The Self-Fashioning of an Ottoman Urban Notable: Ahmad Efendi Tahazâde (d. 1773)

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Kentli bir Osmanlı Seçkininin Kendine Öz-Biçim Vermesi: Tahazâde Ahmad Efendi (ö. 1773) Örneği

Öz ■ 18. yüzyıl Osmanlı taşrasındaki seçkinlerin (âyânlar) siyasî, sosyal ve iktisadî rollerine dair bir çok araştırma mevcut olsa da söz konusu ayanların kültürel yönelimleri ve kişisel ilgileri hakkındaki bilgilerimiz hâlâ sınırlıdır. Merkezî Osmanlı hükümeti ile taşradaki tebaa arasında siyasî arabulucu işlevi görmekte olan âyânların bir çoğu, Osmanlı memuru olmaları hasebiyle de kendilerinden yapmaları beklenen muhtelif görevler ile içinde bulundukları ya da kök saldıkları taşra toplumlarının kültürel hususiyetçiliği (particularism) arasında kalan grift bir yerde bulunmaktaydılar. Bu çalışmada, yukarıda tasvir edilen seçkinlerden birinin, hem kadılık hem de tüccarlık yapan Tahazâde Ahmed Efendi'nin, 18. yüzyıl ortalarında Halep'te kurduğu bir medresenin vakfiyesi incelenmiştir. Vakfiye metni, bilhassa kütüphane envanteri, istihdam stratejisi, müfredat şartı ve seçilen dualar incelenmiş, ve Tahazâde Ahmed Efendi'nin hesaplı ve incelikli bir şekilde kendine has ve muhtar bir sosyal statü ve kültürel kimlik tasarladığı tespit edilmiştir. Ahmed Efendi'nin medrese müfredatında Hanefî fıkhına yer vermesi, kütüphanesinde ekseriyetle Hanefî mezhebiyle ilgili eserlerin olması ve *Edeb-i Osmanî* geleneği dairesinde Türk ve Fars şiiri ile ilgilenmesi, kendisini Osmanlı adli ve içtimai düzeni ile özdeşleştirdiğini göstermektedir. Öte taraftan Ahmed Efendi'nin kendi kültürel ve entelektüel yönelimini ortaya koyduğu bir alanı da inşa etmekten kaçınmadığı tespit edilebilmektedir. Bu husus özellikle kendi *şerif*liğini öne çıkarması ve *nakibüleşraf*a liderlik yapmak istemesinde açıkça fark edilebilmektedir. Yine kütüphanesinde önemli şecere metinlere sahip olması, Osmanlı öncesine dair farkındalığı (örneğin Memluk Sultanlığı dönemine ait kronikleri ve biyografik sözlükleri edinmeye özellikle gayret sarfetmesi, Osmanlı öncesi saygın ve mahalli olarak köklü bir çok Sufî tarikatine mensubiyeti), muvakkitlerin eğitimine verdiği

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büyük mali ve teknik destek sağlaması, ve belki de en dikkat çekici olanı ağırlıklı olarak Musul civarından gelen Kürtlere medresesinde müderris ve talebe olmaları için açıkça ve kapsamlı bir şekilde hamilik etmesi de bu fikri, - kendi özbiçimini inşa ettiği fikrini- desteklemektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Halep, Tahazâde Ahmed Efendi, Ayan, Eşraf, Kürtler, vakfiye, öz-biçim, medrese

On 15 February 1765, Ahmad Efendi Tahazâde, a prominent member of the legal and religious establishment of Aleppo and a wealthy businessman, went to the main law court of that city and founded his third and final pious endowment, or *waqf*.[1] Consisting of over sixty commercial properties, numerous agricultural tracts, and an extensive library, the endowment provided for the distribution of very considerable funds and resources to Ahmad Efendi's college (*madrasa*), various mystical organizations, and members of his family. Indeed the magnitude of the Ahmad Efendi's act prompted many local dignitaries to gather that day in the court and witness the legal proceeding. The record of this act, a *waqfiyya* copied in the registers of the court, forms a remarkably rich source for examining not only the economic activities of Ahmad Efendi, but also his intellectual interests and spiritual orientation. Using this document and some other biographical sources, one can reconstruct various aspects of Ahmad Efendi's life and then make use of this reconstruction to suggest how the *aʿyān*, or urban socio-political elite, of 18th-century Aleppo invested their wealth, cultivated their minds, and expressed their religious devotion.

The *aʿyān* and their political ascendance in the 18th and 19th centuries is a well-established theme in Ottoman historiography and need not be discussed here.[2]

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1 Under the provisions of *waqf*, owners place their property in an inviolable and perpetual trust dedicated ultimately to God, and the income that is generated from use of the property, most frequently rents from land or buildings, is directed to charitable purposes designated by the endower. In the *waqf* foundation document, which is registered in-the law court, the endower describes the properties, stipulates the conditions for the disposal of income, and appoints persons to supervise the endowment. See Gabriel Baer, "The Waqf as a Prop for the Social System," *Islamic Law and Society* 4 (1997), 264-97.

2 Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in Polk and Chambers, ibid., 41-67. An elaboration on Hourani's thesis is Ehud R. Toledano, "The Emergence of Ottoman-Local Elites (1700-1900): A Framework for Research", in *Middle Eastern Politics and Ideas: A History from Within*, ed. Ilan Pappé and Moshe Ma'oz (London: Tauris, 1997), 145-62. For studies on the *aʿyan* of Syrian cities, see Margaret Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count: Family and Society in Ottoman Aleppo, 1770-1840*

But while historians have contributed substantially to the general knowledge of the political, social, and economic roles of the *a'yān*, little is known about their cultural orientations and personal interests. The question of cultural orientation is especially significant. Functioning as political intermediaries between the Ottoman central government and local populations, the majority of the *a'yān* were effectively placed in an ambiguous position between the cosmopolitan demands of service as Ottoman officials and the cultural particularism of the local society in which they had become rooted.[3] Indeed, membership in the ruling Ottoman class meant not only service to the Muslim faith and to the state in an office providing income and tax exemptions, but also familiarity with the "Ottoman way" (*Edeb-i 'Osmani*), a complex of linguistic competence, training in the educational canon, and knowledge of refined manners and customs. Rather, the ambiguous sociopolitical status of the *a'yān* appears to have created wide variations in cultural orientation and conceptions of self-identity.[4]

It is at this level where the example of Ahmad Efendi can be especially instructive, as his personal interests, inclinations, and apparent uses of history suggest the ways in which the *a'yān* fashioned and re-fashioned identities, both familial and individual, to undergird their social and political status. Intriguing questions arise in the case of Ahmad Efendi. First, what did it mean to him and how did he cultivate his status as a descendant of (Arab) Prophet Muhammad's family? Second, was he a Kurd? Third, how could he reconcile belonging to both radical antinomian and traditionalist Sufi orders at the same time? Fourth, how could

(Austin, Texas: University of Texas, 1999) and Linda S. Schilcher, *Families in Politics: Damascene Factions and Estates of the 18th and 19th Centuries* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1985). For a recent critique of the *a'yān* category, see Bruce Masters, *The Arabs of the Ottoman Empire, 1516-1918: A Social and Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

3 Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "Social groups, identity and loyalty, and historical writing in Ottoman and post-Ottoman Syria," in *Les Arabes et l'histoire créatrice*, ed. Dominique Chevallier (Paris: Université de Paris, 1995), 79-93; Steve Tamari, "Arab National Consciousness in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Syria," in *Syria and Bilad al-Sham under Ottoman Rule: Essays in Honour of Abdul-Karim Rafeq*, ed. Peter Sluglett with Stefan Weber (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 309-22; Karl Barbir, "From Pasha to Efendi: The Assimilation of Ottomans into Damascene Society, 1516-1783," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 1 (1979-80), 68-83; Jane Hathaway, "The Wealth and Influence of an Exiled Ottoman Eunuch in Egypt: The Waqf Inventory of 'Abbas Agha," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 37 (1994): 293-317; and Toledano, "Ottoman-Local Elites", 154.

4 Barbir, *Ottoman Rule*, 74; and Toledano, "Ottoman-Local Elites", 154.

he comport himself as an Ottoman gentleman and yet also nurture a distinct pre-Ottoman identity linked with the Mamluk Sultanate? These are the major questions raised in the course of this study.

Political Career and Business Practices

The substantial economic resources and social prestige of the Tahazâde family in Aleppan society extended back at least to the second half of the 17th century.[5] Their high standing was derived in part from their status as a family that produced members of the Muslim religious and legal establishment, the 'ulama'.[6] Enhancing their position was their claim to descent from the Prophet Muhammad. Those who made this claim, the *ashrāf* (sing. *sharīf)*, frequently led, if not dominated, urban polities among the civilian elite in Syria in the 18th and early 19th centuries.[7] Little is known about the eponymous founder of the family, Taha, but his son, Mustafa (d. 1681), figures prominently in local history.[8] He served as *naqīb al-ashrāf*, or head of the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad in Aleppo, accumulated great wealth, and enjoyed connections in Istanbul through intermarriage with the family of personal physician of Sultan Mehmet IV (r. 1648-87).[9] All four

5 Margaret Meriwether, "Notable Families in Aleppo, 1770-1830" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1981); Appendix Two; and idem, *The Kin Who Count*, 36-8.

6 Meriwether, *The Kin Who Count*, 30-68; and Abraham Marcus, *The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity: Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 56-63.

