ABSTRACT

The Land of the Foreign Padishah:
India in Ottoman reality and imagination

During the early modern period, India constituted one of the nodal points of world trade; yet, the relevance of India has been minimized within the Ottomanist field. This study seeks to elucidate various facets of the interactions of Ottoman lands with India by including evidence in almost twenty languages. It consists of four major sections of two chapters each.

The first section develops a historical sociology of western Asian military men (“Rumis”) in India through sources in Romance languages as well as Arabic, Ottoman, and Persian. Before the rise of the Mughals, Ottoman connections with India were regular but often steered by non-state actors. The second section explores relations between Ottomans and Indian rulers through diplomatic correspondence and travelogues. The sources show that far from displaying Sunni solidarity, Ottomans and Mughals frequently clashed over minutiae of protocol and discourse.

The third section shifts attention from politics to culture. A wide range of Ottoman literary sources, including poetry, chronicles, and geographic literature, demonstrates that India was consistently present within the Ottoman collective imagination. The fourth section surveys Ottoman relations with India in the post-Mughal period through an anthropology of Indian and Indianizing textiles in the Ottoman empire. Evidence suggests that Ottoman textile trade with India peaked much later than it is usually supposed, at the end of the eighteenth century, which requires an examination of Ottoman relations with the emerging British Raj through diplomatic
correspondence and Ottoman archival materials. Rather than destroying Indian Ocean networks, the British sought to reshape them to their own advantage.

The conclusion unpacks the concept of “Oriental” trade, suggesting possible trajectories of research for its constituent parts. Finally, Ottoman, Mughal, and Safavid hegemonic practices are compared and contrasted in order to understand the reason for the continuation of the Ottoman state through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, long after the collapse of the seemingly more powerful Mughals.
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There are many libraries, museums and archives which this researcher has visited through the last few years. In some of them, I was a visitor; in others, a constant presence. In the following, I will concentrate on those most relevant to this project as it stands.

In Europe, I would like to thank the friendly and helpful staff of the following institutions: Hamburg University, including the Asien-Afrika-Institut; the Berlin State Library;
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Upon returning to the US, I have found much delight in the kindness of the library staff at Princeton. In spite of the meager alumna quota of fifty books, they have provided flawless assistance and even friendship. The collections of the library initially seduced me into staying at Princeton; they remain one of my favorite places in the world. While the interactions at Columbia University are generally more impersonal, their rows of south Asian books are my refuge in New York, supplementing Princeton’s unsurpassed Arabic, Persian and Ottoman treasure trove.
In personal terms, there are at least three families which have supported me throughout these years, in addition to many loyal friends. I wish to thank them from all my heart. There is at least one more person who must be thanked; but here, let actions speak louder than words.

*Maja Petrović*

*Princeton, December 2011*
Note on transliteration / transcription

In the course of the writing of this dissertation, a secret battle between a historian and a historical linguist has taken place. In a sense, both have won with the inclusion of numerous citations in the original languages. While this decision is somewhat unusual, it also expresses an ideal toward which we strive: a cultural and social history with a strong philological undercurrent and a reliance on primary sources. Accordingly, about twenty languages are quoted here, some extensively, others by mere sprinklings.¹

Errors are unavoidable, all the more so since the present author considers herself a native speaker of only two of them; the following note, somewhat extensive, explains some of the guiding principles and interim solutions.

Any work which includes extensive quotations in the three classical Islamic languages: Arabic, Persian and Ottoman, as well as modern Turkish, will encounter the challenge of proper transcription.² The following lines offer one possibility of responding to it. Clearly, the transcription practices adopted here cannot indicate how transcriptions will be handled in future publications, since those can vary greatly depending upon a specific publisher’s style guide. In addition, whenever a Latin-script transcription is quoted, especially for Ottoman, the style adopted in the original edition is adopted, leading to some variation and seeming inconsistency.

In his Geschichte der islamischen Welt im 20. Jahrhundert, R. Schulze decided to transcribe all languages written in the Perso-Arabic script in an Arabized fashion, rendering for

¹ It is our hope that we will be able to add classical Malay, Ge’ez and Telugu to this repertoire in the next five years.
² The terms transcription is preferred to transliteration, since the Arabic kataba will be rendered with full vocalization rather than the transliterated ktb.
instance the name of the Ottoman sultan as ‘Abdalmağīd instead of Abdülmecid. Although the
author of this dissertation was initially tempted to follow the same path, since it closely mirrors
the written image and it greatly facilitates the treatment of Arabic loanwords in other languages,
it is obvious that the distinctive phonologies of Persian and Ottoman would suffer through this
treatment.

Eventually, the following decisions were made:

1. Macrons versus circumflex

It seems that macrons, usually preferred by scholars transcribing Arabic and Persian,
have a greater potential to disrupt the flow of reading in documents composed in Microsoft
Word. In addition, they still can cause minor difficulties in terms of the composition of the page,
including proper paragraph spacing, particularly within footnotes. Accordingly, the somewhat
unusual (but not unprecedented) decision was made of adopting in all three languages the
Turkish practice of marking long vowels through a circumflex. This decision also makes the
overall visual impression more uniform and perhaps more appealing.

2. Arabic

As in the case of macrons, many other signs usually adopted in the otherwise admirable
practices of the DMG or the EI for Arabic introduce formatting difficulties. Hence, a simplified
version of the Library of Congress transcription scheme is adopted here, with digraphs, but
regrettably without the subscripts which are necessary for the proper rendering of emphatic
consonants. Accordingly, the voiceless velar fricative خ will be rendered simply as kh and the voiced post-alveolar stop ג as dj. The emphatic voiced fricativeظ will be indicated as z, making a concession to the Perso-Turkic practice. The voiceless glottal stop ه (hamza) will be marked in the middle and final position only.⁴ while the voiced pharyngeal fricative خ will be indicated in all positions by a modified spiritus asper. Long vowels will be indicated by a circumflex. Quotations from the Qur’ân and the Sunna in Ottoman will also be rendered in accordance with the Arabic system (kuntu rather than kiintü). The adjectives “Hindi” and “Rumi”, being omnipresent in the text, will be treated as if they were native to English, without a nisba.

3. The Arabic definite article

Preference is given for the practice of imitating the written image rather than the pronunciation; hence, the article is preserved and the hurûf al-shamsiyya and the hurûf al-qamariyya are not distinguished: Nizâm al-daula rather than Nizâmu ‘l-dawla or Nizâmuddaula. Note, however, that in a few instances Perso-Turkic conventions rather than Arabic ones have been adopted since that seemed more appropriate to a document entirely in Ottoman.⁵ When quoting editions by other scholars, conventions adopted by them will be followed.

⁴ It will be omitted in some words for the sake of the readability, for instance Reis and Târîkh.
⁵ All of them are in section two, chapter four, quoting Ottoman letters to Mughals.
4. Persian

A modified version of Steingass’ *Comprehensive Persian-English dictionary* practices was adopted here. Although modern standard Tehrani pronunciation is making inroads in work of several scholars and in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, the older pronunciation model, closer to the historical pronunciation of Persian-Dari in India, is more appropriate for our purposes. Long vowels will be indicated by a circumflex. See Arabic for details on the consonants, with one exception. Since Persian does not have the voiced labiovelar approximant [w] in most variants, but rather the voiced labiodental fricative [v], ی will be represented as v in both Persian and Ottoman. The silent vâv, commonly represented with a superscript w, is also rendered simply as v.

For a few common names, customary spelling is adopted, thus: Jahangir and Shah Jahan, rather than Djahangir and Shah Djahan. We do not modify the transliteration in those cases when we are citing Ottomanists who adopted an Ottoman transcription for Persian, particularly in our third section. Accordingly, the Persian preposition یwill be transliterated as “ba” in Persian, but “be” in Ottoman.

5. Ottoman

A slightly simplified version of the Ottoman transliteration favored by most scholars in Turkey was adopted. As in the case of Arabic, emphatic consonants will be presented in a Perso-Turkic manner. Unlike in Persian and Arabic, for which digraphs will be used (kh, gh, sh, ch), common Turkish practices will be followed (h, ğ, ş, ç). For simplicity’s sake, đ, or sağır kef,
which represented a velar nasal which became obsolescent in later Ottoman and Turkish, will be rendered as n, and the fricative interdentals ظ and ؤ as s and z rather than th and dh. In accordance with the written image, final stops are not devoiced in Arabo-Turkic names, hence: Murad and Mehmed rather than Murat and Mehmet.

Please note that since we will be citing other scholars’ Latin-script editions of Ottoman literature as well, there will be some variation in vowel length.

6. Izafe and İzafet

In Ottoman and Persian, different conventions are common for the construction, and they will be followed here. In Persian, the y will be written after the hyphen, in Ottoman it will be merged with the previous word.

7. Names of individuals who appear in different sources

Names of people appear in a simplified transcription, meaning that the long vowels are usually not indicated except in quotations. For several people who appear in Ottoman as well as Arabic or Indo-Persian sources, such as Khudavand Khan, usually the Persian reading of their names has been preferred, since they assimilated to the Indo-Persian world. However, in the case of Ottoman court elites and Ottoman ambassadors, the Ottoman version is preferred.

Unless names are part of the title of a book, diacritics are kept to a minimum with the aim of increasing readability.
8. Indian languages

In the case of Indic languages (Sanskrit, Urdu and middle Indic), in which no extensive quotations are given, popular rather than scientific transliteration / transcription has been adopted, e.g. with bhāṣā being rendered as bhasha. Long vowels are unmarked, except in Urdu.

9. European languages

The orthography used by the original edition is respected, even when it is highly unusual (e.g. the Portuguese of the Suma oriental by T. Pires). Occasionally, this also means that diacritic marks in French, Spanish and Italian are different than in the modern standard usage. Similarly, there are instances of antiquated German usage, usually noted as “sic”. English and Dutch are also written in accordance with the spelling given in the original. Latin quotes are indicated without long vowels. Russian is quoted in the original, and in the case of names given in variety of the BGN / PCGN system which has been commonly used by English-language media since the 1950s. Modern Greek and Armenian citations of book titles and brief excerpts also include the original scripts.

When a century is used as an adjective, a hyphen is inserted, hence: “eighteenth-century history”, but “the history of the eighteenth century.”
10. Difference in page number and formatting

Please note that the page numbers in the ProQuest copy of this study may vary from those of the printed version deposited at Princeton University due to its particular formatting requirements. The author of this dissertation has a strong predilection for 1.5 line spacing, but other eyes have different preferences: *De gustibus non est disputandum.*
Note on geographical and ethnic terms

As every student of Mercator’s projection knows, geography is not an entirely neutral science. The terms which we commonly use are conventions, often only distantly related to their original etymology and usage and always covered by many layers of accretions.¹ This is inevitable, since all geographical terms are rooted in specific cultural subjectivities, but it is also the duty of a serious historical work to avoid anachronisms. In order to facilitate reading, many conventional terms are also used in this dissertation without annotations concerning their etymologies, aetiologies, or the finer nuances of their meaning. Hence, a clarification beforehand might be necessary.

Some of the most egregious terms are the names for the two “continents” of Europe and Asia. While they originally indicated the two shores of the Aegean sea, their meaning has gone through many permutations, some of which are innocuous, but others quite sinister in their implications (for instance, consider the Nazi Germany interpretation of “asiatisch”). In European media, “Asia” is still synonymous with “the Orient”, including Turkey and Syria, while in the US, “Asia” often implies east and south Asia alone, leading to puzzling questions such as whether Afghanistan and Pakistan belong to central or south Asia, or to the Middle East. Many other geographical appellations, such as “Indonesia” are modern neologisms. “Asia” will be used here occasionally for stylistic reasons, for instance as in the term “western Asia”, which includes Arabic and Turkic-speaking lands, but this does not mean that we consider a term which covers both Japan and Lebanon unproblematic.

Furthermore, the term “India” is used here in its historical sense, including the territory of modern-day states of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and even Sri Lanka. Correspondingly, “Indian Muslims” implies the Muslim populations of the entire subcontinent, rather than those of the Republic of India alone. The terms “Ottoman” (for the empire, its elites and even its subjects) or “Turkic” (for the languages, including Chaghatay) rather than “Turkish” are preferred, “Turkish” being reserved for the spoken Anatolian Turkish language and the modern Turkish republic. “Iran” and “Persia” are used interchangeably for stylistic reasons. Instead of “Indonesia”, the “Malay world” is used, since Malay was the language of many courts in that region. “Britain” and “British” are the terms preferred to “England” and “English”, in particular since recent scholarship has emphasized the importance of Scottish participation in early modern trade and politics. “English” will be used occasionally for stylistic reasons and especially for the period before the eighteenth century, where it is often completely justified; for instance, for the Roe embassy to India.

As a southeastern European, the author of this dissertation is aware of frequent imprecisions in historical scholarship in which “Europe” tends to refer to western Europe only. Consequently, we will write “western Europe” and not merely “Europe” whenever we refer to France, Spain, Portugal, the British Isles and the Netherlands as one unit, but often simply “Europeans” when we describe men who used to be called “kulâh-poshân” or “Farang” in Persian sources. This is not a matter of nitpicking, but rather of historical precision, since we also distinguish between northern and southern India and western and eastern Anatolia.

2 The traditional term for this part of the world was the more evocative “underneath the winds”. Perhaps “Nusantara” will yet gain ground.
3 T.M. Devine, Scotland’s Empire & the Shaping of the Americas (London, 2003). In addition, many employees of the East India Company and colonial administrators were of Irish or Ulster Scottish origin, making the term “Britain” even more preferable.
Finally, a decision has been made to write geographical coordinates such as “south” or “east” in the lower-case in order to improve readability, hence “southern India” rather than the more imposing (and distracting) “Southern India” will be used.
Māl be-Hindūstān, ḍakil be-Frengistān, haṣmet be-Āl-i Osmān.

Ottoman proverb (late eighteenth century)

Hindi ndiko kwenyego, na waendao tupu wako.

Swahili proverb
Introduction

1. Prologue: Kadanal, Nilam and Manek

Povešću vas u zemlju Indiju,
De štir konju raste do koljena
Djetelina trava do ramena:
Otkle nikad ne zalazi sunce. ¹

In spite of its early onset, the monsoon of the summer of 2008 did not affect Delhi heavily. Yet, some thousand kilometers to the south, in the state of Gujarat, rains were abundant. After exploring local tomb architecture, bookstores and a renowned textiles museum in Ahmadabad for about three weeks, the author of this thesis and her traveling companion arrived in the town of Junagadh at the foot of the Girnar hills, waiting for a rain-free day. While Jain pilgrims traditionally gather in Junagadh to ascend the mountains and visit the numerous temples, the aim of the author was the Uparkot Fort on a plateau in the middle of the city.

After a halting conversation with the auto-rickshaw driver in a mixture of English, Hindi and Gujarati, the citadel was reached. Purportedly built by the Mauryas in fourth century A.D., Uparkot is not quite as impressive as the larger sites of Chittor, Ranthambore or Gwalior, which house multiple complexes of worship and which require a full day of exploration, being equivalent to many a European medieval town.² Yet, it was the first northern Indian fort visited

¹ “I will take you to the land of India / Where amaranth grows up to a horse’s knee / And clove-grass up to his shoulder / Where the sun never sets.” This conclusion to a folk song from the nineteenth century, praising India as a land of wonders and exceptional fertility and warmth, is to be found in vol.I of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić’s Srpske narodne pjesme (first edition printed in Vienna, 1824), no.665. The song reflects spoken language and it appears rustic from the perspective of today’s standardized forms.
² We will encounter Chittor and Ranthambore in our first chapter.
by the present author, and initially it appeared vast. Its stone steps were relatively steep and wet from the monsoon, formidable pools of water needed to be crossed and many sections close to the walls were covered in thick, luminously green vegetation. In addition to a rapidly deteriorating mosque with a few tombs and an unusual mihrâb with tree and blossom ornamentation, the fort boasts late antique Buddhist caves and a deep baoli (steeped well). Yet our attention was elsewhere, for the Uparkot fort also hides several cannons within its walls. According to travel guides, they were rumored to be Ottoman.

The gun labeled Kadanal is located in the southern part of the fort, which is more remote and outgrown. Kadanal is 3.90 meters long, with a girth of about 1.70 meters. Toward its rear, the name of its maker is engraved, perhaps readable as ‘Ali b. Sardja. The gun is adorned with an additional ornamental band in the middle. In spite of its beauty, the plaque next to it with an explanation by the Gujarati archaeological society caused some consternation to the researcher. According to it, one could also read an elaborate inscription at the barrel of the gun, toward the front. Close inspection notwithstanding, no such inscription could be seen, leading our observer to a somewhat desperate conclusion that it had been cemented on its downward side and it was lost to sight forever. The cannon’s gray surface was glistening seductively in the sun, and the author of these lines touched it with some reverence, hoping to find another confirmation of its origin somewhere else within the fort.

A foray toward the northwestern corner of the Uparkot fort yielded several pleasant surprises. Two further cannons, called Nilam (Neelam) and Manek, were placed prominently, adorning the view at the city below. It is said that hope springs eternal in the human breast and

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3 This is the reading according to the plaque discussed below. An alternative reading, ‘Ali b. Hamza, is perhaps possible as well.

4 Possibly in a joking reference to one of the first Indian films, Neelam Manek (1928).
the present researcher was no exception to that rule, leading her to approach the cannons. While Manek proved to be a smaller gun of unclear provenance and without inscriptions, Nilam was larger and more impressive, about 5.2 meters in length. Its sides were also adorned, promising to hold the solution to the puzzle. Like Kadanal, the guns were in excellent shape, without any of the rust which gradually devours Portuguese cannons at Diu.

Unlike Kadanal, which was positioned waist-high, Nilam and Manek were in an enclosure and each was raised on two rectangular blocks. As if to increase the odds, the hesitant rays of sun were gradually being replaced by clouds and a few drops of rain. Our researcher and her companion impulsively jumped across the small wall into the enclosure, drawing astonished glances from Gujarati tourists. The author of these lines initially ignored them, trying to decipher the Arabic inscriptions on the Nilam, and only briefly wondering whether the research visa in her passport would assuage the wrath of some handsomely-mustachioed state official. Perhaps a severe admonishment would follow, but she could not give up the quest. As the drops threatened to unfold into a monsoon storm, she considered climbing the cannon, which was approximately at eye’s height, and copying the inscriptions while sitting on it. While her companion was willing to assist her in this eccentric endeavor, assuring her that walls and subtropical rains were no match for ardent pursuit of knowledge, considerations of modesty and the constraints of a delicate shalwar-kameez garment prevailed.

Some parts of the inscriptions were readable at the cost of bending one’s neck at previously inexperienced angles. Gujarati observers concluded that jumping the fence must be another scurrilous angrezi habit (although the transgressors were as Balkan as they come) and turned their attention away from the gun-inspecting couple. The date, Muharram 938 H., and the place, Egypt, were quickly identified from the third stripe on the left side. The second stripe,
crossing the right side and the top, included the name “Sultân Sulaymân Khân b. Salîm Khân ‘azza wa nasarahu.” Elation at the discovery continued with the following fragment. Although the plaque next to Nilam described the maker as the aforementioned ‘Ali b. Sardja, who as we saw had crafted the Kadanal gun, the inscription on this gun proclaimed “‘amalahu Muhammad b. Hamza.” Deplorably, the remaining part of the inscription, facing the gray sky, remained out of reach.⁵

Leaving the enclosure with as much dignity as possible, the author paused on the wall, scribbling several barely legible notes. There were clearly minor mistakes on both plaques by the archaeological society, because the Nilam gun bore the more extensive inscriptions attributed to Kadanal, while Kadanal had been created by the gunsmith whose name was on the Nilam plaque. Perhaps the plaques had been switched, and barring further information, it was unclear how, when and why the guns had been transported from Diu to Junagadh. After all, Akbar, the third Mughal pâdishâh, had attempted to transport them to Agra and failed!

Yet, the inscription on Nilam proved beyond doubt that at least one and probably all three of the guns had been brought to Gujarat from Egypt for the sake of the 1538 expedition against the Portuguese in Diu. Subsequent inspection of the plaque and the comparison of its English and Gujarati texts, which matched without discrepancies, yielded yet another pleasant discovery: The Gujarati word for “cannon” was “top”, bringing the researcher back to her native Bosnia for a brief moment and reminding her of a mischievous rock song by Goran Bregović and of her own father’s service in the Yugoslav army as an artillery gunner.

⁵ Eventually, the missing pieces were located in S.H. Desai, Arabic and Persian inscriptions of Saurashtra (Junagadh, 1980), explicitly naming the Portuguese as their target. Desai also assumes that “Hamza” rather than “Sardja” is correct.
While the exuberance of the moment remained unblemished, a recent search through the annals of the internet suggests that someone may have commented upon the intrusion of the researcher into the enclosure with the cannons. The surface of Nilam, with its precious inscriptions which had tempted the author, is now covered by an additional protective housing, preventing any future climbing attempts. Perhaps the most apt reaction is gratitude rather than rancor, since the housing proves that Gujarati museum keepers cherish their heritage. Besides, the author can swear with her hand on the Mir’ât-i Ahmâdî that encouraging bored Junagadhî teenagers to climb five-century old Ottoman cannons has never been one of the aims of the present study.

2. Why Ottoman India?

To the extent that every human endeavor is motivated by subjective factors, the author of this thesis recalls a moment which carried the seeds of an inter-Asian study. The object in question is a fragmented, yet vivid memory of seeing the movie Shatranj ke Khilari (The Chess Players)⁶ by the famous Bengali director Satyajit Ray.⁷ While the plot of the film was too complex and nuanced for a ten-year-old to grasp, it posed many intriguing questions of identity and aesthetics for any Balkan viewer. Its heroes were Muslims, but they were not Ottomans, and the word “Turk” never occurred in the movie. There was no standard narrative of oppressed

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⁶ Also often transcribed as Shatranj ke khiladi because of the retroflex flap.
⁷ The film is based upon the short story of Munshi Premchand (d. 1936), a scion of a scribal family who initially wrote in Urdu and ultimately became one of the most important figures in twentieth-century Hindi literature. Shatranj ke khilari was also originally composed in Urdu as Shatranj ki bâzî, and subsequently translated into standard literary Hindi. Satyajit Ray’s interpretation preserves the original outline and flavor, while adding many other elements and subplots. Premchand’s story can be found in practically every Hindi edition of his work, but the freshest translation is located in D. Rubin, A. Rai, C.K. King, tr. and ed. Premchand Omnibus (New Delhi, 2004).
peasants or Christian minorities. The men did not wield scimitars and yataghans; instead they recited poetry and played chess, which was something that only Russians were supposed to do well. The general atmosphere was somehow Indian, especially in the attire of the women and the music, but there were no Hindu priests or yogis. Although it was a tragedy, no one died. For more than a decade, the author could not remember the name of the film, but its images remained with her and occasionally resurfaced, leading her to wonder whether Ottomans and “those Indian Muslims” co-existed in the same space and time. This study is, in part, an attempt to answer those youthful questions.

Yet, subjectivity tells us only one aspect of the story. Perhaps scholars cannot avoid being marked by their time and its particular interests. Japanese academic studies in the US flourished in the Nipponized cultural atmosphere of the early 1980s. Similarly, in the course of the last twenty years, the rise of China as an economic powerhouse has invited many hyperbolic predictions about the future and the ascent of “Asia” as a whole. Some of the analyses should be taken seriously, while others proffer titillating exoticisms and pseudo-historical metaphors. However, it is undeniable that these social developments also introduced a renaissance in the studies of China and other parts of Asia. The number of students enrolled in Chinese language courses has skyrocketed since the 1980s, eventually increasing the number of talented scholars who work on topics relevant to Chinese history and culture. In particular, the work by the so-called “California school” of history transformed the academic field of Sinology. The best-known among those scholars is K. Pomeranz, who has stressed the importance of ecological and

demographic factors in the eventual rise of Britain in the nineteenth century as opposed to China. 9

With somewhat less fanfare, the field of South Asian studies has also been transformed since the 1980s. Throughout the twentieth century, India has boasted excellent historians, particularly in the field of economic and social history. 10 However, certain methodological and conceptual impediments have weighed heavily on its historians. The unwieldy tripartite division of India’s history into ancient (i.e. pre-Islamic), medieval (Islamic) and modern (British) imposed a strait-jacket on the curiosity of the researchers. India’s ancient history, per definition, was primarily marked by religious and artistic concerns; the medieval period was defined a time of universal decline and violence, and the British period, the time of modernity, left such deep imprints in the memory of academics that it could not be discussed without arousing politically charged anxieties.

The newly-formed states of south Asia, including India and Pakistan, had to contend with conflicted narratives about their recent past. While colonialism had been rejected by the intellectual elites who were raised in the 1920s, they could not repudiate modernity, which had been one of the cornerstones of their own identity. Correspondingly, as elsewhere, the history of the last five hundred years was interpreted largely by the projection of a linear, teleological development which favored western Europeans, whose global expansion had presumably started in the sixteenth century and reached its glorious peak in the 1880s. The colonial period was

10 Veritable giants of Indian historiography are R. Thapar, whose recent rewriting of *The Penguin History of Early India* (Delhi, 2003) may be the single best book on Indian history and I. Habib, among whose many works *The Agrarian System of Mughal India* (New Delhi, 1999) remains particularly noteworthy.
viewed as unjust and detrimental to the colonized, but in some ways necessary in order to eliminate the detritus of degenerate feudalism and clear the path for an energetic and enterprising modernity.

Since the early modern period had been viewed as synonymous with European expansion, the collapse of most of the western European empires in the mid-twentieth century contributed to a temporary, yet significant drop in interest in the age of explorations and commerce. Many of the best historians of European commercial expansion from the former generation had acquired their knowledge in the context of administrative duties in the colonies; correspondingly, profound changes in the global arrangement of powers in the 1950s and the 1960s led to a tendency among British, Dutch and French historians to concentrate on their “national histories” instead of those of the interactions with former colonies. Conversely, many Indian historians preferred to focus on the history of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century or on the venerable “antique” period. While the Muslim period of Indian history retained many ambivalences, a salvific image of a distant, virtuous past, offering cultural pride in the achievements of one’s remote ancestors, emerged in the popular consciousness.

Much of the narrative above, mutatis mutandis, can be transferred onto modern Turkish, Arab or Persian historiographies. In the Arab and the Persian case, an idealized past was found in the pre-Mongol period for the former and the Achaemenid and Sassanian ages for the latter. In the Turkish republic, which had been spared the experience of a long-term colonial rule, historiography and identity formation followed a somewhat more complex path. The traumatic experiences of the second half of the nineteenth century, culminating in wars and social collapse during the first two decades of the twentieth century, ultimately found a fortunate resolution, at least for the majority of Anatolia’s Muslim population. The most recent past of the 1920s was a
reason for pride, not shame. Yet a general pattern similar to those of Iran and India had been followed, with the idealization of the pre-Islamic self as more robust, brave and masculine. The Ottoman period, similarly to the Safavid and the Mughal times, carried many associations which were ambivalent, bewildering or even agonizing.

While Balkan and Turkish historians have both passed severe judgements on the Ottoman state, it is interesting to compare their perspectives. For most Balkan historians, Ottomans signify ethnic and economic oppression. Philosophically speaking, because the conflict is purported to be at an ontological level, it can never be resolved, since “Turks” always stand for Asiatic intruders and non-European aliens. Of course, the same dilemma had been torturing Russian historians (“the Mongol yoke”) as well as early twentieth-century Chinese intellectuals (“the Manchu yoke”).

Turkish historians have found themselves in a difficult situation throughout the twentieth century, neither being able to embrace their past nor to completely disown it. While in recent years the political climate has led to a romanticization of the Ottoman culture and its elevation as supposedly morally superior to our confused times, for most of the twentieth century the Ottoman empire was generally disliked by Turkish historians. Although some criticisms of the Ottomans included the charge that they were ethnically non-Turkic, the primary accusation which intellectuals and the general educated public leveled against the Ottoman state was not

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11 Even the emerging Bosniak elites are ambivalent about the Ottoman heritage, idealizing their cultural traditions, but also continuously stressing the “Europeanness” and the “modernity” of their Islam.
12 For the Russian historiography, see C. Halperin, Russia and the Golden Horde: The Mongol Impact on Medieval Russian History (Bloomington, 1987). Popular historiography of China still refers to the Manchu yoke, but the recent scholarship on Manchu institutions is highly sophisticated and it relies on knowledge of Manchu documents which were not known until the 1980s. See M. C. Elliott, The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China (Stanford, 2001) and G.R. Li, Manchu: A Textbook for Reading Documents (Honolulu, 2000).
that it was oppressive, but rather that it diminished in vigor and gradually became incompetent and backward.\textsuperscript{13}

With the passing of several generations, it seems that time has come to assess the early modern Islamic empires in a more balanced light. Particularly since the 1990s, some researches have sought to initiate fresh interactions between the historians of the early modern Islamic oikoumene. Initially, the focus of investigation was economic history. In part, this interest had been motivated by Marxian debates on the Asiatic mode of production, which were especially popular in the 1970s, but later discussions became much broader in scope. Notably, a symposium was held in the May of 1990 in Munich on the topics of the state, decentralization and tax farming in the Ottoman empire, Iran and India. Many of the attendees consequently became well-known historians, yet the symposium remains somewhat mysterious. No proceedings have been published and interest in comparing tax regimes of the Eurasian empire eventually petered out.

Impetus for the rapprochement of the three fields occurred somewhat later. In India, the “medieval” period had been customarily analyzed by specialists in Persian and Arabic, usually from a Muslim background, with a fairly strict division of labor between them and the scholars interested in the early modern European expansion into Asia, who primarily used English (and occasionally Portuguese, French and Dutch).\textsuperscript{14} Historians who were familiar with Sanskrit, Pali or middle Indic sources formed their own separate group as well. Some of the members of the latter group were primarily interested in epigraphic evidence and positivist conclusions; others

\textsuperscript{13} The “standard Balkan” and the modern Turkish interpretation of the Ottomans can be fruitfully juxtaposed by reading Ivo Andrić’s \textit{Na Drini čuprija} (Belgrade, 1945) and Orhan Pamuk’s \textit{Beyaz Kale} (Istanbul, 1985). In the former, Ottoman rule is depicted as irrational because of gruesome torture; in the later, because of intellectual stupor.

\textsuperscript{14} A. Das Gupta, \textit{Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat, c. 1700-1750} (Wiesbaden, 1979).
were more literary.\(^\text{15}\) As a rule of thumb, those boundaries were only rarely crossed by professional historians.

Hence, S. Subrahmanyam initiated somewhat of a transformation by integrating fields which had been held strictly separate, as he worked on European colonial history (primarily through Romance-language sources), Indo-Persian cultural questions (drawing upon Persian and implicitly Urdu) and the problems of southern Indian historiography as well (cooperating with scholars of Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu).\(^\text{16}\) In addition, Subrahmanyam has also displayed an interest in the history of southeast Asia and Japan.\(^\text{17}\) Other Indian historians, particularly in the field of economic history, have also questioned the traditional image of the Mughal and post-Mughal period as one of inevitable decay, and employed sophisticated arguments and methods of analysis.\(^\text{18}\) This development was unfortunately accompanied by some relatively acerbic debates between the two camps of the “Aligarh school” and the “Cambridge school”, but both sides have produced significant works in the course of the last two decades.\(^\text{19}\) In a twist familiar to many Ottomanists, the apple of discord was the question whether the eighteenth century was a time of

\(^{15}\) In the absence of significant Indian-language archives outside of Rajasthan and Maharashatra, epigraphic evidence is highly valued in India and frequently employed in economic studies.


\(^{17}\) See P.J. Marshall, ed., *India and Indonesia during the Ancien Régime* (Leiden, 1988).


\(^{19}\) Emblematic for the “Cambridge school” has been the work of C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars, North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770-1870* (New Delhi, 1992); F. Perlin, *The Invisible City: Monetary, Administrative and Popular Infrastructures in Asia and Europe, 1500-1900* (Aldershot, 1993); and M. Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India, Awadh and the Punjab, 1707-48* (New Delhi, 1986). In addition to I. Habib, the “Aligarh school” is represented by S. Moosvi, *The Economy of the Mughal Empire, c.1595,* *A Statistical Study* (New Delhi, 1987); M. Athar Ali, *Mughal India: Studies in Polity, Ideas, Society and Culture* (New Delhi, 2006); I. Alam Khan, and others.
decline or relative commercial prosperity. Fruits of these historiographical discussions also included a revived interest by Indian scholars in all parts of Eurasia, including the Ottoman empire.

Simultaneously – and perhaps more surprisingly – the field of Safavid studies also experienced a renaissance, with a significant number of younger scholars who were intrigued by cultural and social questions. Many had an excellent command of Persian, leading them to reread neglected Safavid chronicles. Some of them even turned toward Ottoman studies to substitute for the loss of the Safavid state archives in the 1720s, and they read and quote Ottoman and modern Turkish sources. Concurrently, new studies of the Armenian diaspora, associated with the figure of the Safavid ruler Shah ‘Abbas I, have further enriched our understanding of the early modern period. Finally, studies of the Timurid period have also been revived, leading to some substantial insights about Turco-Persian identities of central Asia.

