

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY OTTOMAN POET MESÎHÎ AND HIS WORKS*

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After the shattered fragments of the Selçuk Empire were gathered together and re-united under the Ottomans, from the middle of the 15th century, the new state started growing into a powerful empire, extending its frontiers with conquests in the Balkans, South and Central Europe and Crimea and reached its golden age during the following century. This was principally due to the fully organised civil, military and legal institutions of the state, as well as its economic prosperity.

The era between 1450 and 1600 is the true starting-point of Divan poetry. A remarkable and widely spread literary activity characterises the period. There is a great number of poets who flourished during the second period and the literature of this time concerned itself with earthly joy: The beauty of nature, the delights of wine and love; but it also had its religious and philosophical aspects.

Mesîhî, as a representative figure of the late 15th century literary age, is to be regarded among the poets of the second rank. But, it is equally evident that he is pre-eminent on this level, and it is perhaps this interpretation that should be placed on the statement of Âşık Çelebi that Ahmet Paşa was the founder of Ottoman poetry in Rum (Anatolia) on its original foundations, Necâtî as the first corner-stone of this structure and Mesîhî is the second. He even goes further in his appreciation, and, with an allusion to the İlsâ legend, he says that he was the Messiah sent to breathe fresh life into poetry, and he ventures to prefer him to Zâtî. It is difficult to know what importance should be attached to such individual judgements of near contemporaries. Do they represent a consensus opinion or are they

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merely prompted by personal taste? The difficulty will persist until a sufficient number and variety of the divans of the period have been made available for study. But, Mesîhî's value and importance in earlier Ottoman poetry before Bâkî is beyond question.

The Life of Mesîhî

What little is known of the life of the poet has been presented by A. Karahan in his article.¹ This does little more than repeat the information given in Josef von Hammer-Purgstall's *Geschichte der Osmanischen Dichtkunst* and E. J. W. Gibb's *History of Ottoman Poetry* which in turn are based on the imprecise and contradictory accounts found in the tezkires of Sehî, Latîfî, Âşık Çelebi, Kınalızâde, Riyâzî, and Beyânî.² These, too, can be further reduced, for the last three merely recast the information of the first three. This information can be briefly summarized.

His name is given İsâ by most of the tezkire authors and Mesîh only by Sehî. It is said that he chose his pen-name Mesîhî, in reference to his original name. Mesîhî originated in Rumeli, from Priştine, an important town in northern Albania near Üsküp. Of his family and social position nothing is known, nor can the date of his birth be surmized with any assurance. He came to İstanbul in his youth intending to enter the judicial career and here he received a medrese education. According to Sehî, Mesîhî also became a sipahi for a short time in his youth.³ However, in using the term "sipahi" Sehî probably intends to indicate the social class with which he was now associated and it may not mean that he actually engaged in military activities. We are not told whether or not he completed

¹ Abdülkadir Karahan, *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Mesîhî mad. vol. 8, pp. 124-126.

² Joseph von Hammer - Purgstall, *Geschichte der Osmanischen Dichtkunst*, Pesth 1836, vol. 1, p. 297.

E. J. W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, London 1965, vol. 2, pp. 226-228.

Sehî, *Heşt-Behîşt*, İstanbul 1326, p. 103.

Latîfî, *Tezkire*, İstanbul 1314, pp. 309-311.

Âşık Çelebi, *Meşâirü's-Şuarâ*, Süleymaniye No. 268, ff. 166a-167b.

Kınalızâde Hasan Çelebi, *Tezkiretü't-Şuarâ*, edited by İbrahim Kutluk, Ankara 1981, vol. 2, pp. 898-902.

Riyâzî, *Riyâzü's-Şuarâ*, Nuruosmaniye No. 3724, f. 134a.

Beyânî, *Tezkire*, Millet No. 757, f. 192a,

³ Sehî, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

his medrese education, but he was to take an interest in calligraphy and distinguished himself as a calligrapher. Consequently, it would appear that he abandoned his studies in favour of the more lucrative profession of divan secretary in which capacity he eventually entered the service of Hadım Ali Paşa, one of the most influential statesmen of the period. But, though Mesîhî found great favour with Ali Paşa, the irregularity of his life and his carelessness in the performance of his duties frequently irritated his master. According to Âşık Çelebi,⁴ whenever Ali Paşa would call him in order to have him copy a letter or document, Mesîhî was never on duty, and the porters sent in search of him would find him at Tahtakale or in some other taverns with his favourites. So the Paşa grew annoyed and deferred his promotion until his conduct improved. In short, if we can believe the gossip recounted by Âşık Çelebi, he led a rather dissolute life and was more concerned with pleasure than with advancement in his career. Ali Paşa was killed in 917 (5111) during the campaign against the şî'ite rebels of Tekke.