7 Herbert Bodman, *Political Factions in Aleppo, 1760-1826* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963), 79-102. For a broader study on the *ashrāf* as a status group in Ottoman society, see Hülya Canbakal, "The Ottoman state and descendants of the prophet in Anatolia and the Balkans (c. 1500-1700)," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 52 (2009), 542-78.

8 The eponymous founder of the Tahazâde family was a certain Taha bin Mustafa, a scholar and preacher living in Aleppo. The registers of the qadi court dating from this period disclose that in 1625 a certain Taha bin Mustafa, who held the title of Efendi, was appointed as trustee (*mutawallī*) of Jami' al-Bahramiyya, a large and well-endowed congregational mosque in Jallum, the intramural quarter where, in the 18th century, the residences of the Tahazâde family were concentrated. See Abu-l-Wafa bin 'Umar al-'Urdi (1585-1660), *Ma'adin al-Dhahab fi al-A'yan al-Musharrifa bihim Halab*, ed. 'Isa Abu Salim (Amman: Matba'a al-Jami'a al-Urdunniyya, 1992), 140, 182.

9 Meriwether, "Notable Families," Appendix 2, Biography #101. See also Damascus, Syrian National Archives, Law Court Registers (*Sijillāt al-Maḥākim al-Shar'iyya*), Aleppo (hereafter referred to as SMS), Vol. 102, p. 123; and Bruce Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600-1750* (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 166-8.

of Mustafa's sons pursued careers as 'ulama' with varying degrees of accomplishment. Although Taha bin Mustafa (d. 1724/25), the father of Ahmad Efendi, held no religious or legal office, Taha's brothers together dominated the office of *naqīb* throughout the 18th century.[10] The Tahazâde family preserved its status in ways other than tenure in public office. Like most notable Aleppan families, they intermarried with other families of wealth and social prestige,[11] invested a considerable proportion of their wealth in real estate,[12] and in the second half of the 18th century acquired tax farms of both commercial and agricultural activities. [13]

Lacking biographies, Ahmad Efendi's life can be teased out of two early 20th-century Aleppan historians, Kamil al-Ghazzi (1853-1933) and Muhammad Raghib al-Tabbakh (1877-1951).[14] Steeped in the established Arabic literary traditions of the biographical dictionary (*ṭabaqāt*) and historical topography (*khiṭaṭ*), these two authors wrote separate local histories of Aleppo but used similar kinds of sources: other biographies of other members of the Tahazâde family, poetic texts celebrating certain personal events, oral history, inscriptions, and architectural legacies.[15] Knowing the year that Ahmad Efendi was first married (1717/18), al-Tabbakh estimates his birth year to have been around 1697/98.[16] Nothing definite is known about his formative education, other than what one can deduce from the qualifications of positions that he held later in life, but his personal ambition is clearly

10 Meriwether, "Notable Families," 239-40.

11 Court records document four weddings, two to members of other elite 'ulama' families and two to members of elite military-administrative families. See ibid., 150.

12 Ibid., 175-7, 201-2.

13 Ibid., 189-93.

14 See, respectively, their works, *Kitab Nahr al-Dhahab fi Tarikh Halab*, 2nd edition, 3 vols., ed. Shawqi Sha'ath and Mahmud Fakhuri (Aleppo: Dar al-Qalam, 1991-3), originally published in 1924-26; and *I'lam al-Nubala' bi-Tarikh Halab al-Shahba'*, 2nd edition, 7 vols., ed. Muhammad Kamal (Aleppo: Dar al-Qalam al-'Arabi, 1988-92), originally published in 1923-6. For a discussion of Ghazzi and Tabbakh as historians, see Keith Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East: Revolution, Nationalism and Colonialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 126-7, 185-209.

15 Al-Tabbakh, *I'lam al-Nubala'*, VII, 69-70. Al-Tabbakh attributes to political factionalism the absence of a notice of Ahmad Efendi in the preeminent biographical dictionary of the period, *Silk al-Durar fi A'yan al-Qarn al-Thani 'Ashar*, by Muhammad Khalil al-Muradi (d. 1791), 3rd printing, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm and Dar al-Basha'ir al-Islamiyya, 1988). Al-Tabbakh relates that Muradi enjoyed close social ties with the Aleppan Kawakibi family and that the latter were bitter rivals with the Taha family in the local politics of the time.

16 Al-Tabbakh, *I'lam al-Nubala'*, VII, 70.

demonstrated.[17] Both in 1736/37 and 1737/38 the central Ottoman administration appointed him *naqīb al-ashrāf* of Aleppo. Around 1745/46, Ahmad Efendi was named qadi, or judge, of Jerusalem, a position which he held until 1747/48. This was soon followed by the judgeship of Baghdad, a post that he occupied from 1749/50 to 1751, after which he returned to Aleppo. At the same time that Ahmad Efendi was pursuing a career in law, he also managed to accumulate substantial real estate holdings. Although he inherited property from his father Taha, he seems to have built his estate through successful business ventures. When Ahmad Efendi returned to his native city in 1752, he had sufficient material resources to found a major institution of learning, a madrasa, which he named the Ahmadiyya, in the commercial heart of the city.[18] He continued to increase its funding in the succeeding two endowments of 1759 and 1765.[19]

After 1751 Ahmad Efendi held no office in the central Ottoman administration but continued to promote the political interests of the Tahazâde family and in particular the ambitions of his eldest son, Muhammad Efendi (d. 1786), otherwise known as Çelebi Efendi. By 1760, Muhammad Efendi had secured extensive tax farms in the villages of the rural hinterland of Aleppo, maintained financial control over them by using his political connections in the capital to renew his appointments, and engaged in large scale money lending to villagers dependent on him.[20] Having established far-reaching political and economic influence in the rural areas, Muhammad Efendi expanded his urban constituency with the help of his father. In a *waqfiyya* executed in 1764, Ahmad Efendi stipulated that 600 *ghurūsh* from the revenues of the endowment, a substantial sum, be given annually to Muhammad Efendi to distribute to various charities and institutions in and outside Aleppo, most significantly to six different Sufi brotherhoods and numerous employees of the Great Umayyad Mosque, the center of religious life in the city.[21] Some of the shaykhs of these orders even attended the foundation of this *waqf* and served as witnesses, evidence of the integration of the Tahazades among the religious elites of the city.[22]

By 1767, Muhammad Efendi had held the office of *naqīb al-ashrāf* for a prolonged period, a rare political accomplishment, and had accumulated enormous wealth. This aggrandizement aroused bitter resentment among other members

17 Ibid.

18 SMS 102, 110; and al-Ghazzi, *Nahr al-Dhahab*, II, 45-6.

19 SMS 102, 110-29.

20 Meriwether, "Notable Families," 189-94.

21 SMS 102, 123-4.

22 SMS 102, 129-30.

of the *ashrāf* of Aleppo who were his political rivals.[23] Forming a coalition in the same year, the rivals petitioned the Sublime Porte that Muhammad Efendi be removed from office, claiming that he had abused his authority. The Porte responded favorably, not only dismissing Muhammad Efendi, but also removing his name from the registers of the Ottoman judicial class and banishing him to the city of Edirne, in Thrace.[24] Muhammad's father Ahmad Efendi was in Istanbul when he heard this news, and he immediately proceeded to petition the Sublime Porte to rescind the order.[25] Ahmed Efendi's defense of his son soured relations between him and members of the coalition, and they obtained an imperial order that he, too, be banished to Edirne. The pair stayed in exile for about five years and were transferred to several places, including Cyprus.[26] Both the financial disbursement contained in the provisions of the *waqf* and the attempt to rescind the order of banishment indicate Ahmad Efendi's commitment to his eldest son. But in the latter action, recognizing only the interests of his family, Ahmad Efendi pursued the prolongation of his son's already extended political power, a prospect that the unstable and shifting game of *a'yān* politics could not allow. Ahmad Efendi did not live long after his return from exile in 1772. He was by this time probably in his seventies, and he does not seem to have enjoyed the same measure of social and political prestige as he had in the pre-exile period. On 30 November 1773 Ahmad Efendi died of an apparent heart attack at home in Aleppo and was buried in the family cemetery adjacent to his madrasa.[27]

Ahmad Efendi's political ambition was matched by his commercial acumen. The diversity of his real estate holdings are evident in the *waqf* documents The 1765 *waqf* alone recorded eighty-three commercial properties, ranging from small retail shops to large manufacturing and wholesaling facilities; eight houses; and twenty-one gardens, fields, and orchards.[28] Ahmed Efendi channeled the bulk of his wealth into select commercial enterprises, primarily textile manufacturing and the processing and manufacturing of grain products. At the same time, he pursued the development and acquisition of real estate, both commercial and agricultural,

23 Al-Ghazzi, *Nahr al-Dhahab*, III, 237-8.

24 Bodman, *Political Factions*, 100-1; and al-Ghazzi, *Nahr al-Dhahab*, III, 238.

25 Al-Ghazzi, *Nahr al-Dhahab*, III, 238.

26 Bodman, *Political Factions*, 101; and al-Ghazzi, *Nahr al-Dhahab*, III, 238. Curiously, the event of Ahmad Efendi's exile does not appear in al-Tabbakh's history.

27 Al-Tabbakh, *I'lam al-Nubala'*, VII, 68, 72.

28 For a detailed analysis of his investment strategies, see Charles Wilkins, "Ahmad Efendi Tahazâde: 'Alim and Entrepreneur in Eighteenth-Century Aleppo" (M.A. Thesis, Ohio State University, 1996), 17-33.

with the intent of deriving rental income, generally more secure than textile and grain enterprises. Ahmad Efendi was typical of his age in his investment strategies. Several prominent notables of Aleppo in the 18th century established *waqf*s of comparable size to that supporting the Ahmadiyya madrasa, and the financial basis of their endowment was rental income from extensive real estate properties. Records of inheritance settlements from the late 17th century also indicate that a high proportion of wealth was held in this form.[29] In general, while Ahmad Efendi had pushed the limits of political action for a lesser urban notable, his business practices were typical of the propertied classes of Aleppo.

