I say this straight: your striving is lowly.[28]

However, Karaçelebizâde's writing is more multi-layered. Given Karaçelebizâde's statements quoted above, there seems to be a tension between renouncing the world as a pious man of religion, and asking for mercy and forgiveness from a worldly authority to be released from exile and to be appointed to high positions. Karaçelebizâde resorts to clever wordplay to reconcile the two. He makes use of intentional ambiguity to hint that he hopes for a pardon from the sultan, and shows that his criticisms are not as unequivocal and extreme as might seem at first glance. One rhetorical strategy Karaçelebizâde uses is praying to "the Lord" (*Hüdâ*) or to the "sultan" for forgiveness in the text. These terms can be used to refer to both God and the worldly sultan, and so, by leaving it ambiguous which one he is really referring to, Karaçelebizâde allows for one reading that would portray him praying only to Allah, and another that would ingratiate him to the worldly sultan as his loyal servant. As one example, Karaçelebizâde alternates using Allah's names ("the Honorable", "the Merciful") with the "sultan" in consecutive verses, and uses the legal bureaucratic terms for imperial decree (*fermân*) and verdict (*hükm*):

O the Honorable and the Merciful; my soul and my neck
submit to your sword and your decree (*fermân*).
Here is your sword, and here is my neck,
Whatever your verdict (*hükm*), my sultan, execute it.[29]

28 "*Bî-tereddüt virür idüñ cânı / Anda olsa rızâ-yı sultânî / Cu'dan virmeyince ammâ cân / Virmez idüñ fakîre bir kurı nân / Hâlik u Rezzâkuñ çü Hazret-i Hakk / Gayra kulluk revâ mı ey ahmak / Gayrdan ber dübâr-ı minnet idüñ / Râst söz bu ki dûn-himmet idüñ*". Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 182-3. It is also worth noting that even in a verse where he is saying servitude to the sultan is morally dubious, he nonetheless seems to be emphasizing how loyal he was to the sultan.

29 "*Gerden-i cânı ey Kerîm ü Rahîm / Tiğ-i fermâna itmişüm teslîm / Kılıcuñ işte işte gerdânum / Ne ise hükmüñ eyle sultânum*". Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 204.

Another example is ambiguity by omission. Karaçelebizâde says he explicitly disavows patronage and turns to Allah (or, by intentional omission of the addressee, possibly also the sultan) as his only protector:

Everybody turns somewhere for patronage
But you are the only protector![30]

One other way Karaçelebizâde utilizes ambiguity to plead to the sultan is by using the word *murâd*. *Murâd* is a word of Arabic origin meaning wish, desire, intention, aim or goal; it was also a common male name in Ottoman society among Muslims. More significantly, it was the name of the reigning sultan at the time, Murad IV (r. 1623-40). Therefore, by using the word *murâd* in the text, Karaçelebizâde can signal that he is pleading to the sultan without explicitly saying so, leaving it ambiguous whether the addressee is God or the sultan (or both).

He has the command, he may kill me if he wishes
He may now and then make me cry, now and then make me laugh
It is him who wipes away my tears,
And provides me my cures for my troubles.
(…)
The gate of God is the door of my aims (*murâd*)
I do not wish for beneficence from another door.[31]

To further moderate his criticism, Karaçelebizâde also says rulers are shadows of Allah, utilizing a common Ottoman trope:

Because *shah*s are shadows of the Master,
And their hearts are shining mirrors
All my sins appeared there,
Reflecting my condition and behaviors.[32]

30 "*Bir yere intisâb ider herkes / Sensin ancak anuñ penâhı pes.*" Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 307.

31 "*Emr onuñ ister ise öldürsün / Ağladub gâh gâhi güldürsün / Gözümüñ yaşın yine o siler / Derdüme hem devâ yine o kılar / (…) / Bâb-ı Hakkdur der-i* ***murâd*** *hemân / İstemem gayrı kapudan ihsân*". Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 166.