After his protector's death Mesîhî found himself in poverty and consequently tried to get another patron. He wrote a simple and moving elegy on the death of Ali Paşa which is remarkable in the literature of the period. Because of the necessity of finding another patron for himself, he introduced the name of Yunus Paşa at the end of this terkib-i bend.⁵ His first attempt to find a new master failed. Then he turned to Nişancı Paşa Tacizade Cafer Çelebi, to whom he offered one of his most accomplished kasides, asking to be taken into Cafer Çelebi's service.⁶ Probably as the result of this appeal, he was rewarded a small fief in Bosnia.⁷ But revenues from this were

⁴ Âşık Çelebi, f. 166a

⁵ Mersiye-i Ali Paşa, Divan, Istanbul University Library, no. 809, f. 12a.

Mesnedi itdi ise terk-i dünyâ

Haşre dek var o a Yûnus Paşa

For further information see Mine Mengi, "Eski Edebiyatımızın Mersiyelerine Toplu Bir Bakış," *Türk Dil ve Edebiyatı Araştırmaları Dergisi* II, İzmir, 1983, pp. 91-101.

⁶ Kaside-i Râ'îye, Divan, f. 6b.

Serverâ gerçi ba'îdem şeref-i hizmetden

Lik dem yok ki du'ân olmaya dilde tekrâr

⁷ Several references in his divan confirm some tezkire authors' remark like Şehî's that Mesîhî enjoyed the revenues of a small fief.

probably insufficient, and he sought to augment his income by presenting kasides to Prince — afterwards Sultan — Selim. However, Selim, who was fighting for the throne with his elder brother Ahmed, was unable to pay attention to the poet, who shortly afterwards died in Bosnia 918 (1512), poor and forgotten.

This is the sum of the facts to be gleaned from the tezkires, and the evidence afforded by his divan adds but little to it, beyond showing that his floruit fell within the reign of Bayezid II.⁸

The Poetry of Mesîhî

As already pointed out, Mesîhî does not occupy a pre-eminent place among the poets of the 15th century. There is however a variety of reasons why the study of this poet and his works is essential for our understanding and appreciation of the development Divan Poetry at this time.

Mesîhî, first of all, is a representative of his age, and his works, especially the Divan, reflect the character of the poetry of the period. It may also be stated in general that no great momentum of literature can arise of itself, and if the greatness of Necâtî or Fuzûlî must be acknowledged, this is only possible owing to the host of poets whose names appear in the tezkires, and who provided both the audience and the background for this achievement. It was among them that the innovations and the style of the great creative poets first found recognition, and by their imitation they helped to create the literary milieu in which the genius of the masters could be properly displayed and receive due appreciation. Mesîhî may belong primarily to this category of literary artisans. Hence one of the most important reasons for working on Mesîhî is that we can hardly appreciate the true genius of the great figures until we are aware of lesser poets.

Ben senûñ bendelerûñ defterine geçmiş iken

Ne revâdur baña pâ-bend ola cüz'î tîmâr (Kaside 8/49)

Ehl-i tîmâram velî bîmâra döndüm himmet it

Ey tabîb-i cân-u-dil bulsun mizâcum i'tidâl (Kaside 13/28)

⁸ In addition to the references given above some other incidental references to the Poet in Âlî's *Künhü'l-Ahbâr* and Müstakîmzâde's *Tuhfe-i Hattâtîn* contribute nothing to our knowledge of his biography. In the *Keşfü'z-zünun*, Kâtib Çelebi gives the date of his death (and the chronogram) as found in *Âşık Çelebi* and *Hasan Çelebi*. Concerning the subject I here have also to mention a brief article, Mine Mengi, "Mesîhî'nin Hayatı, Şairliği ve Eserleri," *Türkoloji Dergisi*, Ankara 1974, vol. 6, pp. 109-119.

On the other hand, it must be kept in mind that the hundreds of names recorded in the tezkire biographies are in all likelihood but a random selection by their authors from a much wider circle in which the writing of poetry was seen as the normal activity of a cultured man and which now had before it models in their own language which could compare in grace and elegance and profundity of thought. In short, true appreciation of a literary period needs study a sufficient number of the poets representing that period.