Intellectual Interests

Ahmed Efendi's intellectual activity can be studied on the basis of a 250-item inventory of books that he donated to his madrasa in the third *waqf* (1765); the curriculum of the madrasa, which he stipulates in the first *waqf* (1752) and restates in the third *waqf*; and a handful of Arab biographical accounts. By far the most important source, the 1765 inventory provides a rare glimpse into the formative and advanced curriculum of an Ottoman Muslim gentleman. The biographical accounts provide glimpses into his acquisition, at least in part, of the large number of works in his library. This study is part of a growing body of micro-historical studies that have used *waqf* documents and estate inventories to shed light on the personal effects, tastes, and inclinations of individual members of the *a'yān*.[30] The general method of analyzing book lists, whether from library endowments, probate estate inventories, or curricula, as a means to comprehend the intellectual history of Muslim societies has attracted particular attention.[31]

29 Masters, *Origins*, 166-70.

30 Yavuz Cezar, "Bir Ayanın Muhallefatı," *Belleten* 41 (1977), 41-78; A. R. Abdul Tawab and André Raymond, "Le Waqfiyya de Mustafa Ga'far," *Annales Islamologiques* 14 (1978), 177-193; Daniel Crecelius, "The Waqf of Muhammad Bey Abu al-Dhahab in Historical Perspective," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23 (1991), 57-81; and Hamza 'Abd al-'Aziz Badr and D. Crecelius, "The Waqfs of Shahin Ahmad Agha," *Annales Islamologiques* 26 (1992), 79-116.

31 See, for example, Colette Establet and Jean-Paul Pascual, "Les livres des gens à Damas vers 1700," *Revue des monde musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 87-88 (subtitled *Livres et lecture dans L'Empire Ottomane*) (1999), 143-75; Hathaway, "Exiled Ottoman Eunuch in Egypt"; Maria Eva Subtelny and Anas B. Khalidov, "The Curriculum of Islamic Higher Learning in Timurid Iran in the Light of the Sunni Revival under Shah-Rukh, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 115 (1995), 210-36; Shahab Ahmed and Nenad Filipovic, "The Sultan's Syllabus: A Curriculum for the Ottoman Imperial Medreses Prescribed in a Ferman of Qanuni I Süleyman, dated 973 (1565)," *Studia Islamica* 98/99

Since the careers of most male members of the Tahazâde family had for several generations been in the religious and legal establishment, it is probable that Ahmad Efendi inherited a number of books from his relatives but considerably expanded the collection. While serving as judge in Jerusalem and Baghdad, he purchased books and personally copied manuscripts otherwise unobtainable.[32] A British physician and long-term resident of Aleppo, Alexander Russell, also remarked that Ahmad Efendi had obtained a large number of books at considerable expense for the library of his madrasa.[33]

Represented in the collection was a wide array of disciplines and fields of knowledge, from religion and law to history, language and literature, branches of philosophy, the natural sciences, mathematics, and engineering, suggesting that it was the self-contained and fully functioning library of a learned Muslim. Some learned person, perhaps the custodian of the library (*ḥāfiẓ al-kutub*) or Ahmad Efendi himself, took considerable effort to classify the works and arrange them in a specific sequence; even shorter works bound into of single-volume miscellanies (*majmūʿa*s) are identified (see Table 1). The ordering of the categories, proceeding from religious texts to Arabic letters and natural sciences, projects a distinctive hierarchy of dogmatic, moral, and legal positions.

Comparing this list with the works that were used in the curriculum of the central Ottoman administration (the Palace School), and also with texts that were reported to have been used in the madrasas of Aleppo in the 17th century, yields several threads of interest. Attention is first directed at what might be called the "primary" Islamic sciences: commentary on the Qur'an (*tafsīr*), reports of the Prophet Muhammad's sayings and actions (hadiths, collectively called the Sunna), and law (*fiqh*). Attention is then turned to selected "secondary" fields of knowledge representing the humanities and natural sciences, namely, history, poetry, astronomy and geometry. The discussion on the personal piety of Ahmed Efendi to follow will examine a third set of texts in the inventory relating to mysticism, prayer, and the occult sciences.

(2004), 183-218; and Barnette Miller, *The Palace School of Muhammad the Conqueror* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941).

32 Al-Tabbakh, *Iʿlam al-Nubala'*, VII, 68.

33 Russell (ca. 1715-68), *A Natural History of Aleppo*, 2 vols., 1794 (Hants England: Gregg International, 1969), II, 94. The total number of volumes that came to be housed in the Ahmadiyya library, acquired both through purchase and copying, reached 3,000 by the time of al-Tabbakh's writing in the early 20th century. See al-Tabbakh, *Iʿlam al-Nubala'*, VII, 70.

Table 1. Survey of Books Donated to the Library of the Ahmadiyya Madrasa, Aleppo, Third *Waqfiyya*, 5 *Dhu'l-Hijja* 1178/15 February 1765.

Subject (with original subheading in Arabic)	Number of works	Number of volumes
Holy texts (*Kutub Allāh*)	4	35
Qur'an interpretation (*tafsīr*)	8	8
Conduct and sayings of the Prophet (*al-Sunna*)	68	77
Intercessory Prayer (*ṣalāt*)	4	4
Islamic Jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*)	13	17
Hanafi *fiqh*	13	17
Shafiʿi *fiqh*	12	14
Hanbali *fiqh*	6	6
Relgious doctrine (*al-aqā'id*)	16	11
Islamic mysticism (*taṣawwuf*)	4	5
Lexicography (*lugha*)	13	15
Grammar (*naḥw*)	9	16
Morphology (*ṣarf*)	8	5
Rhetoric (*al-maʿānī wa-l-bayān*)	7	7
Logic (*manṭiq*)	4	4
Rules of Debate (*adāb al-baḥth*)	5	3
Prosody (*ʿarūḍ*)	2	2
Belles-lettres (*adab*)	8	8
Poetry (*dawāwīn*)	6	6
History (*tārīkh*)	13	34
Medicine (*ṭibb*)	2	2
Natural science (*al-ḥikmat al-ṭabiʿiyya*)	6	8
Manuals of astronomical instruments (*alāt al-falak*)	12	4
Astronomy and Astrology (*aḥkām al-nujūm*)	6	6
Engineering (*handasa*)	4	2
Occult Sciences (*al-asmā' wa-l-ḥurūf*)	2	2
Works above in Persian or Ottoman Turkish	10	8
Total number	**248**	**307**

Sources: Damascus, Syrian National Archives (Dār al-Wathā'iq al-Tārīkhiyya), Registers of the Qadi Courts (Sijillāt al-Maḥākim al-Sharʿiyya), Aleppo, Vol. 102, pp. 131-35

Of primary interest, obviously, were the Islamic sciences, whose works come directly after the listing of the sacred scripture of the Qur'an in the 1765 inventory. Among the eight works listed in the field of Qur'an commentary, the most significant is undoubtedly *Anwar al-tanzil wa asrar al-ta'wil* by Nasir al-Din 'Abdullah bin 'Umar al-Shafi'i al-Baydawi (d. 1315).[34] By the 18th century, this work came to be the most widely circulating and influential Qur'an commentary in the institutions of higher learning of the Ottoman Empire, including the Palace School,[35] also taught in the madrasas of Aleppo by the 17th century.[36] In fact, the inventory has two copies of this text, each explained with marginal glosses (sing. *ḥāshiya*, pl. *ḥawāshī*),[37] one by a certain Shaykh Ibrahim bin Haydar al-Sughrani (or al-Surani), most likely the father of the first teacher at the Ahmadiyya madrasa, Ahmad al-Surani, and a local scholar. Other works of *tafsīr* in the inventory written by the prolific Egyptian scholar al-Suyuti (1445-1505), or super-commentaries on his works, complement that of al-Baydawi and corroborate the establishmentarian orientation of the Ahmadiyya library *tafsīr* collection.[38] Yet the inclusion of one work of the Hanbali traditionist scholar Ibn Jawzi (1126-1200), probably the *Tafsir Gharib al-Qur'an*, an analysis of obscure expressions in the Qur'an,[39] is in tension with the doctrinal orientation of the Ottoman establishment, which followed the Hanafi school of jurisprudence and Maturidi theology.

More significant are the library's holdings in hadith literature. In recent decades, historians have posited a resurgence of interest in hadith studies by Muslim

34 J. Robson, "al-Baydawi," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd Revised Edition, ed. H.A.R. Gibb et al (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960-) (hereafter referred to as *EI²*). The standard bibliographical and biographical information about Baydawi and this text may be found in Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, revised edition of vols. I-II (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1943-49, hereafter referred to *GAL*), II, p. 416; Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, 3 Supplement vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1937-42) (hereafter referred *GALS*), I, p. 738; and Kâtib Çelebi (1609-57), *Kashf al-Zunun 'an Asami al-Kutub wa-l-Funun*, ed. M. Şerefettin Yaltkaya and Kilisli Rifat Bilge, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Maarif Matbaasi, 1941-43) (hereafter referred to as *KZ*), II, p. 1930.

35 Miller, *Palace School*, 108-9; Establet and Pascual, "Livres," 159; and Ahmed and Filipovic, "Sultan's Syllabus," 197-8, 208-9.