32 "*Şâhlar çünki zıll-i Mevlâdur / Kalbi âyine-i mücellâdur / Görinüb anda cümle evzârum / Mün'akis oldı vaz' u etvârum.*" Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 164.

Likewise in his poetry, he eventually explicitly reconciles the two meanings:

In my trial, I submit to the masterful Master,
And hold on to the coattails of the righteous sultan as an intermediary.[33]

Related to the theme of self-doubt and shame mentioned above, one important attribute of Karaçelebizâde's writings is that it contains some of the earliest mentions of suicidal ideation in Ottoman history. In *The Rose Garden of Pleas*, talking about his days of exile, Karaçelebizâde says:

At times I want to perish
And return to the bottom of the earth
Nobody shall find a trace of me
And nobody shall know my whereabouts[34]

Given that suicide was a taboo in Islam and not something that was talked about in contemporary texts, a man of religion writing about how he wanted to perish is noteworthy. It is not a trope that one expects to see in seventeenth-century texts. In fact, two decades later, in 1650s, Karaçelebizâde repeats the same sentiment during his third exile (1651-8). When narrating the chain of events that led to his third exile in his chronicle *Addendum to the Garden of the Righteous*, he claims he was forced to join the rebels (and did not voluntarily lead them, as he was accused) in a revolt that would end up in queen grandmother Kösem Sultan's (d. 1651) death, and asserts his innocence.[35] He writes about the shame of being accused with treason and how, if he did not fear the religious consequences, he would commit suicide:

33 "*Tevekkül eyledüm bu imtiḥānda Rabb-i erbāba / Tevessül destin urdum dāmen-i Sulṭān-ı ebrāra*". Erdoğan, "Divançesi," 136.

34 "*Vakt olur isterüm helâk olam / 'Âzim-i mülk-i zîr-i hâk olam / Bilmeye tâ nişânumı kimse / Bulmaya tâ mekânumı kimse*". Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz," 198.

35 Of course, whereas Karaçelebizâde asserts his innocence in the revolt, other contemporary chronicles portray him as one of the orchestrators of the revolt. See, for example, Naima, *Târih-i Na'îmâ* 3:1349-50.

> Because at the moment I am not exonerated from the blame of treason—God forbid!—against our majesty, the seal-bearer [of the legendary Persian king] Jem, the exalted Sultan, whose blessings and limitless beneficence engulfs us; I have an inner wound. As I am reminded of this, I scatter like leaves of misery in patience and silence. If I did not fear deserving the fury of the exalted Master, I would have attempted to kill myself.[36]

Karaçelebizâde repeats a very similar sentiment in two different texts, with the later sentiment being more emphatic than the former, explicitly saying he would have attempted to kill himself, compared to merely wanting to perish. The sentiments are written almost two decades apart, and both are related to his punishment of exile. These are also sentiments that a man of religion would not be expected to make. Therefore, it is possible to say that these sentiments reflect a genuine reaction to being shamed, dishonored and tainted by the punishment of exile. These are also virtually unprecedented statements in Ottoman history: before the social upheavals and anomie the nineteenth century brought, suicide is virtually unknown in the Ottoman Empire and unexplored in the historiography. The only two academic studies that have been prepared about suicide look at the second half of the seventeenth century.[37] Although it is possible that more studies