Turkish scholarship has reacted relatively slowly to these developments. In the 1980s, scholars of Ottoman economic history seemed to discover numerous parallels with early modern

20 For a representative set of articles, see S. Alavi, ed., The Eighteenth Century in India (New Delhi, 2002).
India and China. However, the few promising studies which were produced concentrated on broad comparative questions, rather than situating India or China within the same economic space and time as the Ottomans. The injunction to steer away from a perspective of the Ottoman state as being *sui generis* and unanalyzable was followed, but it led to a recurrent strong influence of European-based analyses of early modern France and England and the applications of their historical debates to the Ottomanist field.

To some extent, this development was inevitable. While Indian students of the Mughal state and its predecessors are required to develop a strong competence in Persian, which for many led to an increased interest in Iran and central Asia, most Ottomanists prefer to learn French, German and only occasionally Russian. This tendency is necessary and welcome; indeed, in the conclusion to this thesis, we will argue that the Ottoman empire was “European” from its very start. It was never merely “Oriental” or “Asiatic”; its interactions with Greeks, Slavs and Italians were crucial in the early formation of its identity. Throughout the early modern period, communication with western Europe were never impeded or forbidden, and many Dutch, British and French residents felt at home in Istanbul, Smyrna and Aleppo. Parallels between the Ottoman empire and early modern France in particular have led to crucial insights

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26 The reference here is of course to R.A. Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Albany, 1991). The influence of French historiography, in particular the *Annales* school, has been strong on many of the masters of Ottoman history, including H. İnalci, Ö.L. Barkan, and S. Faroqui.

27 Contrast the development of Japan. Although the country had imposed a strict *sakoku* policy, which barred the bulk of its inhabitants from any direct contact with western Europeans, it was able to modernize rapidly after the Meiji period and reach a high standard of development throughout the twentieth century. The tragic events of March 2011 may reshape the future of the country to a great extent, but this is not the place to discuss them.

28 Recent Dutch scholarship stresses the rooted nature of the Dutch communities in Smyrna, including the marriages of Dutch men to local (“Levantine”) women.
about the nature of land-based *anciens régimes*, including the cultural and economic phenomena of bribes and tax farming. Briefly, Ottomans can never be properly understood without their European component.

Nevertheless, studying Ottoman-European relations still touches a raw nerve in the Ottomanist historiography. *Cet état subsistera-t-il? Dieu le veult-il?* The all-enveloping question whether the Ottoman empire could have survived if it had been more rational, more scientific, more colonialist, more mercantilist and more western European continues to haunt Ottoman studies. Do at least some Ottomans, and by implication, the modern Turks, belong to rational modernity and the successful states of western Europe or not? An affirmative answer implies that Turkey might ultimately join the EU, while a negative answer brings old anxieties to the fore, with direct political consequences. In that respect, excessive comparative focus on western Europe and its development can lead to a troublesome circularity. European historiography, as a sole conceptual resource, simply cannot solve many Ottoman social and cultural questions, because it does not do them justice. For instance, Anatolia on its own can be fruitfully compared to France, but the entire Ottoman empire cannot. The difference in quality and scale is too significant. The point here, obviously, is not to denigrate the relevance of European sources and methods, but rather to indicate that some of our questions about the Ottoman state and society can only be resolved through a more profound study of other Islamic and Asian states. Otherwise, the Ottomans will always appear to be an anomaly among Europeans.

29 Most recent developments seem to steer Turkish leadership away from its long-term EU aspirations, but it is too early to make predictions in either direction.

30 This definition of units of comparison comes from the aforementioned work by K. Pomeranz, in which he points out that it is not adequate to compare the entire Chinese empire to the nation-states of England or France. Instead, western Europe should be compared to similar regions of China, such as the Yangtze valley.

31 For instance, eunuchs or harems can only be explained through studies which compare those institutions in other Islamic and non-Islamic societies. On the other hand, seemingly undignified phenomena such as interest in strange
Of course, there are many other rationales for the lack of India-relevant Ottomanist scholarship. Relative scarcity of studies on the relations of the Ottomans and the rulers of the Indian subcontinent could be explained by geographical remoteness of India in relation to the Ottomans. Having no common borders, leaving much of their trade to western European actors and Armenians, the Mughals and the Ottomans acknowledged each other’s existence, but limited their interactions to sporadic and even perfunctory embassies. For the greatest part of their history, the Ottomans concentrated on Anatolia, the Balkans and also Syria and Egypt in their role as the protectors of the Holy Cities. They never efficiently extended their rule into the Persian Gulf past the strategically and economically important port of Basra. For strategic reasons, they were compelled to pay constant attention to the actions of the Habsburgs and the Russian rulers.

However, in this context we must also point out a general disinterest by Ottomanists in exploring relations between contemporaneous Muslim rulers. There are no major studies of Ottoman relations with the Uzbeks, and even fewer on their interactions with Oman, Indonesia or sub-Saharan Muslim states. Yemen disappears from the historians’ horizon between the 1620s and the 1870s. Even more significantly, the number of Ottomanist monographs which involve the Safavids after the demise of Isma’il Shah is very small, although the Safavids remained important contenders for hegemony among the Shi‘a subjects of the Ottoman empire. Safavid-Ottoman animosities ceased for most of the seventeenth century, yet they were latently present in

animals, dwarves or mutes would have made sense to Italian and Spanish contemporaries. Embarrassed silence about those social factors will not help us to understand them.

32 Strikingly, even comparisons and analyses which seem immediately relevant, for instance with the early modern Russian state, have not been extensively explored. The political history of Ottoman relations with Austria-Hungary is relatively well fleshed out, but many cultural and administrative parallels still elude us.

33 The notable exception is the study by C. Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun güney siyaseti: Habeş Eyaleti* (İstanbul, 1974).

34 Some of those works will be mentioned in section two, chapters three and four.
their interactions in the Caucasus, a region that progressively gained importance in the formation of Ottoman elites. However, serious study of the Ottoman Caucasus (let alone one which would include Safavid sources) is still woefully absent.35

All of this implies that the heritage of the nineteenth-century trauma for the Ottomans is still with us, in all of its positive and negative implications, as it determines the questions being asked. Was Sa’âdabad built under French influence or should we look eastward toward Chihil Sutûn? To employ a European example, surely no-one would deny the French influence on the castle of Sans Souci, even if the French and the Prussian states were not always amiably disposed toward each other and did not share the same religious confession. Yet, in the case of the Tulip period, one sounds vaguely transgressive when implying that the Safavid influence on the Ottomans may have been as strong as the French.36

Returning to our original interest in relations between Ottomans and India, we must recognize that in spite of several studies which have engaged with their aspects, many vital questions still elude us. While recent works have been stimulating in their implications, they remain broadly comparative and of an introductory character.37 Since in the Ottomanist field as a

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35 This lacuna has been filled by some high-quality Azeri scholarship on the Caucasus (particularly concerning folklore and toponymy), but because of political and cultural reasons, including the cultural and psychological barrier of the Cyrillic script and the lack of scholarly dialogue with Azerbaijan during the Soviet period, Azeri historiography is barely known in Turkey. Also see R. Motika, M. Ursinus, ed., Caucasia between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, 1555-1914 (Wiesbaden, 2000), which deserves to be better-known.


whole there is much more urgency to understand European-Ottoman than Indian-Ottoman relations, the latter are always viewed through the lens of European activities in the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, even the Portuguese are not allowed to simply represent themselves; rather, they are usually symbols for the entire western European colonial endeavor of the nineteenth century, implicitly amounting to a weak precursor for the British domination of India. Subsequently, traditional telling of the narrative always leads to the conclusion that Ottomans and Indians somehow failed to measure up to the Europeans.

As many nationalist studies of the previous century have unwittingly demonstrated, glorification of the pre-colonialist “purity” and strength of Asian realms is a path plastered with holes, and portrayals of an undisturbed golden age are invariably infused with sentimentality and excessive subjectivity. Hence, there is little to be gained by portraying Asian empires and their leaders as superheroes and paragons of virtues who lost the economic and the political battle, but retained moral superiority.

On the other hand, it has been proven time and again since the publication of F. Lane’s studies on Venice and the spice trade in the 1940s that the western European presence in the Indian Ocean and its impact on the traditional trade has been vastly exaggerated; yet, instead of describing a complex process which took centuries to unfold, many historians still succumb to the teleology of the seductive image of the Iberian discoveries bursting forth in the sixteenth century, reducing all non-western actors to instant passivity and decay. Hence, the course of global history seems predetermined since 1492. Even among Indian nationalist scholars, this has been a prevalent interpretation of the events, and Vasco da Gama and his Portuguese crew were

Social Scientist 30 (9/10), 2002; and the final chapter in R. Lal, Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World (Cambridge, 2005)
taken *pars pro toto* to signify an entire new age – an age which was exciting and romantic, but in which “Asians” were destined to play a losing part.  

More recent analyses, represented by P. Brummett and G. Casale, appear at first to break with convention. Both authors are at their best when they disentangle interactions between Italian and eastern Mediterranean rulers (Brummett) or the configurations of personal power at the Ottoman court (Casale), and they infuse genuine passion in their story-telling. Adventurous tales and grand schemes are foregrounded. Yet, India remains a static stage for them, with little agency for Indians themselves. In their analyses of Indian Ocean, the authors rely on general works, and largely on Romance language sources. Although Persian and Arabic language sources are crucial to this history, they are not incorporated, except for references to Ibn Iyas in Brummett’s work. Consequently, the old narrative resurfaces in novel garb, and the authors mainly differ from it by ascribing ambitious, proto-colonialist motives to the Ottoman elite. However, in order to grasp the dynamics of early modern period, we surely need something more than a romantic narrative of great battles between heroes and villains.

### 3. A many-colored brocade: structure of the dissertation

The present dissertation does not content itself with offering yet another revisionist interpretation of the sixteenth century. Obviously, since the exploits of the sixteenth century

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38 According to some historians, the age of Da Gama only ended in India in the 1940s. See K. M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance: A Survey of the Vasco da Gama Epoch of Asian History, 1498-1945* (London, 1959). Only recently has this belief been relativized.

39 See P. Brummett, *Ottoman seapower and Levantine diplomacy in the age of discovery* (Albany, 1994), and G. Casale, *The Ottoman age of exploration* (Oxford, 2010). For other works on this topic, including the many valuable articles by S. Özbaran, see section one, chapter one and two.
occupy such a large portion of Ottoman(ist) imagination about India, they must be addressed. However, they remain only one episode within long-term relations between Ottomans and India, since the roots of an Ottoman India are even older than the Ottoman empire. Ultimately, they can be traced to the conquests of Timur in India and Anatolia, and even to the times of the Delhi sultanate. We will also find that much of Ottoman-Indian diplomatic correspondence focuses on Iranian matters. Thus, implicitly, the exploration of Ottoman-Indian relations always involves Iranian and central Asian elements. To some extent, all three major “gunpowder empires” drew upon a common set of ideologies and experiences which stemmed from the reconfigurations of the post-Mongol period. On the other hand, they also developed in very different locations, with different cultural and social substrata, leading to substantial variations in their hegemonic practices.  

Conceptually, our intention is to provide a moyen durée study of Ottoman relations with India, which originate in the fourteenth century and only end on the eve of the twentieth century. Certainly, such a wide scope demands selectiveness. One of the central reasons for the importance of India in the Ottoman world rested upon India’s economic success. Throughout the early modern period, India represented endless wealth and opportunities, and a large portion of the international monetary and commercial order revolved around India’s seemingly insatiable need for silver. This study is fully cognizant of India’s centrality in the early modern world, but it addresses it somewhat implicitly and on a political and cultural rather than economic level.

40 For Safavids, see R. Matthee, “Was Safavid Iran an Empire?” in JESHO 53 (1-2), 2010. Also see the conclusion for an extensive discussion of those matters.
41 The Braudelian term moyen durée is consciously chosen here rather than the more famed longue durée, which is properly only applicable to geographic / geological time.
42 Initially, at least one chapter of this thesis was intended to focus on the economics of trade with India. See the final conclusion for the explanation of some of the relevant questions and research.
This dissertation consists of four major sections. Each of them is comprised of two chapters which are closely related thematically. The first two sections adopt a more Indian-focused perspective, while the last two are firmly rooted in an Ottomanist framework. This choice was made consciously in order to illustrate the wider tendencies and the shift which has occurred globally since the eighteenth century with the fragmentation of the Indian Ocean networks and the rebalancing of global economies and politics away from Asia and toward the Atlantic. Paradoxically, in spite of its many weaknesses, the Ottoman realm gained in global importance politically and economically as the fortunes of India waned. However, in the fifteenth through the late eighteenth century, India and China were undoubtedly the most important centers of world economy, forming our starting point.

In our first section, we will revisit the *problématique* of the Ottoman exploration of the Indian Ocean. In contrast to recent studies, our interest resides in what might be described as a historical sociology of western Asian men in India and the adjacent areas. We contend that Ottoman interactions with the Indian Ocean world were not primarily formed by visionary or shortsighted decisions by prominent men at the Ottoman court. Rather, the framework for the Ottoman dynamics of the Indian Ocean had been shaped by a long-lasting trend which for decades encouraged western Asian adventurers and mercenaries to seek their fortune in India, regardless of their relation to Ottomans and other states in the region. In spite of its power, the Ottoman center could not implement any of its decisions relevant to India without accommodating to this social reality. In this context, we partially draw upon the concepts applied by J. Paul to central Asian history. Within many possible interactions between state and society, Paul stresses the importance of intermediaries (*Vermittler*) who are often only loosely connected
to the state and who frequently act as independent agents. Correspondingly, this section proposes that a re-definition of the term “Rumi” is needed for the Indian Ocean environment, and that the terms “Rumi” and “Ottoman” do not necessarily overlap.

In the second section, our attention shifts to the political and cultural environment at the courts of the major Islamic empires of the early modern period. Relations between the Ottomans and Mughals (and their successors) are explored through the means of diplomatic correspondence (including many quotes from documents in Persian and Ottoman) and western European travelogues. We suggest that in this instance as well, nineteenth-century concerns and anxieties have been projected into the past. In the traditional view, relations between Ottomans and Mughals have been interpreted as being mostly cordial and fraternal, as befitting two Sunni Hanafi empires. It is usually concluded because of the vast distances and the permanent threat of European colonialism, they were never able to communicate efficiently or carry out joint action, adding to their passivity and helplessness. We owe much to researchers who pursued this line of argument, since they located and deciphered much of the diplomatic correspondence; however, their conclusions are not always supported by the evidence.

Indeed, protracted silence between the two empires was not an inevitable by-product of geographical impediments; rather, it was intentional. Before the eighteenth century, Mughals

43 J. Paul, Herrscher, Gemeinwesen, Vermittler: Ostiran und Transoxanien in vormongolischer Zeit (Stuttgart, 1996). We do not agree with some of Paul’s framework, but the notion of various kinds of intermediaries constitutes a very helpful heuristic.

44 On “Rumi” as an identity, also see S. Özbaran, Bir Osmanlı kimliği: 14.-17. yüzyıllarda Rûm / Rûmi aidiyet ve imgeleri (Istanbul, 2008). In section one, chapter two, differences between those two concepts of “Ruminess” will be discussed. Of course, a well-informed south Asian historian will know that early modern India was a magnet for mercenaries, but such an idea is quite novel in the Ottoman(ist) context.

45 The reference here is to the highly valuable works of R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents on Indo-Persian relations, 2 vols. (Karachi / Tehran, 1979-1982) and N. R. Farooqi, Mughal-Ottoman Relations: a study of political & diplomatic relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire, 1556-1748 (New Delhi, 1989) as well as to older scholarship, much of which we owe to H. Bayur, the Ottoman master of Indian history. See section number two, chapters three and four, for this discussion.
and Ottomans were able to construct separate imperial hegemonies without much interference from western Europe. Their interactions with each other reminded them painfully that they were not the only large Islamic empire. Their respective hegemonic advantages, defined in the pithy Ottoman proverb as money and honor, also clashed. Consequently, their relation to each other was marked by quarreling over minutiae of protocol and discourse, and genuine moments of Sunni solidarity were exceedingly rare. In the course of the century-long economic boom in the Mughal India of the seventeenth century, Ottomans were indeed in the weaker position, and they had to accommodate to the Mughals. The situation gradually became reversed in the eighteenth century, when Ottomans gained much prestige in the eyes of many Indian rulers. However, it is quite certain that Ottomans were never viewed as holding the universal caliphate before the collapse of the nineteenth-century Muslim political order in India. Thus, rather paradoxically from the Ottoman point of view, they gained in stature in India even as the nineteenth century progressed and they weakened in many other areas.

Our third section shifts the attention from the political sphere to cultural areas. It explores changing Ottoman perceptions of India, tracing subtle transformations as Ottoman elites reacted to the centrality of India in the early modern world economy. Effort has been made to include a wide range of Ottoman literary sources, including early Anatolian heroic narratives of Battâlnâme and Sari Saltuk, travelogues and geographic works of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, Ottoman historical chronicles, as well as a wide selection of Ottoman poetry in which India and Indians appear as literary topoi. In spite of the classical ideals

46 While the bulk of the evidence for both poetry and prose was consulted in traditional manner, recent availability of Ottoman literary sources online, including edited versions of divans by Ottoman poets, has certainly contributed to the fullness of the discussion. In addition to “major” Ottoman poets such as Fuzuli, Baki, Hayali, Na’ili or Nedim,
inherited from the Persian poetry, the category of “Indian” was flexible and we find that Ottoman poetry often responds indirectly to political and social encounters with India. Indeed, India was well-presented within the Ottoman collective imagination, sometimes as a dream and occasionally as a nightmare. Ottoman authors were certainly aware of questions of inferiority and superiority which inevitably surfaced every time the Mughal India was mentioned.

Our fourth section initially continues with the focus on the cultural area. Its first part, the seventh chapter, strives to define Indian commodities which were desired by Ottomans. While Ottoman spice needs were mostly satisfied through Dutch mediation, Indian textiles were a different matter. Most of the early modern world, including large parts of Eurasia, coastal Africa and Europe became enthralled with Indian fabrics in the second half of the seventeenth century. Yet, their predilections varied, making the anthropology of Ottoman taste very different from east Africa, Thailand, or the Netherlands. Conventional wisdom has held that Ottoman trade with India disappeared after the fall of Hormuz in 1622; nothing could be further from the truth. Consequently, in our seventh chapter, we will define a specifically Ottoman urban market for Indian textiles which maintained a steady demand solidly into the nineteenth century in spite of significant political changes. We will address the importance of Indian textiles as physical and symbolic evidence, building a bridge between the lyricism of the previous section and the harsh realities of the finale. Our claim is that Indian-inspired changes in Ottoman fashions relate to hegemonic questions in complex, non-linear ways.

Consequently, the second part of the fourth section (chapter eight) focuses on the dénouement of the Ottoman-Indian relations. Ottoman relations with the emerging British Raj

whose works have been edited and published decades ago, other, lesser-known authors also mention India and Indians, offering us a wider scope of Ottoman ideas and perceptions.
are explored through the evidence of Persian diplomatic correspondence, English-language travelogues, and, most importantly, about two hundred documents from the Ottoman archives. While British colonial rule introduced profound changes in the Ottoman relations with India, it is manifestly untrue that it destroyed communications and commerce across the Indian Ocean; indeed, in many respects, Ottoman relations with India and Indians became more intensified than before.

The end of our journey will bring us to the general conclusion of this dissertation. The multiple strands of our investigation will be brought together in an overview. The importance of additional languages and sources will be briefly addressed. We will also offer a short investigation in how Ottoman and Mughal hegemonies were similar to each other and in which respects they differed, offering some theoretical underpinnings as well. Furthermore, some vital questions concerning commercial interactions between India and the Ottomans will be mentioned, concluding in a brief discussion of new horizons and desiderata in the studies of early modern Islamic oikoumene.

The wide and seemingly disparate scope of evidence in this dissertation emerged quite naturally as a consequence of Ottoman interactions with India, since some of the most fruitful discoveries were made coincidentally and mentions of India kept appearing in unexpected places. Gradually, this diversity emerged into a heuristic device. In each of the sections, various forms of evidence are emphasized intentionally in order to elucidate a different aspect of the interchanges.

47 Three times as many documents have been collected for the purpose of this study, but many of them will have to be explored in future publications for reasons of space and thematic coherence.
In the first section, we rely on European chronicles from the age of exploration (primarily in Portuguese, but also in Italian, Spanish, French and Latin) and on Ottoman, Yemeni and Gujarati sources on the other hand. Most of the Gujarati evidence from this period is in Persian, but the chronicle of Hadjdji al-Dabir Ulughkhani, composed in Arabic, provides key information which has not been addressed since the 1920s. We will also include some of the most significant Arabic-language evidence from Yemen. Obviously, any further analysis must include a more extensive review of the fairly abundant sources from Egypt, Iraq and the Hijaz. There are also indications that southern Indian languages, especially Deccani Urdu, Marathi and Telugu, could contribute toward the question of Rumi presence in the Deccan. As our study of classical Malay progresses, we expect to be able to integrate additional southeast Asian sources in the future.

The second section, whose core part is the seventeenth century, draws upon Ottoman correspondence with Indian rulers, especially with Mughals. Slightly more than half of the epistolary evidence is in Persian, because it was the chancellery language of India at the time, and because Ottomans occasionally also employed it in their interactions with Indian rulers. Incidentally, correspondence teaches us that the question of language was not culturally neutral, and that the Indo-Persian court environment of the Mughals reacted differently to the Ottoman language than Safavids or Uzbeks. After Babur, Chaghatay was abandoned as a major language

48 For a description of Portuguese sources which are relevant to the Ottomanist field, see “Portekizli Tarihçiler” in S. Özbaran, Yemen’den Basra’ya Sınırdaki Osmanlı (Istanbul, 2004). We will include all four major historians discussed by him, namely Correia, Barros, Couto and Custanheda, in addition to a few others.
49 For the sources, see section one, chapter one and two. Perhaps the only scholar to work with those sources in recent period is E. Ho, The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean (Berkeley, 2006). His excellent work is focused on the importance of the Hadramaut and Yemen in the Indian Ocean.
50 For instance, see S.K. Ayyangar, Sources of Vijayanagar History (Madras, 1919). There are currently at least three Ph.D. candidates in the US working on different cultural and social questions concerning the Deccani sultanates.
of written discourse, although it was symbolically cultivated and taught to the princes even into the eighteenth century. Paradoxically, while the Timurid heritage of Mughals was consistently elevated, Turkic languages were coded as less elegant and more provincial than Persian.

In addition to the diplomatic correspondence in Persian and Ottoman, major Mughal chronicles, which are vital for the formation of Mughal hegemony, are included. Every effort has been made to cite the evidence in the original Persian, but sometimes concessions had to be made to the English version of the chronicles. Safavid evidence is also frequently included, since many of Ottoman-Indian interactions revolved around their relations to Iran. Furthermore, European travelogues (primarily in English, French and Italian, to a lesser extent in Latin and Dutch) are cited as the evidence for comparisons drawn between Ottomans and Mughals by their contemporaries.

The third section prevalently features Ottoman-language materials from prose and poetry, with a few additional sources in Arabic and Persian. A future version of this section of the study will most likely be expanded to include a discussion of Ottoman translation and revision of the late medieval Arabic geographical sources. A few important Ottoman works, such as the Iskender-Nâme by Ahmedi from the early fifteenth century, the renowned Künhü‘l-ahbâr of Mustafa ‘Ali and the charming Muhayyelât of the late eighteenth century have been excluded or

51 Many of the best-known Mughal chronicles were published in the nineteenth century in Persian and English. In the course of the twentieth century, only the English versions were regularly reprinted, leading to an uneven availability of those sources even at major universities. In many cases, out of a three-volume set, only one might be readily available in Persian, but usually all three in English. For those reasons, some of the chronicles are cited in English, although this researcher certainly has a strong preference for working with the original. It is expected that this will be remedied in the published version of this part of the study.
only briefly discussed purely for the reasons of space, but they certainly deserve extensive analysis.\textsuperscript{52}

As mentioned above, the fourth section consists of two parts. Unlike our other previous chapters, it will draw from a smaller array of languages (primarily English, French and Turkish, with sprinklings of Dutch, Armenian and modern Greek), concentrating on visual evidence. The second part extensively relies upon Ottoman archival sources. The thread which connects them is the fate of Indian trade in the nineteenth century. In a future incarnation, the last chapter will also be expanded to include additional archival evidence from India and Britain, as well as late Ottoman travelogues in India, which range from newspaper reports and Ahmed Hamdi Şirvanlı’s \textit{Hindustan} to span even into the 1930s and the 1940s, with Halide Edip Adıvar’s \textit{Inside India} and Falih Rifki Atay’s \textit{Hind}.\textsuperscript{53} However, to properly do justice to those sources, a re-centering in the nineteenth and the twentieth century, including questions of modernity, nationalism and communalism, is necessary. For our current purposes, the \textit{moyenne durée} of Ottoman relations with India must end with the empire itself.

A famous Chinese pilgrim to India, the monk Xuánzàng, said that its names were many and perplexing. Commonly, it is assumed that the story of Ottoman Indias starts (and ends) with the Portuguese conquest of the western Indian Ocean. Nevertheless, there are other genealogies. Some reveal the times when Turkic peoples from the Tarim Basin used to study Buddhist scriptures, perhaps preserved in the etymology of the common Oghuz word \textit{güzêl}; others reflect southern Iraqi perspectives of a vast ocean with many islands. We also might have chosen


Armenian visions of India, presumably pragmatic yet unexplored, or Persian ones which arose after the Mongol conquest of Iran, and in which the figure of the Indian can be both despised and admired. All of these narratives have their own validity, but before we address any subjective multiplicity of Indias, we will follow the footsteps of some highly unprincipled men who rode horses and carried cannons across the ocean. We will not be alone in this endeavor. Indeed, once upon a time, a Genoese navigator perhaps sought to imitate them by sailing in the opposite direction.
Section I

The Age of Intermediaries
Dizia a ElRey que como seu escrauo [...] mandaria chamar os rumes, com que faria no mar tão possante armada com que [...] lhe tomaria as fortalezas, o que podia fazer muy leuemente. E que tomando a India aos portugueses seu nome seria alevuantedo sobre todos os senhores do mundo [...] com que ficaria mais nomeado que o Grão Turço.

Gaspar Correia

Wa sârû yakhdimûna khawânîn al-Hind, tama‘an fî kathrat al-‘ulûfati.

Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Nahrawali

Bu vilâyet âher padişâhîndur. Bundu bizüm hükmümüz geçmez.

Seydi ‘Ali Reis
Chapter 1
Of Men and Horses:
Anatolian Military Labor in India

1. The glorious sixteenth century

Nearly all monographs on the relations between Anatolia and south Asia in the early modern period concentrate on the Portuguese and Ottoman struggle for the control of the western Indian Ocean.¹ With few exceptions, the works focus on the period when the Portuguese control of the Indian Ocean was the strongest, from the beginning of the century to ca. 1540, more rarely depicting later events as well.²

If we follow the most common reading, in which the confrontation between the Ottomans and the Portuguese is a proto-colonial drama set on the vast stage of the Indian Ocean, Vasco da Gama’s journey in 1497-99 serves as a prologue to the main act, in which the martial hero, the governor of India, Afonso de Albuquerque, wanders the seas, conquering ports and building fortresses, without meeting a worthy opponent. Meanwhile, the Ottomans, although largely successful in their territorial expansion, dawdle in their Mediterranean galleys, lurking at Italian shores, ignoring Portuguese carracks and Indian Ocean expanses. Goa on the Konkani coast passes from Bijapuri into Portuguese hands in 1510, the independent sultanate of Melaka in the

¹ See H. Melzig, Büyük Türk Hindistan Kapılarında, Kanuni Sultan Süleyman devrinde Amiral Hadım Süleyman Paşa’nun Hint Seferi (İstanbul, 1943); A. Asrar, Kanuni Devrinde Osmanlıların Dini Siyaseti ve İslam Alemi (İstanbul, 1972); and M. Y. Mughul, Kanuni Devri, Osmanlıların Hint Okyanusu Politikası ve Osmanlı-Hind Müslümanları Münasebetleri 1517-1538 (İstanbul, 1974).
² S. Özbaran, The Ottoman Response to European Expansion: Studies on Ottoman-Portuguese Relations in the Indian Ocean and Ottoman Administration in the Arab Lands During the Sixteenth Century (İstanbul, 1994), and articles by C. Orhonlu. More recent scholarship will be discussed in extenso below.
Malay Peninsula in 1511, the small but immensely significant island of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf in 1507 (decidedly so in 1515) as well as Masqat in the same year.

The accomplishments of Albuquerque’s rival and the first viceroy of India, Francisco de Almeida, such as the conquest of Sofala, the chief seaport of the Zimbabwean empire of Mwene Matapa (Monomatapa), in 1505, his attacks on other significant Swahili ports, and his building of fortresses in the Kerala ports of Kannur (Cananor) in 1505 and Kollam (Quilon) as well as Kochi (Cochin) in 1503 tend to remain in the background, merely implied, as Almeida is seen as somewhat of a scheming careerist in contrast to Albuquerque. The dramatic defeat and death of Almeida’s son Lourenço at a sea battle at Chaul, south of Bombay, and his subsequent vengeance in Diu (1508) have received more detailed attention, yet the outcome of Portuguese actions remains perpetually marked by the great visionary Albuquerque. In this narrative version of history, which ends tragically with Albuquerque’s demotion and death in 1515, the Portuguese king ignores his vision to continue the conquests and favors his rivals. The pathos is matched on the Ottoman side by the death of Piri Reis half a century later, as his knowledge and skills are similarly disregarded by his sovereign. Yet, the Portuguese win the struggle, since after Albuquerque’s death, the Indian Ocean de facto becomes a Portuguese lake, whereas Ottomans, although successors to the Mamluks, lose their chance to remain a world power through trade or colonialism. In addition, they squander their victory over the Safavids at Çaldıran with the implementation of a ban of silk trade from the east and “Oriental goods” in general, bitterly

4 As noted above, the spelling “Reis” rather than “Re’is” will be adopted in this dissertation for aesthetic reasons.
regretted later by the Sultan Süleyman, but irreparable. Later encounters between the Ottomans and the Portuguese merely serve to accentuate the lessons of the tale. Strikingly, the Ottomans implicitly focus on the wrong targets, as they ignore the riches of the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans (in old parlance, the Indies), and steer instead for central Europe and the Mediterranean, taking Belgrade in 1521 and Rhodes in 1522, carrying victory at Mohács in 1526, but failing in their attempt to conquer the ports of Europe at Vienna in 1529. (Another scholar believes that the Ottomans made a mistake by fighting against fellow Muslims, stating that “the Ottoman empire would have been better advised to stake its future in Europe”.) Scholars may then agonize over whether Ottomans even understood the significance of India, since they barely attempted to colonize it.

This reading of events has deep roots. Although the sixteenth century has been “disenchanted” among Europeanists as the site of impetus for the “rise of the West”, as more recent interpretations favor a gradual development starting ca.1100 and resuming after some fractures in the eighteenth century, the period between 1490-1580 remains an academically privileged sphere. There is a separate journal reserved for it, illustrating Braudel’s comment that specialists in the sixteenth century tend to be somewhat possessive of their period. Even more significantly, in popular historiography and common memory, the first third of the sixteenth

century represents an accumulation of glorious moments and a center of historical gravity which models the perception of the entire early modern period.

To illustrate our argument, let us conduct an experiment and enumerate the dates and the events of the sixteenth century which may be familiar to the educated, non-specialist historian. From the discovery of the Americas (1492), the opening of the Portuguese route to India (1497-9), Portuguese conquest of strongholds in the Indian Ocean (ca.1503-1515), the posting of Luther’s theses which unleashed the Reformation movement (1517), accession to throne by Charles V (1519), the Battle of Pavia in which the fate of Italy is decided (1525) and the proclamation of the Anglican church (1533), we confront some of the most exciting moments in European and world history. This period conveniently ends with Iberian / European triumph in the new world and the subjugation of the Mexicah⁸ (Aztec) empire, starting in 1519-21 and concluding in the 1530s. All of these take place in a roughly 40 year period, which is then taken *pars pro toto* to signify all of the sixteenth century in Ottomanist studies as well.⁹

It is highly significant that most general histories of Ottoman presence in Europe gloss over the years which follow. In most standard narratives, the next date of importance associated with Ottomans occurs some thirty years later, as they dramatically lose their navy in the encounter at Lepanto in 1571¹⁰, prefiguring the defeat of the Spanish armada in 1588, which is a sign for the Ottomans and the Iberian powers to initiate their decline and leave the center stage of history. Significantly, as we have seen, this observation is not merely valid for Ottoman history.

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⁸ This is the wider ethnonym by which the Aztecs called themselves, regarding “Aztecatl” as derogatory. Of course, following the Spanish orthography of the time, it is pronounced “Meshika”.

⁹ This tendency is very pronounced in the study of P. Brummett, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* (New York, 1984). In his review of Brummett’s work, A. Hess addresses the difficulty of drawing generalizations based on a “narrow slice of Ottoman history”. See *IJMES*, 27 (3), 1995.