36 al-'Urdi, *Ma'adin al-Dhahab*, 149-53.

37 SMS 102, 130.

38 Jalal al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman bin Abu Bakr al-Suyuti (1445-1505), *al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an*, *GALS* II 179 and *KZ* I 8; and 'Ali bin Muhammad Sultan al-Harawi al-Qari al-Hanafi (d. 1606), *Kitab al-Jamalayn*, a commentary on another work by al-Suyuti, *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*, *GAL* II 145, *GALS* II 180, and *KZ* I 445.

39 *GAL* I 663, *GALS* I 918, and *KZ* II 1208.

scholars of North Africa, the Middle East and South Asia in the 17th and 18th centuries,[40] likely related to the social movements of Islamic renewal and reform in the same time span.[41] The works classified as hadith in Ahmad Efendi's library are notable for their large number – at sixty-eight works, by far the largest classification and the diversity of the subgenres.[42] Most of them (twenty-nine) were concerned with the multidisciplinary pursuit of hadith criticism, the remaining categories including significant representations of digests of canonical hadith collections, specialized topical collections, and auxiliary reference tools.[43] While the array of subgenres suggests a vigorous library for the study of hadith literature, the provenance of the works suggests a conservative disposition. Of the sixty-six that could be dated, more than half (thirty-seven) were written in the 14th and 15th centuries, a small minority (ten) in the 16th and 17th, and none in the 18th century.[44] Perhaps the most important Ottoman-era work of hadith is the *Kunuz al-Haqa'iq*, a systematic and careful digest compilation of hadith reports by 17th-century Egyptian scholar al-Munawi.[45] However, the apparent absence in the 1765

40 Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "Transmitters of authority and ideas across cultural boundaries, eleventh to eighteenth centuries," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 3, *The Eastern Islamic World, Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. David O. Morgan and Donald Reid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 582-610; John O. Voll, "Foundations for Renewal and Reform: Islamic Movements in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 509-47, esp. 516-22, 530-1; idem, "'Abdullah ibn Salim al-Basri and 18th Century Hadith Scholarship," *Die Welt des Islams* 42 (2002), 356-72; and Stefan Reichmuth, "Murtada al-Zabidi (d. 1791) in Biographical and Autobiographical Accounts: Glimpses of Islamic Scholarship in the 18th Century," *Die Welt des Islams* 39 (1999), 64-102.

41 John O. Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World*, 2nd Ed. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994), 29-30; and idem "'Abdullah ibn Salim al-Basri," passim.

42 Cf. Establet and Pascual, "Livres des gens," 157.

43 Drawing on historical and literary forms of analysis, hadith criticism subgenres included general manuals (*mukhtaṣars*) and works of transmitter criticism (*'ilm al-rijāl*) and of specialized analysis of hadith reports (*'ilal*, *mawḍu'āt*, etc.). This analysis uses the typology of hadith literature discussed by Jonathan A. C. Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009), Chps. 2 and 3.

44 Significantly, this distribution corresponds roughly to that found by Establet and Pascual in their general study of book ownership in probate inventories of Damascus townspeople around 1700. See "Livres des gens," 155.

45 *Kunuz al-Haqa'iq fi Hadith Khayr al-Khala'iq* by 'Abd al-Ra'uf bin Taj al-'Arifin al-Munawi, al-Qahiri al-Shafi'i (1545-1621). See A. Saleh Hamdan, "al-Munawi," *EI²*; and *GAL* II 394, *GALS* II 417, and *KZ* II 1521.

library of 18th-century commentaries or glosses on older works of hadith, let alone original treatises, lend support to the observation that little or innovative hadith scholarship was taking place in the Ahmadiyya madrasa in that century.

The library holdings in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) return discussion to the relationship of Ahmad Efendi to the Ottoman learned hierarchy. The representation of three different schools of jurisprudence – Hanafi, Shafiʿi, and Hanbali – suggests an inclusiveness of juridical opinion that is at odds with resolutely Hanafi Ottoman establishment. While the presence of roughly the same number of Shafiʿi works as Hanafi is not surprising, given the historic strength of the Shafiʿi school in Syria, the substantial representation of the Hanbali school, and the relatively recent provenance of the pertinent works, points to an intellectual vitality during the Ottoman period.[46] The prevailing impression of Ahmadiyya *fiqh* holdings, however, is that of close alignment with the Hanafi school, as the collection includes the chief manuals of Hanafi jurisprudence for Ottoman judges: the *Mukhtasar* of Abu-l-Husayn Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Quduri (972-1037)[47] and the *Multaqa al-abhur* of Ibrahim bin Muhammad al-Halabi (d. 1538/9).[48] That these works were referred to in the inventory by simply giving the name of their authors, when most other works have part or all of their title given, suggests that the people taking the inventory were familiar with their title and contents.[49] Ahmad Efendi would have consulted these texts regularly in his duties as both works served as summaries of large corpuses of pre-existing legal discourse and were useful as reference tools.

The works in other fields of knowledge generally locate his broader education within the boundaries of Ottoman elite culture. The works contained in the library classified in the categories of history, poetry, and astronomy reveal an impressive breadth of inquisitiveness and can be linked to the curriculum of the Palace School and, to a lesser extent, the curricula of the madrasas of Aleppo.

Within the category of history (Ar. *tārīkh*), one finds the major genres represented. Taking its place in the inventory is the apologetic work, *al-Iʿlan bi-l-Tawbikh* of al-Sakhawi (1427-97), a scholar of the Mamluk Sultanate (1250-1517).

46 John O. Voll, "The Non-Wahhabi Hanbalis of Eighteenth Century Syria," *Der Islam* 49 (1972), 277-91.

47 M. Ben Cheneb, "al-Kuduri," *EI²*; *GAL* I 174-75, *GALS* I 295-6, 451-2, and *KZ* II 1631-4.

48 J. Schacht, "al-Halabi, Burhan al-Din Ibrahim b. Muhammad," *EI²*; *GAL* I 478, *GALS* I 659-60, and *KZ* II 1814-6.

49 See similar references to these authors in other library listings and curricula in Cevat İzgi, *Osmanlı Medreselerinde İlim*, 2 vols. (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1997), I, 163-76.

Since this treatise was produced for the specific purpose of defending the study of history as an ancillary subject in the curriculum of religious studies, one can easily conceive of this work as an important didactic text.[50] There are several large multi-volume chronicles, most of them penned by scholars of the Mamluk Sultanate and recording the events of that empire, which spanned Egypt, Syria, and the Hijaz: the *Tarikh al-Islam* of al-Dhahabi (1274-1348),[51] the *'Uyun al-Tawarikh* of Ibn Shakir al-Kutubi (1287-1363),[52] and the *Rawdat al-Manazir* of Ibn Shihna (d. 1412).[53] The authors of these chronicles were either native-born or long-term residents of Syria. Such a geographical concentration is only partially offset by the presence of an unidentified Ottoman Turkish-language *Tevârîh* chronicle, which would strengthen ties between the education of Ahmad Efendi and the curriculum of the Palace School.[54] No less significant were the library holdings of biographical dictionaries (Ar. *ṭabaqāt*),[55] also written by historians of the Mamluk Sultanate, namely, the *Wafi bi-l-Wafayat* of al-Safadi (1296-1363)[56] and the *Tabaqat al-Shafi'iyya* of al-Asnawi (d. 1370),[57] among others. This collection is balanced with regard to subject: while al-Safadi concentrated on describing the political figures of his time, al-Asnawi focused on relating biographies of the eminent 'ulama'.

Least impressive were the holdings in geography, which were represented by a single work, the *Muthir al-Gharam li-Ziyarat al-Quds wa-l-Sham* of the Mamluk scholar Ibn Hilal al-Maqdisi (d. 1364).[58] This book, limited as it was to an account of the history of Syria, could not provide knowledge of countries outside the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, the annals of the *Tevarih* probably presented more information in this regard since it included accounts of the military campaigns

50 *GAL* II 35 and *GALS* II 42; a full English translation of this work can be found in Franz Rosenthal, ed., *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), 195-450.

51 F. Rosenthal, "al-Dhahabi," *EI²*; *GAL* II 46-8, *GALS* II 45, and *KZ* I 294-5.

52 F. Rosenthal, "al-Kutubi," *EI²*; *GALS* II 48 and *KZ* II 1185-6.

53 *GAL* II 46, 141, *GALS* II 176-7, and Katib Çelebi (1609-57), *Idah al-Maknun fi-l-Dhayl 'ala Kashf al-Zunun 'an Asami al-Kutub wa-l-Funun* (*Keşf-el-Zunun Zeyli*), ed. Şerefettin Yaltkaya and Kilisli Rıfat Bilge, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Maarif Matbaasi, 1945) (hereafter referred to as *KZZ*), I, p. 597.

54 For a list of chronicles with the title, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Osman*, see F. Babinger, *Die Geschichtesschreiber der Osmanen und ihre Werke* (Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1927), 35-8.

55 Michael Cooperson, "Biographical Literature," in *New Cambridge History of Islam*, ed. Robert Irwin, IV, 458-73.

56 F. Rosenthal, "al-Safadi, Salah al-Din Khalil b. Aybak," *EI²*; *GAL* II 3, *GALS* I 562 and II 28, and *KZ* II 1996-7.

57 *GAL* II 90-1, *GALS* II 107, and *KZ* II 1101-2.