Divan literature was as a rule limited to certain themes and subjects. Traditional context demanded equally traditional forms, metaphores and epithets in the eulogies, na'ats, tevhids, and in love lyrics. The art of the poet lay in using these in an individual way. In this respect, traditional forms and expressions are, also, used by Mesihî. However, despite the imitating feature of the poetry, Mesihî was able to maintain his own style. There is genuine feeling and a passion for nature in his verses on human joys and sorrows. Together with the expression of joy, there is a moral and religious sentiment to be found in some of Mesihî's poems and this is quite extensive. His poetry is mingled here and there with a gloomy pessimism acknowledging man's endless fate, the transient and inconsistent character of the world and the futility of man's effort.

Dönersin bir yaña ey zülf sen de
Benüm 'ömrüm gibi muhkem degülsin

Basîret ile gözet kim mahall-i hâdisedür
Bulur mı kimsene lutf u kılur mı kişi huzûr

Cihân ne kişiye el virdi k'itmedi pâ-mâl
Zamân ne kimseye lutf itdi k'itmedi makhûr

Zamâne saltanatından bekâ uman görsün
Ki kam Hüsrev ü Dârâ vü Kayser ü Tekfûr

On this point, he seemed to be influenced by Sufism, yet he did not have that yearning to remain aloof from all the joys of life.

Yazmadı çünkü Hudâ defter-i 'ömri bâkî
Câm-ı lâ'lüñ berü sun cânlanalum ey sâkî

Ol safâdan pür idüp na're ile âfâkı
Mest-i lâ-ya'kıl olalum yakalar çâk idelüm

... ..
Mesîhî zâhid o dünyâyı medh ider ammâ
Ne hoşça 'âlem olur bu cihâni hoş görelüm

This was a period in which literary embellishment was almost an essential activity in the shaping of a Turkish literary language. Arabic and Persian elements have already entered the language. Mesîhî does not give any indication of his opinions on the language of poetry, but it is evident that he is on the side of simplicity. Throughout his Divan and in the Şehrengiz Mesîhî, considering the amount of Persian and Arabic elements, uses them less than most of his contemporaries. The following couplet may, in some measure, be a manifestation of his national feeling in reaction to the commencement of the flood of Persianism and Arabism :

Mesîhî gökten inseñ saña yer yok
Yüri var gel 'Arabdan yâ 'Acemden

On the other hand, although it is not certain whether Mesîhî completed his medrese education, or not that he attended such an institution is obvious from his abilities in writing in Persian and even Arabic. In this connection it is, also to be noted that Mesîhî, like his contemporaries, confirming the vogue of his age, wrote three gazels and a few kasides in Persian. So, one of the most prominent features in Mesîhî's literary language is his limited usage of words and expressions from literary Arabic and Persian. This is partly because the functional use of Arabic and Persian, both in poetry and prose, only really commenced in Mesîhî's time, but the development of this vogue and the richness it imparted to Ottoman Turkish as a medium of expression reached its zenith during the following two centuries. Concerning his language, it must, also, be mentioned that, in Mesîhî's Divan, simple sayings, common expressions and proverbs are often encountered. In this respect, Mesîhî follows his pre-eminent contemporary Necâtî who owes his reputation chiefly to his frequent use of popular expressions and proverbs in his poems.

The language of Mesîhî's poetry is consistent with that of other literary works of the period, and in respect of morphology and vocabulary it calls for no particular discussion. His versification is wholly

consistent with that of the other poets of the period. In his kasides he does not burden himself with a redif, and of the twenty-two items of this class, seventeen are rhymed on a single syllable. The five remaining have redifs on the model of many of the kasides in the divans of other contemporaries. Thus, there is – er hilâk, – er jâle, – er nesîm etc.. The metres of the kasides in his Divan are also the most usual ones. The mersiye in the form of a terkeb-i bend also has precedents in the Divans of Necâti and Ahmed Paşa, although the use of the Remel 5 metre for this purpose seems to be original to Mesîhî. Coming to the analysis of the gazels, the pre-dominance of Remel 1 and Muzari 1 conforms with the metre distribution in other divans of the period, but what connection this fact may have with the syllabic metres of folk-poetry, it is still premature to say. One singularity of Mesîhî's Divan in this period is the frequency of Hezec 3 as compared with Hezec 1. It is this preference for the short line that gives so lyrical a quality to much of his poetry, and indeed contributes most to the individuality of the Divan. Within Remel 1 and Muzari 1, too, the frequency of the redif length (–. –) is characteristic of other divans, a fact that may have some connection with Turkish word-pattern.⁹

Persian influence in this age manifested itself in the development of the literary language as well as in the concept of art and in literary forms. Towards the close of the 14th century in Persia, under the leadership of Hâfız and Kemâl Hucendî in the gazel and of Sel-mân-ı Sâveci in the kaside, the lyric and romantic movement emerged. In the second half of the 15th century, those Persian poets who maintained the lyric and romantic tendency in poetry gathered at the court of Hüseyin Baykara in Herat, and the illustrious Câmî stood at the head of this school.