¹⁰ Of course, in the standard version of the events, the readers are not informed about the Ottoman success in rebuilding the fleet and reconquering Tunis barely three years after Lepanto. See A. Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier, History of the Sixteenth Century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago, 1978).
We may conclude that after ca. 1530, very few dates and events of the sixteenth century come immediately to the mind of the non-specialists, unless they were formed in the French or German tradition, in which e.g. 1572 and 1648 mark formative points for the national consciousness. Hence, for the non-specialist, whether Ottomanist or not, the period from 1492-ca.1533 signifies the sixteenth century *tout court*.

In spite of our skeptical tone in the depiction of the events above, they indeed mark the appearance of a new historical period. We cannot deny the long-lasting significance of so many striking occurrences clustered within an exceptionally short time span. However, through our little experiment, we have also noticed a distortion in the manner in which this historiography has been received by the general public. Certain moments are heavily privileged, emotionally charged, and etched into our collective memory; others, although of similar significance, are left unclear. For instance, in the Americas, the conquest of the *Mexica* (Aztec) is a moment of high drama as Cortés and Motecuhzoma face each other, yet the conquest of the much larger Incan empire by Pizarro has not achieved similar fame, as it is viewed as mere repetition of the same pattern. In terms of the Portuguese expansion, the failed attack on Kazhikode (Calicut) on the northern Malabar coast in 1510, the decision to abandon Soqotra in 1511, the lifting of the siege of Aden in 1513, and the Gujarati sack of the Portuguese factory in the Maldives in 1519 are rarely mentioned in the series of events. Albuquerque’s professed ambition to enter the Red Sea, conquer Jerusalem and possibly destroy the holy cites of Islam is seen merely as a piece of braggadocio, not as a real – and failed – project. In 1513, Albuquerque tried to enter the Red Sea and he was not able to pass the Kamaran island. Even when his successors were able to enter the Red Sea past the Bab al-Mandib, as in 1517 and 1541, they had great difficulties replenishing themselves, and were never able to build a fortress except on the Kamaran island. Portuguese
aims in the western Indian Ocean were not accomplished, leading them to concentrate on other areas, such as eastern African coast, the Bay of Bengal, China and Japan. Yet, in terms of the historiography of the Red Sea and the western Indian Ocean only the memory of the 1510s remains with us.

Through the emphasis on certain elements of the narrative and certain actors at the expense of others, we never learn that many men on Portuguese ships (except for the upper echelons of command) were converts or *mestizos* of African and Indian origin, rooted locally, but with very little direct experience of Portugal.\(^{11}\) Post-Albuquerque developments are similarly glossed over, for instance the Portuguese laborious engagement with the gold-rich Mwene Matapa kingdom in Zimbabwe, the clashes with the Ottomans in Ethiopia, the development of a Bengali trade with far fewer martial episodes, the importance of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines, or the consequences of the battle of the three kings in 1578 in Morocco. All of these events shaped Asia and the Indian Ocean trade significantly, yet they have been given extensive scholarly attention only recently. This selective historical memory means that the Portuguese arrival in India is frozen in time, along with the echoes of the very different, but roughly contemporaneous Spanish conquests of the Americas, so that the reality of the 1520s is projected into the rest of the sixteenth century and beyond, and a linear, exponential nature of European conquests assumed.\(^{12}\)

\(^{11}\) As alluded to by the English ambassador Roe, who in 1615 described his Portuguese adversaries as “barbarous miscellaneous people”. Letter to the viceroy of Goa, p. 57, in W. Foster, ed., *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India, 1615-19* (New Delhi, 1990).

\(^{12}\) Few historians have been able to analyze western European expansion with the clarity of Luis Filipe F.R. Thomaz, one of the most respected historians in Portugal today. For him, the true problem is situated at a more profound level than merely establishing the course of events, namely, “to know whether the seeming relative unity of European expansion is merely external and formal, or whether it is authentically intrinsic and material.” Thomaz’ work has been crucial in understanding different modes of empire applied by the Portuguese in Brazil, western Africa and the
We realize the significance of such distortions only when we analyze the mismatched temporal and spatial relation between Ottoman and Portuguese presence in the Red Sea. In the conventional reading of history, the Portuguese were forced to find a route to India because the “Turks” blocked them from the access to the Red Sea. Ottomans are thus depicted as either an aggressive and fanatical force on the road to India, or, alternatively, as an ignorant or indifferent obstacle for the spice trade. As for the Portuguese actors, they tend to become reduced to mere abstractions after the death of Albuquerque in 1515, since they fulfilled their teleological role of circumnavigating Africa and colonizing India, thus defeating the “Muslim Turks”.

The actual development of the events, as it has been understood in the last several decades, may be summarized as follows. Although their realm was continuously expanding, Ottomans were not yet even the masters of entire Anatolia, let alone the Red Sea, at the height of Portuguese involvements in the Indian Ocean. Hence, the main advantages of the Indian Ocean trade did not accrue to them in the same measure as to the Burji Mamluks of Egypt, but they were well aware of its profits. In the course of several decades preceding the appearance of the Portuguese, Ottomans, Mamluks, Venetians and other regional actors had fought with weapons and diplomacy alike for dominion over the eastern Mediterranean. The Portuguese interruption of the spice trade and their attempts to enter the Red Sea endangered everyone’s Arabian sea. See his article entitled “Expansão portuguesa e expansão europeia – Reflexões em torno da génese dos descobrimentos” in De Ceuta a Timor (Lisbon, 1994).

13 See the classic work by W. Heyd, Histoire du commerce du Levant au Moyen Age, 2 vol. (Leipzig, 1885-86). Heyd’s study, while out of print in western Europe, is still the most easily available study of “Oriental trade” in Turkey. We will address it in our final conclusion.

14 A debate on this statement is in Lybyer, “The Ottoman Turks and the Routes of Oriental Trade”, The English Historical Review, 30 (120), 1915.

15 They would only come to rule most of it in ca.1517, after the collapse of the Aqqoyunlu, the defeat of the rulers of Qaraman and Zulkadir (Dhû al-Qadr) and the Qızılbaş under the Safavids. See the extensive study by M. Ventzke, “The Case of Dulgadir-Mamluk Iqta’: A Reassessment of the Dulgadir Principality and its Position within The Ottoman-Mamluk Rivalry”, JESHO, 43 (3), 2000.

interest and brought rivals to relatively quick cooperation. Venetians and Ottomans offered material assistance to the Mamluks, building up their fleet. After an initial success in India, the Egyptian fleet was destroyed, and Mamluk position severely weakened as the patterns of spice trade were in a process of flux and readjustment.

A few years later, the course of events allowed the Ottomans to exploit Mamluk weakness and conquer their territory quite effortlessly, while making new arrangements with Venice. As a consequence of political stability, much of the spice trade recovered, serving the markets of Ottoman domains and much of central and eastern Europe and Italy as well. In other words, this was certainly not a global clash of faiths or cultures. Instead, we witness Christians (Venetians and Ragusans) endangered in their economic interest by other Christians (Portuguese), leading them to assist Muslims (Mamluks and Gujarati sultans) in spite of papal bans, and in the aftermath, other Muslims (Ottomans) who conquer Muslim (Mamluk) territory while proclaiming themselves ghâzis. As for the conflict between the Ottomans and the Portuguese, they engaged somewhat reluctantly in several military encounters, mostly of low-level intensity, which took place much later, roughly from 1538-67, subsequently making many semi-tacit agreements in the interest of trade, everyone acting in accordance with the varying availability of resources and the demands of Realpolitik. Of course, religion was not merely ideological. Many men rallied to its cause and were prepared to die fighting for it, but it represented only one manner of building alliances among many others. This version of the events has been accepted as the standard narrative among specialists in the last few decades, and it

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18 F. Lane, “The Mediterranean Spice Trade: Further Evidence of its Revival in the Sixteenth Century”, The American Historical Review, 45 (3), 1940. Lane’s view has been widely accepted by specialists in the last several decades.
should be common knowledge, yet the older, reductionist interpretation of Ottomans as Muslims *par excellence* and Portuguese as proto-colonialists is still ubiquitous in popular literature and occasionally present even in recent studies on the Indian Ocean which may still conflate Mamluks and Ottomans into undifferentiated “Turks.”

Since the heroic and personalizing version of events seems so tenacious and resistant to even minor modifications of the narrative, there must be a strong affective attachment to a retelling of the story of the Ottoman-Portuguese conflict in dramatic tones and the ever-present heroes and settings. “European” and “Asian” historians may invert the signs in accordance with their preference, labeling either the Portuguese or the Ottomans as the villains of the piece, but they both insist on the dramatic quality of the narrative, on the impact of individual decisions, and on the spectacular moments of confrontation which could have turned the course of history.

We may suspect that the heightened and persistent concern of scholars with these early sixteenth century episodes in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea constitutes an attempt to grasp something far larger than the immediate implication of the Portuguese actions. The subtext appears to indicate the following: if, as we have been taught, the Portuguese arrival in India

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19 This mistake is unfortunately still quite common, see e.g. M. Dunn’s “Pfeffer, Profit und Property Right: Zur Entwicklungslogik des Estado da Índia im südostasiatischen Raum”, in which he depicts a linear connection between conquest of Constantinople and the monopolization of currents of spice trade in the Portuguese attempt toward a “Brechung des Gewürzmonopols des Osmanischen Reiches, [die] die ökonomische Grundlage seiner militärischen Expansion gegen das christliche Abendland unterminieren [muss].” According to him, this breaking point is finally achieved in the Indian Ocean in the battle at Diu in 1509, when Dunn defines the defeated fleet as Egyptian, without displaying an awareness of the distinction between Ottomans and Mamluks. See Portuguese Asia, Aspects in History and Economic History, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, ed. by R. Ptak (Stuttgart, 1987).

20 For instance, repeated attempts by Croatian and Yugoslav scholars to integrate Dalmatia and Dubrovnik in the history of spice trade, which are met with indifference or hostility. In contrast, recent Russian scholarship accepts some of these claims. See M. Freydenberg, Дубровник и Османская империя (Moscow, 1989). Lukarević, a contemporaneous Ragusan chronicler, states that at the beginning of the XIV c. there was a colony in Goa called São Braz, meaning Sveti Vlaho, the patron saint of Dubrovnik. Also see S. Mijušković, “Les Yougoslaves dans l’Océan Indien”, in Sociétés et companies de commerce en Orient et dans l’Océan Indien, ed. by M. Mollat (Paris, 1970), and N. Mirkovich, “Ragusa and the Portuguese Spice Trade”, Slavonic and East European Review, American Series, 2 (1), 1943.
signifies the rise of the dominant West, then the Mamluks / Ottomans, as the major Asian power, should have endeavored to defeat them militarily. Had they fulfilled their duty as defenders, Europe may not have risen to become a great power in Asia; but due to Ottoman failure, all of Asia eventually became a colony. Ottomans, hence, prefigure the forces of the Nawab of Bengal, while the Portuguese stand for the British East India Company at Plassey in 1757. The Portuguese conquest of Goa and other Indian ports and their control over the pepper trade is a mere rehearsal for the British conquest of India and dominance of world trade. In both cases, Asians lost and Europeans won the global game through the force of arms, and perhaps the latter’s superior technology and organization of political economy.

In another common reading, which is less focused on great persons and events, we may conclude that Portuguese and Ottomans, still medieval in their ardor for faith and rapidly antiquated notions of heroism, are well-matched adversaries. Ottomans lose the struggle through negligence, lack of technological ability, or perhaps the hand of providence, while the Portuguese falter through corruption, greed and incompetence. Thus, these old-fashioned empires are destined to wither away, gradually clearing the way for the more efficient and properly capitalist northern Europeans. This reading presupposes initial Spanish and Portuguese victories, but ultimately inevitable Iberian decay, a few intermittent episodes during which the Dutch dominate the field and French forces achieve partial colonial success, yet all that only as a prelude to a final and unmitigated British triumph in India.

21 The original title is of course nāʾīb, but the Anglo-Persian term Nawab is commonly used in English.
22 For Adam Smith, discoveries of America and India are the most important events in the history of the world.
23 For a sophisticated and very influential formulation of this argument, see N. Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century: The East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Copenhagen, 1978), originally published under the title *Carracks, Caravans, and Companies* (1973). In its cruder variation, “western Europeans” tends to be an extended codeword for “British”, as Dutch and French participants in the Indian Ocean trade have been viewed as minor contenders in mainstream English-speaking historiography until quite recently.
The 1510s merge with the 1760s as two key moments in the conquest of the world, the intervening period consisting mostly of some minor and inconsequential obstacles. The glorious sixteenth century did dissolve into the centrifugal confusions and crises of the seventeenth century, but this can be glossed over as a mere preliminary stage toward the next episode of glory, consisting in the Enlightenment period and its children, the political and industrial revolutions of the “West”. Ottomans failed either to defend their Muslim brothers or to colonize them.

Ottomanist historiography, which *perforce* relies heavily on Europeanist interpretation of global events, has been sometimes chastised for giving excessive weight to the successes of the sixteenth and the reforms of the nineteenth century, while leaving the centuries in-between relatively unexplored.\(^{24}\) Yet, we have seen above, this is not exclusively the fault of Ottomanists. Far from being deviant, this tendency closely mirrors the general perception of early modern and modern history as it was retold and shaped in the course of the nineteenth century.

Our goal here is not to repeat the tale of Ottoman-Portuguese encounters as an exciting and possibly tragic tale of the rise of European colonialism and the decline of Asia. By focusing on what in recent years has been called meta-narratives, or on isolated events and personages, one is exposed to the risk of producing a decontextualized and anachronistic version of events. A recent reading of the events has been somewhat sidetracked by excessive emphasis on colorful and perhaps folkloric details such as the body mass of the protagonists or their presumed anthropophagy.\(^{25}\) Instead, if we want to reach a deeper understanding of these historical actors, we must be able to place them into a context of the wider political economy of the Indian Ocean

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\(^{24}\) See the introduction in L. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy, Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660* (Leiden, 1996).

as it developed prior to the arrival of the Portuguese. In doing so, we will also uncover the presence of western Asian men in India and the impact which it had on the relations between India and the Ottomans. Initially, it is a tale which relates to a subsection of Ottoman society, rather than the central Ottoman state. 26

2. The military economy of the Indian Ocean world

In spite of the number of studies which profess to focus on Ottoman actions in the Indian Ocean, they tend to imitate an older mode of European historiography and take India merely as a pretext, e.g. mentioning Bahmanids, Mughals, Gujaratis, or the ports of Malabar cursorily, without setting them into any political and economic context. Often, basic geographical locations will be confused. 27 This tendency is regrettable and comparable to, say, confusing the locations of Antwerp and Venice. However, it is understandable once we grasp the intent of most historians. The veiled question in most of the studies is not how the Ottomans interacted with the Indian Ocean world, but rather how the Ottomans could have gained comparative advantage over the Portuguese, and whether in an Indian context they can be considered “European”, “Mediterranean” or at least relatively equal to the “West”.

Consequently, much of the discussion reduces complex ethnic and religious allegiances to a schematic and predictable development, and the sixteenth-century political economy, which

26 Anachronistically, we may be tempted to call it a description of a sub-culture within the Ottoman realm.
27 Thus, even a first-rate historian such as C. Orhonlu confuses Calicut (Kaliküt) and Calcutta (Kalküta), which are approximately 2200 km apart. Calcutta, while more famous, was only established in 1690 by the British and hence has no relevance at all to the sixteenth-century problématique. See Orhonlu’s “XVI. Asırın ilk Yarısında Kızıldeniz Sahillerin’de Osmanlılar”, Tarih Dergisi, 12 (6), 1962. This mistake is repeated by several younger Turkish historians as well.
permeated the Indian Ocean area, remains obscure to most historians, as India is reduced to an epiphenomenal, foggy background to the glorious competition between the two adversaries. Correspondingly, pepper takes the place of pride, since it was the commodity desired by the Portuguese, while the importance of textiles, horses and ghulâms,\(^{28}\) and the Anatolian participation in it, which predates Ottoman hegemony, is hidden from our sight. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the processes at stake, we need to concentrate on the movement of men and commodities in the Indian Ocean before the arrival of the Portuguese. The following analysis may reveal new and somewhat surprising landscapes to an Ottomanist, as it uncovers forgotten linkages.

Ties between India and Anatolia, while not as conspicuous and stable as those between the Arabian peninsula and India\(^ {29}\), are of considerable antiquity. The presence of the Mitanni kingdom in seventeenth century B.C., with its Indo-Aryan elites\(^ {30}\), may be subject to various interpretations, but direct relations with India are relatively well documented for the Roman and the Byzantine periods, when Indian commodities were eagerly accepted by the upper strata of the society.\(^ {31}\) The court of Julian the Apostate in Constantinople reputedly received several Indian ambassadors. As for the movement of people, we may mention the presence of the Syriac church of Malabar, which historically owed its allegiance to the patriarch of Antioch, and which to this

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\(^{28}\) Here the term “ghulām” is used in its Indo-Persian context, signifying adult men who become bondmen or military slaves. It is equivalent to terms “mamlâk” and “kul” used in Egypt and Ottoman lands, respectively.

\(^{29}\) Linkages between Gujarat and the Arab peninsula seem to be as old as recorded history. A glimpse of those discussions can be seen in E. D. Caspers, “Sumer, Coastal Arabia and the Indus Valley in Protoliterate and Early Dynastic eras. Supporting evidence for a Cultural Linkage”, \textit{JESHO}, 22 (2), 1979, Caspers has engaged in extended discussions with R. Thapar, one of the most important contemporary Indian historians.


\(^{31}\) The last twenty years have seen a resurgence of interest in those linkages. A good summary is provided by J. Wiesehöfer, “\textit{Mare Erythraeum, Sinus Persicus} und \textit{Fines Indiae}. Der indische Ozean in hellenistischer und römischer Zeit” in S. Conermann, ed., \textit{Der indische Ozean in historischer Perspektive} (Hamburg, 1998).
day is connected with Syriac communities in Anatolia.\textsuperscript{32} Much of this history remains to be written, as only a few histories of Iraq give us a glimpse of Indian presence in the Abbasid realm.\textsuperscript{33}

Perhaps surprisingly, the relations seem to intensify and acquire a new character in the thirteenth century, at the time of general fragmentation and weakness in the western Islamic world, while an independent sultanate was established in Delhi. As we will see, a certain dynamic which remained crucial to interactions between western Asia and India finds its roots in this period, making it directly relevant to our study. From its beginnings, the Delhi sultanate acquired particular recognition as it offered a haven from the Mongols for Muslim scholars.\textsuperscript{34} Afghanistan and central Asia suffered destruction at the hands of the Mongols and the fleeing forces of the Khwarazm-shah, encouraging Muslim populations to cross the Indus and settle in northern India.

Shams al-Din Il-tutmush (alternatively transcribed as Il-etmish), originally a Ghurid\textsuperscript{35} mamlûk, established himself as the first recognized ruler of the Delhi sultanate, receiving a robe

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{32} Here, we may recall the infamous Ctesias of Caria, whose Indica, composed in the fifth century B.C., remained a source on an imaginary India for centuries to come. For a standard work by a Byzantinist with exceptional linguistic abilities, see N. Pigulewskaja, Byanz auf den Wegen nach Indien: Aus der Geschichte des byzantinischen Handels mit dem Orient vom 4. bis 6. Jahrhundert (Berlin, 1969). For an insider’s analysis of the Syriac Malabar Church see G.P. Pulikkottil, A Study on the Intercultural Aspects of Indian Orthodox Church (Doctoral dissertation, University of Erlangel-Nuremberg, Nuremberg, 2003).
\item \textsuperscript{33} M. Morony, Iraq after the Muslim Conquest (Princeton, 1984). A combination of Arabic and Syriac sources would be crucial for such a project, and it would elucidate the process of intellectual transmission as well. The most famous example is perhaps the originally Buddhist tale of Barlaam and Ioasaph, which spread in medieval Europe through Greek and Georgian mediation.
\item \textsuperscript{34} This point of view is clearly defined in the first chronicle of the Delhi sultanate, Minhaj-i Siraj Juzjani, Tabaqât-i Nâsirî, vol. I-II (Kabul, 1963-4). See the recent monographs by P. Jackson, The Delhi Sultanate, A Political and Military History (Cambridge, 1999); I. H. Siddiqui, Perso-Arabic Sources of Information on the Life and Conditions in the Sultanate of Delhi, (New Delhi, 1992); and S. H. Kortel, Delhi Türk Sultanlığı'nda Teşkilat (1206-1414) (Ankara, 2006). P. Hardy’s article “Dilhi Sultanate” in the Encyclopaedia of Islam (EIP) (1954-2002), and his monograph Historians of Medieval India (London, 1966) also help to introduce the non-specialist into the works of several significant early Muslim chroniclers, such as Barani, ‘Isami and others.
\item \textsuperscript{35} C.E. Bosworth, “Ghurids”, EIP.
\end{itemize}
of honor and a title from the Abbasid caliph al-Mustansir in 1229. In spite of incessant internal fighting, Rajput and Ghurid pressure, and a change in dynasty, the Delhi sultanate emerged to political prevalence in northern India, extending gradually to the south as well. By the end of the century, large parts of coastal regions of Gujarat and Sind were conquered. The immediate access to maritime commerce was of vital importance for the organization of state violence. Since Muslims were not very numerous in India, their military forces needed external replenishment. Importing military slaves from central Asia had become increasingly difficult because of the antagonistic Mongol presence. Consequently, Shamsi and Khalji rulers of the Delhi sultanate turned not only to those traditional recruiting areas, but also to western Asia.

Numerous horsemen arrived through the land route from the Crimea and Khorasan, but Gujarati ports proved crucial in several ways. Through them, the sultans of Delhi could acquire rare commodities, exile political opponents to Yemen, and access the pools of horses and men in Iraq, western Iran, the Caspian region and Anatolia itself. Thus, among the high-ranking slaves in Delhi one could encounter men called “Rumis”\(^{36}\), at this period most likely to designate ethnic Greeks, Armenians or Slavs from the Byzantine territory, although we may assume that at least some of them must have been Muslims from the Seldjuqid sultanate. After their presumed conversion to Islam, “Rumis” were given Turco-Muslim names typical for central Asia, such as ‘Izz al-Din Kabir Khan Ayaz and Badr al-Din Sonqur. Among them, we find men who obtained access to the highest circles of the court. Those western Asian men participated in power struggles among central Asian Turks, Afghans and converted Hindus, joining ranks with

\(^{36}\) This appellation will be of primary significance in this chapter. In the conclusion, we will discuss the range of its possible meanings.
Habashi (Abyssinian) slaves and some Mongols. The complex nature of these alliances shows the extraordinary heterogeneity of the ruling military classes of northern India.\(^{37}\)

After another change of the dynasties in 1320, which brought the Tughluqs to power, the tendency to grant powerful positions to foreign-born men intensified. Tughluqabad, located in today’s south Delhi, became the new capital of the sultanate, symbolizing their most glorious period. It was built in the 1320s by Ahmad b. Ayaz, a nobleman of Anatolian origin (mâlikzâda-i Rûmî). His Tughluq patron, Ghiyath al-Din, died when a quickly constructed pavillion collapsed over his head in 1325, but Ahmad b. Ayaz was not punished for the episode. Indeed, he subsequently became a vizier as well as the commander of the Delhi sultanate army in Gujarat.\(^{38}\)

The reign of Muhammad b. Tughluq, Ghiyath al-Din’s successor, marks the apogee of the Delhi sultanate. In Gujarat, the Rajputs, who had constituted the top of the local social hierarchy, were replaced by Turkic soldiers and administrators. However, in spite of their Sunni inclinations, Delhi sultans did not interfere with Isma’ili Shi’a and Jains who were dominant in the trade of Khambayat (Cambay) through which western Asian men and horses entered the realm.\(^{39}\) Karimi merchants from Egypt also visited the rulers several times, and the region attracted traders even from western Europe.\(^{40}\) The empire expanded, as the sultan sent large forces to conquer parts of the Deccan, establishing a second capital there, and reputedly planning to extend his dominion onto Balkh, Khorasan and even Iraq. In the second half of his reign,

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\(^{39}\) See S. C. Misra, *The Rise of Muslim Power in Gujarat: A History of Gujarat from 1298 to 1442* (Bombay, 1963). This work displays the flaws and virtues typical of earlier Indian scholarship, offering a detailed chronology and a comprehensive assessment of the primary sources, but also excessively stressing “racial” motivation and projecting terms such as “liberal” into the earlier phases of Indian history.

rebellions were constant, one of them incited by a military slave, an amîr with the remarkable nickname of Qaysar al-Rumi, who revolted in 1333, because a Hindu was placed above him.\textsuperscript{41}

The Tughluqids were highly esteemed in western Asia: while the first mission from the Caliph which invested Muhammad b.Tughluq as the nâ‘ib of Hind and Sind may have been an elaborate hoax, real patents sent by the Abbasid caliph al-Mu‘tadid in 1353 conferred a mandate upon Firuz Shah Tughluqi to govern northern India, and the Egyptian shaykh al-shuyûkh accompanied the embassy. The next caliph, al-Mutawakkil, sent a mission to Delhi as well, addressing Firuz Shah as the sayyid al-salâṭîn and caliph’s wâlî. Embassies arrived almost every year after 1364. Ibn Battuta, who spent some time as the qâdî of Delhi, called one of its parts “The City of Caliphate”, as members of the caliphal family had resided there.\textsuperscript{42} In India, hegemonic claims were made as well. Hyperbolically, the Delhi sultan’s realm was described as encompassing “Sarandib (Sri Lanka), the Jawât (Java and Sumatra), Kashmir, Zabulistan (in Afghanistan).”\textsuperscript{43} The high prestige enjoyed by Delhi assured that many of the administrative and cultural practices implemented by its rulers remained paradigmatic in the centuries to come, thus exerting an indirect impact on Indian-Ottoman relations as well.

The increased wealth and reputation of the empire encouraged centrifugal movements and invaders. Timur gained much of his fame through the crossing of the Indus and the sacking of Delhi in 1398 before arriving in Anatolia and destroying the Ottoman state a few years later. The impact of his attack was so profound that the empire collapsed and the Lodis, the last Delhi

\textsuperscript{41} For reference, see S. Conermann, \textit{Die Beschreibung Indiens in der “Rihla” des Ibn Battuta: Aspekte einer herrschaftssoziologischen Einordnung des Delhi-Sultanates unter Muhammad ibn Tughluq} (Berlin, 1993). Occasionally the author appears to adhere to Weberian categories at the expense of the evidence.

\textsuperscript{42} C. Defrémery, B.B. Sanguinetti, \textit{Voyages d’Ibn Batoutah, Texte arabe, accompagné d’une traduction}, III (Paris, 1855).

\textsuperscript{43} P. Jackson, \textit{The Delhi Sultanate, A Political and Military History} (Cambridge, 1999), p.297 f.
sultanate, were reduced to a local dynasty, suffering silver shortages for many decades. Muslim-rulled India fragmented into several sultanates, among which Gujarat and the Bahmani sultanates are of particular relevance in the Ottoman context.

The independent sultanate of Gujarat was established by Zafar Khan, later entitled Muzaffar Shah; hence, the dynasty was named the Muzaffarids by historians. He nominally acknowledged the Delhi Sultanate from the time he was sent to Gujarat as its governor in 1380 until 1407, when he declared himself independent. Whereas he and his successors concentrated on raiding the Rajput territories in Malwa, commercial activities flourished as they did under the Delhi reign. Indeed, this is the period in which Gujaratis started to build a dominant position in Indian Ocean trade, which would only be seriously shaken in the eighteenth century.44 While the port of Surat was a place where one could acquire Chinese porcelain and commodities from southeast Asia, its rival, the city of Diu under the governor Malik Ayas45 (who was also a former military slave, probably of Caucasian origin), was turned toward the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, and the Portuguese repeatedly perceived it as strongly associated with Anatolian men.46 Thus, as a steady stream of military slaves and horses entered India through Gujarat, the neighboring coastal areas to its south also received their share of western Asian mounted horsemen.

The influx of the men was not surprising. In particular, the area saddling western Iran and eastern Anatolia has been defined as a reservoir for “tribal warriors” who had been enlisted by the surrounding powers since the times of the Medes. In the classical Islamic period, this

44 For a detailed history of this period, see the excellent work by S. Sheikh, Forging a Region: Sultans, Traders, and Pilgrims in Gujarat, 1200-1500 (New Delhi, 2010)
45 His name is also written Ayaz, but we will use “Ayas” because this is the form preferred by Feridun. See below for more information about this intriguing figure.
reservoir of military labor was second only to those of Arabia and central Asia.\textsuperscript{47} The Turkic tribes whom de Brocquière encountered in the fifteenth century deployed admirable military skills, although their loyalty varied depending on their location; according to this Burgundian pilgrim, the rulers who employed them accepted this flexibility.\textsuperscript{48} In contrast to Perso-Indian and Portuguese sources, in which we encounter Rumis and Gilanis very frequently, most chronicles of the Aqqoyunlu and the Qaraqoyunlu do not mention migration of Rumi men to a significant extent.\textsuperscript{49} India is mentioned mostly as a hyperbolic rhetorical device, perhaps in order to avoid mention of the migrations eastward.\textsuperscript{50} This is not surprising; after all, it was not flattering to admit that one’s subjects preferred to serve Indian sovereigns.

The “slaves”, whom at this point we should perhaps view as mercenaries, were sought for their equestrian skills and their abilities with the bow and the arrow. There have been some speculations about their use of cannons and muskets as well, as a chronicle attests that a cannon was being operated in 1366 by a group of “\textit{Rûmiyân wa Farangiyan}” under Muqarrab Khan, a Bahmanid official.\textsuperscript{51} Mā Huān, the Muslim chronicler of the Chinese expedition into the Indian Ocean, mentions firearms in Bengal in 1406.\textsuperscript{52} While the precise date cannot be established, the use of artillery and large fortresses with thick walls thus predated the arrival of the Portuguese,

\textsuperscript{47} M. van Bruinessen, \textit{Agha, Scheich und Staat: Politik und Gesellschaft Kurdistans} (Berlin, 2003).
\textsuperscript{48} C. Schefer, ed., \textit{Le Voyage d’Outremer de Bertrandon de la Brocquière} (Paris, 1892).
\textsuperscript{49} Tahrani, F. Sümer, ed., \textit{Kitâb-i Dîyârbakriyya} (Ankara, 1962) is an exception. Its index contains some omissions; for instance, \textit{Habashi} mercenaries are not listed, although they are mentioned in the body of the text.
\textsuperscript{51} This statement is to be found in the chronicle of Firishta, who is of Gilani origin himself. Yet, Firishta, translated early and often quoted by nineteenth-century European scholars, can be quite unreliable. For an excellent analysis, see I.A. Khan, \textit{Gunpowder and Firearms: Warfare in Medieval India} (New Delhi, 2004). Also see C. Boxer, “Asian Potentates and European Artillery in the 16th-18th centuries”, in \textit{Portuguese conquest and commerce in Southern Asia, 1500-1750} (London, 1990).
\textsuperscript{52} Ma Huan, Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan, \textit{The Overall Survey of the Ocean’s Shores [1433]}, tr. and ed. by J.V.G. Mills (Cambridge, 1970).
and must be linked with western Asian men in India. Indeed, as we will see, Rumis, at this point most likely denoting Anatolian-born Muslims, were famed in large parts of India as specialists in the molding of cannons in the early sixteenth century. Certainly in Yemen and the Hadramaut there was a tradition of associating Rumis with muskets, which were called banâdiq al-Rûm (and the musketeers themselves Rumâh, which would resonate in the context of folk etymology). In the lore of Deccani sultanates of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar, Rumis are frequently mentioned in connection with cast bronze cannons, some of which are still extant.

Equine preferences of the Muslim sultanates were also paramount for the development of this economy. Horses do not have a long life span upon arriving in India, most likely because the climate does not fit their feeding patterns. However, as in most parts of Eurasia, at least in the minds of the elites, there could be no army without chain-mail riders. Transoxiana, parts of Iran and eastern Anatolia provided men who were skilled riders and archers. Such a cavalry required horses endowed with speed, endurance, and preferably an impressive appearance as well. Although horses of relatively high quality could be raised in the region of Kathiawar or imported from Transoxiana or Afghanistan, horses from the Arab peninsula were the most sought after. Best quality horses from Iran and the Arabian peninsula (including even Egypt and

54 See the references to Rumis and Turks in R. Balasubramaniam, The Saga of Indian Cannons (Delhi, 2008).
55 J. Gommans, Mughal Warfare: Indian Frontiers and High Roads to Empire, 1500-1700 (London, 2002).
56 In contrast to the popular cliché of peaceful Indians, Indian peasants have been employed in state and private armies for centuries, and it proved difficult for the British to demilitarize the Indian countryside. However, they mostly provided infantry soldiers, whereas mounted archers were imported. The standard study is D. Kolff, Naukar, Rajput and Sepoy: The ethnohistory of the military labour market in Hindustan, 1450-1850 (Cambridge, 1990). Also see W. Pinch, Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires (Delhi, 2006).
57 For the origins of these preferences, see R. Barendse, “The Feudal Mutation: Military and Economic Transformations of the Ethnosphere in the Tenth to Thirteenth Centuries”, Journal of World History, 14 (4), 2003.
Syria) cost 1000-4000 tankas. By comparison, an adult female slave cost 20-40 tankas. As Indian princes bought entire shipments of horses, paying per horse before receiving them, even dead animals were purchased, bringing in exceptional profits for the traders, ranging from 300-500%. In the fourteenth and fifteenth century, some of those horses were subsequently sent to China as well. The import of horses does not stop after the Portuguese conquest of the Konkani ports of Goa and Hormuz; it even seems to increase to 2000 horses a year in 1550s. We know that the trade in bahri, i.e. overseas horses, was still alive at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the British imported horses from Basra and conveyed them overland to Madras on the Coromandel coast, in spite of the formidable cost. The profits at the time were still quite high, about 200%.