36 "*müstagrak-ı ni'met u ihsân-ı bî-pâyânı oldugumuz Sultân-ı Cem-nişân-ı 'âlî-şân hazretlerine hâşâ sümme hâşâ hıyânet töhmetinden ile'l-ân halâs olmadugumuz dâg-ı derûn ve mülâhaza olundukca perîşânî-dih-i evrâk-ı sabr u sükûn olup* ***mazhar-ı gazâb-ı hazret-i Rabb olmak havfı olmasa kendümi helâka kasd iderdüm***". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 93-4. He also mentions how, in trying to get away from the rebels that he was forced to lead, he decided to speed up intentionally in order to fall off his horse and lose consciousness, but he did not commit to this decision for fear of killing himself and facing the sin of committing suicide. "*Hazret-i Rabb-i Kadîr vâkıf-ı sırr-ı zamîrdir ki yolda giderken bi'd-defa'ât atdan düşüp gaşy ve bî-şu'ûrâne evzâ' ile ellerinden halâsa çâre-yab olmak kasdında şitâb eyledüm. Amma yine,* ***mebâdâ helâk olup kendümi katl itmek vebâline mübtelâ olmak havfından*** *nâçâr (...) tâbi'-i fermân-ı Hudâ-yı Mennân olup dâ'ire-i 'akl u şu'ûrdan dûr olduğum hâl-i nedâmet-mevfûrda maksad olan mekâna varıldı.*" Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 84.

37 About suicide in the Ottoman Empire prior to the nineteenth century, there is one academic presentation about suicide in court cases in Anatolia, and one article about suicide of slaves in Crimea. Zeynep Dörtok Abacı, "Kendi Kendini İhlâk ya da Katl-i Nefs: Pre-Modern Osmanlı Toplumunda İntihar Vakaları (1650-1700)" (lecture, 14th International Congress of Ottoman Social and Economic History (ICOSEH), Sofia, July 24-28, 2017); Fırat Yaşa, "Desperation, Hopelessness, and Suicide: An Initial Consideration of Self-Murder by Slaves in Seventeenth-Century Crimean Society," *Turkish Historical Review*, no. 9 (2018): 198-211. In his study of death in the Ottoman Empire, Edhem Eldem says that "*[t]here are very few references to suicide in Ottoman society. Certain isolated cases, such as the tradition that Bayezid I (Yıldırım, "the Thunderbolt") killed himself when he fell captive to Tamerlane, can be noted, but a wider-scoped research into suicide only becomes possible from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards*". Edhem Eldem, *Death in Istanbul: Death and its Rituals in Ottoman-Islamic Culture* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre, 2005), 210.

may uncover earlier cases as well, as of now, Karaçelebizâde's statements from the first half of the seventeenth century are so far the earliest explicit mentions of suicide in the Ottoman Empire.

Going back to *The Rose Garden of Pleas,* contrasting Karaçelebizâde's expressed ethical stances with how he actually writes about his rivals in his later writings (especially in his history chronicle *Addendum to the Garden of the Righteous*) provides us with an interesting conundrum. The contrast between his earlier and later writings is drastic, and this discrepancy can help us interpret his motives in writing *The Rose Garden of Pleas*. As the first example, Bahaî Efendi (d. 1654), Karaçelebizâde's main rival for the office of the chief mufti, had a fatwa that declared tobacco religiously permissible, which Karaçelebizâde was strongly opposed to. Bahaî's permissive attitude and tobacco use served as the excuse for Karaçelebizâde's personal attacks:

> Bahaî has passed out untimely from pleasure:
> They thought he was he was dead, so they buried him, what a shame!
> His residence became a lime pit,
> Wild dogs urinated on his grave.
> (…)
> Hamzevis and blaspheming pimps
> gathered to mourn after him.
> They cursed his drunkard soul,
> They swore at him, see what shit they were up to!
> What were those damned men up to?
> In his health, they were all praising him.
> Shedding tears and beating their chests on this date,
> Alas! The blasphemer mufti is dead, they said.[38]

But Bahaî was not the only person that caught the ire of Karaçelebizâde. Ebû Sa'îd Mehmed Efendi (d. 1662) was Karaçelebizâde's replace-

38 *"Kefledi nâgeh Bahâyî keyfden / Gömdüler öldi sanup pek kıydılar / Bir kireçhâne yeri oldı makarr / Kabrine itler köpekler sidiler (…) Geldiler bir yere mâtem tutmağa / Hamzavîler ile mülhid gidiler / La'net étdiler rahîkî cânına / Söğdüler görsen ne bohlar yediler / Ya nice ol küştenîler olmasun / Sağlığında cümlesi mer'îydiler / Yaş döküp sine dögüp târîhini / Gitdi mülhid müftî eyvâ dediler."* Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli (Tahlîl ve Metin)*, ed. Nevzat Kaya (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2003), 167.