58 *GAL* II 130-1, *GALS* II 162, and *KZ* II 1589.

of the Ottomans in various regions, including the Balkan Peninsula. Still, the presence of works devoted to Jerusalem (*al-Quds*) and Damascus (*al-Sham*), suggest an appreciation of (greater) geographical Syria as a meaningful category of belonging.[59]

The preponderance of works by authors living in Egypt and Syria under the Mamluk Sultanate is perhaps the most notable general feature of this category. It is curious why one does not find the important, more recent Ottoman-period histories produced in Syria and Egypt, such as chronicles of Muhammad bin Ahmad Ibn Iyas (d. 1523) and Shams al-Din Ibn Tulun (d. 1546), and the biographical dictionaries of Najm al-Din Ghazzi (d. 1577), ʿUmar bin ʿAbd al-Wahhab al-ʿUrdi (d. 1615), and Muhammad Amin al-Muhibbi (d. 1699).[60] One may speculate that Ahmad Efendi deliberately cultivated an interest in pre-Ottoman, Mamluk history, a point to which this study will return.

The collection of poetic works identify the intellectual interests of Ahmad Efendi with those of the educated Ottoman elite. The inventory includes not only Persian but also Arabic poetry written by various Iranian poets, which strongly suggests that Ahmad Efendi acquired them in Baghdad. It is, in fact, the latter poetry, the *Diwan* of al-Tughraʾi[61] and the works of al-Abiwardi,[62] both from the 12th century, that provide evidence for the engagement of Ahmad Efendi in

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59 On Ottoman geographical inquisitiveness, see Thomas Goodrich, *The Ottoman Turks and the New World* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1990); Suraiya Faroqhi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2004), 179-210; Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010); and Michael Bonner and Gottfried Hagen, "Muslim Accounts of the Dar al-Harb," in *New Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 4, *Islamic Cultures and Societies to the End of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Robert Irwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 474-94.

60 For a survey of Arabic histories written in Syria in the early period of Ottoman rule in Syria, see Muhammad Adnan Bakhit, *The Ottoman Province of Damascus in the Sixteenth Century* (Beirut: Librarie du Liban, 1982), 295-307; and Michael Winter, "Historiography in Arabic During the Ottoman Period," in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period*, eds. Roger Allen and D. S. Richards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 171-88.

61 Muʿayyad al-Din Abu Ism'ail al-Husayn bin ʿAli al-Tughraʾi (d. 1121/22). See F. C. de Blois, "al-Tughraʾi," *EI*^{2}; *GAL* I 247, *GALS* I 439, and *KZ* I 798 and II 1537-9.

62 Abu-l-Muzaffar Muhammad bin Abu-l-ʿAbbas al-Abiwardi (d. 1113). The specific works of al-Abiwardi listed in the inventory are the *Diwan*, *ʿIraqiyyat*, *Najdiyyat*, and *Muqattaʿat*. See Brockelmann and Ch. Pellat, "al-Abiwardi," *EI*^{2}; *GAL* I 253, *GALS* I 447, and *KZ* I 884 and II 1930.

the Arabic-language, poetical traditions of Iran that must have been accessible in Baghdad. Al-Tughra'i is closely associated with Baghdad, as this is the city where he served as a Saljuq official and composed much of his poetry. As for the Khurasanian al-Abiwardi, the itemized listing of his works within a single volume suggests Ahmad Efendi's interest in and familiarity with his poetry. Ahmed Efendi may have been motivated to acquire this collection because al-Abiwardi was a distinguished member of the *ashrāf*: he could trace his pedigree back to an early Umayyad lineage and many of his poems recount the genealogy of the Abbasid Caliphs and their officials. Owning a copy of this *diwan*, in other words, lent Ahmad Efendi, a former *naqīb* of Aleppo, a certain social and intellectual prestige.

Among the Persian language collections is *Asrarnama,* or "Book of Secrets," a long narrative poem of moral didacticism by the well-known medieval Iranian mystical poet and thinker ʿAttar. Its sister work, the *Pandnama*, by the same author, enjoyed considerable popularity in the Ottoman Empire; the *Pandnama*, indeed, was used in the Palace School.[63] Also present were the Persian *diwan*s of the 17th-century poets Shawkat and Sa'ib. Composed in the ornate *Sabk-i Hindi* style, the poetry of Shawkat and Sa'ib also enjoyed a great reputation among literate groups of the Ottoman Empire in the later 17th and 18th centuries.[64] No doubt to aid Ahmad Efendi in his appreciation of this poetry, two 17th-century Persian-Persian dictionaries are also found in the library: the *Burhan-i Qatiʿ* of al-Tabrizi[65] and the *Sharafnama-i Ahmad-i Munyari* of Faruqi.[66]

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63 Farid al-Din Abu Hamid Muhammad ʿAttar (ca. 1142-ca. 1220). See H. Ritter, "al-ʿAttar," *EI²*; E. G. Brown, *A Literary History of Persia*, 4 vols. (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1902), II, 507-8; "ʿAttar," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985-); J. Rypka, *A History of Iranian Literature* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1968), 430-1; and Miller, *Palace School*, 110.

64 Shawkat Bukhari (d. 1695/96) and Mirza Muhammad ʿAli Sa'ib Isfahani or Tabrizi (d. 1677/78). See Munibur Rahman, "Sa'ib," *EI²*; J. T. P. de Bruijn, "Sabk-i Hindi," *EI²*; Brown, *Persia*, IV, 64, 265; E. J. W. Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry*, 6 vols. (London: Luzac, 1900-07), I, 130, IV, 96-7; and Rypka, *Iranian Literature*, 190, 237-9, 295, 301-2.

65 Muhammad Husayn bin Khalaf al-Tabrizi (fl. 17th century), who completed the text in 1651/2 in Hyderabad. See "Burhan," *EI²*; and C. A. Storey, *Persian Literature: A Bio-Bibliographical Survey*, 5 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1984), III, Part 1, pp. 31-5.

66 Ibrahim Qiwam Faruqi (fl. 1458-74), written for the Sufi saint Sharaf al-Din Ahmad Yahya al-Munyari al-Bankali al-Hindi (d. 1380/1). See J. Rypka, *Iranian Literature*, 430-1; and Eduard Sachau and Hermann Ethé, *Catalogue of the Persian, Turkish, Hindûstânî, and Pushtû Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1889), Part I, pp. 1005-6.

Ottoman Turkish poetry is represented in the library by a single work, the *Gencine-i Raz*, or "Treasury of Mystery," by the 16th-century poet Yahya Bey. The *Gencine* revolves around moral precepts and rules of conduct (as does the Persian-language *Asrarnama* above) and was written in a style heavily influenced by the *Bustan*, a long, didactic poem by the 13th-century Iranian poet Sa'di, an important text in the Palace School curriculum.[67] The collection of poetry as a whole, encompassing the Arabic, Persian, and Turkish languages and diverse in content, projects Ahmed Efendi's engagement in the three principal languages of the Ottoman Way (*Edeb-i 'Osmanî*). The circumstance, to be discussed below, that Ahmad Efendi was associated with a Sufi order, the Nesimiye, whose rituals were conducted in Turkish or Persian, corroborates that he possessed multi-lingual skills.

The works in the fields of astronomy and geometry can be examined together since they are closely related. Competence in the use of astronomical instruments and tables and in the performance of related mathematical computations was necessary for those who served as timekeepers (*muwaqqit*s) in mosques. Geometry was a branch of mathematics on which *muwaqqit*s were dependent for performing basic technical functions. The works on geometry in the inventory are notable for the ties they demonstrate between the library of Ahmad Efendi and the curriculum of the Palace School. The 13th-century scientist Nasir al-Din al-Tusi,[68] three of whose works on astronomy and geometry appear in the inventory,[69] was the translator of an Arabic language text used to teach Euclidean geometry in the Palace School; and one treatise of the 13th-century scholar al-Jaghmini,[70] also present, is mentioned as the principal geometry text in Aleppo in the 17th century.[71]

67 Yahya Bey (d. 1575/76) was a member of the notable Albanian Duqakin family that was recruited into Ottoman state service. See Gibb, *Ottoman Poetry*, III, 109, 116, 121-2, 125-7; and Miller, *Palace School*, 110.

68 Nasir al-Din Abu Ja'far Muhammad al-Tusi (1201-74). See H. Daiber and F. J. Ragep, "al-Tusi, Nasir al-Din," *EI²*.

69 These works are listed in the inventory as the following: (1) "Risala fi al-'Amal fi-l-Asturab al-Musamma bi-l-Ala li-l-Tusi," (2) "Risala fi al-Hay'a li-l-Tusi," and (3) "Risala fi Sayr al-Kawakib wa Hay'atihim li-l-Tusi." For a listing of al-Tusi's works on mathematics, physics, and astronomy, see *GAL* I 673-6 and *GALS* I 929-32.

70 Mahmud bin Muhammad al-Jaghmini (d. ca. 1344/5). See H. Suter and J. Vernet, "al-Djaghmini," *EI²*.

71 This is an unidentified commentary (*sharh*) on *al-Mulakhkhas fi-l-Hay'a* of al-Jaghmini. See *GAL* I 473 and *GALS* I 865. See also Miller, *Palace School*, 96; and al-'Urdi, *Ma'adin al-Dhahab*, 153.