Imported men and horses were vital to the needs of the Bahmanids, the most important Indo-Muslim realm of the time. The Bahmanid sultanate broke off from Delhi’s control in 1347, and in subsequent confrontations, the Bahmani ruler sent his mother to Mecca and Egypt, seeking formal recognition from the Abbasid caliph. Starting with the turn of the fifteenth century, Bahmanids imported large number of men from western Asia, especially from the coasts of the Persian Gulf and the Caspian, thus leading to confrontations between the gharib al-diyyar or afqis (“cosmopolitans”) as opposed to the dakhanis (Deccani Muslims, originally mostly local converts, but also including some descendants of central Asians). Afqis, including not only

military men, but also *sayyids* from Kerbela, Najaf and Medina, were generally given preference over Indian-born men. As in the Delhi sultanate, there was an emphasis on new architectural styles reminiscent of western Asia. Although the chief architect of the first major Bahmani mosque in Gulbarga was from Qazwin and not Anatolia, the mosque, almost entirely roofed with a small court, reputedly reflects the Anatolian rather than the Indian environment.\(^6_2\) Similarly, Deccani tilework is occasionally remarkably similar to that of Iznik and Bursa.\(^6_3\) Due to the emphasis on the military aspects of trade, traditional distinctions between merchants, administrators and military men become fluid. Hence, a horse trader from Basra called Khalaf Hasan became a *vakil-i sultanat* (prime minister), also designated as the *mâlik al-tudjdjâr*. He subsequently spent much time fighting on the west coast of India on behalf of the sultan. Under his viziership, three thousand archers from Iraq, Khorasan, Arabian lands and Anatolia were enrolled in the royal army.\(^6_4\) They were engaged in struggles against Hindu rulers, but also other Muslim kingdoms, especially in Malwa (whose capital was a famed fortress named Mandu) and Gujarat.

The *âfâqîs* were to reach even greater heights of glory with the arrival of Mahmud Gavan, who arrived at the Konkani port of Dabhol in 1453 as a merchant. Gavan, the first Indian official to establish contact with Ottomans, was a scion of a notable family in Gilan, which he left due to intrigues. Prior to his decision to depart for India, he had been offered high posts in

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Iraq as well as Khorasan, and one of his brothers was a wealthy merchant in Egypt.\textsuperscript{65} Gavan rose quickly in the good graces of the ruler, and was proclaimed Chief Minister in 1466. He was notable for his diplomatic skills, and he seems to have combined an understanding of local power positions and a sense of the wider Muslim world.\textsuperscript{66} Initially, he was unable to subjugate local Hindu chiefs of the Konkan, who were intercepting a large number of Meccan ships and robbing the pilgrims. When the punitive expedition failed, he offered Italian textiles, Arab horses and other precious commodities to his antagonists. Like his predecessor, he also drafted Arabs, Turks (called atrâk as well as turk), Kurds, Habasha, and Gilani ghulâms, some of whom are mentioned in Gavan’s letters to the ruler of Gilan.\textsuperscript{67} In another letter to the Timurid ruler of Herat, congratulating him on the conquest of Hormuz, Gavan asked for intrepid Turks and valiant young men (futtâk-i atrâk va javânân-i châlâk) to be sent to India.\textsuperscript{68} Goa, one of the major ports in the horse trade, was also captured by Bahmanid Arab and Persian soldiers in 1472, expanding Bahmani influence from the Arab seas to the Bay of Bengal.

As the Bahmanid empire dissolved into several Deccani sultanates under centrifugal pressure (this process took place ca. 1490-1510), some of the âfâqî men reached for the highest position in their region. It is not certain whether the rulers of Ahmadnagar, the Nizam Shahis, made any claims of western Asian origins. We know that they certainly employed Rumis: among

\textsuperscript{66} See section II, chapter 3.
\textsuperscript{68} Idem., letter no. 57, p.207.
the most remarkable mosques of Ahmadnagar is the Mecca mosque, erected by one Rumi Khan in the service of Burhan I in 1525, reputedly with columns imported from Mecca.69

The rulers of Bijapur, known as ‘Adil Shahis, claimed descent from Anatolians.70 Qasim Barid, the ruler of the neighboring Bidar, may have been Anatolian or Hungarian.71 While those claims cannot be definitively substantiated, it is attested that the Qutb Shahis of Golconda were indeed descendants of a Qaraqoyunlu prince who fled Anatolia after their defeat by the Aqqoyunlu. A fragmentary chronicle relates his fate thus: “In India, merits were always recognized [...] the [Bahmanid] king appointed Sultan Quli to his inner circle, for people coming from Persia [usually] belonged to the low classes (arâdhil), whereas he was the first prince to come and his ancestors had ruled in Iran, the best country in the world.”72

The main adversary of the Bahmanids and their successor states was the Vijayanagara realm directly to its south. Partially because of the nature of historical evidence, the empire was virtually unknown by the historiographers of the Portuguese discoveries in the nineteenth century, upon which most of the studies relevant to our topic rely. Thus, to our knowledge, the kingdom has not been mentioned at all in any analyses of Ottoman, or Mamluk, involvement in south Asia. However, the long existence of Vijayanagara (1334-1646) was a very significant impetus in the “importation” of western Asian military men into India. Since Vijayanagara has

70 This claim is viewed as suspicious by most historians, but it prompted a rare instance in which there is a book in modern Turkish about a Deccani dynasty. See I.H. Ertaylan, Adilşahiler, Hindistan’da bir Türk-İslâm devleti (Istanbul, 1953). Curiously, none of the three copies that we examined in three university libraries is complete, and in one instance the book appears to have been stolen.
71 For the Hungarian case, see L. Kropf, “Melique Verido”, in Századok, 53-54, 1919-20.
traditionally been viewed as a bastion of Hindu ritual traditions and the only major force in the subcontinent which resisted Muslim incursions, it also assumed a great ideological importance in the Indian communalist politics of the 1990s.\textsuperscript{73} The rulers of Vijayanagara certainly employed a Hinduising and anti-Muslim rhetoric, which encouraged the Portuguese in the sixteenth century to envision a possible alliance with them against Arabs and Ottomans.\textsuperscript{74} Konkani city-ports, such as Chaul, Dabhol and Goa were fiercely disputed between Vijayanagara and the Bahmanids. In order to fight their adversaries, the Vijayanagara rulers imported more than 10,000 horses a year. However, they did not only employ them against the Bahmanids; they also fought against other Hindu kingdoms and chieftains, and they occasionally joined the Bahmanids in an attack against their common enemies, a Hindu dynasty in the eastern Indian region of Orissa.

Thus, we may note that the Vijayanagara empire was quite similar to the eastern Mediterranean and Caucasian Christian states of the same period. All of them occasionally espoused a religious rhetoric of holy war against Muslims. However, they were in constant contact with Muslim cultural and social practices, and thus quite “Islamicate” in Hodgsonian terms. Through analysis of historical narratives and other cultural norms such as dress, insightful recent studies have shown that the boundary between the Hindus and the Muslims was quite permeable in late medieval and early modern India.\textsuperscript{75} Instead of the popular image of homogenous social entities which are perpetually at war with each other, we encounter

\textsuperscript{73} For an analysis of such ideological implications in the historiography of Vijayanagara, see the first chapter in the recent dissertation by C. Chekuri, \textit{Between Family and Empire: Nayaka Strategies of Rule in Vijayanagara South India, 1400-1700 A.D.} (University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, 2005).

\textsuperscript{74} The alliance lasted for a brief period. Portuguese ships conquered Goa in 1510, but they offered to supply horses to Vijayanagara through that port as well as Bhatkal, which remained Vijayanagara’s main port.

statements in Vijayanagara chronicles according to which the legitimacy of the first ruler is traced back to alliances with the Delhi sultan, who turns out to be the reincarnation of a Hindu god. The fierce Lord Shiva could be represented as a Muslim horse trader. Appropriately, one of the titles used by Vijayanagara rulers is *himduraya suratrana* (Sultan among Hindu kings).

In concrete terms relevant to us, this means that Vijayanagara, in spite of its official ideology of militant Hinduism, counted “imported” Muslim mercenaries, especially archers, among its soldiers. Later, they were joined by Portuguese mercenaries, who sometimes even fought under Muslim command. This was not a unique occurrence. In Sind, Rumis and Portuguese (called *Farangi*) fought side by side as mercenaries in the service of the local dynasty until they were conquered by the Mughals. The *Samdesarasaka*, a contemporaneous poem written in the traditional Sanskritizing style, centered on a heroine who is yearning for her husband who dwells in far-away lands, is set in Vijayanagara and composed by one “Abdala Rahamana”, who defines himself as a weaver whose father came to India from a famous *mleccha* (in this context, Muslim) country in the west. The presence of Muslims in Vijayanagara is also attested by the famous ambassador sent by Timurids, ‘Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi, who is somewhat surprised, but

78 A Vijayanagara minister is described as an exceptional polyglot, speaking Arabic and “Turkish” (*turushka bhasha*), in addition to Gujarati, Malayalam, Konkani and other languages. Of course, this may be poetic hyperbole, but it demonstrates the importance of Arabic and Turkish, which top the list. Given the strong presence of Rumis in the Deccan, it is most likely that the “Turkish” referred to was Anatolian rather than central Asian. See footnote 19 in V. Rao, “Coconut and Honey: Sanskrit and Telugu in Medieval Andhra”, *Social Scientist*, 23 (10-12), 1995.
79 For a missive to the grand vizier which depicts the Mughal dynasty as stable while the Rumis and Farangis come and go, see letter 112 in I.A. Zilli, *The Mughal State and Culture 1556-1598, Selected Letters and Documents from Munshaat-i Namakin* (Delhi, 2007).
80 The middle Indic language indicates the poet is completely rooted in an Indian cultural environment. See C.M. Mayrhofer, ed. and tr., *The Samdesarasaka of Abdul Rahman* (Delhi, 1998).
certainly not outraged, by the presence of Muslims in the infidel army. One of the Vijayanagara successors, the Hindu kingdom of Madurai in Tamil-speaking area to the far south of the peninsula, employed Anatolian mercenaries even in the mid-seventeenth century.

In addition, the logistic difficulties of horse trade and the reluctance of Hindu elites of coastal southern India to even embark upon a ship, let alone complete a journey to western Asia, required constant cooperation with Muslim merchants. As in other parts of India, most of the horses and many of the mercenaries had to be imported from Muslim lands, primarily from Iraq and through Hormuz in the Persian Gulf. To some extent, horses could also be obtained from the pirates of the Malabar coast. Since those pirates were mostly local Muslims of the Shaf‘i madhhab (Mappillas) they were not encumbered by Brahmanical notions of impurity. One of their clans, the Marakkar, came to play a significant part in organizing local and regional anti-Portuguese alliances, although they did not disdain occasional cooperation with the Portuguese, and a large number of Malabaris were often present in Portuguese ships as early as 1513. In the course of the sixteenth century, they also recognized Ottoman authority and

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81 The most frequently cited version is available in R.H. Major, India in the Fifteenth Century: being a collection of narratives of Voyages to India (London, 1857). The Persian has been edited recently by A. Nava‘i, Matla’-i sa’dayn va madīma’-i bahrayn (Tehran, 2004).
83 In the classical Vedic understanding of Hinduism, a higher-caste person may lose the right to commensality if he embarks upon a ship, which is tantamount to social death. While this prohibition has been ignored by many Hindu merchants and ship-captains through the ages, it seems to have been applied very strictly in the Vijayanagara period, which the Portuguese discovered to their dismay that Hindu noblemen would rather commit suicide than become hostages on the board of their ships. See G. Bouchon, “Les Musulmans du Kerala”, L’Asie du Sud à l’époque des Grandes Découvertes (London, 1987).
84 Before the conversion of Mappillas to Islam, most seamen were Buddhist or lower caste, for whom the prohibitions were not valid. G. Bouchon, “Les Musulmans du Kerala”, in L’Asie du Sud à l’époque des Grandes Découvertes (London, 1987). A good overview of this period from an Arabist / Persianist perspective, with a very extensive bibliography, is available in S. Conermann, “Muslimische Seefahrt auf dem indischen Ozean vom 14. bis 16. Jahrhundert”, in S. Conermann, ed., Der indische Ozean in historischer Perspektive (Hamburg, 1998).
addressed them several times for military assistance. In addition to the Mappillas, Vijayanagara also relied upon Egyptian Karimi merchants, many of whom left Egypt and settled in the port of Calicut following the 1429 monopoly on pepper imposed by the Mamluk ruler Barsbay.

When Vasco da Gama’s ships arrived at the Malabar coast in 1498, Portuguese men were not aware of the complex system of alliances prevalent in this part of the world. However, this rapidly changed, as they encountered a Maghribi merchant who was so astonished to meet them in Kerala that he sent them to the devil in fluent Spanish. As the Portuguese learned to their surprise, Hindu rulers of several small and fantastically wealthy coastal kingdoms, nominally subject to some degree to Vijayanagara, refused to exile their Muslim subjects or ban them from trade. The most famous of those rulers, the Samudri rajas of Kazhikode (Calicut), perhaps the richest port at the time in all of India, thwarted Portuguese advances and threats, participating in many alliances with Muslim rulers which sometimes included Rumi soldiers as well. Only in 1583 did a Samudri ask for an armistice with the Portuguese. Even then, banning Muslims

88 Their very title derives from the Sanskrit word for any large body of water, *samudra*. Local (Malayalam) pronunciation of this title is *samuthiri*, but in western European sources until recently the Portuguese form “Zamorin” was the most common, and often mistaken for a personal name.
from trade was unthinkable, since at least twenty ships from the Red Sea arrived in Calicut annually, and many Arab merchants intermarried with local Muslim women.\textsuperscript{90}

Ten years later, the Portuguese ceased to be astonished by the presence of Rumis and Arabs in India. Tomé Pires, son of the king’s apothecary, arrived in India in 1511 as a scribe and pharmacist in southern India, leaving after a few years.\textsuperscript{91} His description of India is most frequently quoted to assert that the Portuguese held their finger on the pulse of Venice by conquering the Malay port of Melaka, since it was reputedly the most important spice port in the world and closely entwined with Gujarat and Egypt. As we will see in our discussion on Aceh, Pires claimed to have met many Rumis, mostly merchants, in the Malay world. In Gujarat, he encountered many men of war: “maçaris” (i.e. Egyptians), Arabs, Turkomans, Rumis, Persians, Gilanis, Khorasanis and Abyssinians, all of whom he termed “clean (i.e. pale-skinned) people” (gente limpa) which assisted the Gujarati sultan in raiding his neighbors. In addition, he alleged that there were many renegade Christians in his army.\textsuperscript{92} This agrees well with the observations of J. Barros\textsuperscript{93} in his description of Gujarat, as he explains that the Gujaratis are able to fight against


\textsuperscript{91} The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires, An account of the east, from the red sea to Japan, written in Melaka and India in 1512-1515, tr. and ed. by A. Cortesão (London, 1944). In the following footnotes, the original orthography of Tomé Pires as presented by Cortesão is quoted; however, for font reasons, only the standard contemporary Portuguese diacritics are included here. Hence, e.g. there is no tilde on the u, r, or x. Other diacritical marks may be omitted in the original, thus we encounter “tem (pl.)” instead of standard Portuguese “tém”. These details should not impede comprehension, although many other features of the orthography may seem bewildering at first.

\textsuperscript{92} Pires, The Suma Oriental, p.347: “mujta Jemte dalmãs Jemte de guerra De fora tem maçaris aRabios turqujmaes Rumes persiansos conuem saber gujlanes coraçones abixijs toda gente limpa com que contimoadamente peleJa com os Reinos comarcãaos com que tem guerra amtreses naçôes ha mujtos xstãaos aRengados.”

\textsuperscript{93} J. de Barros’ Décadas da Ásia is the standard work from the Portuguese golden age, and much of general historiography draws upon it. Diego de Couto, who went to India in 1559 as a young soldier, edited and continued Barros’ work. Couto was familiar with the Red Sea and Basra, finally becoming the official historian of the archives in Goa.
the Rajputs successfully because they import men from other Muslim kings who are skilled with artillery, and put them in charge of the seaports.94

The Deccan (Daquem), meaning the Bahmanid sultanate, was a place with even better warriors, the land of chivalry with many “white people” (gente branca). Pires estimates it must be 250 years since it was won from “heathens” (Hindus) by Rumis, Turks and Persians95, who arrived by the many seaports. These Rumis (rumes) came to the Deccan through Goa in order to earn wages and honor. They were granted titles of Malik and Khan (milic, can).96 Before being taken over by the Portuguese, Goa was “the haunt of thieves, Turks, Rumis and people who die opposing the Christian faith.” Those Rumis had the habit of going to Goa and enjoying the shades of trees and engage in chewing betel.97

Incidentally, the predilection of Rumi men for Goa was also noted by Andrea Corsali, a Florentine, who mentioned it in his letter to Giuliano de’ Medici in 1515.98 Pires assumes that at his time there were hundreds of Turks, Rumes and Arabs in the kingdom of Deccan, and ten or twelve thousand Persian men at arms. Command over these men will give one control over the

94 “E o que principalmente fez aos Reys Mouros, que conquistáram aquele Reyno, poderosos contra esta robusta, e gerreira gente, foi fazeremse logo senhores dos portos de mar, perque foram mettendo muita gente Arabiga, Persa, e Turquesca, e de nação Grega, e Levantisca, a que eles chamam Rumes, os quaes vem cada anno àquelle Reyno buscar mercadorias e ganhar grandes foldos, que elles Reys Mouros lhes dam, com que tem conquistado o que ora possuem.” J. de Barros, Décadas da Ásia, Década IV, Livro V, Capitulo I, (Lisbon, 1777), p.546.
kingdom, he claims. ‘Adil Khan, whose personal name is interpreted by Pires as the rank of the
highest ranking official in the Bahmani state, is a “Turk from Turkey”, whose father was a slave
of the king’s father.” Since he was a foreigner, most of the mercenaries came to support him,
which enabled him to establish himself as the ruler over a large part of the kingdom and found a
new dynasty when the Bahmanid kingdom collapsed into several sultanates. One Nizam al-mulk,
the lord of the ports of Chaul and Dande, was also the son of a “Turk by birth” with 1000
warriors from Persia under his command. Pires also notices the prevalence of Abyssinians,
which will be quite significant for our discussion of the 1540s. Clearly, for Corsali and Pires, the
Deccan was a land of “Turks” as much as a land of Indians.

Pires’ contemporary, Ludovico di Varthema (d.1517), presumably one among the first
western Europeans to enter Mecca, traveled from 1502-1507 in the western Indian Ocean and
north Africa. He disguised himself as a Muslim, fearing that he would be recognized. Indeed,
he encountered an Italian renegade who knew that he was a Christian and advised him to depart
for the Deccan. Varthema traveled to Gujarat as well. Whereas Tomé Pires conspicuously
stated that the city of Diu, under the governorship of Malik Az (Ayaz) had not been important
before the arrival of the Portuguese, Varthema called it “Dioban of the Rumis, the holy city of
the Turks.” He notes the city was well equipped with artillery, and in it resided hundreds of

99 Pires, Suma oriental: “este Jdalhan de nação he turqo de torquja seu pay foy espauo do pay deste Rey [...] por ter de sua Juridicam toda a Jemte branqa Do Reino pola mor parte por ser estrangeiro & turqo.” p.371. Also see J. de Barros, Décadas da Asia, Déc. I, Livro IV, Cap. IX, where Arabs, Turks and renegade Levantines are mentioned.
100 Pires, Suma oriental: “chamase o sor de chaull & damda njza mall mulec seu pay deste era turqo de naçam seu espauo Do pai do Rey de daquem [...] tem este mjll homees brameos da persija de peleja mjll de cauallo.” p.374.
102 Idem., vol. I, p.390: “Dapoi mi ammaestrò del modo ch’io aveva a tenere, e de indrizzarmi ad uno re che sta nella parte dell’India maggiore, che si chiama re di Decan, del qual diremo quando sarà il tempo.”
“Turkish merchants.”

Although he alleges constant fear for his life in a prevalently Muslim environment, Varthema established contacts with Arab and Anatolian merchants in Calicut as well. Varthema makes clear distinctions between Arabs, Turks, and local Muslims. As an Italian, we can trust him to recognize Anatolians, many of whom settled along the west coast of India.

Similar patterns asserted themselves even in Bengal, as Ilyas Shahi Khans attempted to achieve legitimization through a pan-Islamic approach, supporting the holy sites in Mecca and Medina at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Their frame of reference, architecturally and culturally, became increasingly Persianate, as the rulers sought confirmation of their legitimacy beyond mere assertion of force. This tendency survived even the change of a dynasty and the rise of a king who was a convert from Hinduism in 1415. He established close ties with the Mamluks of Egypt, receiving a khil’a and a letter confirming his position. Toward the end of his reign, he styled himself the caliph.

A century later, a Bengali poet in the Arakan port in Burma mentions Arabs, Egyptians, Syrians, Turks, Abyssinians, Rumis, Khorasanis and Uzbeks – for the ruler to have imperial pretensions, as S. Subrahmanyam comments, he must accumulate a diversity of people in his realm. Yet, Rumis were more than mere hyperbole. Varthema


104 Idem., p.438: “qui stavano ventiquattro mercatanti persiani, soriani e turchi, li quali tutti mi conoscevano e mi portavano grandissimo amore, e sapevano che cosa era lo ingegno del cristiano.”

105 When the Ilyas Shahi rulers returned to power, they tended to emphasize local elements as well, but within the court, knowledge of Persianate forms was still appreciated. R. Eaton, The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760 (Berkeley, 1993).

106 See S. Subrahmanyam, “On the Window that was India” in Explorations in Connected History: From the Tagus to the Ganges (New Delhi, 2005). The article is a reproduction of a lecture given by Subrahmanyam. Its title alludes
encountered merchants in the Bay of Bengal who were familiar with the Christians “because they are the neighbors of the rulers of Rum” and who sent Bengali rubies to the Ottoman empire.\textsuperscript{107} Pires also asserted that large numbers of Parsis, Rumis, Turks and Arabs lived in Bengal, governed by Abyssinians.\textsuperscript{108}

For most Rumi men who went to India, Hormuz was the first step. In the fifteenth century, Hormuzi rulers had recruited mercenaries of Turkish and Abyssinian origin as well as Arabs and Persians. Although it remained the most important stepping stone, Hormuz was not the only route for men from the Caspian shores and other parts of Iran or Anatolia. If there was political unrest, Indians could avoid Hormuz and ask the rulers of the coastal region of Lar to equip ships with mercenaries, and send them to India directly, as Mahmud Gavan did when he needed them for suppressing a rebellion in Konkan.\textsuperscript{109}

These patterns became disturbed, but not completely interrupted, after the Portuguese finally established themselves in the Persian Gulf in 1515. Andrea Corsali noted in his letter to Giuliano de’ Medici that the Persian, “Turkish”, Armenian and Arab merchants from the Red Sea had to obtain passes from the Portuguese in order to bring their horses and other commodities through Hormuz. Portuguese military control of the Persian Gulf also allowed them to control the number of horses directed toward India; one imagines that in the 1510s, young men who seemed militarily capable were scrutinized with great care, since they could be

to a standard work in the earlier South Asianist tradition by A.L. Basham, \textit{The Wonder that was India} (London, 1954).
\textsuperscript{109} J. Aubin, “Le royaume d’Ormuz au début du XVIe siècle”, \textit{Mare Luso-Indicum} II (Geneva, 1972).
dangerous for the Portuguese in India. However, the ‘Adil Shahis still sent ships every year to Hormuz, seeking men. In the 1510s, a report states that there still are large numbers of Turkish-speakers, Persians, Arabs and Khorasanis who arrive in Hormuz, lured by the riches of India.

Mercenaries did not have to cross the Persian Gulf or the Indian Ocean to find employment. An unusual source, the *Rasulid Hexaglot*, composed in the second half of the fourteenth century in Yemen, is revelatory in this respect. The *Hexaglot* is a word list with Arabic, Persian, Greek, Armenian and Turkish (with both Qypchaq and Oghuz) glosses. Although the editors of the work have understandably concentrated on linking the work to the wider reality of the Mongolian Eurasia, the particular composition of languages and the vocabulary reveals the importance of Anatolia as a source for military labor in the wider Indian Ocean sphere. A large proportion of the words are military commands (e.g. “Dismount!” “Abuse!” “Praise!” “Guard!”), indicating the practical nature of the word list. According to this linguistic evidence, the Rumi heartland seems to be eastern and central Anatolia, which agrees well with the other attested sources of emigration to India, namely the Caucasus, northern Iraq and the Caspian sea. Indeed, histories of the Rasulid dynasty claim that “uninformed people” believed the Rasulids to be “Turcomans” because of the long period of time they had spent in Byzantine lands and in Iraq. Even if we accept the claim of the court chroniclers

110 “Due lettere dall'India di Andrea Corsali” in M. Milanesi, ed., *Navigazioni e viaggi di Giovanni Battista Ramusio*, II (Torino, 1978-88), p.8: “La principal fortezza e importantissima è l'ultima, edificata in Ormuz l'anno passato, alla qual fanno capo tutti i mercanti persiani, turchi, armeni o di Arabia Felice, che vogliono con cavalli e altre mercanzie passare in queste parti per levare spezie. Il qual Ormuz è isola nel sino Persico, e rispetto allo stretto non possono questi mercanti passar, se non fanno capo a Ormuz per pagare i dazii e pigliar securità di navigare.”


112 Occasionally, Mongolian glosses are included. A smaller list within the hexaglot in an Ethiopic language has not yet been edited, but through its existence, we obtain a glimpse on how an Anatolian-Abyssinian connection may have been formed.

113 Poetry is not included, and there are not many words relevant to trade. See T. Halasi-Kun, P. B. Golden, ed., *The King’s Dictionary* (Leiden, 2000).
concerning a purportedly pure Arab origin of the Rasulids, the Anatolian connection remained strong, as Rumi men are known to have reached high positions within the Rasulid state. \(^{114}\) Many of them must have reached Yemen through the Mamluk sultanate in Egypt, and they realized that many of the fruits of India could be obtained in Yemen, including Indian spices, textiles, and even dancing girls. \(^{115}\)

A motley group of men from eastern Anatolia, the Aegean islands, Egypt and north Africa reached the same conclusion about two centuries later, in the 1510s. Unlike the men whom we have mentioned in this section, most of whom remain anonymous, this group acquired relative fame across the Indian Ocean, including the Portuguese dominions.

### 3. Salman Reis: To be or not to be an Ottoman in Yemen?

In the sixteenth century, most Muslim corsairs in the Mediterranean came to recognize Ottoman sovereignty. Although many of them were born in the Aegean, some as Ottoman subjects, this was not a self-evident truth from the start, but a process starting under Bayazid II and concluding in Süleyman’s reign. Obviously, some corsairs had been integrated into the Ottoman military forces earlier, for instance Kemal Reis and his famous nephew Piri. \(^{116}\) However, prior to this period, Piri Reis gathered his experiences by privateering at the coast of Spain, France and Italy. Hayreddin Barbarossa also eventually reached the position of an admiral

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\(^{116}\) N. Göyünc, “Kemal Reis”, EP, S. Soucek, “Piri Reis b. Hadjidji Mehmed”, EI²
in the Ottoman army; but he and his brother Oruç certainly started out as privateers. It is not clear whether they were Muslims from birth, but at least one of their parents is alleged to have been Greek.\textsuperscript{117} They were born in Mytilene some time before the island was conquered by the Ottomans in 1462. Oruç, the older brother, spent most of his corsair career in north Africa, trying to establish his own political sphere in Algeria, and he died in 1518 without pledging himself to the Ottomans. Hayreddin, his younger brother, left the Aegean after Selim I banned private sailing there. He also established himself in Algiers, proclaiming himself a sultan. However, in 1519, he formally submitted to the Ottomans, recognizing them by minting coins and having the \textit{khutba} read in their name. Yet, he probably fully became a member of Ottoman forces only in 1533, when Ibrahim Paşa bestowed on him the titles of \textit{Kapu'dân Paşa} and \textit{Cezâ'îr beğlerbeği} (here, meaning islands, not Algeria). By 1537, Hayreddin certainly coordinated most of his actions with the demands of the Ottoman central officials.\textsuperscript{118}

When Qansauh al-Ghauri, the Mamluk sultan in Egypt, dispatched an armed fleet to assist the Indian rulers against the Portuguese, he gathered some of those Mediterranean corsairs. His aim was in part to protect the Egyptian ports by directing the corsairs to new areas of plunder.\textsuperscript{119} They could provide not only sailors, but also caulkers, carpenters and artillery. Command was given to the amir Husayn Musharraf al-Kurdi.\textsuperscript{120} Capable and ruthless, Husayn fortified Jiddah (abusing merchants during his stay there), established contacts in Yemen and sailed to India in 1507. Initially, he met with great success, as he defeated Lourenço de Almeida,

\textsuperscript{117} R. Le Tourneau, “‘Arudji”, EP, and A. Galotta, “Khayr al-Din (Khidir) Pasha, Barbarossa”, EP.\textsuperscript{118} E.S. Gürkan, \textit{The Ottoman Mediterranean Corsairs in the Western Mediterranean and their Place in the Ottoman-Habsburg Rivalry (1505-1535)} (M.A. Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, 2006).\textsuperscript{119} Saffet Bey, “Şark Levendleri-Osmanlı Bahr-i Ahmer Filosunun Sumatra Seferi Üzerine Vesikalar”, \textit{Tarih-i ‘Osmani Encümeni Mecmuası (TOEM)}, 24, 1329.\textsuperscript{120} His name is given in an Arabic version because most sources which mention him are in Arabic and Persian rather than Ottoman.
the son of the Portuguese viceroy in India in March 1508. However, his fleet was destroyed by Francisco de Almeida a year later, causing most of Husayn’s men to disperse and seek new employment in Diu. He returned to Cairo in 1512, accompanied by a Gujarati ambassador and several Gujarati ships. In spite of his defeat, Husayn was rewarded by the Mamluk sultan, and returned to Jiddah as his nā‘ib.

Having heard of the disaster at Diu, Qansauh asked Ottomans for help, fearing a grand alliance between the Portuguese, the Knights of Rhodes, Shah Isma’il and Venice. Anatolian timber and ship-building materials as well as arms and men were dispatched quickly from the Ottoman arsenals, even at Ottoman expense. Economic consequences of the blockade had affected Egypt severely, but the fear that the Portuguese could attack the Holy Cities was even greater, as the Portuguese carried out raids all over the Indian Ocean oikoumene.  

Salman Reis was placed in charge of the Mamluk arsenal in Suez, as the commander of some 2,000 men. Somewhat later he was granted the rank of the admiral of the Red Sea fleet. This was a new “Indian” fleet, sent in 1515 into the Red Sea with the task of expelling a group of Portuguese who settled at the Kamaran island, and then sailing to India. The precise nature of Salman’s relations with the Ottoman officials is unclear. Some Arab chronicles view him as a member of the group sent by Selim I to assist the Egyptians, but the Portuguese sources allege that he abandoned the service of the Ottomans, hoping for greater rewards from the Mamluks. Others claim that he was in the service of the Mamluks first, switching to the Ottomans later.  

121 P. Brummett, Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery (New York, 1984).  
Salman had perhaps accompanied Husayn Mashraf al-Kurdi to India, but sources disagree here.\textsuperscript{125} It is certain that he was a native of Mytilene\textsuperscript{126} and an able and wealthy corsair with a large number of followers and slaves.\textsuperscript{127} He had close relations with the Mediterranean corsair world, and extended experience raiding the coast of Sicily and Apulia. Among his men, there was a large number of Maghrebis and Turkish-speakers, in addition to Egyptian Circassians and some Abyssinians. He himself is known as “Turcoman” in a number of sources, and he describes his men in a later document addressed to Selim I as a mixture of \textit{kul}, \textit{levend} and \textit{maghāriba}.\textsuperscript{128}

These two men from greater Anatolia, Husayn and Salman, met in Jiddah, where Husayn joined as a subordinate. The Kamaran island was easily conquered, and the Portuguese captured or expelled, but it seems that both Husayn and Salman had little interest in going to India, and preferred to remain in Yemen. Husayn conquered Zabid, but being forced to leave it, he left a Mamluk called Barsbay as his representative. Although he initially argued that his intention was not to attack fellow Muslims, Salman eventually joined Husayn in an attack on Aden.\textsuperscript{129} He plundered a few Indian merchant ships which belonged to the ruler of Aden and the Gujaratis. One of them was allowed to depart, carrying the message of his conquest of Yemen, and his subsequent arrival in India. However, both of these boasts came to naught. The siege of Aden


\textsuperscript{126} “Elle era natural de huma ilha do archipelago chamada Mitylene, homem de baixa sorte, Turco de nação, cujo oficio era carpinteiro de navios, e fustas, o qual por ser homem de espirito quiz tentar a fortuna, mettendo-se a furtar em huma fusta que fez per suas mãos; e deo-se-lhe tão bem o oficio, que veio ter nome de corsairo entre os seus.” J. de Barros, \textit{Décadas da Ásia}, Déc. III, Livro I, Capítulo III, p.31f.