Regarding the artistic concepts of this school, it was principally formalistic. The representatives of the movement now turned their attention to a theory of the beautiful and to a theory of ornament. Consequently they began looking more to style than to the thing expressed. After a short while these aesthetic ideals of the Persian

⁹ The coding of the metres of Mesîhî's kasides and gazels has been already given in the aforementioned article, Mine Mengi, "Mesîhî'nin Hayatı, Şairliği ve Eserleri".

lyric school manifested themselves among the contemporary Ottoman men of letters.

Though, apart from Selmân-ı Sâveci and Kemâl Hucendî, Mesîhî did not mention any of his contemporary Persian poets, he, also, seems to have been influenced by this ideal and formalistic lyrical poetry.

Gün yüzün midhatı ile bu Mesîhî kuluñuñ
Sözü şöretlü durur güfte-i Selmân-şekil

... ..
Hüsrev-i Rûm diye baña Mesîhî şeksüz
Ger irc gûş-ı Kemâl'c kclîmât-ı hasenüm

... ..
Ey sabâ şî'r-i Mesîhî-yi yûri Parsa ilet
Şâd olsun dir iseñ mühçe-i üstâd-ı Hucend

In this connection, the following lines show that Mesîhî treated poetry as an art and appreciated literary beauty:

Nazm ile hüsnünü kıldı hoş-edâ yine Mesîh
Dahi şî'rün nesi var hüsn-i edâdan gayrı

... ..
Takdîr-i ma'ânî-yi bedî' eylemeyince
Şî'r içre Mesîhî bulmaz zîb ü fer elfâz

In short, Turkish literature in the late 15th century continues its development in the traditional forms and expressions. There is a genuine feeling, a passion for nature in verses on joys and sorrows of man and passionate expression of love which is the only meaning of life. On the other hand, there are poems riddled with gloomy pessimism, acknowledging man's endless fate, the futility of hoping for happiness in a transitory world and hopes for happiness in the next eternal world. Subordination to the will of God fostered a passive contemplative attitude to reality, a yearning for aloofness from all the joys of life. The influence of these conventional topics is naturally seen on Mesîhî's poetry, but despite this traditional shape, we must admit that Mesîhî brought into poetry something of his own. His style is sincere and many of his poems are simple.

Necip Asım, in a short article, has remarked on the number of allusions to contemporary social life which are to be found in the Divan.¹⁰ In this respect, Mesîhî is in no wise distinguished from his

¹⁰ Necip Asım, *Tarih-i Osmani Encümeni Mecmuası*, İstanbul 1911, vol. 1, pp. 300-308.

fellow poets. Although he prides himself on the freshness and originality of his imagery, the fact that so many of his gazels contain but the minimum five couplets demanded by the form may be taken as evidence that he lacked a sustained imaginative drive. But always he is witty, and he is frequently capable of a simplicity and directness that make many of his couplets memorable. Latîfî says that his francies are too subtle for the ordinary reader and that consequently he did not enjoy great popular esteem, but where this subtlety lies it is difficult to discern.¹¹ In preferring him to Zâtî, Âşık Çelebi is too imprecise and figurative in his language to allow us to know what exactly were the qualities he found praiseworthy.¹² But these are problems that properly belong to a critical study of the origins of divan poetry among the Ottomans, and one can do no more than allude to them here.

Lastly, as already stated before Mesîhî is not among those most famous poets of his literary age, but he occupies an important place among a few Turkish poets whose fame reached beyond the frontiers of Ottoman Empire. Mesîhî's famous poem Bahariye was translated into Latin by Sir Williams Jones — English orientalist — and published in the Anthology of Asian Poetry in 1774.¹³ At that time, Bahariye was the only Turkish poem that appeared in the anthology and this famous poem of Mesîhî helped Europeans to become acquainted with Turkish poetry. Later Bahariye was, also translated into French, Russian, Serbian, and some other languages.¹⁴

The Works of Mesîhî

As it is mentioned in various sources, Mesîhî's works consist of a Divan, a Şehrengiz and a prose work named Gül-i Sad-Berg which is the collection of letters.