ment as chief mufti after his third exile in 1651, and another one of his long-standing rivals. Therefore, it is unsurprising that whenever Karaçelebizâde mentioned Ebû Sa'îd, it was accompanied by a variety of personal attacks and name calling. Among the epithets Karaçelebizâde uses for Ebû Sa'îd are "hated by the masses" and "obstinate",[39] "impious and Zoroastrian in creed" and "stingy-natured",[40] "Ebû Sa'îd the brigand",[41] "rude bastard" and "despicable",[42] "the vile, lowly Ebû Sa'id the damned who is a so-called mufti",[43] "Ebû Sa'îd the catamite",[44] "bad-natured",[45] "deceitful",[46] and "Ebû Sa'îd the cruel".[47] Karaçelebizâde also attacked Ebû Sa'îd's pedigree: One of his ancestors was Hasan Can Çelebi (d. 1567), a companion of Selim I (r. 1512-20) and a Persian emigree.[48] Due to his Persian roots, Karaçelebizâde called him "ill-born", with "an accursed pedigree of Shiism and heresy", and that his father was a monk.[49] Karaçelebizâde also called him "Ebû Sa'îd the son of the public" (*ibn 'amm-i Ebû Sa'îd*)[50]—given that the "ibn" construction denotes the father in Arabic-style names, this is a playful, mischievous way to insult and defame someone's paternal pedigree. Naima, the eighteenth-century chronicler who utilized Karaçelebizâde's chronicle as a source, has noted the rivalry between Karaçelebizâde and Ebû Sa'îd, and the unusual hostility and slander of Karaçelebizâde against Ebû Sa'îd.[51]

39 "*menfûr-ı halk-ı âlem*", "*anîd*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 53.

40 "*bed-kiş ü bed-küniş*", "*Eş'ab-meniş*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 66.

41 "*Ebû Sa'îd-i şakî*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 97.

42 "'*utul-ı zenîm*", "*le'îm*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 99.

43 "*Müftî nâmına olan dûn u denî Ebû Sa'îd-i küştenî*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 113.

44 "*Ebû Sa'îd-i meb'ûn*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 114.

45 "*bed-ahlâk*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 124.

46 "*muhtî*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 194. This is a pun on "mufti", changing just one letter.

47 "*Ebû Sa'îd-i zalûm*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 275.

48 It is also worth noting that Karaçelebizâde married into the family of Hoca Sadeddin Efendi (d. 1599), who was the son of Hasan Can Çelebi. This also makes him a distant in-law of Ebû Sa'îd, who is the subject of his insults based on pedigree. Of course, very conveniently, Karaçelebizâde does not bring up his own relationship with Hasan Can Çelebi's family and his own distant familial relationship to Ebû Sa'îd.

49 "*bed-nijâd*", "*şecere-i mel'ûne-i rafz u ilhâdı*", "*Papasıdır papasıdır papası*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 203.

50 "*ibn 'amm-i Ebû Sa'îd*". Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 53.

51 Naima, *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 4:1686.

Not even his relatives were spared from Karaçelebizâde Abdülazîz's outrage. For example, he insisted that when his father died, his older brother Karaçelebizâde Mehmed expropriated the amount of inheritance he deserved, and he received only a small amount of the inheritance he was due to receive. He was very resentful against his brother, Karaçelebizâde Mehmed, and his nephew, Karaçelebizâde Mahmud, because of this.[52] His nephew Karaçelebizâde Mahmud was also appointed as his replacement as the judge of Istanbul when he was exiled to Cyprus, further compounding his ire. When his nephew died, he wrote a chronogram couplet, where the total numerical value of the letters in the last line equal the date of his death. This line is as follows:

Our pack donkey Mahmud died too soon![53]

To reiterate, this is how Karaçelebizâde writes about the death of his nephew. There are many more examples of his grudges, rivalries and ambition. For example, Naima narrates a humorous anecdote where, when there was going to be a meeting of statesmen (*dîvân*) in the presence of the sultan in 1649, Karaçelebizâde (who at this point had the title, but not yet the actual position, of the chief mufti) tried to eschew usual protocol and walk in after the grand vizier, in front of other viziers and all the clergy. He was chastised, shoved with a shoulder, and tossed behind by a certain Kenan Paşa, and the rest of viziers also pushed him behind, humiliating him in the presence of the entire Ottoman *dîvân* attendants.[54]

Going back to *The Rose Garden of Pleas*, how can such a juxtaposition be interpreted? On one hand, Karaçelebizâde was a man whose life was rife with rivalry, competition and intrigue. He was, by contemporary accounts as well, a vengeful, bitter and ambitious man. On the other hand, he also wrote about, and emphasized at length, the need to avoid the things he was embroiled in his whole life. There are two obvious interpretations: One, he wrote *The Rose Garden of Pleas* as a *mesnevi*, a genre that is supposed to be didactic. Two, his target audience was the sultan and high-ranked statesmen, and he was writing a plea to be forgiven and to be appointed back to

52 Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 161-2.

53 "*Hele tîz öldü bizim mal eşeği Mahmûd âh.*" Kara Çelebi-zâde Abdülaziz Efendi, *Ravzatü'l-Ebrâr Zeyli*, 161.

54 Naima, *Târih-i Na'îmâ*, 3:1246.

high-ranking positions. Therefore, he tried to portray himself as a virtuous and repentant person. Both of these are obviously correct, but seeing his writing as just utilitarian, that he wrote because he wanted something, while doubtlessly true, is too oversimplifying and mechanical. Approaching this text as an ego document, as self-expression, is another fruitful perspective to look at this text and the tensions it contains.

Clearly, there was a rift between ideal prescribed religious behavior, of values like temperance, kindness, generosity; and the reality of the higher echelons of the Ottoman religious bureaucracy, which was, as Karaçelebizâde's writings aptly demonstrate, rife with cutthroat competition and grudges and envy and intrigue. Karaçelebizâde would have been acutely and intensely aware of this conundrum, as would any seventeenth-century educated Ottoman reading this text. I would assert that it is this contradiction that was a key motivation for the writing of this text, and of its contemporary popularity, as attested by its many extant manuscript copies.

At this point, in order to portray the unusual and unique qualities of Karaçelebizâde's writing, I would like to compare this text with two other contemporary or near-contemporary exile texts from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I looked for similar texts called *sergüzeştnâme*s, or stories written in couplets in *mesnevi* format that have autobiographical elements; and *niyâznâme*s, which are pleas to a ruler or to high-ranking statesmen. My search resulted in two such texts. One was written by Karaçelebizâde's main rival, the aforementioned Bahaî Efendi, who was also exiled also to Cyprus a year before Karaçelebizâde, in 1633. His work is titled *Niyâznâme*, or *Book of Pleas*. The other one is titled *Arzuhâl-i Mahtûmî* (*The Petition of Mahtûmî*), written by a minor early eighteenth-century poet and an arms-bearer (*silahdar*) named Vâhid-i Mahtûmî, who was exiled to Raqqa in 1717, went on pilgrimage in 1720, moved to Larissa afterwards after his pleas to return to Istanbul were ignored, and died in 1732-3. Both of these texts were written as rhyming couplets, in the *mesnevi* format, just like Karaçelebizâde's *The Rose Garden of Pleas*. Although neither of these texts have attracted much scholarly attention beyond material for dissertations, they are available in the respective poetry compilations of the two authors.[55] The main difference is that these two texts are