\textsuperscript{127} For the Arabic original, see Ulughkhani, E. Denison Ross, \textit{An Arabic History of Gujarat, Zafar al-Wâlih bi Muzaffar wa âlíh} (London, 1910), p.218. There is also an English translation which we have not been able to consult at the time of writing.


\textsuperscript{129} Ulughkhani, E. Denison Ross, \textit{An Arabic History of Gujarat, Zafar al-Wâlih}, I, p.219, presents a dramatic scene in which Salman is entrusted with the task of conquering Yemen by Qansauh al-Ghauri. Other sources present him as initially hesitant to wage a war on Muslims, but convinced to do so by Husayn. We may assume that the aim of both narratives is to present Salman as a more principled man than he was.
failed, although considerable treasure had been amassed by the two men, who quarreled and separated. Ultimately, Husayn and Salman had acted as independent agents rather than appointees of the Mamluk state; across the water in India, the Caucasian governor of Diu, Malik Ayas, bitterly complained about their attack on Aden.

After some traveling in the Red Sea, including stops at the port of Adal Muslim port of Zayla and the Kamaran island, Salman withdrew to Jiddah, where he regained some of his reputation, defending the city from Lope Soares and the Portuguese fleet. Although they had finally succeeded in penetrating the Red Sea beyond the Kamaran island, the Portuguese failed to establish their presence there. They withdrew from Jiddah after a few days, passing Aden on return, without trying to attack it. It seems that Salman had reason to rejoice. In 1517, after repeated demands that he submit to the Ottomans, he finally arrived in Cairo and kissed the Sultan’s hand. However, his fate for the next several years is obscure, and he may have been imprisoned. His opponent, Husayn al-Kurdi, had been drowned in the course of being transported to Egypt, probably as a punishment for not pledging loyalty to the Ottomans. His men, many of whom were Circassian Mamluks or Rumis, decided to flee from Jiddah and Mecca to Yemen. The next decade was marked by their incessant struggle for power, called the “Circassian state” (al-daula al-djarkâsiyya) by Yemeni chroniclers of the time.\textsuperscript{130}

Obviously, allegiances to the Ottomans were weak at best. As we had seen, Husayn al-Kurdi left a Mamluk named Barsbay in the Yemeni town of Zabid. Although Barsbay succeeded in conquering Ta‘izz and Sana‘a, eliminating the dynasty of the Tahirids, he perished soon

\textsuperscript{130} The narration of these events relies on the first few sections of al-Nahrawali, \textit{al-Barq al-Yamâni fî al-Fath al-‘Uthmâni} (Riyad, 1967). F. Soudan includes a chart as an appendix to his study, defining the “Circassian rule” as lasting from 1511-1521, and the “Lawand” (Rumi levend) rule from 1521-1536. See F. Soudan, \textit{Le Yémen ottoman d’après la chronique d’al-Mawza‘i} (Cairo, 1999).
afterwards, and the rule passed onto a certain Emir Iskender, who gathered Rumis and Circassians in Zabid in 1517. Ta‘izz was occupied by another Rumi called Ramazan. With the change of rule in Egypt, Ottoman authorities became increasingly interested in Yemeni matters, especially since their mid-level officials were often former Mamluk subjects and familiar with the region. Hence, the former Mamluk nā‘ib of Aleppo and the new wāli of Egypt, Hayri Bey, sent a message to Iskender to submit to the Ottomans. Iskender obeyed, but his submission proved to be purely formal, for he repudiated it once Selim I died.

Rumi Hüseyin Bey, who had been in charge of Jiddah, went to Yemen to admonish Emir Iskender, but had little success, although he was probably accompanied by Salman Reis. Eventually, Kemal Bey, a janissary and one of Sultan Selim’s former soldiers, succeeded in killing Iskender and replacing him. Thus, in 1520, the khutba was read in the Ottoman name. Yet, Kemal Bey was soon killed by the Rumis in Zabid, one of whom, Iskender Karamani, was elevated, and khutba was read in his name instead. Hadrami chronicles state that a Portuguese fleet approached the coast of Yemen, but did not dare sail for Jiddah when they heard that there were many Turks (atrâk), Rumis and north Africans (maghâriba) in the region.\(^{131}\) Despite the political chaos, the Portuguese recognized these military adventurers as a formidable force.

We know with certainty that Salman Reis returned to the region at this point. Trying to escape being implicated in the revolt against the Ottomans by Ahmad Paşa in Egypt, Salman went to Jiddah in 1524 and convinced Rumi Hüseyin Bey to join him in a new expedition to Yemen. As he had done earlier, Salman sailed to the Kamaran island, killing and capturing the Portuguese who had been left there by Lope Soares in 1517. Salman demanded that Iskender Karamani submit, but when he refused, he killed him in the subsequent confrontation. However,

the local population in Zabid rejected Salman as the ruler and attached themselves to their new amîr Hüseyin Rumi.

Salman decided to seek direct Ottoman approval for his plans in Yemen. In his previous report from 1517, he had already accused the ruler of Aden of cooperating with the Portuguese. In his second report from 1525, which has been published several times, Salman depicted the richness of the Indian Ocean, disdaining the Portuguese and alleging it would be very easy to defeat them. In reality, his description of India recedes into the background once he mentions the Red Sea itself.

The letter by Salman is a curious mixture of second-hand information, some of it precise for a man who may never have set foot in India, some distorting the geographical realities and making Indian distances considerably smaller than they were. For example, the sailing distance between Diu and Goa is indicated as five days, but the distance between Goa and Calicut a mere two days. However, other, more precise information is included, for instance that the island of Ceylon produces cinnamon. Salman Reis contended that with the repair of ships which remained from the Husayn al-Kurdi expedition in 1515, Portuguese forces in India, who were a mere 2,000 men, could be overwhelmed with his 1,000 Rumi men (Rûm yiğitleri).

However, Salman’s real focus is Yemen. The fertile Ta‘izz, ruled by a Rumi and “similar to Bursa”, is presented as an Ottoman outpost, in which coins are minted and the khutba is read in the name of the sultan. Yemen is otherwise empty of men, but rich in gold, jewels and red dye. Aden itself is comparable to any Indian ports. Abyssinia is also largely devoid of men and thus an easy and rich target, especially so the ports of Sawakin and Dhalak, which face Jiddah and where one could obtain gold and elephant tusks. In short, securing Yemen and the Ethiopian ports is a precondition for protecting the Red Sea from Portuguese ships. Salman blamed Rumi
Hüseyin Bey for lack of loyalty, suggesting that a fleet should be equipped for him to enter Yemen, replace Rumi Hüseyin Bey, and subsequently fight the Portuguese.¹³²

Ibrahim Paşa, the Ottoman grand vizier, assigned one Hayreddin Bey as the commander (başbuğ) and Salman as the captain. Salman was also given 2,000-4,000 irregular soldiers. Even before entering Yemen, they engaged in plunder along the western shores of the Red Sea. When the fleet arrived in Yemen, they learned that Hüseyin Rumi had been killed and one Emir Mustafa had taken his place. Salman demanded that he cede authority to Hayreddin Bey. Mustafa thereupon fled to Aden and the Kamaran island. When Salman entered Zabid, he gave authority over it to one of his men, called Yunus, and defeating Mustafa, he made himself the lord of most of Yemen in 1526. However, Hayreddin killed Salman in 1528 while he was playing chess, thus ending the life and career of this ambitious native of Mytilene.

Most scholars have not even questioned Salman’s allegiance to the Ottomans. In part because of his fierce reputation and the respect with which he is viewed in many Portuguese and Indian chronicles, Salman has been seen as crucial to Ottoman plans for the Indian Ocean. For some scholars, he represents the Ottoman commitment to the conquest of the Indian Ocean, while others stress that his petitions were neglected by the Ottoman authorities, presumably out of shortsightedness. To some extent, the interpretation of Salman as a neglected visionary reflects the attempt to find an Ottoman admiral whose capacities and foresight could match Albuquerque’s. However, while Salman was certainly capable and feared by the Portuguese, as he had not been defeated by them, there is little reason to elevate him to the status of an Ottoman champion.

¹³² M. Lesure, “Un document Ottoman de 1525 sur l’Inde portugaise et les pays de la mer rouge”, *Mare Lusocom* III (1976). As noted by Lesure, particularly the sections which relate to all other parts of India except for Gujarat are carefully framed with the verbal ending –miş, indicating lack of first-hand knowledge.
We may doubt that Salman’s association with the Ottoman center was firmly established. His contemporaries saw him as a rebel. He was certainly familiar with the structure of the Ottoman state and with its elites. When circumstances demanded, he submitted to the Ottomans, in whose dominions he had resided, and he was a skillful agitator for his cause and a capable admiral. However, his career in the eastern Mediterranean was outside of the purview of the Ottoman state, and his ambitions in Yemen were certainly not based on selfless service. The correspondence between him and the Ottoman authorities reveals they considered him as an important source of information, but also untrustworthy. After all, he was never given unlimited authority by the Ottoman authorities, whether in Cairo or in Istanbul. If we analyze his acts from 1515-1528, we realize that his main ambition was to be granted access to the riches of Yemen, so that he could carve out his own domain. He did not only resort to the Ottomans, but also applied to the Mamluks and to Ahmad Paşa directly before his rebellion in 1524, as well as to anyone who happened to be in charge in Jiddah. Subsequently, he quarreled unto death with any of his companions over his share of the loot.

We are not concerned here with an assessment of Salman Reis’ character, as it certainly took more than one man, with all his flaws and virtues, to fight the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean. Instead, we should note several recurrent themes which repeat in the course of his struggles for supremacy over Yemen. Whether they were formally Ottoman officials or not, Egyptian and Anatolian men of the early sixteenth century clearly considered Yemen, in spite of its difficult terrain, a storehouse of riches for which they were willing to risk their lives. Since we learn from the chronicler Ibn Iyas that everything south of the Hijaz could be glossed as “India”,

\footnote{“Due lettere dall'India di Andrea Corsali” in M.Milanesi, ed., \textit{Navigazioni e viaggi di Giovanni Battista Ramusio}, p.24: “Il soldano del Cairo mandò Raysalmon, natural di Turchia, al cammino di Suez, uomo audacissimo ed esperto, il quale, sendo ribello al gran Turco, era stato gran tempo corsale ne' nostri mari.”}
we may assume that the plunder of Yemen represented a “minor India” for many of the military men.\textsuperscript{134} Even if they considered going to India, they often stayed in Yemen, since it was closer to western Asia, yet from their perspective, almost as rich as the Deccani kingdoms. Some of them served local rulers as merchants; for example, one man, Yusuf al-Turki, a slave to the sultan of Aden, was captured by the Portuguese transporting goods from Jiddah to India.\textsuperscript{135}

It seems that the aura of Ottoman hegemony had some symbolic validity in parts of Yemen, as several among the contending Circassians and Rumi nominally recognized Ottoman rule. However, in actuality, at least at this point, there was very little direct Ottoman control. A few of those men pledged loyalty to the Ottomans and subsequently disavowed it, seemingly on a whim. As we have seen, Salman Reis entered Yemen twice with an official appointed by the Ottomans in Egypt and demanded that dominion be handed over to him, but unless he resorted to arms, little else could be done. Once Salman was in power, he did not respect assignments made by the Ottoman superiors either. His fate was ultimately sealed by the resentment of many of his followers for not distributing the spoils of Yemen conquests and for delaying an Indian campaign, in which the levends expected to gain additional riches.\textsuperscript{136}

Rumi and Circassians in Yemen cannot have fully regarded themselves as Ottoman subjects. To some extent, this is not surprising, as the Ottoman hegemony in a large part of western Asia was quite recent. Instead of remaining in the Ottoman realm, those men were still

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{135} J. de Barros, Décadas da Ásia, Déc. VI, Liv.IV, Cap. XIX.
\textsuperscript{136} J. de Barros, Décadas da Ásia, Déc. IV, Liv.I, Cap.VIII, p. 47: “Além disso, como aquella gente partiria com intenção de ir a India, e trazia sede das riquezas della, de que ja faziam conta, tomavam mal a detença que Soleimão fazia em conquistar terras naquela parte de Arabia.”
\end{footnotesize}
continuing older traditions of emigrating from western Asia in order to obtain access to the riches of the Indian Ocean. They accepted the risks as well. While he was not aware of the connections in the Indian Ocean world which existed before the sixteenth century, the early twentieth-century historian Saffet Bey had recognized that Rumis had been entering Yemen at least since the days of Qansauh al-Ghauri: “Saying to themselves: ya devlet başa ya kuzgun leşe, many of them obtained ranks of emirs and khans.”

The difficulties of pre-modern logistics and communication in general must have encouraged any able-bodied men who were displeased with the expanding control of the Ottoman state to seek their fortunes elsewhere. Others retained some measure of loyalty to the Ottoman dynasty.

The fluidity of identities is also reflected in Yemeni sources, which may refer to Anatolian men as “Rumi” or “Turki.” In addition, Egyptian mercenaries were most frequently described as “Circassian”, but some of them were also called “Rumi”. This ambiguity need not trouble us. If we assume that pre-modern ethnic identities and political loyalties are not static and stable, but rather layered and mutable, we may also define Salman, and his followers as “occasionally Ottoman.” This was valid for Salman Reis as well as for his nephew Mustafa b. Bayram, to whom we will now turn. Unlike Salman, who seemed content with Yemeni pickings, Mustafa indeed crossed the ocean and became a famous ghulâm in the service of two Indian states.

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137 Saffet Bey, “Ṣark Levendleri-Osmanlı Bahr-i Ahmer Filosunun Sumatra Seferi Üzerine Vesikalar”. 
4. Mustafa b. Bayram: a ghulâm’s marred perfection

All chronicles, whether Arab, Indian or Portuguese, agree that Salman’s nephew, Mustafa b. Bayram (or Behnam), avenged his uncle by killing Hayreddin. Thereupon, he established himself in Zabid. However, soon afterwards he received a message from his father in Istanbul who warned him to leave before the arrival of the Ottoman mütevelli. Together with his followers and a few of Hayreddin’s men, Mustafa roamed through Yemen, touching upon Kamaran and finally reaching the city of Shihr. Although his relations with the ruler were quite amicable and the ruler had formally submitted to “Sulaymân b. ‘Uthmân, the lord of al-Rûm”, Mustafa embarked for India. Khvadja Safar, his uncle’s freedman and steward, followed him, accompanied by a large number of men who included Abyssinians and Anatolians, as well as their women and children. Although they faced the Portuguese ships in a few clashes, they

138 Ulughkhani, who had many reasons to depict the group in favorable light, tells us that Salman was not merely innocent, but also a shâhid. Ulughkhani, E. Denison Ross, An Arabic History of Gujarat, Zafar al-Wâlih, I, p.220.

139 At this point, we should note a curious flaw in recent historiography. Although Mustafa b. Bayram’s subsequent flight from Yemen and his career in India are well-known, a Turkish historian portrays him as a proper Ottoman subject who attempted to establish Ottoman customs and laws in the country by minting Ottoman coins and building a large madrasa. There is no mention of his flight to India. According to this version, at his death in 1536, the rule of Yemen passed onto Nakhuda Ahmed. These unqualified claims are quite puzzling, as the work is recent and the scholar in question is knowledgeable in Arabic and very meticulous, having assembled a large bibliography on the Ottoman rule in Yemen. Unfortunately, it is also an illustration of the lack of knowledge of Indian sources by most Ottomanist scholars. See the introduction in H. Yavuz, Yemen’de Osmanli idaresi ve Rumuzi tarihi (Ankara, 2003).

140 Ulughkhani tells us that Mustafa was discharged (’azala) from his duties. However, it is never mentioned what those duties would have entailed. More likely, word had come to the Porte that Hayreddin, who had been in charge of Salman’s expedition, had been killed, and Mustafa would be punished for killing him and taking his treasury. Thus, Correia’s version, which stresses the sense of rupture with the Ottomans, may be more reliable: “O Mustafa, capitão dos rumes, que estaau em Camarão, e Coje Cofar, tisoureiro, que tinha muito dinheiro do capitão que maturão, nom se ouverão por seguros em Camarão onde estauão, temendo que o Turquo [sc. Suleyman] os auiá de mandar buscar; e [...] para saluarem suas pessoas assentarão de se passarem á India e se meterem no seruiço d’ElRey [sic] de Cambaya, que era homem de guerra, a que farião taes seruiços que lhes fizesse mercês, porque o Coje Cofar era granady de nacão e era muito sabido nos ardis das cousas da guerra em que sempre andara, e o Mustafa se tinha em conta de grande caualleiro.” Correia, Lendas da India, Livro III, Capitulo XXIV, p.405f. (Lisboa, 1863). We may also note that Mustafa and his men displayed little squeamishness about killing, see Ba Faqih, Tārīkh al-Shihr, p.190.

141 Ba Faqih, Tārīkh al-Shihr, p.196, where Salman’s wives and servants are mentioned.
arrived in Gujarat without significant losses. Despite Portuguese control of Hormuz, the waterway remained open for determined travellers.

Upon Mustafa’s arrival in Diu, he was welcomed by its governor, Malik Doghan. His father was the famous Malik Ayas, whom we mentioned previously as a governor of Diu and most of the Kathiawar peninsula. Some accounts describe him as a Rumi,\textsuperscript{142} which led a renowned Croatian historian to view him as a Dalmatian janissary.\textsuperscript{143} Other sources attest he was of Qypchaq or Georgian origin. He had certainly spent some time in Istanbul and Anatolia before being taken to India, where he rose from a slave to a governor, deploying his archery skills in a scurrilous incident.\textsuperscript{144} His diplomatic abilities were also legendary, preventing the Portuguese from an attack on Diu in 1509. Although Malik Ayas had contacts with the Ottoman rulers in 1517, his primary concern had been to protect commercial relations with the ruler of Yemen. His good relations with the Portuguese deteriorated after 1515 because of their insistence that Gujaratis could not trade with the Red Sea until the Portuguese conquered Aden, with the additional demand that they could not allow Rumi men within their territory.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{143} V. Mažuranić, “Melek “Jaša dubrovčanin” u Indiji godine 1480-1528 i njegovi prethodnici u Islamu prije deset stoljeća”, in \textit{Zbornik kralja Tomislava} (Zagreb, 1925). On the basis of the French summary, J. Aubin disputes the accuracy of his conclusions in “Albuquerque et les négociations de Cambaye”, arguing that Malik Ayas was most probably from the Caucasus. See \textit{Mare Luso-Indicum I} (Geneva, 1971). However, the article inspired Mažuranić’s daughter, Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić, one of the most important Croatian writers of her time, to compose a romantic novel in which the Dalmatian hero is taken to Istanbul through \textit{devşirme} and then decides to go to India: \textit{Jaša Dalmatin, potkralj Gudžerata} (Zagreb, 1937). Unlike her other work, this novel remains practically unknown in Croatia.
\textsuperscript{144} According to the tale, the Gujarati sultan suffered an insult from nature, when a passing bird’s droppings fell from the sky on his luxurious clothing. Swiftly, the alert Malik Ayas drew his bow and slew the feathered offender, to the astonishment and approval of the entourage. For more on Malik Ayas, see A. Subhan, “Malik Ayaz“, EP.
Malik Ayas disliked Rumi attempts to take Aden\textsuperscript{146}, and although he praised Salman Reis, he had much contempt for Amir Husayn, whom he had met during Husayn’s campaign in India.\textsuperscript{147} Yet, Malik Ayas had Rumi men under his command. In 1508, there were some thirty small ships and 400 armed men in his guard, among whom were Abyssinians, Arabs, Khorasanis and Rumis. In 1524, two years after his death, his son and successor Malik Doghan came into the possession of 3700 men, arranged in four special corps, including Khorasanis and Rumis. Hence, Malik Doghan must have been pleased about the arrival of the new Rumis, which he expected would increase the forces originally built by his father. With Mustafa b. Bayram as his retainer, Malik Doghan planned to improve his relations with the Gujarati court and fend off the Portuguese.

As Portuguese forces approached after the monsoon, Mustafa b. Bayram and his men were able to sink many of their ships, taking advantage of the uneven quality of their equipment.\textsuperscript{148} The Portuguese eventually decided to withdraw to Goa, concentrating their efforts on disturbing access to the port of Bassein, north of Bombay, in which Rumis used to buy wood for their ships.\textsuperscript{149} When Bahadur Shah, the reigning ruler of Gujarat at the time, was informed about this incident, he had Mustafa b. Bayram summoned to his capital, Champaner, where he granted him the title of Rumi Khan. In turn, Mustafa presented two cannons to Bahadur. One of them, named Layla, had been cast by Salman and had been originally intended for the Ottoman

\textsuperscript{146} He even informed the captain of Goa about the attack of Salman Reis on Aden and the number of Rumis in Zabid, asking the Portuguese not to attack Aden as it was besieged by Rumis. See the letter of Malik Ayas to the captain of Goa written in 1516, \textit{Mare Luso-Indicum I} (Geneva, 1971).
\textsuperscript{147} He wrote a letter to the Ottomans, suggesting that Salman be put in charge of the Indian fleet. See section two, chapter three.
\textsuperscript{148} Correia, \textit{Lendas da India}, III (2), XXXII, p.150.
\textsuperscript{149} Correia, \textit{Lendas da India}, III (2), XXXII, p.151: “E que os rumes tinhão muito em fantasia, se passassem a esta costa de India, se meterem e fizerem fortes n’este Baçaim, porque tinhão melhor auimento para sua armada que em outra nenhuma parte.” Nonetheless, the Portuguese were concerned about the cost of supporting two fortresses in close vicinity, Bassein and Chaul, and considered destroying the former.
sultan Süleyman, while the other, called Majnun, was cast by Mustafa in the name of Bahadur Shah. Those two cannons, in the words of the chronicler, were “as inseparable as the two lovers”, adding to the lore of Rumis as specialists in artillery.\textsuperscript{150}

Mustafa’s rise to the rank of Rumi Khan was not unexpected, since Bahadur Shah had been favoring āfāqīs for some time. In addition, the fame of Rumi artillery techniques must have spread throughout northern India after the victories of Babur the Mughal in the 1520s. Bahadur Shah now could boast of having a capable artillery specialist, who by chance even bore the same name as Babur’s protégé, Mustafa Rumi.\textsuperscript{151} In 1530, the Portuguese formally moved their headquarters to Goa, as opposed to the previous seat farther south, in Cochin on the Malabar coast. This meant that their center of government was at the Konkani coast, considerably closer to the former Bahmanid ports and to Gujarat, which had traditionally been the areas of attraction to western Asian men.

After their failure in Diu, the Portuguese ambassadors tried to dissuade Bahadur Shah from bestowing privileges on the Rumis, even promising perpetual cooperation between Bahadur and the Portuguese governors in India.\textsuperscript{152} The Portuguese had been willing to negotiate with Gujaratis, as they needed their commercial presence at their port in Melaka. In 1520s, they had

\textsuperscript{150} Given the expense and the labor involved into casting an appropriate cannon, and the reverence which Mustafa received in India, the habit of labeling them with names may seem less exotic and superstitious. Yet, it was also a military men’s joke and an expedient to identify a valuable weapon, and under the Mughals, the best cannons were also named, see N. Manucci, W. Irvine, ed., \textit{Storia do Mogor, 1653-1708} (London, 1907), II, p.341. The cannons seem to have played a vital role in the defense of Surat, when Khudavand Khan built a fortress there upon the departure of Süleyman Paşa. The men put in charge of the fort were forty Rumis and thirty Malays. The captain was a Rumi, and the local governor an Abyssinian.

\textsuperscript{151} See chapter II.

\textsuperscript{152} Tristão da Gã, a Portuguese ambassador who had great familiarity with Gujarat since the 1520s, argued that Bahadur Shah should not place his confidence in the newcomers. He omitted Gujarati participation in the battle of Chaul in 1509, placing the blame on Rumis, “who are Turks” and thieves. “Senhor, ElRey de Portugal […] tem guerra com muytas terras de mouros junto das suas, e com outras tem pazes; o que assy fazem outros Reys christãos. Sômente nenhuma paz com turqos, por ser má gente, sem nenhuma verdade […] em tempo do primeyro Gouernador que teue na India, passarão rumes, que sào os turqos, e se recolherão com su’ armada á cidade de Dio […] eles forão pelejar dentro no rui de Chaul.” Correia, \textit{Lendas da India}, L. III, C. XLIII. p.531f.
conceded to Gujaratis the right to trade as before in everything except spices, under the sole condition that they accept “neither Turks nor Rumis” in their country. To appease them, the Portuguese suggested that textiles from Bursa and Aleppo would be brought in via Hormuz. The Gujaratis in turn allowed the Portuguese to build a feitoria, but not a fortress. The location of Diu mattered so much to the Portuguese that they rejected alternative locations in which Gujaratis did allow a fortress, among them Bharuch, Surat and Daman.153

Yet Mustafa was allowed to claim the territory around twin ports of Ranir and Surat in eastern Gujarat, down to the minor port of Mahim. Mustafa’s plans were grandiose. He reputedly aimed at the conquest of the east African coast and the fortress of Malindi, which had been among the first possessions of the Portuguese. He even claimed that he and his Rumis could chase the Portuguese out of India completely, by which Bahadur’s name would surpass that of the “Great Turk”.154 While elevating the Gujarati royal house at the expense of Ottomans, Mustafa also praised the Barbarossa brothers in the presence of the Portuguese, saying that there was “nothing in the world which could defeat them.” The Portuguese ambassador warned the sultan not to confide in “a Turkish stranger”, who had betrayed his lord and would certainly betray him as well.155 Yet, Bahadur Shah added Diu onto Mustafa’s dominions, with the justification that Mustafa’s previous patron, Malik Doghan, was not Mustafa’s equal in terms of bravery or stature. Malik Doghan thereupon openly expressed his enmity toward Mustafa at the

154 “Dizia a ElRey que como seu escrauo [...] mandaria chamar os rumes, com que faria no mar tão possante armada com que [...] lhe tomaria as fortalezas, o que podia fazer muy leuemente. E que tomando a India aos portugueses seu nome [sc. Bahadur’s] seria aleuantedo sobre todolos senhores do mondo [...] com que ficaria mais nomeado que o Grão Turqo.” Correia, Lendas da India, Livro III, Capítulo XLVI (Lisbon, 1863), p.542f.
155 Correia, Lendas da India, Livro III, Capítulo XLVI, p.542-545. Of course, this may be mere retrojection post factum by the chronicler. It is unclear whether the Portuguese truly claimed that Mustafa had killed his uncle Salman.
court and was executed for it. Consequently, Mustafa rose much higher within the Gujarati state than he ever would have in the Ottoman lands from which he fled.

The Gujarati state needed competent warriors. While its ports were attacked by the Portuguese, it was expanding aggressively into the interior, as most of the neighboring principality of Malwa was attached to Gujarat in 1531. The battle of Panipat in 1526, in which Babur the Timurid had defeated the much larger force of the last of the Lodi sultans (who were later described by Mughal historiographers as mere “horse traders”), had caused anxiety in the region as Babur’s realm expanded across north India into Bengal. To insure his victories, Babur had famously employed Rumis with Anatolian strategies. After two decades during which Portuguese held supremacy on the sea and centrifugal forces dominated western India, imperial ambitions were in the air again. However, Babur died in 1530, and his successor, Humayun, had to fight against his own relatives as well as against a former retainer, Sher Shah Suri, the leader of Bihari Pashtuns. This opened up new possibilities for the Gujaratis. Meanwhile, Mustafa, as the new Rumi Khan, was encouraging Bahadur Shah to conquer northern India, telling him that he would find 10,000 Rumis who would serve him as bravely as any 30,000 infantry men would. According to the Portuguese historian Correia, Mustafa sent money and a messenger to the governor of Egypt, asking him for men. We cannot verify the exact nature of Mustafa’s ambitions, since the Gujarati chronicles are largely silent on such plans. He was, however, given command over a motley crew of

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158 “Que se em suas guerra trouxesse dez mil rumes lhe farião tanto seruço como trinta mil homens da terra [...] o messigeiro, que leuou cartas ao Rey de Misey e muyto dinheiro [...] logo fez ajuntamento de gente a soldo [...] e para a passagem d’estes rumes, que mandou o dinheiro que daau o messigeiro d’ElRey de Cambaya, se começarão a concertar as gales em Suez.” Correia, Lendas da India, III, LII, p.569.
European renegades along with his 700 Rumis, as Bahadur Shah proceeded to attack the Sisodia Rajput state of Mewar, to the north of Gujarat. Although Mewar was led by Rajput princes who had been antagonistic to the Mughals, both Mewar and neighboring Malwa applied to Humayun for aid, which resulted in an aggressive Mughal embassy to Gujarat in 1533-34. Yet Bahadur continued his attacks on Mewar, besieging the fortress of Chittor. He did not succeed in taking it, but Ranthambore, of somewhat lesser significance, was conquered by Mustafa’s men. The fortress was located several hundred kilometers from the Gujarati coast and on high steep hill, surrounded even today by jungle and large predatory cats, such as tigers and leopards. Its conquest represented quite a feat for the troops of Rumi Khan.

By then, seeds of discord appeared between Bahadur Shah and Mustafa, perhaps inevitably since Chittor was not taken upon the first attempt. Mustafa had been promised control over Chittor as well as Ranthambore, but he did not receive either one of them even after the latter had been conquered. Intending to gain time, Bahadur promised him Chittor again, and Mustafa acquiesced, feigning acceptance. At the time of the second siege of Chittor in 1535, as Humayun’s forces approached, intending to attack the Gujaratis, Mustafa’s bewildering advice to Bahadur Shah to isolate his own camp through entrenchment, in alleged imitation of the strategies employed by the sultans of Rum (wa ḥāḍḥā ḍastūr salāṭīn al-Rūm), met with suspicion. Indeed, Mustafa had sent a secret letter to Humayun, announcing his willingness to fight for him. However, his messenger was intercepted by the distressed Bahadur, who thereupon

161 Ulughkhani, E. Denison Ross, An Arabic History of Gujarat, Zafar al-Wâlîh, p.239.
destroyed the cannons “Layla” and “Majnun”, symbolically disassociating himself from his ghulām. Mustafa survived by sacrificing some of his men and pledging loyalty. However, quite soon he left Bahadur’s forces at the fortress of Mandu and attached himself to Humayun, recognizing him as the more powerful ruler. Bahadur’s violent verbal reaction became universally known and it even serves as an illustration for the early history of the Urdu language, although it was purportedly transmitted by a parrot!

Mustafa b. Bayram’s career did not last long after his treachery against the Gujaratis. He assisted Humayun in several battles before his mysterious demise by poison. However, the bulk of the Rumi men from his group remained in Gujarat, loyal to the Muzaffarid dynasty in face of Portuguese threat. Khvadja Safar, the freedman of Salman Reis who had come to India with Mustafa, assumed leadership of the Gujarati Rumis and he remained their most prominent member until his death. Indeed, in Portuguese colonial historiography and lore, Khvadja Safar

\[\text{\textsuperscript{162}}\text{ Bahadur composed a } \textit{mu'amma} \text{ which alluded to Mustafa’s name: “Haif bâshad nâm-i ān sag bar zabân, mîkh dar djânash nih u nâmash bikhvân (It would be waste to mention that dog’s name, push a nail into his soul and read his name [while doing so])”. See Badauni \[\text{\textsuperscript{\cite{Badauni}}\text{, G. Ranking, W. Haig, W. Lowe, } \textit{Muntakhab al- Tawârîkh}, I, (Calcutta, 1865-1869), chapter on Shah Suri.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{163}}\text{ Ulughkhani, E. Denison Ross, } \textit{An Arabic History of Gujarat, Zafar al-Wâlih}, p.232.\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{164}}\text{ A parrot which had been left behind by Bahadur Shah was captured by the Mughals and brought to Humayun’s court. Imitating Bahadur’s voice, the bird repeated his words. “Fi ïthnâ’ dhâlika hadara Rûmî Khân fi dhâk al-djam’ al-’azîm wa salama fa râhhaba bihi Humâyûn wa dhâkarahu bi-ismihi fa mā sama’a’t al-babaghâ bi-ismihi illâ wa qâlat bi lisân al-Hind: } \textit{Phit Rûmî Khân, harâm-khur! Phit, Rûmî Khân, harâm-khur!} \text{ wa kararat al-laft marâran [...] wa ghâdabâ fataraqa Rumi Khan bayn dhâlika al-djam’ [...] wa tardjamat qaul al-babaghâ: lu’inta ya Rûmî Khân ya hä’în al-mukhhkh! qâla wa al-zâhir annahu lamma kharadja Bahâdur min al-arâba nataqa bi hâdhîhi al-kalîmât [...]” See Ulughkhani, E. Denison Ross, } \textit{An Arabic History of Gujarat, Zafar al-Wâlih}, p.235f, and T.G. Bailey, “Early Urdu Conversation”, \textit{BSOAS}, 6 (1), 1930.\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{165}}\text{ Even Ulughkhani, who is generally well-disposed toward Mustafa, claims that this was proper punishment for betraying his lord. This may be a later scribal interpolation or a reflection of Ulughkhani’s sentiments, as his own lord was connected with Mustafa b. Bayram’s group. Perhaps this was also the reason for his strange claim that the group of Rumis was the first to arrive in Gujarat. See Ulughkhani, E. Denison Ross, } \textit{An Arabic History of Gujarat, Zafar al-Wâlih}, p.983: “Thumma shughila Rûmî Khân bi-al-simm […] min al-khiyâna wa sâra naqsan fi kamâlihi yamna ‘an al-thiqqa bihi.”} \]
looms larger than his masters.\textsuperscript{166} His tomb is still attentively maintained by local guardians in Surat, who remember him as one of the powerful “lashkar-log” of yore.