Ahmad Efendi certainly patronized *muwaqqit*s and may have been a practicing *muwaqqit* himself. Many of the pertinent texts in the library focus on the technical aspects of astronomical observation. Essentially how-to manuals, these works provide the fundamentals of *ʿilm al-mīqāt* -- the body of practical knowledge necessary for determining by calculation or instruments the hours of the day and night, with emphasis on the fixing of the times of the five canonical prayers in the mosques.[72] The historian al-Tabbakh writes that Ahmed Efendi endowed for his library not only books in this subject but also astronomical instruments (*alāt falakiyya*).[73] Presumably these works and instruments, in particular the astrolabe and quadrant, constituted the textbooks and equipment used to provide instruction in the Ahmadiyya madrasa. It is clear from the text of the building inscription on the portal of the madrasa that Ahmad Efendi intended this subject to be included in his curriculum.[74] The interest that Ahmad Efendi had in *ʿilm al-mīqāt* did not end with training others. The 1765 *waqfiyya* attests to his regular financial support of the *muwaqqit* at the Great Umayyad Mosque of Aleppo, the central congregational mosque of the city.[75] Muezzins, persons who performed the call to prayer (*adhān*), had a long tradition of learning the rudiments of *ʿilm al-mīqāt*, a tradition that Ahmad Efendi supported by designating stipends from the revenues of the 1765 *waqf* for muezzins in Aleppo, Mecca, and Jerusalem.[76] Based on these pieces of evidence, one may infer that Ahmad Efendi had a practical knowledge of *ʿilm al-mīqāt*. Whether Ahmad Efendi conducted astronomical observation for scientific purposes is unclear. Alexander Russell remarked that he found in the city "one [unnamed] person … capable of calculating eclipses, and on that account [he] had the reputation of a most profound astronomer."[77] Might it have been Ahmad Efendi himself?

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72 These works are listed in the inventory as the following: (1) "Risala fi al-ʿAmal bi-l-Asturlab al-Musamma bi-l-ala li-l-Tusi, on which see the footnote above on al-Tusi; (2) "Sharh al-Asturlab al-Manzum li-ʿAbd al-Wahid," on which see *GALS* I 828; (3) "Ghayat al-Su'al fi Sharh ʿAsharat al-Fusul fi al-ʿAmal bi-l-Rubʿ, " on which see *GAL* II 128 and *GALS* III 1259; (4) "Hawi al-Mukhtasarat bi-l-ʿAmal bi'-l-Rubʿ," on which see *GAL* II, 170 and *GALS* II 216; and (5) "Risala Hidayat al-Sa'il fi al-ʿAmal bi-l-Rubʿ al-Kamil, on which see *GAL* II 170. See also A. J. Wensinck and D. A. King, "Mikat," *EI²*.

73 *Iʿlam al-Nubala'*, VII, 70.

74 The inscription concisely lists the major subjects of the curriculum, including "astronomical instruments" (alat [al-falak]). See al-Ghazzi, *Nahr al-Dhahab*, II, 52.

75 SMS 102, 122.

76 Ibid., 123-4.

77 Russell, *Natural History*, II, 99.

The examination of the collection to date reveals a broad-minded collector of scriptural commentary and legal texts, an avid and curious gatherer of history and poetry, and a patron and likely practitioner of practical astronomy. Many of these activities Ahmad Efendi must have pursued in the company of family and friends at home or among small groups of the literate elite who shared his interests. The next section speculates on Ahmad Efendi's role as a pedagogue beyond his social circle.

The Curriculum and Activities of the Madrassa

As seen through his instructions on admission and personnel recruitment recorded in the *waqfiyya*, it is apparent that Ahmad Efendi wanted his library accessible to the public. He stipulated that the library was to be open four days of the week corresponding to Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. Anyone who wished to read the works of the library, consult reference books, transcribe copies, or write in general, could enter. Ahmad restricted use of these books to the library; under no circumstances were these books to circulate outside the madrasa.[78] The room which housed the library appears to have been adequate for scholastic activities. The historian al-Ghazzi describes it as spacious, furnished to store books, and having four windows, two looking on the open, central court of the madrasa, and two onto the family mausoleum.[79] The library thus constituted a true public foundation, offering free educational resources with no substantial restrictions as to access.

The instructions with regard to the recruitment of the principal teacher (*mudarris*) and the resident students (*sukkān hujar*), however, envisioned an institution that sought to give educational and occupational advantage to a specific ethnic and geographic group. In the 1752 *waqfiyya*, Ahmad Efendi made the following specifications regarding recruitment: first, the principal teacher and resident students shall come from among the Kurdish populations living in the areas of "Sanjaq Kuwi," "Sanjaq Baba," or "Suran", all towns in the hinterland of Mosul[80];

78 Al-Tabbakh, *I'lam al-Nubala'*, VII, 70.

79 Al-Ghazzi, *Nahr al-Dhahab*, II, 45-6.

80 These place names correspond to present-day towns in northern Iraq. Sanjaq Kuwi appears to be an Arabic transposition of the Turkish Köy Sancak or Kurdish Koysinjaq or Koya (36°05'N 44°38'E), a large town and district seat 35 miles east-southeast of the Iraqi city of Arbil. "Sanjaq Baba" could not be located, though if the name is transposed (in a manner consistent with Köy Sancak above) it bears some resemblance to the name of a village 25 miles north-northeast of Arbil in the same vicinity, Babaçiçak (36°33'N 44°10'E). "Suran" probably refers to Soran (36°39'N 44°32'E), a town close to Rawanduz

second, if no accomplished Kurdish scholar from these regions could be found, the trustee (*mutawallī*) shall appoint the teacher from among the Kurdish students currently residing in the madrasa; third, if no one among these students is Kurdish, the trustee shall appoint a Kurdish scholar from among the population of Aleppo; and fourth, if no Kurdish scholar can be found among this population, the Trustee should appoint someone to teach until a Kurdish scholar can be found.[81] Ahmad further specified that the resident students, who received stipends in addition to their lodging, should remain unmarried, and if they did marry, they would no longer be permitted to lodge in the madrasa.

It is clear from the conditions stated above that Ahmad Efendi wished to provide benefits to a population to which he had personal ties, but the origin and nature of those ties are uncertain. It is probable that Ahmad Efendi had personal acquaintance with Kurdish scholars in the region of Aleppo and elsewhere, and that he encountered large Kurdish populations during his tour as a judge in the Ottoman province of Baghdad, part of which was historical Kurdistan. Al-Tabbakh judged it likely that the first principal teacher of the Ahmadiyya madrasa, a certain Ahmad bin Ibrahim bin ʿUmar al-Kurdi al-Surani, had influenced Ahmad Efendi to patronize and uplift this ethnic group.[82] A native of the hinterland of Mosul, al-Kurdi so impressed Ahmad Efendi with his erudition and moral character that the latter summoned him to the instructorship. Subsequently, the extreme fondness (*shaghaf*) Ahmad Efendi had for al-Kurdi, according to al-Tabbakh, induced him to grant the latter's request for the recruitment of Kurds from his birthplace and nearby areas.

Ahmad Efendi's decision may have also been influenced by his personal travels. Relying on local oral tradition, one late 20th-century Aleppan historian related that while traveling through northern Iraq in his capacity as qadi of Baghdad (1749-51), Ahmad Efendi encountered such deplorable conditions of poverty and ignorance (*jahl*) among the Kurds living there that he was moved by compassion to bring about their educational and religious advancement.[83] Indeed, Ahmad Efendi's observation of the wretchedness of these populations is supported by historical events. An army led by Nadir Shah (r. 1736-47) had devastated and depopulated the countryside of Mosul and Arbil prior to its siege of the former

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(s. v. "Rawandiz," *EI²*) and about 45 miles northwest of Arbil. See maps.google.com (accessed 18 June 2013).

81 Al-Tabbakh, *Iʿlam al-Nubala'*, VII, 69-70; and al-Ghazzi, *Nahr al-Dhahab*, II, 49.

82 Al-Tabbakh, *Iʿlam al-Nubala'*, VII, 71fn.

83 Interview with Dr. Ahmad Sardar, Director of the Waqf Libraries in Aleppo (al-Maktabat al-Waqfiyya al-Islamiyya fi Halab), Aleppo, 3 August 1995.

city in 1743.[84] The coincidence, then, of Ahmad Efendi's admiration of a Kurdish scholar and his active compassion for a downtrodden Kurdish group serves as a plausible explanation for his deliberate recruitment policy.

Ahmad Efendi's peculiar ethnic policy also leads one to ask whether he himself was of Kurdish origin. Local oral tradition presents a contradiction, as it relates that while Ahmad Efendi was an Arab, the Tahazâde family (which later adopted the name of Çelebi in the 19th century) traced their *sharīf* lineage through the famous 12th-century Kurdish ruler Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi (Saladin), who was native to the neighboring highlands of western Iran.[85] It does not necessarily follow, however, that Ahmad Efendi was ethnically Kurdish. The Tahazâde (and later Çelebi) family subsequently may have intermarried with Kurds, especially those coming to study at the Ahmadiyya madrasa. Additionally, the publicly recognized association the Tahazâde family had with this ethnic group may have led to the careful manufacture of a genealogy that incorporated and gave honor to both *sharīf* and Kurdish lineages.

The education that Ahmad Efendi designed for Kurdish and other students generally conformed to the local Islamic traditions. The three endowments provided stipends for instructors in the primary Islamic sciences of *tafsīr*, hadith, and Hanafi *fiqh*; to these should be added applied astronomy (*'ilm al-mīqāt*), though the instructors in this subject did not receive regular funding. It should be noted also that the principal teacher (*mudarris*) was to provide, along with the two days of instruction in *tafsīr*, four days of instruction in "whatever he chooses from among the fields of study and other subjects (*'ulūm al-mawādd wa ghayrihi*)."[86] Aside from stipulating the days on which these subjects were to be taught and the amounts of the salaries, no other specifications were made pertaining to the curriculum. What is striking about this program of education is that it does not incorporate the remarkable range of subjects contained in the book inventory detailed in Table 1.