¹¹ Latîfî, p. 310.

¹² Âşık Çelebi, f. 166a.

¹³ Sir William Jones, *Poescos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, cum appendice*, Leipzig, 1774.

¹⁴ For further information see, "Fehim Bajraktarevic, Jedna turska pesma koja je usla u svetsku knjizevnost" (Dünya Edebiyatında Yer Alan Bir Türk Şiiri), *Letopis Matice Sprske*, year 131, vol. 376, Novi Sad, 1955, pp. 142-147. This paper has been translated into Turkish by İsmail Eren under the title of Mesîhî'nin Dünya Edebiyatında Yer Alan "Bahariye"si, *Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi*, vol. 22, 1974-1976, pp. 213-219 and see also, İsmail Eren, "Bahariye'nin Fransızca, Rusça ve Sırpça Çevirileri", *Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi*, vol. 22, 1974-1976, pp. 221-227.

a) *Divan*

The Divan of Mesihî as established in the critical edition prepared as our Ph. D. thesis contains 1 münacat, 20 Turkish kasides, 1 Persians kaside, 1 terkib-i bend, 291 Turkish gazels, 3 Persian gazels, 3 murabba, 2 Persian kıt'as, 1 Turkish kıt'a and a miscellany of fugitive verses and couplets.

The aforementioned edition has been based upon the following five manuscripts:

a) British Museum, Or. 1152 "Charles Rieu, Catalogue of the Turkish Manuscripts in the British Museum", London, 1888, p. 171.

b) British Museum, Arundel Or. 18 "Rieu, op. cit., p. 172".

c) John Rylands Library, Manchester, Turkish, ms., no. 62. An elegantly written manuscripts of 534 ff. containing the divans of fourteen poets of the 15th and 16th centruies. The Divan of Mesihî is in the margins of ff. 2b-92a.¹⁵

d) İstanbul University, no. T. 899 "İstanbul Kitaplıkları Türkçe Yazma Divanlar Kataloğu", İstanbul 1947, vol. 1, p. 87

e) Süleymaniye, Lala İsmail Efendi, no. 483 "İst. Ktp. Yaz. Div. Kat., vol. I, p. 88".

Of these manuscripts only B is dated (20 Rebiü'l-âhir 938) but with the possible exception of C, all are characteristic of works of the early 16th century. Apart from B, which omits all the long poems, they all, too, contain the mersiye on Ali Paşa and the kasides to Sultan Selim and Ca'fer Beg, works which must have been composed within the last year of the poet's life. From this it may be inferred that the original on which all are ultimately based was collected sometimes in the year 917 when Mesihî may have been using it as evidence of his literary abilities in his search for a new appointment.

Yet none of the manuscripts can be accepted as a faithful representation of the original. In general, they exhibit two traditions: A and D forming one group, and the other consisting of B, C and E. These two traditions are sufficiently similar to one another to allow the impression that they may be the author's own recensions of the

¹⁵ For further information see, Mine Mengi, "Bir Şiir Mecmuası Hakkında", *Türkoloji Dergisi*, Ankara 1977, vol. 7, pp. 73-78.

individual poems, with the second group usually containing the more polished and felicitous renderings.

b) *Şehr-engiz*

Besides the Divan, Mesîhî's best known work is his *Şehr-engiz*. The word "şehrengiz" denotes a type of poetical composition which praises or satyrizes the inhabitants of a certain town. According to some critics, among whom Gibb, F. Köprülü, and A. Karahan may be counted, Şehrengiz form was originated by Mesîhî.¹⁶ A. Karahan goes even further in saying that Mesîhî's Şehrengiz is the most successful one among other examples of Şehrengiz form written in Divan Poetry. The exaggerated terms of praise in which Gibb speaks of this work — Mesîhî's truest claim to distinctions as an original poet — wholly disguises the triviality of both the theme and the treatment, and there is in fact doubt that the form was even originated by Mesîhî. Ağah Sırrı Levend in his special study of this type of jesting mesnevi calls attention to the fact that Zâtî composed a similar work of the same title at the same time.¹⁷ Although A. Sırrı Levend does not carry his comparison any further, examination shows that not only do both use the same metre (H3) but the boys of Edirne mentioned in each are the same, also.¹⁸ Thus, we have Na'lbendoglu Ahmed, the talib-i ilm Mahmud, etc, etc. All described in much the same fashion as in Mesîhî. In fact, the works must have resulted from a light-hearted müşâ'ere on an agreed theme between the two poets and the mock mesnevi style was but part of the jest.