As Humayun’s forces swept southward over large parts of Gujarat, Bahadur Shah fled to Diu and turned to the Portuguese, asking them for help against Mughal forces and offering them to build fortresses in Bassein and Diu. Yet Humayun’s armies suddenly retreated as his core northern realm crumbled under the attacks of his brother on the one side and Pashtun forces on the other. In the aftermath, Bahadur regretted his decision to give up Diu and decided to send an embassy to Mecca to ask the Ottomans for assistance.\textsuperscript{167} Although the Ottomans had received similar petitions from other Indian rulers in 1517 and 1527, this was the first and only time that they responded by sending a fleet to India.

From the Ottoman perspective, the request marked a truly novel development and the first official involvement of the Ottoman state in the Indian Ocean. For the Gujaratis, however, it was closer to a \textit{déjà vu}, recalling the times of Husayn al-Kurdi, with very similar initial successes and subsequent quarrels, inconclusive withdrawals and further arrangements with the Portuguese.

\section*{5. Ottomans in Aden, Rumis in Diu: dissonant campaigns}

In a move which puzzled his contemporaries, Bahadur Shah sent most of his wealth and many members of his household to Mecca. The accompanying Gujarati embassy proceeded to

\textsuperscript{166} Although Rumi Khan was present at Diu, Bahadur understood that he could not be trusted. He decided to transfer the title of Rumi Khan to Khvadja Safar Salmani, who was Mustafa’s bondsman, and most of Mustafa’s men, the \textit{djamā’a al-salmāniyya}, remained in the service of Gujarat. Ulughkhani, E. Denison Ross, \textit{An Arabic History of Gujarat, Zafar al-Wâlih}, p.271.

\textsuperscript{167} See Correia, \textit{Lendas da India}, Liv. III, Cap. LIX.
the Ottomans in Istanbul, under the leadership of the nobleman Asaf Khan, and coinciding with other Indian embassies which were all affected by the changing balance of power in north India. The embassies arrived in Istanbul at a fairly auspicious moment, fitting nicely within the emergence of Ottoman universalist ambitions and contributing to their reputation as the most powerful Muslim rulers.

In spite of the recent retreat from Vienna, Ottoman fortunes were still on the rise. In 1534, Ottoman forces had entered Van and Tabriz as the Safavid Tahmasp fled before them. Not only was Baghdad conquered, but the eastern campaign also contributed greatly to the Ottomans’ reputation, as they proved that they could move their forces quickly between two very remote fronts. Hayreddin Barbarossa’s conquests in north Africa accrued to them as well, while northern African and Ottoman ships raided the shores of the northern Mediterranean undisturbed. Subsequent engagement at Preveza against the Venetians also concluded victoriously. Accordingly, Ottoman position in the region was stable, and they could assume an aggressive posture. Portuguese gains from the spice trade and their occasional attacks on pilgrim ships were well-known, providing an additional justification to fight against them.

Yet, the decision to interfere in Indian affairs was not made easily. We should remember that Ottomans had no access to the Persian Gulf at this point. For them, the way to India still led primarily through the Red Sea, which at this point seemed relatively secure from Portuguese attacks. The motives for undertaking such a risky endeavor must have been complex. In part, the Ottoman resolution to send a fleet may be connected to the mystery of Bahadur’s lost treasure.
H. Melzig believed that the Gujarati royal treasure was taken from Mecca to Istanbul upon learning of Bahadur Shah’s death in India\textsuperscript{168}, presumably to protect it from Portuguese claims while the fleet for India was being prepared in Suez.\textsuperscript{169} However, according to a report to the Sultan from the former Ottoman governor of Egypt, the eunuch and senior administrator Hadım Süleyman Paşa, the treasure also attracted the eye of the current vâlî of Egypt, who appropriated parts of it. This rash act must have caused some embarrassment in Istanbul, as the Porte made efforts to investigate whether the treasure had been intended as a recompense for the Ottoman expedition, or perhaps rather as a gift for the Holy Cities, and whether Bahadur Shah’s mother was his legal inheritor. This was a legal, diplomatic, and administrative quandary. Given the circumstances, Sultan Süleyman Kanuni and his advisers perhaps felt compelled to send some form of assistance to the Gujaratis, even after they learned about Bahadur’s dramatic demise by drowning. However, they were careful to reject Lodi and Gujarati requests for help against the powerful Humayun, declaring themselves ready to fight only against infidels. Burhan Beg, the son of the last Lodi ruler, Sultan Iskandar, was comforted by the Ottomans with a monthly pension of six ducats.\textsuperscript{170}

The Portuguese version of these events is slightly different and more focused on the Indian side. The contemporary Portuguese historian Castanheda, on the authority of a converted

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{168} Bahadur Shah famously drowned during a quarrel with the Portuguese, becoming a shâhid of the sea in a chronogram which commemorated the event. While he claimed that he intended to go to the pilgrimage, they accused him of inciting the Rumis against them. See Ba Faqih, Târikh al-Shîhr, p.239: “wa mā qasduhu illā yastânîhîdî al-Arwâm ‘alayhum.”

\textsuperscript{169} H. Melzig, Büyük Türk Hindistan Kapılarında, Kanuni Sultan Süleyman devrinde Amiral Hadım Süleyman Paşa’nın Hindәfe (Istanbul, 1943). Melzig’s monograph includes interesting political undertones, as he composed it in Istanbul as a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany. His sympathies clearly lie with the Ottomans / Turkish republic as opposed to the Portuguese / Catholic Europe; hence, as we may expect, in his depiction the Ottoman fight in India assumes a particular atemporal symbolic. Yet, it may be the single best analysis of the Indian campaign because of the range of his sources and his philological training.

\end{footnotesize}
Christian Rumi, assumes that Bahadur Shah sent his favorite wife to Mecca, intending to settle there. According to Castanheda, the Gujaratis sent two embassies to Istanbul. The first embassy failed to convince the Ottomans, who intended at that time to send a fleet to Italy; however, a second embassy, sent by “Miraomuhmahla” (Mahmud, the successor of Bahadur Shah), moved the Sultan. He was quite impressed by the gifts and convinced that it would be quite easy to expel the Portuguese from India. Simultaneously, an embassy from Shihr in Yemen also arrived, presenting 18 Portuguese captives, among whom was a capable pilot familiar with western Indian ports.

Additionally, the defrayment of expenses played a significant part in the decision to help the Gujaratis, since Hadım Süleyman Paşa offered to finance most of the project out of Egypt’s treasury, now that he had been reinstated as its governor. Some of Bahadur Shah’s treasure may have been spent on this fleet as well; this is certainly implied by the Portuguese sources. Castanheda believed that the Paşa had been ordered to take the hinterland of Cambay or Mangalore and not enter into a conflict with anyone except the fleet of the Portuguese governor in India in order to spare the strength and the numbers of the Ottoman soldiers, but if the Portuguese avoided fighting at sea, the Paşa was supposed to go to Goa and besiege it, whereupon he would be sent reinforcements. Should the Paşa realize in Mangalore that he could

171 Castanheda was a contemporary who returned to Portugal from India in 1538. See Ferão Lopes de Castanheda, Historia do Descobrimento & Conquista da India pelos Portugueses, ed., by Coelho (Coimbra, 1924), Livro VII, Cap. XCVIII. Unfortunately, it seems that final two volumes authored by Castanheda were destroyed, limiting our understanding of the period. For Barros, see his Décadas da Ásia, Déc. IV, Liv. VI, Cap. X-XI.
172 “[P]areceolhe q a riqueza daquela terra deuia de ser sem conto, pelo que desejou de poder coquistar Cambaya & o resto da Índia, & por isso se enfermou de iorge o arrenegado, assi da riqueza de Cambaya & dos outros reynos & do poder de seus reys [...] que o enfermou muyto largamente de tudo fazedolhe muy poca cousa o poder del rey de Portugal na Índia.” See Ferão Lopes de Castanheda, Coelho, Historia do Descobrimento & Conquista da India pelos Portugueses (Coimbra, 1933), Liv. VIII, Cap. CXC.
173 There are many conflicting claims on the treasure. Most likely, it was broken up between the Ottoman center, Egyptian local authorities, and the Gujaratis themselves.
not fight against the Portuguese armada or take Goa, he was supposed to spare his men and ships and go to Hormuz and conquer it, since it would be easier for the Ottomans to send reinforcements there.\textsuperscript{174}

Many of the details proffered by Castanheda cannot be verified. However, when we combine Portuguese, Arabic and Ottoman sources, we obtain a fairly accurate impression of the Indian Ocean campaign. Hadım Süleyman Paşa set out from Suez on the 28th of June 1538, arriving in Jiddah in a week, then proceeding to Aden. The Tahirid governor of Aden, ‘Amr b. Daud, kept the Ottoman messenger waiting for several days before offering lukewarm submission to the Sultan. On August 3rd, ‘Amr b. Daud was lured to the entrance of his fortress by the Ottomans, captured, and hung publicly together with his vizier and three other men.\textsuperscript{175}

The news of this execution arrived swiftly in Gujarat ahead of the fleet, greatly affecting the further course of the campaign.

The subsequent details of the Indian Ocean campaign have been told in a variety of versions, each revealing a different aspect of the region’s geopolitics. Several Ottoman historians exonerate the Paşa from blame for the events in Aden, mostly by omitting unpleasant details. Al-Mawza’i, an apologist for Ottoman rule in Yemen, depicts the relations between the Paşa and ‘Amr b. Daud as initially cordial, until the former discovered that the governor of Aden had secretly cooperated with the Portuguese; thus, he is punished for his betrayal of the Ottomans. Notably, al-Mawza’i barely mentions the expedition to Gujarat, stating only that the Paşa did not

\textsuperscript{174} “Que fosse tomar a costa da enseada de Cambaya ou Mágalar, & hi fizesse agoada, & não pelejasse com ninguém se não cô a propria armada do governador da India por el Rey de Portugal, porque não enfraquecesse ou diminuisse sua armada, & se o governador não quisesse pelejar coele no mar, se fosse á cidade de Goa & lhe posesse cerco & tomada se fizesse nela forte, porq logo lhe mandaria Socorro para se defender dos Portugueses: E se em Mangalor soubesse que não podia pelejar com a armada do governador, ne tomar Goa sem auenturar muyto da sua armada & gete que então se fosse a Ormuz & o tomasse & se fizesse hi forte, porque logo o socorria com breuidade.” See Castanheda, \textit{Historia do Descobrimento & Conquista da India}, Liv. VIII, Cap. CXCI, p.438.

\textsuperscript{175} An Ottoman \textit{khil’a} was offered to him as bait. See Ba Faqih, \textit{Tārikh al-Shihr}, p.245.
succeed in completely expelling the Portuguese from India. Solakzâde’s history is more disingenuous: the Paşa conquered Yemen with courteous behavior (güzeltedbîrlerle), and the ruler of Aden is not even mentioned. In his version, the Paşa plundered the infidel port of Diu and its environs, returning with rich treasure, thereby avenging the death of Bahadur Shah.

Writing with hindsight and aided by his knowledge of European affairs, Katib Çelebi connects the arrival of the Portuguese in India with their presence in the Americas. This does not mean, however, that he admires them. The bulk of the blame for the Ottoman failure during the Gujarati expedition is placed on the Portuguese, who, while they were militarily defeated and removed from the fortress, told the Gujarati ruler Mahmud that he would be hung in the same manner as ‘Amr b. Daud; hence, he should not trust the treacherous Ottoman admiral Süleyman Paşa. Thus, the Gujarati sultan denied the Ottomans supplies and provisions, made peace agreements with the Portuguese and forced the “armies of Islam” to evacuate the Diu fortress. Consequently, the Ottomans loaded their guns onto their ships and sailed back to Yemen in twenty days. Having conquered the remaining part of Yemen hüsnü tedbîrle, Süleyman Paşa went to Jiddah, carried out the hadjî and returned to Egypt.

It is noteworthy that the historians who were closer in time and space to the events tend to condemn the execution of the ruler of Aden. Al-Nahrawali, although loyal to the Ottomans, depicts ‘Amr b. Daud as virtuous and liked by his people. Süleyman Paşa’s treatment of the ruler is depicted as cruel and unjustified. When the Paşa arrives in Gujarat and offends a Gujarati

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178 See Katib Çelebi Mustafa (alias Hadjdji Khalifa), Tuhfat al-kibîrî fî asfâr al-bihîr (Istanbul, 1329) especially pages 57-8. The editor adds a footnote in which he mentions that the hanging of ‘Amr b. Daud was not only the trickery of infidels (yalnz küffârin hilesi değildir), but in fact happened.
nobleman, the sultan refuses his presents, unless he can be assured that they were explicitly sent by the Ottoman court. Finally, Khvadja Safar, a former Ottoman subject who knows of the Paşa’s reputation as a killer (qâtil), agrees with the sultan to deceive the Paşa and sends him a fabricated Portuguese letter.\textsuperscript{179} The Paşa leaves immediately, and his forces scatter, some coming to serve the ruler of Gujarat, attracted by large salary (wa sâru yakhdimûna khawânîn al-Hind, tama’an fî kathrat al-‘ulûfati).\textsuperscript{180} The Gujarati chronicler Ulughkhani is surprisingly curt on the expedition, stressing the distrust which Khvadja Safar had for the Paşa. He also mentions that the Ottoman Sultan purportedly reprimanded the Paşa when he later suggested another expedition to Gujarat.\textsuperscript{181}

Two reports from eyewitnesses are also available. One of them was composed by an unknown Italian who was drafted into the Ottoman fleet against his will along with other Venetian men. His report includes many geographical coordinates, indicating that he was an experienced sailor. His depiction of the events in Gujarat does not point to any initial conflicts among the Ottomans and the Gujarati noblemen; however, Ottoman forces soon descend upon Diu and plunder it, injuring and offending Gujaratis. A venerable old man presents himself to the Paşa and explains several of the local customs, including the burning of widows. Yet, there is no time for further ethnographic details, as in this version of the events, Portuguese ships appear on the horizon and Ottomans depart hastily. Subsequent cruelty of the Paşa is greatly emphasized,

\textsuperscript{179} The same is affirmed in J. de Barros, \textit{Décadas da Ásia}, Déc. IV, Liv. X, Cap. XVII. Khvadja Safar is described in greater detail below.

\textsuperscript{180} Al-Nahrawali, \textit{al-Barq al-Yamâni fî al-Fath al-‘Uthmâni} (Riyad, 1967). For this episode, see the third chapter, which is revealingly entitled: “fî dhikr tawaddidjuh Sulaymân Bâshâ ilâ‘Adan wa qatihi li-sâhibi ‘Adan ghadran, wa akhdhiha djabran wa qahran.” A partial translation of Nahrawali into English does not include the first part of his chronicle.

\textsuperscript{181} Ulughkhani, E. Denison Ross, \textit{An Arabic History of Gujarat, Zafar al-Wâlih}.
including a slaughter perpetuated on Yemeni Abyssinian soldiers and random killings of Venetian prisoners.\textsuperscript{182}

The second eyewitness report, quite different in tone and focus, was composed by Coutinho, a Portuguese soldier who was among the besieged soldiers at the Diu fort. His report is quite noteworthy in terms of its depiction of his enemies. At the beginning of Coutinho’s narrative, we initially learn about the Rumi history of Diu before the Portuguese built their fortress. According to him, a “Turk” holding the island of Diu had warned the Portuguese commander that it was profitless to attack such a small island and waste men. When the Portuguese proceeded to attack, he and his men committed suicide. With this tale, Coutinho perhaps alluded to his own suffering, criticizing the Portuguese decision to hold onto Diu unconditionally. When his account relates the Ottoman arrival, he does not mention a rivalry between Khvadja Safar and Süleyman Paşa, although he hints that Gujaratis grew weary of the Ottoman presence. According to him, Gujaratis were not informed about the events in Aden because the Ottomans had captured two Malabari ships at Aden, taking precaution not to allow any ships to leave for India. After intense struggle, the outer wall of the fortress collapsed and the Portuguese prepared for death. Yet the Ottoman forces left because they were ignorant of the weakened state of the Portuguese and because they had sustained heavy losses of munitions and men as well. According to Coutinho, more than a thousand of the best Ottoman men died in the

\textsuperscript{182} The original of the report was published in Ramusio, “Viaggio scritto per un comito veneziano, che fu condotto prigione dalla città de Alessandria fino al Diu nella India, col suo ritorno poi al cairo del 1538”. However, most researchers have preferred to work with J. Green, Astley’s Collection of Voyages and Travels, I, (London, 1745), p.88. This version was also reprinted in R. Kerr’s General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels (Edinburgh, 1812).
singe. Many of the Ottoman weapons and wounded men were left to the care of Khvadja Safar, who kept the Portuguese in suspense, not revealing immediately the Ottoman departure.\footnote{Lopo de Sousa Coutinho, \textit{O Primeiro Cerco de Diu} (Lisbon, 1989).}

In summary, the three most influential sources are the brief report by the anonymous Italian, the Yemeni chronicle of al-Nahrawali and the last chapters of the monumental \textit{Décadas da Ásia} by Barros.\footnote{Accessibility plays a considerable role here. Before 1967, researchers were most likely to read portions of Nehrawali in a French translation by Sylvestre de Sacy, preserved as a manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale. J. de Barros’ \textit{Décadas da Ásia} is usually favored. Versions of the same events by Castanheda and Correia have been less emphasized.} All of them stress the personal cruelty of the Paşa and the discord between the Ottomans and the Gujaratis. Accordingly, the Paşa’s character has been seen as central flaw which destroyed Ottoman plans in Gujarat.\footnote{In 1910s, Saffet Bey was severely condemning his actions, probably considering the cost of losing men in Yemen.}

Based on the sum of the sources, however, certain facts remain. After crossing the Indian Ocean in seventeen days, Süleyman Paşa succeeded in conquering the port of Gogha in Gujarat. In the course of his siege of Diu, he abandoned his project in face of Gujarati hostility and a possible Portuguese attack, and withdrew after a month. After returning to Yemen, he announced the conquest of Aden to the Porte. Before proceeding to Egypt, he aimed to subjugate the ruler of Zabid, Nakhuda Ahmed, a Rumi who reluctantly accepted the Paşa’s conditions, explaining that he had conquered Zabid by sword and was unwilling to simply release it. After this rebuttal, Süleyman Paşa went to Kamaran, replenishing his ships. He returned to Zabid and eventually defeated Nakhuda Ahmed’s army of Rumis, Abyssinians and Arabs, executing him and reading the \textit{khutba} in the Ottoman name on the 6th of March, 1539. In spite of his promise to return to India, the Paşa never did so; however, he later participated in campaigns in Aswan on the Nile and in the fields of Hungary.

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185 In 1910s, Saffet Bey was severely condemning his actions, probably considering the cost of losing men in Yemen.
Within the Portuguese historical tradition, the obesity, advanced age and exotic status of the Paşa as a Porte-raised eunuch have been emphasized since the sixteenth century, carrying implicit moral condemnation. Some Portuguese sources claimed that Hadım Süleyman Paşa was executed upon his return to Istanbul because of his perfidious behavior and his involvement in court intrigues. Astonishingly, we still find a version of this statement even in the work of a major Portuguese historian of our times. In reality, after his return, the Paşa was elevated to the post of the grand vizier for three years and seven months. In Hammer’s words, he “went to Mecca, where he accomplished the duty of hadjij, and then onto Constantinople via Cairo, where the eighty year old sat among vezirs in the diwan, [honored] as the conqueror of Arabia.”

Portuguese historians tend to stress the failure of the Ottoman state to establish itself in India. But Hadım Süleyman Paşa’s contemporaries in the Ottoman realm did not view his expedition as a failure, for he was rewarded rather than punished. The Habsburg emissary to the Ottomans, Tranquillus Andronicus [sic], intended to purchase spices from the Ottomans rather than the Portuguese. In his letter to the Austrian king, he presents the Paşa’s involvement in India

186 See Couto, Da Asia, Déc V, Liv. IV, Cap. IV, p.330, for a rather “macho” reaction by the Portuguese upon receipt of a letter from the Paşa.
187 See J. de Barros, Décadas da Ásia, Déc.V, Liv. IV, Cap. X, p.717f., which alleges that the Paşa was entangled in intrigues which caused the death of the şâhzâde Mustafa. In this questionable narrative, although the Sultan was inclined to forgive him, he was finally executed and his property appropriated: “[L]he foram confiscadas suas grandes riquezas; e o que a outros tirou os estados, e os officios, e a honra, em huma hora se vio privado da honra e da grandeza de seu officio; e o que foi matador de tantos homens sem culpas, foi elle o matador, e algoz de si mesmo por a suas.” This is a trope and wishful thinking, but it also intimated Portuguese familiarity with Yemeni gossip, for it seems that some Yemeni chronicles believed that the Ottoman Sultan executed the Paşa.
188 One of the most important contemporary historians of the Portuguese “discoveries” states that Süleyman Paşa killed himself at Jiddah! “Por fim, tendo regressado a Djeddah em 13 de Marco de 1539, suicidou-se, com modo de ser castigado pela Porta.” V. Magalhães Godinho, Os Descobrimentos e a economia mundial, III, (Lisbon, 1971), p.121.
189 J. Hammer-Purgstall, Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches, III, p.211. Relying on the Ottoman historian Ferdi, he does not refer to Khvadja Safar or any other Rumis.
in laudatory terms (*strenue adque feliciter Indiam domino suo quivisset*), although he could have revealed that the campaign did not exactly go as planned.\(^{190}\)

We may attempt to explain the subtext of this episode as follows: Hadım Süleyman Paşa was an experienced old man who ruled Egypt for a decade and certainly remembered the 1510s, when Husayn al-Kurdi, Salman Reis and the Portuguese attacked Aden repeatedly.\(^{191}\) The Ottoman admiral must have drawn several conclusions. First, he knew that ‘Amr b. Daud of Aden was a capable politician who had persisted in power since 1526, constantly switching his loyalty and working with the Portuguese when the moment demanded it. Moreover, he had made pledges to the Ottomans which were not reliable. Second, Salman Reis’ expeditions had proved that well-fortified Aden could not be taken except by deceit. Hence, Hadım Süleyman Paşa’s decision to deceive and hang ‘Amr b. Daud was not a gratuitous moment of sadism, although it had negative consequences for his campaign in India.\(^{192}\) The Paşa had intended some involvement in Indian Ocean matters previously; he suggested sending a fleet into the Red Sea even in 1530, and indeed, sixty ships had been sent from Anatolia to Suez. He was forced, however, to abandon the project and join the Ottoman campaign on Baghdad. We may speculate that since the very beginning of the 1538 expedition, the admiral primarily aimed to take Aden. Indeed, this is what the Ottoman historian Peçevi claimed in his chronicle.\(^{193}\)


\(^{191}\) Thus, Ulughkhanı views his fate of being hanged by Hadım Suleyman Paşa as a just punishment for refusing to pay his share in the financing of the Egyptian fleet of Husayn al-Kurdi.

\(^{192}\) In contrast to the recalcitrant ruler of Aden, the sultan of Shihr faired well. He renewed his promise of loyalty to the Ottomans and pledged to remit a certain yearly amount and deliver a number of armed men.

As noted above, Aden was a nodal point of access to India and it had strong ties to Ethiopia, in which Ottomans had started to become interested. In spite of Portuguese interference with the spice trade, it was still the major regional entrepôt, and it was easier to access and defend than any potential Ottoman holdings in Gujarat would have been. Accordingly, we need not be surprised that Hadım Süleyman Paşa was rewarded after returning from his campaign, even though he had failed in India. We may also note that before and after the expedition, the admiral was known in Egypt for his charitable works, which inspired a recent study with a voluminous collection of documents.\(^{194}\)

Since the Ottoman fleet was not defeated militarily in 1538, we may conclude that it accomplished another aim in India; namely, measuring the extent of its power and probing the potential danger of the Portuguese. If the Sultan and his advisors had genuinely considered the Gujarati campaign of supreme importance, they would surely have mounted more than one attempt, and they would have displayed better planning, as they had in so many other successful battles at that time.\(^{195}\) Nonetheless, it would have been very difficult to retain an outpost in India in terms of logistics, especially if so much was dependent on the good will of the Gujarati population. The initial Portuguese approach of brutal intimidation was not an option for the Ottomans to the same degree because they had to act in their role as fellow Muslims. In addition, the ruling house of Gujarat and the noblemen would doubtlessly have rejected a long-term Ottoman presence. As we have seen, many Rumi men were renegades from the Ottoman rule and there was no need for them to unequivocally embrace it. Ottomans had much to lose and little to

\(^{194}\) A.M. El-Masry, *Die Bauten von Hadım Sulaiman Pascha (1468-1548) nach seinen Urkunden im Ministerium für fromme Stiftungen in Kairo* (Berlin, 1991). These documents have yet to be incorporated into a full account of the admiral.

gain by seeking to establish a permanent formal settlement in India. We substantially agree with a Franco-Portuguese scholar who suggests that the Ottoman priority was the pacification and control of the Red Sea, through which many riches of India flowed toward the Mediterranean. Indeed, only the Ottomans proved capable of controlling this crucial western pole of the Indian Ocean trade through the nineteenth century.

On the basis of the evidence, we may also conclude that the greatest difficulty for the Ottomans resided in the ambivalent attitude of the Gujaratis, and especially their Rumi soldiers. The Ottoman fleet was not defeated by Portuguese arms, but rather by the lack of support from the local population. Although they often came from similar backgrounds, Rumis and Ottomans diverged in their political loyalties and that rift was difficult to mend. At this point, the indisputed leader of the Rumi group in Gujarat associated with Salman Reis and Mustafa b. Bayram (al-djamā’a al-salmāniyya) was Khudavand Khan, the former Khvadja Safar. We can finally elucidate the background of this mysterious man.

While it is quite certain that Khvadja Safar was the treasurer of Salman Reis, there are various claims about his origin. He may have been a Muslim from Granada or, more likely, an Albanian renegade from Otranto who became Salman’s slave and was freed before his death. Occasionally, he displayed willingness to cooperate with the Portuguese, who describe him as affable in expression and physiognomy. After the death of Bahadur Shah, the Portuguese

196 D. Couto, “No rasto de Hadim Suleimão Pacha: alguns aspectos do comércio do Mar Vermelho nos anos de 1534-1540,” in Matos, ed., A carreira da Índia e as rotas dos estreitos, Actas do VIII seminário internacional de história Indo-Portuguesa (Angra do Heroísmo, 1998). Couto suggests that the changes in trade patterns are structural, and that Venetians, in spite of numerous conflicts with the Ottomans and their Jewish representatives, did not have compunctions in going to Istanbul to provide their ships with spices; consequently, the dichotomy of “European market” and a “Muslim market” cannot be strictly upheld.

197 Here Barros and the Venetian conflict in their indications. Characteristically, Gujarati, Ottoman and Yemeni chronicles are silent on this matter.

198 This may be a trope by which Gujarati nobles who cooperated with both Ottomans and Portuguese are described.
spared him under the condition that he not leave his residence. However, upon hearing that the
Ottoman forces approached, Khvadja Safar fled his house arrest in Surat, seemingly enthusiastic
to join the Ottomans in their siege of Diu against the Portuguese. Yet we encounter contradictory
statements about his interaction with the Ottomans. As we have seen, the near-contemporary
historians Nahrawali and Ulughkhani, whom we may assume to be well-informed, stress the
immediate dislike which Khvadja Safar had for the Paşa, and his willingness to resort to
deception in order to get rid of him. Even before the arrival of the Ottoman fleet, many new
Rumis were present in Gujarat, and they were welcomed by Khvadja Safar. They had arrived
disguised as merchants. Without waiting for the Ottomans, Rumi, Abyssinian and Arab
mercenaries attacked the fortress, with the implication that they would have conquered it without
any Ottoman interference. In short, it seems that Khvadja Safar eventually realized that he did
not need Ottomans to reassert himself in Gujarat. He certainly wanted Anatolian and western
Asian men and their horses, but he did not desire the intrusion of Istanbul on his actions.

Perhaps the only dissenting voice is the historian al-Shihri, who portrays Khvadja Safar
as a determined enemy of the Portuguese and a loyal ally of the Ottomans, abandoned by the
panicked Hadım Suleyman Paşa just before the conquest of the fort. In his version, Rumis are
loyal Muslims, betrayed by Hadım Suleyman Paşa. As Portuguese sources indicate, Rumis
and Gujaratis were initially impressed by the Janissaries among the arriving fleet, who were
dressed in brocade and wore turbans adorned with gold. According to Castanheda, Khvadja Safar
expected complete victory over the Portuguese with their help. Yet the young Gujarati sultan

199 Ba Faqih, Tārīkh al-Shihr, p.230f.
asserted that he did not want friendship with the Ottomans, because he viewed them as bad company. Consequently, the Rumis decided to act in accordance with their Gujarati sovereign.

Regardless of the Ottoman official fleet, the Portuguese were quite engaged in battles with Anatolian men, even outside of Gujarat. Rumis at the Konkani coast were also involved in attacks against Portuguese holdings. ‘Adil Shah of Bijapur sent a force which included Rumi soldiers against the feitoria at Salcete.’ Most of those conflicts resulted in stalemates, but we may note that any Gujarati arrangements with the Portuguese were temporary. A wall was constructed between the Portuguese fortress and the Muslim-Hindu town of Diu (still called cidade de Rumes by the Portuguese). In spite of the fortifications, Mahmud III, Bahadur’s successor, prepared for a second attack. In 1545, the young Gujarati sultan had freed himself from the tutelage of his noblemen and the following year, he attacked Diu. Unlike the month-long fight in 1538, the second siege of Diu lasted for eight months; yet, we do not find any mention of it in Ottoman sources. In addition to Gujarati chronicles, we learn about this siege from the Portuguese, particularly in a report by Diogo de Teive.

Teive is of particular interest to our Rumi pursuits, as their presence is in the foreground of his narrative. He informs us that Mahmud III, the successor of Bahadur Shah, bought artillery from the Ottomans for 60 thousand golden ducats. Reiterating earlier Portuguese claims, Teive states that the late Bahadur had invited into his realm many mercenaries, among whom were numerous Rumes, renegade Christians, Abyssinians and Arabs. Those men spurred him on

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200 Casancheda, Historia do Descobrimento & Conquista, Liv. VIII, Cap. CXCV.
201 Casancheda, Historia do Descobrimento & Conquista, Liv. VIII, Cap. CIII and CXXIII.
203 “Destes [...] de enorme tamanho, o comprara aos Rumes por cerca de 60 mil ducados de ouro.” Teive, p.38.
204 “É assim que acodem ao chamamento muitíssimos Rumes/Turcos, até cristãos que tinham abjurado o seu sagrado juramento e a sua religião – abissinios Ra’s Fartak e árabes.” Idem., p.39.
onto further conquest in Gujarat due to their thirst for plunder. Khvadjə Safar, or Khudavand Khan, introduced a second influx of men, for he had asked his relatives in western Asia to actively recruit more Anatolians, Arabs, and Abyssinians. Among them were 5,000 “Turks” of whom 400 were musketeers. The Portuguese managed to seize a few additional ships loaded with Anatolian mercenaries and led by one of Khvadjə Safar’s numerous relatives. In spite of offers of ransom, the captives were taken to Goa and beheaded.

Teive especially castigates the Christian renegades as willing to do anything to please the bellicose “Turks.” His narrative reaches its rhetorical apogee as he transmits the address of the governor to his compatriots, assuring them that the Indians depend on “Turkish” reinforcements. The latter are not much more numerous than the Portuguese themselves, since, as Teive asserts, it is hard for the Ottomans to send men from Macedonia and Thrace; however, we cannot deduce much about the presence of Ottoman subjects from the Balkans from this statement alone. As Teive writes in Latin, his geographical terms may reveal more about his classical education than about the exact provenance of the Rumis. In spite of Muzaffarid efforts, the second Gujarati siege of Portuguese Diu failed, perhaps because a part of the army had to be sent north to a second front. Khvadjə Safar and his oldest son Muharram Rumi Khan were killed, in addition to

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205 “Além disso, Coje Sofar a um seu parente [que vive num pais da orla do] Golfo Arábico- Pérsico – a que vulgarmente chamam de Estreito de Meca – enviou uma grande sona de ouro e prata e também cartas. Nelas lhe recomendava curasse de lhe recutar en cada uma das províncias, turcas, árabes, abexins de Adisabeba, de Suakin e de Judá – Províncias que ficam no litoral do referido Golfo Arábico – bem como Áden e nos reinos vizinhos, os mais valentes e valeroso militares.” Idem., p.47.