The projected image of Ahmad Efendi as an educator combines elements of a genuine public spirit, a strong interest in the patronage of underprivileged Kurdish scholars, and a vigorous upholding of the canons of Islamic learning. This image is enriched by his personal appreciation of history and of Persian and Ottoman poetry, and his knowledge of astronomical timekeeping. But what can we say about his spirituality?

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84 Robert W. Olson, *The Siege of Mosul and Ottoman-Persian Relations, 1718-1743* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Publications, 1975), 170.

85 Interview with Dr. Ahmad Sardar.

86 Al-Tabbakh, *I'lam al-Nubala'*, VII, 70.

Mystical Pursuits

The pieces of evidence available for the study of the mystical activities of Ahmad Efendi are found in a biographical notice and in the 1765 *waqfiyya*, principally the books in the inventory that are on mysticism (*tasawwuf*), prayer (*salāt*), the occult sciences (*al-asmā' wa-l-hurūf*), and various references to Sufi brotherhoods. The works dealing directly with mysticism display an interesting variety of doctrinal tendencies. Most notable is the sophisticated theosophical text *al-Futuhat al-Makkiyya*, or "Meccan Revelations," of Ibn al-'Arabi (1165-1240).[87] Although this work attracted a very large following across the Islamic world, the antinomian ideas it contains provoked recurring attacks by orthodox theologians, who viewed the work as an innovation (*bid'a*), and therefore heretical. This conflict was continuously played out in the Ottoman Empire, where members of the 'ulama' condemned the widespread adoption of the *Futuhat* as a text in the curricula of local madrasas.[88] The extent to which the ideas of Ibn al-'Arabi were embraced and normalized by Ahmad Efendi is perhaps reflected in the fact that an abridgement of the *Futuhat* by the 16th-century scholar al-Sha'rani was classified in the 1765 inventory not under mysticism (*taṣawwuf*), but rather under ritual prayer (*ṣalāt*).[89]

Representing a very different tendency in Islamic mysticism in the inventory is *Nasihat al-'Alawiyya*,[90] as it is a hagiography of the founder of the Ahmadiyya order, producing and produced by the popular sub-culture of saint veneration in Egypt and Syria, and as such lacks the intellectual sophistication of the *Futuhat*. While these two works are very different in approach, they share a common view that Muslim believers enjoy considerable freedom to explore their spirituality through mystical devotions.

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87 A. Ateş, "Ibn al-'Arabi, Muhyi al-Din Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad," *EI²*. On the *Futuhat* see *GAL* I 442-8, *GALS* I 790-802, and *KZ* II 1238-9.

88 Michael Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1982), 25; and Bruce Masters, *The Arabs of the Ottoman Empire, 1516-1918* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 112-26.

89 *Al-Kibrit al-Ahmar fi 'Ulum al-Shaykh al-Akbar* by Abu-l-Mawahib 'Abd al-Wahhab bin Ahmad al-Sha'rani (d. 1565). The *Kibrit* is composed of selections from another of Sha'rani's works, *Lawaqih al-Anwar al-Qudsiyya fi Bayan al-Qawa'id al-Sufiyya*, itself an abridgement of the *Futuhat* of Ibn al-'Arabi. See M. Winter, "al-Sha'rani," *EI²*; and *GAL* II 336, *GALS* II 335-8, and *KZ* II 336.

90 *Al-Nasihat al-'Alawiyya fi Bayan Husn Tariqat al-Sadat al-Ahmadiyya* by Nur al-Din Abu-l-Faraj 'Ali bin Ibrahim al-Halabi al-Qahiri al-Shafi'i (1567-1635). See *GAL* II 307, *GALS* II 418, and *KZZ* I 104 and II 654. See also K. Vollers and E. Littman, "al-Badawi, Ahmad," *EI²*.

A third tendency is exemplified in the work, *Talbis Iblis*, or "The Devil's Delusion," by Hanbali theologian Ibn al-Jawzi (1126-1200), which defines a rigid and narrow Sunni orthodoxy that condemns *tasawwuf* as an unlawful intrusion into Muslim tradition.[91] Taking a less severe approach to Islamic mysticism, al-Sha'rani's work, *al-Bahr al-Mawrud*, serves as a manual that strictly prescribes ethical behavior for Sufis, and, significantly, denounces among other practices the retreat (*khalwa*), a Sufi ritual that, as will be made clear, Ahmad Efendi encouraged through his patronage of activities in Sufi lodges of Aleppo.[92] Of all the works in the inventory, *al-Bahr al-Mawrud* most closely reflects Ahmad Efendi's seemingly eclectic attitude to Sufism, since the work may be described as an attempt to balance an adherence to the shari'a with a vigorous pursuit of mystical discipline.

Of Ahmad Efendi's actual mystical affiliations, we can be reasonably sure of his initiation into the Qadiriyya, a well-known Sufi orthodox order the origin of which extended back to the 12th century.[93] Al-Tabbakh reports on the basis of a certificate (*ijāza*) that Ahmad Efendi was appointed as *khalīfa* (spiritual successor) and shaykh of the Qadiriyya order in Aleppo, and that he retained that position until his death.[94] The 1765 *waqfiyya* furthermore provides multiple pieces of evidence of his association with the order. The person who made him *khalīfa* and shaykh, *al-Sayyid* 'Umar Efendi b. *al-Sayyid* Yasin Efendi al-Kaylani (or al-Jilani), served as a legal witness at the execution of that *waqf*.[95] Ahmad Efendi also designated a large sum for the nourishment of adherents in self-enforced seclusion (*khalwa*) in the Qadiriyya Sufi lodge (*zawiya*), known as the Salahiyya, in Aleppo. In exchange for this grant, Ahmad requested that those entering into *khalwa* recite each evening a communal form of intercessory prayer, and dedicate the spiritual reward of this act to the souls of thirty-nine deceased persons. Since the *khalwa* customarily lasted thirty-nine days, the prayers made each evening were dedicated to a certain soul. In an implicit ranking of spiritual favor, Ahmad Efendi stipulated that the spiritual benefits derived from the first eight days be conferred on eight

91 [*Al-Namus fi*] *Talbis Iblis* by 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Ali bin Muhammad Ibn al-Jawzi. See H. Laoust, "Ibn al-Djawzi," *EI*²; and *GAL* I 504, *GALS* I 918, and *KZ* I 471.

92 *Al-Bahr al-Mawrud fi al-Mawathiq wa-l-'Uhud* by Abu-l-Mawahib 'Abd al-Wahhab bin Ahmad al-Sha'rani. See Winter, *Society and Religion*, 108-9, 123; and *GAL* II 337, *GALS* II 465, and *KZ* I 228.

93 For a history of the Qadiriyya order and a description of its doctrine and practices, see D. S. Margoliouth, "Kadiriyya," *EI*²; J. S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), 40-44; and Éric Geoffroy, *Le Soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie* (Damas: Institut Français d'Études Arabes, 1995), 225-9.

94 Al-Tabbakh, *I'lam al-Nubala'*, VII, 72.

95 SMS 102, 129.

souls, the first being that of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (d. 1166), the founder of the Qadiriyya order, and the remaining seven on those of the *khalīfa*s that followed successively in the leadership of the order. The remaining recipients were the souls of the members of the Tahazâde family, other members of the Aleppan *a'yān*, and Ahmad Efendi's wetnurses.[96]

A second affiliation is borne out by Ahmad Efendi's grant, documented in the 1765 *waqfiyya*, to the shaykh of the Nesimi lodge (*tekke*) located in Aleppo.[97] The dervishes there were also to receive funds for nourishment during *khalwa*, in exchange for which they were to provide regular intercessory prayer. The mystical practices of this institution are based on the beliefs of 'Imad al-Din Nesimi (d. 1418), a martyred Sufi poet of Turkish origin whose verse marks him as one of the first lyrical poets of importance in Oghuz Turkic classical literature.[98] His poetic production, consisting mostly of quatrains in both Turkish and Persian, must have formed the textual basis for the rites and meditations of this lodge. Nesimi's ties to the city of Aleppo are well established, as it was there where his ecstatic heresies caused the local Mamluk governor to execute him. Nesimi is distinguished by his promotion of the theosophical ideas of Ibn al-'Arabi but even more by his adoption of the tenets of the heterodox Hurufiyya sect (which appears to have historical links with the Anatolian Bektashi order), and his close adherence, both in poetry and practice, to *'ilm al-hurūf*, an occult science that attributes cabbalistic properties to letters of the alphabet and manipulates them to discern the nature of divinity.[99] Reinforcing Ahmad Efendi's links with the Nesimi are two books in the inventory dealing with this science. While the first text, the *al-Lum'at al-Nu'maniyya*[100] of the 13th-century scholar al-Buni was a widely studied manual for *'ilm al-hurūf*, the second text, the *Sharh Asma' Allah al-Husna*,[101] treated the

96 Ibid., 122-3.

97 On the Nesimi lodge in Aleppo, see Heghnar Watenpaugh, *The Image of an Ottoman City: Imperial Architecture and Urban Experience in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 126-7.

98 F. Babinger, "Nesimi," *EI²*; Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "Nesimi," *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, edited by Adnan Adivar et al (Istanbul: Maarif Basimevi, 1950-) (hereafter referred to as *IA*); and Kathleen Burrill, *The Quatrains of Nesimi: Fourteenth-Century Turkic Hurufi* (The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1972), 24.