E. G. Browne and Hammer also seem to disagree with the idea that Mesîhî's Şehrengiz represents the first attempt in this kind of Islamic poetry. Edward G. Browne says that the kind of poem entitled şehrengiz is not a Turkish invention. Among Mesîhî's contemporary Persian poets, Vâhidî of Kum and Harfî of Isfahan, whose

¹⁶ E.J.W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. 2, pp. 226-228.

Fuad Köprülü, *Yeni Türk Mecmuası*, İstanbul 1933, no. 7, p. 545.

Abdülkadir Karahan, *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, "Mesîhî", vol. 8, pp. 124-126.

¹⁷ Ağah Sırrı Levend, *Türk Edebiyatında Şehrengizler ve Şehrengizlerde İstanbul*, İstanbul 1958, p. 16.

¹⁸ The Lala İsmail, ms., no. 443 which contains the complete text of Zâtî's Şehrengiz was not available for study. The comparison was made with the imperfect text in the Bayezid Umumî Library, ms., no. 3595.

names were mentioned in Sam Mirzâ's *Tuhfe-i Sâmî*, composed similar poems, the former on Tebriz, the latter on Gilan, and though these were probably written later than Mesîhî's Turkish Şehrengiz on Edirne, there is nothing to suggest that they were regarded as novelty or innovation in Persia.¹⁹ Hammer also says that Fakîrî, a minor poet of Mesîhî's time, was the first to produce a şehrengiz.²⁰

It is not known when Mesîhî wrote the Şehrengiz, but it was probably written in Edirne.²¹ None of the aforementioned manuscripts give the work a title, nor would such an expression be applicable to a poem. On the other hand, the description of this type of poem as şehrengiz remains obscure. Şeh-rengiz like şehr-âbûş would be used most probably in description of the beauty, and it can be surmized that if a title had been given to either of these works, it would have been something like: Edirne Şehr-engizleri Vasfinad.

Mesîhî's Şehr-engiz consists of 178 couplets, written in Hezec 3 and contains three parts: Prologue, catalogue and epilogue. In the first two sections of the prologue Mesîhî confesses his sins and asks for God's forgiveness. The next two sections include descriptions of night and of morning. The last section of the prologue is devoted to praising Edirne. The catalogue is chiefly concerned with the descriptions of the beauties of Edirne, each of which is mentioned by name and there a few couplets of comment about the people and their trade in a humorous way. It may be noted that the names are all Muslim and most of the boys belong to the middle class. They are either employed in shops or they are the sons of artisans or shopkeepers. In the epilogue Mesîhî prays to God to bless them and finishes the mesnevî with two gazels.

c) *Gül-i Sad-Berg*

Latîfî is the only one of the tezkire biographers to mention this work,²² though the terms in which he describes it show that it had achieved a certain popularity in his time. It was apparently modeled

¹⁹ E.G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, Cambridge 1930, p. 237.

²⁰ J. von Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte der Osmanischen Dichtkunst*, vol. 1, p. 297.

²¹ A.S. Levend dated the Şehrengiz 918 (1512) by means of the title "Azimet kerden-i Sultan Selim Han der Şehr-i Edirne" appeared in the ms. of İstanbul University Library No. 1532.

²² Latîfî, p. 310.

on the *Gülşen-i İnşâ* of the Nakşbendî Şeyh Mahmud b. Edhem.²³ It consists of a hundred letters and can be presumed to have an especial importance for the study of early Ottoman prose. However, no copy of the work has yet been located. Mehmed Tahir mentions a manuscript of it in the Nuruosmaniye Library, but whether it is actually this work or some other book with the same rather common title has not been determined.²⁴ One cannot help but feel certain reservations on this point, for in his description of the work Latîf's words are used almost verbatim. Neither is the work mentioned by Karahan in the Selim Ağa Library of Üsküdar (Hüdayi, mecmua no. 57) that of Mesîhî.²⁵ Correspondence with the librarian shows it to be a collection of hadis.

²³ Kâtib Çelebi, *Keşfü'z-zünûn*, İstanbul 1941, vol. 2, p. 1505.

²⁴ Bursalı M. Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, İstanbul 1330-1338, vol. 1, p. 160.

²⁵ A. Karahan, *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, "Mesîhî", vol. 8, pp. 124-126.