206 “A escola de todo o exército eram os soldados turcos a saber: 5.000 homens escolhidos entre os militares de maior galhardia e gabarito. Deste número faziam parte 400 fuzileiros.” Idem., p.53.


208 “Na verdade, quaisquer que sejam as forças que dispõem, essas dependem dos reforços dos Turcos [...] que não são muito mais numerosos do que vós próprios sois [...] Se eles forem vencidos, da Trácia e da Macedónia não vão conseguir reforços muito mais facilmente do que nós de Portugal.” Idem., p.133. We will return to the issue of Teive’s geography in the conclusion of this section.
several other mercenary leaders. The governor João de Castro retaliated against the erstwhile invaders by executing a large number of people in the city of Diu.

Probably planning further campaigns, Mahmud III called upon Asaf Khan, who had been Bahadur Shah’s ambassador to the Ottomans and currently resided in Mecca. Asaf Khan returned to Gujarat with some 10,000 men in 1548, but Mahmud was murdered in 1554, and a child enthroned. Henceforth, no significant attacks against the Portuguese were undertaken, and the sultanate of Gujarat entered its last phase of incessant fighting until it was conquered by Akbar and the Mughals in 1572. Traditionally, the second siege of Diu is taken to signify the demise of Rumi presence in India.

However, the Arabic chronicle of Ulughkhani reveals that Rumis assumed the center stage in Gujarat at this time. Significantly, although the Rumis were aware of the power of the Ottomans, their alliances and enmities bore little relation to it. Their intention was not to establish Ottoman hegemony in India; rather, it was the elevation of their own group of troops to the detriment of their local adversaries. Perhaps surprisingly, the most embittered enemy of the Rumis and their clients was a central Asian man called Chingiz whose father had been sold as a slave in Istanbul.
Chapter 2

Other Theaters in the Indian Ocean:
Rumis or Ottomans?

1. Rumis, their Habasha clients and the African djihâds

Upon the death of Khvadja Safar and his older son, the younger surviving son, Radjab (Receb) was proclaimed the head of the soldiers, although he was only twenty-five years old. Apparently, the title of Rumi Khan was not limited to only one person, and it was hereditary, recalling Tomé Pires’ statement that many Rumi men came from western Asia seeking titles of khân and mâlik. Many other men from the group of Mustafa b. Bayram had acquired honorary titles as well. For instance, one Mustafa Karamani and Isma’il the Circassian were called ‘Adil Khan and As‘ad Khan in Gujarat. Significantly, Rumi Khan Radjab’s retainers did not consist only of the original members of Mustafa b. Bayram’s group, as other Anatolian men joined them after the withdrawal of the Ottoman fleet in 1538. Among them was one Fath Djang Khan, who obtained his title in 1547. He was still known to swear in Anatolian Turkish, and he resided in Ahmadabad with a coterie of his followers. Another Rumi, called Karahasan, became well-known for laying a mine and blowing up a wall in Diu. He received the title of Jahangir Khan, commanded artillery and became vizier to Rumi Khan Radjab, whom he assisted in the conquest

209 Only a rough outline of the interactions of members of this group will be given here. I intend to disentangle it in more detail in a separate article. The main sources for the Rumis and the Rumikhanis are Ulughkhani, E. Denison Ross, ed., Zafar al-Wâlih bi Muzaffar wa âlih (London, 1910); al-‘Aydarus, Tâ’rikh al-nûr al-sâfir ‘an akhbâr al-qarn al-‘âshir (Beirut, 1985); Shaikh Sikandar Manjhu, S. Misra, M. Rahman, eds., The Mirat-i Sikandiri (Baroda, 1961); Ali Muhammad Khan, S. N. Ali, ed., Mir ‘at-i Ahmadî (Baroda, 1927), and other Perso-Gujarati chronicles.

210 Ulughkhani, Zafar al-Wâlih, p.460.

211 Idem., p.276f.
of Bharuch. After Radjab’s murder in 1561, Jahangir Khan departed for Surat where he was eventually poisoned.

Additional Rumi men arrived with Asaf Khan in 1548. Among them, the most notable was ‘Imad al-Mulk Aslan Turki, occasionally also called Rumi, probably a Shi’a of central Asian descent, enslaved in the wars against the Safavids and purchased by Asaf Khan in Mecca. He obtained the armoury and treasury of the Gujarati kingdom and became the commander of “Javanese”, Rumi, Persian and Habashi mercenaries. As prime minister to the Gujarati sultan Ahmad III in 1556, ‘Imad al-Mulk was involved in a struggle with I’timad Khan, a converted Hindu. At that time, those two men were the most important noblemen in the Gujarati realm.

The Ottoman admiral Seydi ‘Ali Reis encountered Radjab Rumi Khan and ‘Imad al-Mulk when he arrived in Gujarat in 1554. According to him, both of them expressed admiration for the admiral’s military skills and refused to deliver him and his men to the Portuguese, despite the severely weakened state of this Ottoman expedition. In Ahmadabad, ‘Imad al-Mulk supposedly praised the Ottoman ruler as the pâdishâh of all Muslim lands, asking for his assistance to free India from the Portuguese. Seydi ‘Ali Reis also found common ground when he praised the achievements of Barbarossa to a Rumi audience already familiar with the corsair’s fame and when he visited a Maghribi saint’s tomb in Gujarat.

Yet, Seydi ‘Ali Reis clearly feared the temptations of Gujarat and the attrition of his forces. When a man called Yağmur attempted to kill Hüseyin Bey, the leader of the Ottoman

212 Idem., p.363.
213 Idem.
214 Seydi ‘Ali Reis will be discussed in detail below and in section three, chapter five.
216 Idem., p.95f.
Circassians, Ottoman men called for Seydi ‘Ali Reis to settle the quarrel, but he cautiously responded that they were in “the land of another pâdishâh”, where Ottoman laws were not valid.\textsuperscript{217} Many of Seydi ‘Ali Reis’ men were displeased since they had not been paid for two years, so they consented to participate in the Gujarati conquest of the city of Bharuch and other adventures, in hopes of acquiring loot.\textsuperscript{218} Hence, only about 50 men remained with Seydi ‘Ali Reis. At this point, the Gujarati sultan Ahmad offered him the province of Bharuch and an exhorbitant sum, yet the loyal Ottoman Reis refused, asserting valiantly that he would return to Rum “even if all of Gujarat were offered to him.” Fortunately, the early Islamic caliph ‘Ali appeared soon afterward in the Reis’ dreams, reassuring him that he had made the right decision.\textsuperscript{219} We may doubt many elements of his narrative which so strongly compliments the Ottomans, yet it is clear that the temptations and dangers of India left a strong impression on the admiral and his men. As we will see in the fifth chapter, Seydi ‘Ali Reis’ memories of India are carefully crafted, avoiding any mention of dispute between Ottomans and Indians, such as Hadım Süleyman Paşa’s earlier expedition, thus creating the impression of two distinct realms between which there was very little communication. Yet it cannot be denied that many of Seydi ‘Ali Reis’ men remained in India to benefit from joining the Rumis.

\textsuperscript{218} “Sultân Ahmed cânıbine gidüp ve leşkere Hüdâ-vend Hân eellişer ve altmuşar akça ‘ulûfe idüp ‘Âdil Hân dahi Bervec’de olan halka eyle kilup halk biri birini idlâl eleyüp iki yila karibdür ki ‘ulûfe yüzün görmeyüp ve zâd u zevademuz kalmayup ve gemilerde âlât ve esbâb olmayup gemi dahi köhne olup min ba’d Msr’a gitmek ihümâli olmaydu mûte’ayıyindir diyü niçesi [...] âkibet Vilâyet-i Gücerât’da ekseri nöker olup gemiler hâli kalmagın Kal’a-i Sürret’de Hüdâ-vend Hân’a yarakları ve mevcûd olan esbâbları ile teslim olunup bahâlarin der-i devlete ihsâlam memûr olup mezbûr Hüdâ-vend Hân ve ‘Âdil Hân’ dan temessûkler alınıb [...]” Idem., p.94.
\textsuperscript{219} “Def‘i meclis olup bir kaç günden sonra Sultân Ahmed Vilâyet-i Bervec’i bu hakare teklîf idüp ve mûbâlağa dirlik ta’yın eleyüp kâbul kalmayup: Külliyyen Vilâyet-i Gücerat’i virsênüz, durmak muhâlâtundar diyüp” Idem., p.96.
Solidarity was often lacking among the Rumis and their clients. ‘Imad al-Mulk was killed by assault in Surat in 1559. Radjab Rumi Khan claimed the killing and burned the dead man’s beard.\(^{220}\) In retaliation, he was murdered in 1561 by Bidjli Khan, a Habashi client who was known for introducing learned Arabs at the Gujarati court, and Radjab’s head was sent to Chingiz Khan, ‘Imad al-Mulk’s son. Chingiz Khan, a fervent Shi‘a, was instrumental in the degradation of Rumi leaders, as he elevated Persians and men from Transoxiana.\(^{221}\) It may be that he could not forget his central Asian father’s humiliation of having been sold as a slave in Ottoman lands. When he was killed in 1567, his guns and elephants were given to Jhujhar Khan, a Habashi and an honorary Rumi whose father had been one of Salman Reis’ slaves.\(^{222}\)

As noted above, Habashi military men were likely to align their forces with the Rumis from the very beginning of the Delhi sultanate.\(^{223}\) In contrast to the Islamic heartlands, Abyssinians did not only provide labour as domestics, musicians or seal-keeping eunuchs, but they also enjoyed great reputation as merchants and warriors.\(^{224}\) Habashi slaves had seized control in Bengal in 1486; after the collapse of the Bahmanid sultanate, they also held great power in Bijapur and Ahmadnagar. The island of Janjira, famed for impregnability even among the British, belonged to Abyssinians since 1489, when a Habashi warrior captured it by disguising himself as a trader and landing his men in boxes which purportedly contained his

\(^{220}\) Ulughkhani, *Zafar al-Wâlih*, p.444.
\(^{221}\) Idem., p.505.
\(^{222}\) One of Jhujhar Khan’s retainers, a fellow Abyssinian named Sidi Sa‘id, built a mosque which still bears his name. Its latticework windows (with a variation of the tree-of-life motif) have become the trademark of Ahmadabad. Sidi Sa‘id had also served Radjab Rumi Khan, the son of Khvadja Safar.
\(^{223}\) Radiyya, the daughter of Iltutmush who succeeded him to the throne, becoming the first woman to rule a Muslim state, lost the throne because of her involvement with a Habashi. The cinematic version with Hema Malini added further fame to this romantic story.
\(^{224}\) Francisco Alvarez, *Capellan del Rey don Manuel, Historia de las cosas de Etiopia, y del estado del Christianissimo Emperador della* (Zaragoza, 1561). Also see J. Bacharach, “African Military Slaves in the Medieval Middle East: The cases of Iraq (869-955) and Egypt (868-1171)”, *IJMES*, 13 (4), 1981.
wares.\textsuperscript{225} The rulers of Janjira later embraced a modified Ottoman flag. Whether in the Delhi sultanate, on the Konkani coast, in the Bay of Bengal or in Gujarat, we encounter firm linkages between the Rumis and the Habashis. These relationships did not only consist of spontaneous friendship or recognition of common interests, but also of formal slavery which included military training of able-bodied men.

In the Gujarati case, connections between Rumis and Habashis are particularly well-documented and explicit. Ulughkhani, the author of the Arabic chronicle which is one of our main sources, spent most of his life in the service of Habashi lords. He expressed admiration for their military prowess, confessing (or feigning) initial ignorance about them. He claimed that he only understood them when he encountered a book entitled \textit{Tuhfat al-zamân}, in which the times of the Adali \textit{djihâd} against Christian Ethiopians are related.\textsuperscript{226} Through this book and the conversations with his lords, he learned that the group of Habashis who arrived in Gujarat with Mustafa b. Bayram was composed of slaves who were bought during Salman Reis’ visit in Zeyla. Some of them were executed for disobedience, but others were freed and trained in an organized fashion. As warriors, they were “distinct among their kind, men of good physical constitution and natural disposition (\textit{khalq wa khulq, sa’da wa daula}).\textsuperscript{227} Ulughkhani noted that many of these Habashis retained marks of their acculturation by the Rumis, to the extent of being called Rumi Khanis. Jhujhar Khan, as a son of a member of the original Salman group, was


\textsuperscript{226} Ulughkhani, \textit{Zafar al-Wâlih}, p.578.

\textsuperscript{227} Idem., p.579.
fluent in Anatolian Turkish and thus able to respond to insults and detect intrigues.228 As we saw above, he was decisive in eliminating the greatest enemy of the Rumis, Chingiz Khan.

But fear of powerful Habashis and their allies led Gujarati rulers into alliances with far-reaching consequences. The port of Daman was given to the Portuguese in order to subdue the Habashis, and after the final submission of Gujarat to Akbar in 1572, Jhujhur Khan and many of his followers were executed, lest they endanger Mughal rule.229 Even after the demise of Rumis as a military force, Habashi men still retained an important role at the coasts of Gujarat and Konkan in the early eighteenth century, when they defended them against Omanis, Marathas and others.230

A historiographic note may be needed here, as the presence of Abyssinians in Gujarat has only recently attracted the attention of scholars.231 Even major scholars of south Asia in the early modern period tend to ignore the east African connection.232 Conversely, there is a marked reluctance within the Africanist field to study the relevance of Indian or Arab connections with the eastern African littoral, perhaps because of numerous distorted interpretations which stem from the colonial period, and which derive the very existence of any African civilizations from

228 Idem., p.460, p.466.
229 Burton-Page, ―Gudjarat‖, EI²
231 R. Pankhurst, “The Ethiopian Diaspora to India: The Role of Habshis and Sidis from Medieval Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century” in S. de Silva Jayasuriya, R. Pankhurst, The African Diaspora in the Indian Ocean (Trenton, 2003). Pankhurst is perhaps the important scholar of Ethiopian history in the twentieth century, but his synopsis of the Gujarati Habashi diaspora includes a few mistakes, most likely because he does not read Arabic.
232 Braudel-inspired Indian Ocean studies of K. N. Chaudhuri, e.g. Asia before Europe: economy and civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the rise of Islam to 1750 (Cambridge, 1990), have attracted criticism for omitting Africa altogether. The scarcity of references to Africans in the magisterial work of S. Subrahmanyan is even more puzzling.
non-African roots. In the Ottomanist field, analyses have been limited to the work of C. Orhonlu, while the Gujarati connections have not yet been studied. Deplorably, the rich Ge’ez chronicles from the period have not been sufficiently analyzed either. Consequently, this discussion can only sketch out the contours of the problem and emphasize the need for more studies.

In order to understand the dynamics of Habashi slave trade, we must focus on Ethiopia itself. The group of “Rumikhanis”, consisting of slaves who were purchased by Selman Reis and their descendants, played a significant part in Gujarati history, and their actions are particularly well recorded. Yet, Salman certainly was not the first Rumi to be engaged in the Ethiopian slave trade. The first alleged Rumi involvement in sub-Saharan Africa refers to Bosnian troops sent by Selim I in the early sixteenth century to explore the Nubian region. We may doubt at least some elements of this anecdote, since it is based on the Sudanese oral traditions of the nineteenth century, as reinterpreted and contextualized by a Swiss traveler. Yet, Ethiopian sources state that the first Mamluks to train Ethiopians in horsemanship and new weapons were Turkic speakers in the 1420s, among them one Altunbugha. As we have seen elsewhere, it is quite likely that such troops were not state-directed. Instead, they may have left Egypt because of

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233 Paradigmatic for unsavory scholarship produced under Apartheid in South Africa is C. Hromnik, *Indo-Africa: Toward a New Understanding of the History of Sub-Saharan Africa* (Cape Town, 1981). Although Hromnik is ostracized by the academic community, he has a sizeable following as he claims that all civilizational achievements in Africa may be traced to Indians, in a version of the Aryan thesis. By contrast, see the excellent summary by R. Pouwels, “Eastern Africa and the Indian Ocean to 1800: Reviewing Relations in Historical Perspective”, *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 35 (2/3), 2002.
235 In Ethiopian historiography, as elsewhere, the problématique of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is especially developed. In contrast, the early modern period has been relatively neglected. D. Crummey, “Ethiopia in the Early Modern Period, Solomonic Monarchy and Christianity”, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 8 (3-4), 2004.
conflicts with the authorities or because of sheer interest in adventure. Significantly, their numbers seem to increase after the fall of the Mamluk dynasty in 1517. From a Portuguese source, we gleam that in Ethiopia, a different distinction between Rumis and “Turks” than the expected one was customary: Rumis were primarily understood to come from the Mamluk Egypt, whereas “Turks” were the subjects of the Ottoman rulers. To increase the complexity of the categories, we may note that in the Ethiopian context of 1550s, Rumis and Circassians from Yemen could simply be defined as “Arabs”, perhaps because of intermarriages of that generation with Yemenis and Hadramis.

Raid on the realm of the Christian Ethiopian emperor (Negus) were directed from the sultanate of Adal. The Adali center had been in Zayla, subsequently moving to Dakar in the eastern part of Ethiopia, and finally to Harar. Adali troops, led by the amir Mahfuz, had been raiding Christian territories since 1490. One of his successors, the Adali sultan Imam Ahmad b. Ibrahim al-Ghazi, nicknamed “Grañ”, intensified the djihad in 1529, defeating the larger Ethiopian army. Using Rumi and Yemeni mercenaries as well as Somali pastoralists, he conquered most of Ethiopia by 1540. Not all Rumis were ready to obey him; some returned to

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238 M. Abir, *Ethiopia and the Red Sea*. Although Abir in an earlier section comments that some of the Rumis were Ottomans, but others were not, he neglects this point in his subsequent discussion, occasionally resorting to the vague term “Turks” and when he claims that Ottomans ruled Zabid de facto since 1525. As we have seen, the Rumi-Circassian struggles for power included recognition of Ottoman sovereignty, but did not necessarily imply a firm control by Cairo or Istanbul.  
239 In a conversation with the Ethiopian emperor Libna Dingil, the Portuguese are encouraged to join him in an armed fight against the Adali sultinate and Rumis. “Tornaron a preguntar si la artillería de los Turcos era buena y que quien se la hauía enseñado. Respodió el Embarador que era tã buena como la nuestra, pero que no les temíamos [...] los Rumes (q son los Mamelucos de Egypto) eran mas q nosotros [...]” Alvarez, *Historia de las cosas de Ethiopia*, capitulo LXXVI, folio xxxii (Zaragoza, 1561).  
240 A. Hersi, *The Arab Factor in Somali History: The Origins and the Development of Arab Enterprise and Cultural Influences in the Somali Peninsula* (Doctoral dissertation, UCLA, Los Angeles, 1977). Hersi’s work has been viewed as a major contribution toward Somali historiography; however, his view of Portuguese and “Turks” is simplified, as he asserts that they were oppressive and inhibiting trade.
the port of Beylul and to Yemen, while others joined him. Remarkably, Ahmad Grañ endeavored to send Rumi and Yemeni mercenaries back to Zabid as soon as the conquest seemed achieved. Yet, two years later, he demanded repeated assistance from the local Ottoman governor. Rumis arrived and were again sent back to Yemen within a short period of time. Probably the Adali imâm had some anxiety about retaining them in the region, intending to avoid power struggles similar to those in Yemen in 1520s, or perhaps even fearing the imposition of direct Ottoman rule. The official chronicle of the Adali djihâd, nominally used by the Gujarati chronicler Ulughkhanî as a source, is not explicit in this regard; its mention of Rumis is limited to episodes which glorify the riches of Ethiopia. For instance, when Grañ arrives at a conquered church, he is astonished by the gold, silver, pearls and carved wood with which it is decorated. As his armies enter it, he asks them rhetorically if they had ever seen anything like it, and they respond that they had not, “neither in Rum nor in Hind.” Notably, those troops with experience in Rum and Hind are mostly described as Arabs rather than Indians or Rumis. Grañ’s wars ended abruptly in 1543, when he died in battle.

In Portuguese chronicles, the conflict in Ethiopia is followed with great interest, as it overlapped with the Portuguese ambitions to build fortresses at Bab al-Mandib and in the Red Sea, and the increasing Ottoman involvement in the Persian Gulf. The Portuguese fleet which entered the Red Sea in spring 1541 and advanced toward Suez assisted the Negus, but it was not

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241 C. Orhonlu, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun Güney Siyaseti: Habeş Eyaleti (İstanbul, 1974).
243 Indeed, increased panic noted in the Portuguese dispatches to the center, demanding reinforcements, may have reflected the Ottoman involvement in the Red Sea area, instead of India itself.
able to establish itself in the area.\textsuperscript{244} As in the case of the Deccani empire of Vijayanagara, we should note that the Ethiopian Solomonic dynasty employed the rhetoric of holy war, but \textit{de facto} made a sharp distinction between Muslims loyal to the crown and those opposing it. Beyond the façade of religious wars, Ethiopian rulers had been accustomed to having petty Muslim amirs as their vassals. In the course of the conflict, some Rumis and Arabs joined the Ethiopian side (names of one Hasan al-Basri and ‘Abd al-Asfar Turki, among others, are attested). In turn, notable members of the Tigre Christian aristocracy, who opposed the Solomonic dynasty, temporarily joined Muslims against the emperor. As Portuguese attempts to impose Catholicism were violently opposed by the Ethiopian population, some Jesuits left the Ethiopian kingdom and joined the Ottomans in 1557, following their occupation of the island of Massawa and the land port of Arkiko (Hargigo).\textsuperscript{245} Unlike the contemporaneous Christian-Muslim encounters in India, which usually culminated in great battles, the struggle for Ethiopian lands lasted for several decades, waxing and waning in intensity.

After more than a century of intermittent Rumi presence in Ethiopia, direct Ottoman rule was established along parts of the coast. Özdemir Paşa, a Circassian mamluk who had participated in the 1538 expedition to India, had remained in Yemen as an amir of Zabid. In the following decade, he rose through the ranks to become a \textit{sancak beği} and eventually the \textit{beğlerbeği} of Yemen from 1549 until 1555. Upon his dismissal, he decided to conquer the port of Sawakin, which served as an \textit{entrepôt} between the upper Nile basin and the Indian Ocean trade. Ostensibly reacting to the Jesuit landing in Ethiopia, he obtained the approval of the central authorities in Istanbul. Yet, the drafting of men in Egypt proved somewhat difficult,

\textsuperscript{244} About 100 men were sent, but few of them were able to cross war lines. Ba Faqih, \textit{Tārīkh al-Shihr}.
\textsuperscript{245} E. Cerulli, \textit{Studi Etiopici I, La Lingua e la storia de Harar} (Rome, 1936).
forcing him to resort to mercenaries (göñüllü). He raided the regions of Bahr Midir and Tigre, but was forced to withdraw to Sawakin. In 1555, he was declared the beğlerbeği of the new province, and the presence of a kadi and a defterdâr attested to the legitimacy of the rule.246

The Ottoman government looked benevolently at his efforts, yet leaving the initiative of the conquest largely to him and his men (quite unlike the expedition of Piri Reis in the Persian Gulf, which was given precise instructions). In the following year, the southern port of Massawa was conquered, and raids carried out into the province of Tigre. A pause ensued, as Özdemir Paşa died in 1560, and his men were sent to Yemen. However, his son and successor Osman received reinforcement from the governor of Egypt in 1563, and marched into Bahr Midir as well.247 From 1576-79, Rizvan Paşa attempted to conquer Bahr Midir permanently, and Tigrean nobility and the sultans of Adal also joined the Ottomans against the Negus. The efforts dissipated after Rizvan Paşa died in battle in 1579. Thus, in spite of the smaller raids by the new Paşa of Habeş in 1589-1592, there were no more serious attempts to conquer the hinterland. Ottomans contented themselves with the coastal area. Incidentally, we may also note that in this period, the rulers of Soqotra viewed themselves as the vassals of Ottomans, and adopted some Ottoman military techniques with their Gujarati mercenaries.248 Thus, in spite of setbacks,

246 Özdemir Paşa encountered Kanuni and the Grand Vizier and informed them about Ethiopia. Orhonlu points out that the increased need for gold may have contributed toward the Ottoman decision to establish a base in Orhonlu, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Güney Siyaseti: Habeş Eyaleti (Istanbul, 1974).
247 He left Abyssinia in 1567, participating in the Ottoman reconquest of Yemen, an attack on Hormuz and finally in the campaigns against the Safavids. Notably, Koçî Bey accused him of being the first who introduced non-kuls into the kapikulu regiments. J.R. Blackburn, “Othman Pasha Özdemir Oghli”, EP.
248 “The sultan of Socotra [...] the people marching before and behind him, shoutinge after the Turkish manner [...] and twelve of his privat guard, hiered Gusaratts, some with Turkish bowes, some with pistolls, some with muskets, all with good swords. His clothes are of Suratt stuffs, after the Arabs manner, with a cassocke of wrought velvet, red and whytt [...] and besides, all the cloth he and his people wear are stuffs and callicoes of Suratt, which Guseratts bring.” See W. Foster, The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe in India, 1615-19 (London, 1926).
Ottomans had secured control in the Red Sea and certainly tapped into the Indian Ocean trade that passed through east Africa.

Ultimately, the era of *djihâds* passed along with the men who had participated in them, as the Portuguese and the Ottoman spheres of influence were fairly delineated by the 1580s, and the Portuguese state became absorbed by the Habsburgs, alienating many Portuguese colonists from the centers of power in Iberia. Similarly to the Venetians, the Portuguese henceforth employed Christian rhetoric, but in everyday practice focused on trade. The relations between the Ottomans in Arkiko and Massawa and the Portuguese in Diu improved to the point that the Ottoman authorities allowed Jesuits to enter their ports.

Under the *Negus* Fasiladas, those patterns changed somewhat. In 1634, he asked the Ottomans to ban Catholic missionaries from entering Ethiopia. Reinstitutioning Ethiopian Orthodoxy as the official religion of the country as opposed to the enforced Catholicism of his predecessors, Fasiladas relied on connections with the Ottomans and the Zeydi Imams, sending an embassy to the Mughals as well.\(^{249}\) Henceforth, the Ethiopian emperors kept emissaries at Massawa and Sawakin, while the Ottoman authorities consented to closing the ports to western Europeans, who were forced to pose as Armenians or Greeks if they wanted to enter Ethiopia. Once again, the lines of decision-making did not run along the Muslim-Christian divide, but across them in the face of the lucrative Indian Ocean trade.

Ethiopian noblemen were interested in an arrangement with the Ottomans. Initially, this occurred through intermediaries, such as Syrians and Armenians, who had been welcome in

Ethiopia even during the *djihād*. The Ethiopian elites, whether Christian or Muslim, wanted a continuation of regular patterns of Red Sea trade, through which they could obtain Indian textiles and firearms offered by the Rumis. As in the previous century, slaves constituted one of the most important commodities.

Many of the Ethiopian slaves acquired in the period of the *djihāds* must have been Christians. However, after the 1540s, a new *modus vivendi* gradually came into being, as most of them originated from Oromo and Afaw animist communities in southern Ethiopia. Consequentially, both Christian and Muslim merchants engaged in slave trade without hesitation. As elsewhere in Africa, the slaves were most frequently exchanged for fine Indian cloths and brocades which were used at the Ethiopian courts. Probably more than 10,000 slaves were exported each year along the various currents of the trade. We may note that the grandfather of the famous Russian poet Pushkin, who became a *confidant* of the early eighteenth century Czar Peter the Great, was an Ethiopian resold in Istanbul.

In India, the most famed example among many is Malik Ambar, the bane of the Mughal emperor Jahangir, who was a southern Ethiopian captured as a boy and sold several successive times in Mocha, Baghdad and the Deccan. Baghdad was a key step in his career, where he was acclimated to a new environment through conversion to Islam and acquisition of high Islamic culture through his owner / patron, a wealthy merchant named Mir Qasim, who then sold him to the chief minister of the kingdom of Ahmadnagar, also a Habashi by origin. Malik Ambar

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251 Since Ethiopian Orthodox could not sell other Christians as slaves, the Oromo (Galla) and Afaw peoples were not allowed to convert to Christianity or Islam.
253 R. Pankhurst, *An Introduction to the Economic History of Ethiopia from early Times to 1800* (Lalibela, 1961). As a sign of his closeness to Peter the Great, he was given the last name Petrovich.
became so powerful that he married his daughter to the ruler of Ahmadnegar and effectively ruled the realm for decades. Rumi men were under his command as gunners. Accordingly, the trade in slaves, gold and Indian textiles ensured political stability at the African coast of the Red Sea, making local alliances between Ethiopian rulers and Ottoman administrators likely, as well as leaving a mark on Habasha and Rumi military men across India.

Returning to the question of Rumis and the central government, we may conclude that similarly to the other areas of the Indian Ocean where the Ottomans tried to establish themselves, such as Yemen and Bahrain, a pattern becomes apparent. Initially, levends, who may be antagonistic or indifferent to the Ottoman central government, appear in the region. They are greatly appreciated by the local rulers for their artillery skills. Subsequently, mid-rank Ottoman officers from neighboring provinces (in this case, Yemen and Egypt) become interested in the area and engage in its conquest. Finally, there is recognition of the changed circumstances by the administrative center in Istanbul and the formal establishment of a province. Typically, there were multiple layers of Vermittler. Since the 1550s, Ottoman knowledge about the Indian Ocean world had greatly increased. Hence, the establishment of Ottoman sovereignty at the Ethiopian coasts appears relatively quick and resolute, in contrast to the slow progress in Yemen and the Persian Gulf. Even so, the basic dynamics remained the same.

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255 Badauni cites the verses of a poet from Bukhara, who sings of a messenger who bears tidings from Rum to Zanzibar, see Badauni, Muntakhab al-Tawârîkh, I, the chapter on Humayun.
In spite of the distances involved, we should also note that Ottoman rule in the port cities of the greater Red Sea remained especially stable, as it persisted even when Yemen and much of southern Iraq were no longer under Ottoman control. Local alliances were facilitated when in 1589 the control over Massawa and Arkiko was transferred to a local chief of the Bedja family from Samhar region. The chief was still nominally subject to the Ottomans, and travelogues witness that the power and trade structures lasted into the early nineteenth century. Ottoman presence left deep cultural traces in Massawa, introducing Hanafi legal traditions. Additionally, the imposition of extensive Ottoman control along both coasts of the Red Sea marked a departure from Mamluk practices, which were concentrated on the Mediterranean and the Arab coast of the Red Sea, allowing the commerce between the port of ‘Ayndhab and the Dahlak islands to deteriorate completely. In that respect, we find that Ottoman local authorities may have engaged in local trade at both sides of the Red Sea to a greater extent than their predecessors, which is a reality that has been completely overlooked by most historians.

The history of any Rumi / Ottoman presence south of Ethiopia itself remains to be teased out by a skilled ethnohistorian. Even a cursory acquaintance with east African cultures will reveal that everyday vocabulary of Somali and Swahili speakers is replete with Indian and even Indonesian references; occasionally, surprising linkages to the Ottoman realm will appear as well. Currents at the Horn of Africa are called shâmî or hindî depending upon the direction of the

259 S. Labib, Handelsgeschichte Ägyptens im Spätmittelalter (1171-1517) (Wiesbaden, 1965).
flow. A type of woman’s scarf is called hindiya. It is also notable that a kind of perfume is called istambuuli.260

Such linkages certainly troubled Freeman-Grenville, a British colonial historian of the Swahili ports. In one of his articles, he mentions a “Turkish raid” which took place in 1542 north of the port of Malindi, which had supported the Portuguese to the detriment of their rivals in Mombasa.261 We cannot completely exclude that possibility, since this was the time of the Ethiopian djihâd, and we have seen that Rumis in Gujarat had ambitions of conquering the Swahili coast. But as the story includes a number of romantic elements, such as a queen throwing herself into the sea from a “Turkish” galley, it may in fact be a Portuguese sailor’s tale.262

Somewhat better attested is the fate of a Rumi / Ottoman corsair. In 1585, Amir ‘Ali Bey arrived in a single galley and visited the northern Swahili ports of Mogadishu, Brava, Kisimayu, Faza, Pate, Lamu and Kilifi, informing the inhabitants that he had been sent on mission to free them from the Portuguese. Mombasa, which had been repeatedly attacked by the Portuguese in the course of the century, asked for a permanent garrison, and coinage was struck in Mogadishu in imitation of Ottoman mints. Amir ‘Ali left with many gifts. He returned in 1588 as the northern coast revolted against the Portuguese, including ports from Mogadishu to Kilwa. A Portuguese fleet from Goa under Thomé de Sousa sailed to Malindi which had remained loyal to them and stormed Mombasa, whereupon the Ottomans fled to the walled town together with

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260 Musa H.I. Galaal, “Historical Relations Between the Horn of Africa and the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean Islands through Islam”, in Historical Relations across the Indian Ocean (Paris, 1980).
261 Mombasa had been attacked by the Portuguese in 1505, 1526 and 1589. Similarly to Calicut, there was permanent resentment against the Portuguese for disrupting the prosperity of the city.
262 Although he wishes a historian of eastern Africa would learn Ottoman and work in the archives, he confuses Bahri Mamluks and Ottomans, since he says that the Turks fought naval actions to benefit the Cairo market, the crucial action being off Diu 1509, and the last Turkish attack on Mombasa in 1588. See G.Freemen-Grenville, “The Coast, 1498-1840”, in The Swahili Coast, 2nd to 19th centuries: Islam, Christianity and Commerce in Eastern Africa (London, 1988).
their Arab and the Swahili allies. A rather scurrilous fight followed, as the Portuguese were almost overwhelmed by the Ottomans; however, according to the Portuguese, the Zimba, a cannibalistic tribe, suddenly emerged from the jungle and attacked the Ottoman forces, many of whom drowned or surrendered to the Portuguese in order to avoid being eaten alive.