99 Burrill, *Quatrains of Nesimi*, 38-42; and Bausani, "Hurufiyya," *EI²*.

100 *Al-Lum'at al-Nuraniyya fi al-Kushufat al-Rabbaniyya* of Muhyi al-Din Abu-l-'Abbas Ahmad b. 'Ali al-Buni (d. 1225). See B. Carra de Vaux, "al-Buni," *İA*; T. Fahd, "Huruf, 'Ilm al-," *EI²*; and *GAL* I 497, *GALS* I 910, and *KZ* II 1566.

101 Multiple works by this title are available, but it may be that of the well-known theologian Abu Hamid Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Tusi al-Ghazali (d. 1111). See W.

revered ninety-nine names of God, the principal object of speculation in this field of occult knowledge.

Whether Ahmad Efendi had ties to the Ahmadiyya order is less clear. The only connection that can be made is Ahmad Efendi's possession of the hagiographical work *al-Nasihat al-'Alawiyya*. The Ahmadiyya, a loosely organized order whose central tenet was the veneration of the Egyptian Sufi saint Ahmad al-Badawi (d. 1276), had had a long history in Aleppo. In the period of the Mamluk Sultanate, the cult of "Sidi Ahmad" enjoyed popularity among the provincial ruling elites of Egypt and Syria. So influential did the head of the Ahmadiyya in Aleppo become that after overrunning the city in 1516 Selim I found it necessary to execute him and appoint another in his place, at the same time installing a Turkish administrator to share in the leadership of the order.[102] The Ahmadiyya organization may well have continued to exert influence locally in the Ottoman period to the extent that men of religious and social prominence were attracted to its membership; this was the case in Ottoman Egypt.[103] While there is no other evidence at hand of Ahmad Efendi's association with the order, one is tempted to speculate that his naming of his madrasa the Ahmadiyya is the happy coincidence of his own name and a deliberate attempt to recall the prestige of that venerable Sufi organization.

The inclusion in the collection of a book of prayer formulas attributed to 'Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad and the fourth Caliph, begs explanation. It can be interpreted in two complementary ways. First, Sunni Muslims revered 'Ali as a member of the family of the prophet and considered him to be a key figure in the formation of spiritual lineages claimed by Muslim mystical orders. Second, as a member of the *ashrāf*, Ahmad Efendi no doubt sought to reaffirm openly his ties with the family of the prophet. The collection of prayer formulas can thus be viewed as both a practical text of a practicing Sufi and as with other works in the collection, a symbolic possession of a *sharīf* who wished to enhance his social standing.

What can be said of Ahmad Efendi's mystical activities in their broad outlines? As shaykh of the local Qadiriyya order, Ahmad Efendi possessed considerable spiritual stature and held the weighty responsibility of providing spiritual guidance to adherents (*murid*s). The true Sufi shaykh, according to the 16th-century

Montgomery Watt, "al-Ghazali, Abu Hamid Muhammad," *EI²*; and *GAL* I 420 and *GALS* I 752.

102 Winter, *Society and Religion*, 100-1; and Geoffroy, *Soufisme*, 205-6.

103 Winter, *Society and Religion*, 101.

Egyptian Sufi al-Shaʿrani, deserved the total physical and mental submission of his adherents and could impose widely varying tests of discipline and obedience.[104] Within his order, the shaykh could serve as arbiter and hand down authoritative decisions in disputes arising among his adherents; and he could act as a confessor, since adherents had to disclose their thoughts, good and bad, to the shaykh. Ahmad Efendi's knowledge of the devotional practices of this order, which include ecstatic rites, must have been extensive. It is puzzling why we do not find manuals for the conduct of Qadiriyya practices in the inventory; it is plausible, however, that these texts would have been kept at the Sufi lodge.

Ahmad Efendi's public acknowledgement of his Sufi associations is all the more remarkable since they present an apparent tension: simultaneous membership in an order having strong orthodox tendencies (the Qadiriyya) and another order that presumably upheld heterodox, antinomian beliefs (the Nesimiye). How did Ahmad Efendi, a judge who upheld the religious conservatism of the Ottoman state and a member of the Qadiriyya, explain his membership in this suspect order? He may have eased this tension by being initiated into this order only after his career as a judge ended in 1751. Alternatively, one could view Ahmad Efendi's Sufi associations generally as chiefly personal relationships formed with the various shaykhs, aiming not for rigid indoctrination but rather for participation in a tolerant exchange of ideas and sharing in open devotions.[105] According to this view, the goals of the Sufi novice were to receive training primarily in ethics (*akhlaq*) from a qualified and inspired shaykh and thereby make progress (*taraqqi*) along the Sufi Way, a single, broad cursus that united all of the mystical orders and minimized doctrinal differences. In this light we can view as signs of strong personal ties Ahmad Efendi's designation by name of the Qadiri and Nesimi shaykhs as beneficiaries in the third *waqfiyya* and their presence as witnesses during the execution of the document. By the same reasoning, the absence of an Ahmadi shaykh as a beneficiary, the hagiography notwithstanding, would point to a weaker affiliation with that order or simply a personal curiosity in its system of belief.

Conclusion

The portrait of Ahmad Efendi derived from the surviving documentation enables us to reconstruct, at least in part, how Ahmad Efendi shaped his personal and family identity. By virtue of his distinguished judicial career Ahmad Efendi clearly held membership in the empire-wide Ottoman elite class. As a member of

104 Ibid., 134.
105 Ibid., 101.

the provincial *a'yan*, he was an intermediary, brokering influence in the imperial capital for local clients and interest and status groups. Operating in these two distinct but overlapping worlds he asserted and cultivated additional sources of social, cultural, and religious prestige.

This pattern is no clearer than in Ahmed Efendi's leadership of the *ashrāf* of Aleppo, whose claims to descent from the Prophet Muhammad not only distinguished them from the local population, but also served as the primary basis for effective joint political action vis-à-vis the central Ottoman government. Sharing the claim to ancient Arab nobility through *sharīf* lineage with other Aleppan notables, Ahmad Efendi could often find refuge and support in their solidarity. Yet within this elite group, he appears to have strengthened and articulated a pronounced individual, and by extension family, identity. First, he enhanced his *sharīf* status through occupation of the highest office of local *ashrāf* leadership, the *niqāba*, and through patronage of a library that boasted important works tracing *sharīf* geneaology and praising the family of the prophet.

Related to this claim is Ahmad Efendi's second component of identity, that of a Sufi shaykh. We see this most clearly in his requests for intercessory prayers, where he incorporates a section of his family lineage, and implicitly himself, into the spiritual lineage of the Qadiriyya. This is an attempt to reaffirm in perpetuity the claim of the Tahazâde family to an elevated socio-religious status. Bound up with this spiritual leadership, Ahmad Efendi also appears to have acted on a sort of pre-Ottoman, Mamluk-period civic awareness. He expressed this most notably through membership in the Nesimiye, and possibly Ahmadiyya, Sufi orders, both of which had distinguished, even heroic, roles in the city's Mamluk past, and through the active collection of written histories dealing with that era.

In addition to these assertions of religious and cultural prestige are others of a very different nature, namely, Ahmad Efendi's explicit and extensive patronage of Kurds, primarily from the area of Mosul, as teachers and students in his madrasa, and his generous financial and technical support for the training of timekeepers (*muwaqqit*s). The multiplicity and diversity of Ahmad Efendi's associations that emerge from this study suggest the ways in which the a'yan of the eighteenth century searched continuously for sources of social status and prestige yet also exercised a restless intellectual curiosity and public spirit.

The Self-Fashioning of an Ottoman Urban Notable: Ahmad Efendi Tahazâde (d. 1773)

Abstract ■ While historians have learned much about the political, social, and economic roles of the Ottoman provincial elites (*aʿyān*) in the 18th century, little is known about their cultural orientations and personal interests. Functioning as political intermediaries between the Ottoman central government and local populations, the majority of the *aʿyān* were effectively placed in an ambiguous position between the cosmopolitan demands of service as Ottoman officials and the cultural particularism of the local society in which they were or had become rooted. This study takes in hand the foundation document of a college (madrasa) built in mid-18th century Aleppo by a Muslim judge (qadi) and merchant, Tahazâde Ahmad Efendi. Examining together the document's constituent elements, primarily the library inventory, personnel recruitment strategy, curriculum stipulations, and prayer supplications, this study discerns a calculated and fine-tuned effort on the part of the founder to fashion a distinct and autonomous social status and cultural identity. On the one hand, Ahmad Efendi identifies with the Ottoman legal and social establishment as through the prescribed teaching of Hanafi jurisprudence in the curriculum of the madrasa, the plurality of Hanafi texts in his library, and his cultivation of Turkish and Persian poetry in the *Edeb-i Osmani* tradition. On the other hand, Ahmad Efendi carves out a space within which he asserts his own cultural and intellectual orientation. This is seen most notably through promotion of his *sharīf* lineage and pursuit of group leadership as *naqīb al-ashrāf*, which is reinforced by ownership of prestigious genealogical texts in his library; the cultivation of an pre-Ottoman awareness tied primarily to the Mamluk Sultanate as seen in his concentrated acquisition of chronicles and biographical dictionaries of that era and his affiliation with multiple pre-Ottoman Sufi orders with proud but temporally remote local histories; his extensive financial and technical support for the training of timekeepers (*muwaqqit*s); and, perhaps most strikingly, his explicit and extensive patronage of Kurds, primarily from the area of Mosul, as teachers and students in his madrasa.

Keywords: Aleppo, Tahazâde Ahmad Efendi, Ayân, Urban, Notables, Kurds, waqf, madrasa, self-fashioning

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