55 Bahattin Kahraman, "Vahîd Mahtûmî: Hayatı, Eserleri, Edebî Kişiliği ve Eserlerinin Tenkidli Metni" (PhD diss., Selçuk University, 1995), 836-41; Muhbet Toprak, "Şeyhülislam Bahayi Divanı Şerhi" (Master's thesis, Pamukkale University, 2006), 124-203. Bahai also has a second text, *Mesnevî der-*

significantly shorter than *The Rose Garden of Pleas*: Bahaî's *Book of Pleas* consists of 238 couplets, and Mahtûmî's *Petition* consists of only 83, compared to around 1800 couplets of *The Rose Garden of Pleas*. Both of these texts are also relatively straightforward texts, praising the sultan and asking to be released from exile. They do not contain the long emotive content of the author, the open didacticism, or the autobiographical details that *The Rose Garden of Pleas* does.

To recap, *The Rose Garden of Pleas* seems to be a unique text, in that there does not seem to be any other extant texts from exile before the nineteenth century, with such long emotive content written in the first person language. Clearly, Karaçelebizâde did not just want to praise the sultan and ask for repentance, like two other similar texts (*The Petition of Mahtûmî* and Bahaî's *Book of Pleas*) did. Instead, he wanted to, and consciously chose to, write about himself and his emotions at length. He was also a person that was, again according to his contemporaries, out of contemporarily accepted bounds in his ambitiousness. It is hard to imagine an author writing eighteen hundred couplets of mostly emotive content, and bringing up envy and wrath and revenge in a completely unprompted manner, only to talk about how bad and wrong these feelings are, for no reason at all. Both Karaçelebizâde himself, and the contemporary reception of this text, would have been aware of this dissonance between his ideals and his reality.

If we consider this text a planned apologia, it is a very peculiar one, because the things Karaçelebizâde most emphatically disavows (revenge, jealousy, wrath) are emotions and internal states. With very few exceptions,[56] Karaçelebizâde does not attempt to disavow, explain or justify any observable actions. His focus is, instead, on emotional content. Therefore, it can be understood as a text that is concerned with moral purity more than anything else. But why would Karaçelebizâde have a preoccupation with moral purity? Unlike the relatively tranquil career and social environment of the sufi Seyyid Hasan, which this paper opened with, Karaçelebizâde's career

Midhat-ı Sultân Murâd, or *Mesnevi in Praise of Sultan Murad*, that is significantly shorter than *Book of Pleas* at 88 couplets. As a praise of Sultan Murad IV (r. 1623-40), it was also probably written during his exile, with the purpose of receiving a pardon from him. Likewise, another work of Mahtumî, a city thriller (*şehrengiz*) of Larissa titled *Lâlezâr* (*The Tulip Garden*) addressed to the grand admiral Mustafa Paşa (d. 1730), includes lines asserting his innocence and wanting to be released from exile. Toprak, "Bahayi Divanı," 90-123; Kahraman, "Vahîd Mahtûmî," 774-819.

56 In one passage, Karaçelebizâde says: "The jealous ones should not slander me/There was no appropriation of goods, God is witness." "*İftira itmesün baña hâsid/Olmadı bezl-i mâl Hakk şâhid*." Bindal Arslan, "Gülşen-i Niyâz", 155.

path and social environment was based on competition and intrigue. His unease with the morality of his actions and ambitions could have played a role in his tone of writing and choice of themes. And so, such a text can also be understood (and was probably contemporarily understood), not just in utilitarian terms (he wrote this text to obtain a pardon from the sultan, or to be appointed to high positions), but as an attempt to mend a mental dissonance by someone who was exceptionally guilty of the things he most loudly disavows. It is therefore a text that is a unique product of Karaçelebizâde's ambitious and combative personality, his sense of shame and self-doubt upon being dishonored with exile and losing his social status (which must have also contributed to his expressed suicidal ideation), and his self-awareness of the discordance between idealized religious behavior and the reality of competition and rivalry in the highest echelons of the Ottoman religious hierarchy.

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