A recent analysis views this episode as a key moment, leading to the end of the Ottoman involvement in the Indian Ocean. Even if we set aside some details of topography which complicate the description of a sudden cannibal-versus-Ottoman encounter (for instance, Mombasa’s position as an island, which excludes the possibility of a spontaneous hinterland attack), there are two significant errors in such reasoning. First, it seems that Amir ‘Ali Bey was a corsair loosely associated with the Yemeni authorities who intended to gain local support. He had links to the Paşa of Aden, but he is not mentioned in any Ottoman sources; thus, his adventure can be viewed as quite irrelevant to the official Ottoman involvement in the Indian Ocean.

Second, the attraction of the Zimba attack loses much of its aura of terrifying contingency once we become acquainted with Africanist scholarship according to which the Zimba were a mercenary force for the inland state of Lunda in today’s Malawi. As such, they were implicated in the wider political environment of the region, impeding routes to the gold-producing Mwene Matapa kingdom and occasionally cooperating with the Portuguese. The attack on Mombasa

may have been coordinated with the Portuguese, and the cannibalism strategically employed, perhaps even feigned.\textsuperscript{265}

There are sporadic traces of Ottoman allegiances along the Swahili coast, which was the outermost edge of their firmly controlled Red Sea territory. After 1587, coins appear with a copy of the Ottoman \textit{tughra}, apparently in order to send signs of defiance to the Portuguese. Even when the Portuguese reestablish themselves six years later, the coinage remains.\textsuperscript{266} As elsewhere in the Indian Ocean area, such linkages to the Ottomans must have been formed indirectly. After the 1530s, there was a large number of Hadrami immigrants directed toward Zeyla, Mogadishu and the Swahili coast, in spite of Portuguese presence there.\textsuperscript{267} A revitalized Mombasa received many Somalis as well, who had preserved an independent tradition of trading within the Indian Ocean and a closer link to the Ottomans.\textsuperscript{268} A Swahili epic poem, \textit{Utenzi wa Tambuka}, composed at the town of Pate, celebrates the early Arab wars with the Byzantines, ending in a description of the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople.\textsuperscript{269} Significantly, within the same archipelago, at Faza, Freeman-Grenville located a manuscript in the possession of a local family. It apparently contains detailed records of the foundation of a petty “Turkish” principality held by a family who

\textsuperscript{265} See Couto, Dec. XI, Cap.VIII, where explicit mention is made of a message sent by the Zimba to the Portuguese admiral. Obviously, the cannibal episode is only of tangential interest for our discussion. For recent debates, see M. Schoffeleers, “The Zimba and the Lundu State in the Late 16\textsuperscript{th} and Early 17\textsuperscript{th} centuries” and M. Newitt, “The Early History of the Maravi”, \textit{The Journal of African History}, 23 (2), 1982. As the Ottomans never reached Sofala, we need not concentrate on this branch of Indian Ocean trade, although we may note that the gold provided by the Mwene Matapa empire was vital to the existence of the \textit{Estado da Índia}. See D. Chanaiwa, “Politics and Long-Distance Trade in the Mwene Matapa empire during the sixteenth century” in \textit{The International Journal of African Historical Studies}, 5 (3), 1972.


\textsuperscript{269} J. Knappert, \textit{Het epos van Heraklios, een proeve van Swahili poëzie, tekst en vertalling} (Alkmaar, 1958).
called themselves al-Stanbuli and who lost their rulership in 1893. This manuscript has probably not yet been examined.270

As in the case of Gujarat, Swahili coast linkages with the Ottomans illustrate the importance of men at the margins of the Ottoman state. Many of them acknowledged their loyalty to the dynasty while in reality seeking to leave their realm and act independently. However, before addressing possible conclusions concerning the interactions between the Ottoman central authorities and Ottoman adventurers, let us briefly turn to the other end of the Indian Ocean where Rumis also thrived: the Malay world, the “lands below the wind”. In Aceh and other parts of Sumatra, we will find a greater coordination between Rumi and Ottoman action.

2. Rumis and Ottomans in the Malay world: enduring prestige

Tomé Pires, whom we encountered in the second part of the previous chapter, became aware of the strong Gujarati presence in southeast Asia as he was visiting Sumatra and the Malay peninsula. Since the journey from western Asia to the entrepôt of Melaka took more than a season, many merchants arrived in Gujarat in September and then relied upon Gujarati ships to take them to the Malay countries in March, with a trading stop in the Maldive islands.271 Among

271 This was an old pattern connected with the interplay of monsoons in the Indian Ocean, as reflected in the rise of the port of Kedah, which flourished when Abbasid merchants became less likely to visit China directly. See G. Tibbetts, *A Study of the Arabic Texts Containing Materials on South-East Asia* (London, 1979). Tibbetts draws upon G. Ferrand, *Récit de voyages et textes relatifs à l’Extrême Orient*, 2. vols. (Paris, 1913-14).
those men were Cairenes, Arabs from Aden, Abyssinians, Rumis, Turkomans, Armenians and east Africans.  Additional sources mention Nestorians from Mesopotamia and western Asian Jewish merchants. Many of them settled permanently in Melaka, which was very attractive because of its links with the Chinese trade.

Melaka also offered access to spices and other commodities, such as white silk, tin, and the feathers of black parrots and paradise birds from the island of Banda, which were especially favored as an adornment for the turbans of “Turks and Arabs”. Although Pires stated that the Siamese did not like “Moores”, Rumis were nevertheless present in Ayutthaya in Siam in the mid-sixteenth century. Many of them must have entered it via Surat, as we know that Khvadja Safar had planned to send some members of his family to the port of Tenasserim on the Kra isthmus, to the north of Siam. A “Turk” presumably a former Ottoman subject, was governor

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273 The appeal of Melaka was also significant because of its low duty rates, i.e. 6%, which could be cut in half under certain circumstances, whereas Siam, Pegu and other surrounding kingdoms demanded from 12% to 23% duties. See L.F. Thomaz, “The Economic Policy of the Sultanate of Malacca (XVth-XVIth centuries)”, Moyen Orient et Ocean Indien, VII (1990) and “Malaka et ses communautés marchandes au tournant du 16e siècle” in D. Lombard and J. Aubin, eds., Marchands et hommes d’affaires asiatiques (Paris, 1988), as well as K. R. Hall, “Local and International Trade and Traders in the Straits of Melaka region: 600-1500”, JESHO, 47 (2), 2004. The older standard work is M. Meilink-Roelofz, Asian Trade and European Influence in the Indonesian Archipelago between 1500 and about 1630 (“s-Gravenhage, 1962).”


275 Idem., p.385: “Em syam ha mujto poucos mouros nom lhes querem os siames bem contudo ha arabios parses bemgallas.”

276 Letter from Melaka in November 1554: “Ya en esta cidade de Sión ay siete mezquitas, cuyos cacizes son turcos y árabios, y trynta mil fuegos de moros en la ciudad, cosa para mucho envergonçar a los soldados de christo [...] estos moros predican continuamente el alcorán de Mahoma. El rey dexa a cada uno hazer lo que quiere, y ser moro o gentil, dando una bien ruin razón, que él no es señor más que de los cuerpos.” J. Wicki, ed., Documenta Indica, Vol. III (1553-1557) (Rome, 1954), p.152.

of Bangkok during the 1670s and 1680s. Among his contemporaries was the famed Constantine Phaulkon, who left Europe at a young age, but who as a Greek would have been familiar with Ottoman realities.

After the conquest of Melaka by the Portuguese in 1511, Pires visited Sumatra. He paid especial attention to the northern Sumatran ports of Pedir and Pasai. While Pedir was at war, Pasai’s trade flourished, and many merchants relocated there from Melaka, avoiding the straits and approaching Sumatra from its western coast instead. Among the ethnicities of the eastern Indian Ocean, such as Bengalis, Malays, Javanese, and Kelings (Tamils), Pires encountered Rumis, Turks, Arabs, Persians, Gujaratis. When Pasai was conquered by the Portuguese in 1521, Muslim merchants moved to other parts of Sumatra. Some of them went to Minangkabau farther to the west, while others moved to Pedir. Further shifts of trade patterns occurred when Pedir itself was soon conquered by the former vassal, the Acehnese sultan ‘Ali Mughayat Khan.

The Acehnese expressed strong antagonism against the Portuguese from the 1520s onward, striving to gather Muslim support to fight their ships. This tendency intensified after the accession of ‘Alauddin Ri‘ayat Shah al-Kahar (1537-1571). The Portuguese author Mendez Pinto refers to “Turcos” in the armies of the sultan who reached Aceh in the early 1540s, presumably having decided to remain in India instead of returning to the Ottoman realm.

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Although Mendez Pinto assumes a direct connection with the siege of Diu in 1538,²⁸² we may suspect that some of those men had been in India for longer periods of time, since there seemed to be associations with Abyssinians and Malabaris.²⁸³

Those men were not only employed against Portuguese in Melaka, but also against the highland Batak peoples and other Sumatran kingdoms, such as Aru to the east of Pasai. In addition, it seems that their number increased from about hundred to three hundred within a few years. With the attack on Aru, the Acehnese realm extended into the vicinity of Portuguese Melaka.²⁸⁴ We know that Portuguese had called for a destruction of this dangerous neighbor as early as 1539.²⁸⁵ After a period of relative peace in the 1540s, antagonistic encounters greatly intensified, as Portuguese encountered Acehnese ships with Rumi men on board across the Indian Ocean, in the Maldivian islands, Soqotra and elsewhere.²⁸⁶ Aceh, as a territorially small state, needed manpower for its wars in order to procure rice, pepper and slaves from other parts of Sumatra. International trade, territorial conquests and building of administrative institutions all required qualified labor force in an area which for centuries valued humans more than land.²⁸⁷

The first recorded Acehnese mission to Istanbul, asking for such military assistance, occurred in 1562. Another embassy arrived in Istanbul in 1566, requesting additional military aid

²⁸² Possibly the ruler of Aceh asked the governor in Egypt for reinforcements, see P. A. Tiele, “De Europeers in den Maleischen Archipel, 1529-1540”, Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI), 27, (1879), pp. 31-32.
²⁸³ Peregrinaçam de Fernam Mendez Pinto em que da conta de muytas e muyto estranhas cousas que vio & ouui no reyno da China, no da Tartaria, no do Sornau, que vulgarmente se chama Sião, no do Calaminhan, no de Pegù, no de Martaauão, & em outros muytos reynos & senhorios das partes Orientais (Lisbon, 1614), p.16: “Os ceto & sessenta Turcos, q poucos dias antes lhe erão vindos do estreyo de Meca, & duzentos Mouros Malabares, co algus Axexins, q era a melhor gente q trazia cosigo […] e a maneyra de arrabalde estauão fora dos muros, & quatro naos, & dous galeoes, q estauão varados em terra, em que os Turcos tinhão vindo do estreito de Meca.”
²⁸⁴ Idem., p.21: “[O] Rey do Achem mandaua sobre elle [sc. the ruler of Aru] para lhe tomar o reyno, a fim de […] continuar com suas armadas sobre Malaca, por lhe serem chegados nouamente trezentos Turcos do estreito de Meca.”
²⁸⁵ See J. Perdigão, L. de Matos, eds., Das Relaçoes entre Portugal e Persia, 1500-1758 (Lisbon, 1972), p. 34.
²⁸⁶ See Diogo de Couto, Déc. VII, Liv. X, Cap. III.
²⁸⁷ See V. Lieberman, “Some Comparative Thoughts on Modern Southeast Asian Warfare”, JESHO, 46 (2), 2003, and A. Reid, Charting the Shape of Early Modern Southeast Asia (Bangkok, 1999).
from the Sultan in his capacity as a Caliph. According to folkloric Acehnese stories, the embassy could not obtain an audience for a long time, and it found itself in dire circumstances, selling its gifts in order to procure food, eventually attracting Selim II’s attention after the death of his father.288 The Acehnese offered him the last gift, a small measure of pepper. The Ottoman sultan chastised his vizier for negligence and sent cannons as well as artisans from Jerusalem, who ended up settling permanently in Aceh.289 From Ottoman sources, we know that in 1567 Selim II ordered 15 galleys to be sent to Aceh, but because of a revolt in Yemen only two ships with a few guns and gunsmiths reached Sumatra.290 Most significantly, Ottoman official letters also document that Selim II gave the Acehnese ruler permission to do as he saw fit with the Ottoman men and to punish them, should they disobey. This solved the dilemma encountered decades earlier in Gujarat: if the foreign ruler was given authority over Ottoman men, the Ottoman elite could still partake in successes of the Rumis, but their failings did not tarnish Ottoman reputation.291

In addition to the Acehnese legends, we often discern a larger number of Rumi men than those mentioned in Ottoman sources. P. Manguin comments in his article on the Acehnese siege of Melaka in 1568, in which some 400 Rumis participated:

288 Saffet Bey’s “Bir Osmanlı Filosunun Sumatra Seferi”, TOEM, 10-11, 1327. Another colorful story concerning an Ottoman cannon, named after the manner of its acquisition, is included. One of Saffet Bey’s friends served as an ambassador to Indonesia, and he told him he had encountered men who alleged descent from the Rumis / Turcos. Saffet Bey also relied on the work of the colonialist historian S. Hurgrunje, who in turn drew upon Acehnese chronicles. See the luxurious edition of Teuku Iskandar’s Hikayat Aceh, ed. by H. Ahmad, with the text of the chronicle in Latin and Jawi script (Kuala Lumpur, 2001). Also see A. Seljuq, “Relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Muslim Kingdoms in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago”, Der Islam, 57, 1980, p.301.


“Although a Turkish fleet of 15 galleys was dispatched to Sumatra by Sultan Selim II with numerous gunsmiths, soldiers and artillery, it was diverted to Yemen to crush a local rebellion: the few guns and men that eventually reached Aceh could have done so only after the 1568 attack on Melaka. The facts is that neither Couto nor the anonymous author of the sketch mention Turkish ships, but only Turkish men, who could have been sent earlier (the first embassies to Constantinople date from the early 1560s), or could have been hired mercenaries.” [emphasis mine].292

We can assume that the Acehnese attack on Melaka was closely coordinated with the resurgence of a war directed against the Portuguese at the western coast of India. In 1564-65, Muslim sultanates of Deccan united in conquering Vijayanagara. Hopes were high that Portuguese fortresses in India could be conquered as well; thus, Acehnese forces participated in an attack on Goa, as did the ruler of Kazhikode, supported by the Mappilla pirates.293 Whether the participation of any Rumis / Turcos was orchestrated from the Ottoman center or not, the years from 1560-80 were a time of sharper Muslim-Christian polarization in the Indian Ocean, comparable to 1530s, and men on both sides may have expected another decade of intense conflicts.294 Yet this spectacular period quickly came to an end, as most of the actors were interested in relatively peaceful interactions for the sake of trade.

In this context, the end of the djihâd in the Malay lands did not mean that Rumi men disappeared. Some of them crossed to the northern coast of Java and assisted the Demak sultan in his raids on neighboring parts of the island, even though Demak had refused to participate in a

292 P. Manguin, “Of Fortresses and Galleys: The 1568 Acehnese Siege of Melaka, after a Contemporary Bird’s-eye View”, Modern Asian Studies, 22 (3), 1988. The sultan sent ambassadors not only to the Ottomans, but also to the Gujaratis, Calicut and Masulipatnam. They are called turqos (sic) in the source quoted by Manguin, this appellation apparently replacing the older designation rumes.
293 Characteristically, the work by Zayd al-Din, Tuhfat al-mujâhidîn, is very focused on local developments. In addition to Hadim Süleyman Paşa’s campaign, which is mentioned with displeasure, only one other Rumi is included, namely, the admiral ‘Ali al-Rumi, who died in a fight against the Ottomans at Calecare. This happened in 1553; one wonders whether the admiral is meant to be identified with Seydi ‘Ali Reis, making the story apocryphal. For the chronicle in Arabic and Portuguese, see D. Lopes, ed., Historia dos Portugueses no Malabar por Zinadim (Lisbon, 1898).
Malabari and Acehnese joint attack on Melaka. In 1596, when the first Dutch ships arrived in Banten in Java, they discovered many “Turks”, “Arabs”, and “Persians”, living permanently there. Some among them had apparently visited Venice and spoke Italian with the freshly arrived Dutch, in an episode reminiscent of the Portuguese arrival in Malabar. These Rumis also traded with the Portuguese, as they did in Sumatra. Thus, the intense struggles for supremacy in the western Indian Ocean ended with a stalemate and a result very similar to the Bay of Bengal trade, with occasional aggression and piracy which did not endanger the primacy of trade. Indeed, with the appearance of the Dutch, old patterns were reversed and new alliances, not based on religion, became possible: as the Dutch aligned themselves with Johor on the Malay peninsula, a rival of both Aceh and Melaka, the Acehnese asked Goa for assistance in 1599.

Yet, Acehnese and other Sumatran kingdoms retained a sense of loyalty to the Ottomans. Adversaries and sometime subjects of Aceh, the rulers of Minangkabau uplands in western Sumatra also accepted the Ottoman legitimation tactics. Fortified by the Dutch assistance in the mid-seventeenth century, after the eclipse of the Acehnese empire in ca. 1641, when the focus of powers shifted to Johor on the Malay peninsula, they affirmed in their letters and seals to be equal with the rulers of China and Constantinople, as they traced their lineage

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297 The first English travelers, for instance Nicholas Withington, bear witness to the presence of Malabari pirates as far north as Surat. Gujarati links with Aceh were firmly established in the early seventeenth century, including yearly caravans. See W. Foster, Early Travels in India 1583-1619 (London, 1921).
299 However, one does encounter jarring notes, as when an Italian-speaking Ottoman merchant requires help from Dutch ships in Bantam in Java to return home, because the sultan of Aceh is preventing merchants from leaving. See G.P. Rouaffer, J.W. Ijzerman, ed., D’erste Boeck van Willem Lodewychsz (‘s-Gravenhage, 1915), vol. 1, in particular the journal of Cornelis de Houtman.
back to Alexander the Great and other empires. They also laid claim to the caliphate. While Johor did not establish relations with the Ottomans, they accepted a slightly modified version of the Ottoman crescent in their flag. In a famous hikāyat composed in Johor, we learn that the Malay cultural hero Hang Tuah visited Rum as an ambassador of his king. As a brief search in the comprehensive concordance of classical Malay works reveals, much could still be extracted from Malay hikāyat tradition. Certainly the influence of Rumi men was present in the religious sphere as well.

It is notable that in some respects the Rumi / Ottoman dichotomy in the Malay world recalls the distinction between southern Chinese traders and the mainland Chinese rulers, as the former were disavowed by the Ming court. Certainly, the commercial aspect of these interactions has been prevalent in the minds of scholars, since it led to a revival of the Red Sea pepper trade.

3. Rumis before Ottomans

Who were the Rumis whose traces we followed across the Indian Ocean? What was the nature of their relation with the Ottoman state? We have given some indications of our

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302 An extensive Malay concordance project is sponsored by the Australian National University. Unfortunately, it does not offer complete texts of the Hikayat, but it can be searched for terms such as “Rum.”
303 M. Bruinessen, “Kurdish ‘Ulama and their Indonesian Disciples”. Bruinessen states that in Java “Kurdi” is not an uncommon last name. The article, found on Bruinessen’s website, is a revised version of “The impact of Kurdish ulama on Indonesian Islam”, Les annales de l'autre islam, 5, 1998.
304 In other respects, those relations are strikingly different. The literature on diaspora Chinese has grown significantly in recent decades, e.g. see K. Hall, “Multi-dimensional Networking: Fifteenth-Century Indian Ocean Maritime Diaspora in Southeast Asian Perspective”, JESHO, 49 (4), 2006.
understanding of the problem above. As in any ethnic or geographic appellation, contradictions are inevitable. Without firm contextualization, any such terms become reified and ahistorical, when in reality there is a constant interplay between the continuity of an ethnic category and the gradual shifts in the nuances of its meaning.306

In early Islamic history, the term “Rum” encompassed the entire Roman empire, with an emphasis on its eastern half. Unlike many other lands outside the Islamic oikoumene, which often existed at the margins of the collective consciousness307, Rum was constantly present in the reality and imagination of western Asia. Thus, we encounter “Rumis” (in the sense of “Romans”) in the Qur’an, in hadith literature, poetry, geography, adab, as well as in the heritage and the nisba of numerous Umayyad and Abbasid administrators. More than any other alien people, eastern Romans inspired fear and admiration, imbuing the term “Rumi” with a nimbus of power and knowledge.308 As we have seen, many among the first Rumi mamâlik in India may have been of Byzantine origin, reflecting the original usage of the word.

Yet even in the formative period of Muslim cultures, we encounter ambivalence with this term. A certain ambiguity of the category of Rum in Egypt is as old as the Arab conquests.309

306 For an excellent example of shifting identities see E. Gilbert, “Coastal East Africa and the Western Indian Ocean: Long-Distance Trade, Empire, Migration, and Regional Unity, 1750-1970”, in The History Teacher, 36 (1), 2002. Gilbert argues that while the coastal peoples who speak Swahili are now identified as African and their ancestry was indeed largely African at the start of documented history in 1000 C.E., it does not mean that this identification in the periods between those two points was static. During the centuries of intense interaction with other parts of the Indian Ocean, many people of Arab and Indian origin have viewed themselves as Swahili, while African Swahili elites ideologically identified themselves as Persians or Arabs. In other words, in the year 1500 or 1900 the “pure Africanness” of the Swahili would not have appeared as unequivocal as it does now. Mutatis mutandis, we may apply the same reasoning to the Turkic nomads in Anatolia in 1200, the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish republic.

307 For instance, western Europeans or Slavs, see e.g. how they are described by al-Mas’udi.


309 “In the Saʿïd there were Nuba, Barbar, Daylam, Saqaliba, Rum, and Qibt; and the Rum were dominant.” See al-Waqidi, ‘Abdulrahman, ed., Futūḥ al-shām, 2 vols., (Beirut, 1997), II, p.203.
Long after the demise of the Byzantine rule in north Africa, *Bahr al-Rûm* still denoted the Red Sea.\(^{310}\) It is easier for us the grasp the roots of this confusion when we recall that Salman Reis, Hadım Süleyman Paşa and Özdemir Paşa all entered the Indian Ocean area after residing in Egypt, with its numerous Rumis, providing a bridge between Anatolia and the Red Sea. From an east African perspective, then, the Red Sea could have been a Rumi lake.

Due to the association between Rumis and military prowess in India\(^{311}\), we must accept that “Rumi” occasionally designated a set of skills rather than geographical or ethnic provenance. Through this interpretation arose the confusion between Rumis and Khorasanis which we encounter in some travelers. In spite of frequent encounters with them, Tomé Pires sometimes persisted in the erroneous equation between all cavalry men, Rumis and Khorasanis. Another traveler, a man named Anastasii Nikitin with proclivities toward religious syncretism and spiritual despair\(^{312}\), assumed the name of Khvadja Yusuf Khorasani when he intended to pass for a Muslim, since he believed that all non-Indian Muslims were Khorasanis.\(^{313}\)

In India, “Rumi” was the traditional definition of those men of arms coming from a region which was delineated by its relation to Iraq and Iran, and which encompassed most of Anatolia. As the *Rasulid Hexaglot* from Yemen showed us, those men’s native languages and ethnic identities may have been Oghuz or Qypchaq Turkic, Persian, Armenian or Greek, in


\(^{311}\) The question whether or not Rumis / Ottomans introduced fire weapons across the Indian Ocean has often been addressed, but there is no conclusive answer, and recently the presence of other mercenaries, for instance the Portuguese and the Dutch, has also been emphasized.

\(^{312}\) Nikitin’s struggles have been analyzed with some linguistic imprecisions by M. Maxwell, “Afanasii Nikitin: An Orthodox Russian’s Spiritual Voyage in the Dar-islam, 1468-1475”, *Journal of World History*, 17 (3), 2006.

addition to unrecorded Kurdish and Caucasian languages. While the term “Turks” in India denoted central Asians, “Turcoman” was more or less synonymous with “Rumi”. The Portuguese who had faced those Anatolian men in battle under both labels, as “Rumis” as well as “Turks”, could not disentangle the riddle, whereas for their Indian informants, those were two relatively clearly distinguishable categories.

Significantly, men from Anatolia were practically never called “Turks” in northern India, even if western Turkic (including Azeri or Qypchaq) was their first language. In Indo-Persian chronicles, the term turkî is reserved for men from Transoxiana, and in our period, the distinction is usually precise. Its Sanskrit equivalent, turushka, is somewhat looser, and it has been read as an ethnicity. However, it often applies to any armed militiamen who ride horses (as opposed to elephants) and who do not speak the local languages. Thus, if in southern Indian text we encounter turushkas, they may be Anatolians, but also any other overseas cavalry. In yet another twist of nomenclature, those non-Indian men may be called Yavanas, meaning Ionians (or Yunanis).

Whereas in India the category of Rumi was elastic and polyvalent, as it could include any Anatolians, Caucasians, northern Iraqis or Turkish-speaking Egyptians, in Anatolia itself the term underwent a reinterpretation, which prompted Seydi ‘Ali Reis to ask the Mughal emperor Humayun for clarification of what he meant by “Rum.” As indicated by their subsequent conversation, the stricter meaning of “Rum” within the Ottoman domain came to imply a

314 For instance, Salman Reis, who is often defined as “Turcoman”, although he was born in the Aegean.
315 D. Guilmartin and B. Lawrence, eds., Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Medieval South Asia (Gainsville, 2003).
316 “Yavanas” is an old term first encountered within the Prakrit literary tradition and referring to the Greco-Bactrian kingdoms. See the recent works on India and Hellenism by K. Karttunen and an earlier summary by R. Thapar, “Indian Views of Europe: Representations of the Yavanas in Early Indian History”, in Cultural Pasts, Essays in Early Indian History (New Delhi, 2000).
317 Different memories of the Seldjuqids of Rum must have played a part in this conversation as well.
province which included Sivas, Tokat and Amasya.\textsuperscript{318} Rum-ili or Rumeli, of course, referred to the Balkan holdings of the Ottomans, but the appellation does not seem to have been known in India. Although the more general concept of “Rum” as covering much of western Asia was not completely lost,\textsuperscript{319} we may assume that it was much more common in the Indian Ocean than in Ottoman Anatolia itself.

Was Rumi identity permanent? As M. Mamdani has recently stressed in a different context, cultural identities are cumulative and non-territorial, unlike the false uniformity typically imposed by the nation-state.\textsuperscript{320} Thus, seemingly contradictory alliances could be embraced and cast off depending on the situation, as we have seen in the case of Khvadja Safar / Khudavand Khan. He was most likely born in Otranto, perhaps to Albanian parents. After joining the corsairs, he and his patron Salman Reis attached themselves to Mamluk and Ottoman authorities. Upon arriving in India, Khvadja Safar changed his name. Thus, he was Italian / Albanian by birth, Rumi by training, Gujarati by affiliation, and famously adverse to the Ottomans and Portuguese alike by the end of his life. The twentieth-century plaque at his tomb in Surat vaguely identifies him as “European”. Yet, his sons and their Ethiopian retainers preserved the name of Rumi, as a mark of prestige.

Portuguese perception of the Rumis varied.\textsuperscript{321} While Pires occasionally confused them with Khorasanis, his contemporary, the merchant Giovanni Empoli, gives a very precise

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{319}{For Piri Reis’ understanding of Rum, see \textit{Kitâb-i bahriye}, keeping in mind that this definition of Rumi differs slightly from the Indian Ocean one. Also see D.A. Pitcher, \textit{An Historical Geography of the Ottoman Empire} (Leiden, 1972).}
\footnotetext{320}{M. Mamdani, \textit{Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror} (New York, 2004).}
\footnotetext{321}{For a range of definitions, see the entry “Room” / “Roomee” in H. Yule, \textit{Hobson-Jobson: A glossary of colloquial Anglo-Indian words and phrases, and of kindred terms, etymological, historical, geographical and discursive}, second edition by W. Crooke (London, 1903).}
\end{footnotes}
definition which largely overlaps with what we know from Persian sources. Hence, in 1525, if a Portuguese sailor heard the word “Rum”, he would most likely interpret it correctly as people who were often, but not always, somewhat similar in complexion to the metropolitan Portuguese and skilled in artillery. Their political affiliations could be ambivalent, but they were certainly *mouros* (Muslims).

In the course of the following decades, we witness the term “Rumes” fall out of usage among metropolitan Portuguese, since they regard it as vulgar. When chroniclers employ it, they have an urge to equate it with “Turco” and offer additional explanation. Thus, Barros tells us that *Rumes* are Greeks and Slavonians, while for Teive, they are Thracians and Macedonians. To some extent, these explanations both elucidate and obscure the processes at stake. By transforming *Rumes* into *Turcos*, Portuguese chroniclers recognized that there a

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323 A recent article stresses the familiarity which developed between Portuguese and Rumi, defined as “western European” or “Turkish” Ottoman subjects. The analysis is also marred by its employment of categories such as “race” and even “Caucasian” [sic!] uncritically; regardless of Portuguese uses of the words “limpa” and “branca”, we doubt that Rumi men in India saw themselves as “white men”, fundamentally different from Indo-Persian Muslim elites. See G. Casale, “The Ethnic Composition of Ottoman Ship Crews and the “Rumi Challenge” to Portuguese identity”, *Medieval Encounters*, 13, 2007. Notably, the Portuguese were not always seen as “white” by other western Europeans either; see S. Subrahmanyam, “The ‘Kaffirs of Europe’: A comment on Portugal and the historiography of European expansion in Asia”, *Studies in History*, 9 (131), 1993.

324 This is another term with a complex history which we cannot disentangle here. Similarly to “Rumi” it is not static. Although originally connected with north Africa and al-Andalus, it could be stretched to encompass all Muslims from Morocco to Melaka.


326 Notably, he recognized that the term “Turk” was offensive to the Ottomans. When he explains that Bahadur Shah granted the name of Rumi to Mustafa Bayram, Barros states in Déc. IV, Liv. IV, Cap. XVI: “O Rome lhe chamou por ser natural Grego; porque os Mouros da India como não sabiam fazer divisão destas provincias de Europa, a toda Tracia, Grecia, Esclavonia, e ilhas circumvizinhas do mar Mediterraneo chamam Rum, e aos homens dellas Rumij, sendo este nome proprio dos naturaes daquella parte de Tracia em que está Constantinopla, que do nome que ella teve de nova Roma, tomou a Tracia o do Romania. E alli [sc. in Gujarat] são diferentes nações Rumes e Turcos, ; porque estes tem a sua origem da Província Turchesta, e os Rumes de Grecia, e Tracia, e como taes se tem por mais honrados que os Turcos, fazendo-lhes vantagem nos costumes, e valor, e tendo por afronta chamarem-lhes Turcos.” J. de Barros, *Décadas da Ásia* (Lisbon, 1777), p.459. Also see Déc. IV, Liv. V, Cap. I, p. 546, where Rumes are defined as Levantine and Greek.

327 Teive, *Comentário da gesta portuguesa* as quoted above, p.133.
specific wider Anatolian identity was associated with those men; yet, they also collapsed two different categories. Henceforth, it was implied that every Rumi viewed himself as a subject of the Grão Turco in Constantinople, although in the example of Hadım Süleyman Paşa’s expedition we have seen that many of them were indifferent or hostile to the Ottoman authorities.

In terms of Portuguese intellectual history, the replacement of “Rumes” with “Turcos” also reflects a growing influence of Italianate Renaissance models of understanding, in which classical Greek and Latin learning becomes an obligatory frame of reference which supersedes and obscures direct experience of Ottoman and Indian realities. Turks, of course, are not found in ancient Greek and Latin sources, but Italians would not have been familiar with any “Rumis”; consequently, as Italian knowledge was transposed onto Portuguese understanding of the world, the image of Rumis as Turks, i.e. Ottoman subjects, became unshakable.

Clearly, we cannot read the Portuguese chronicles verbatim. We have seen that they can be severely mistaken, out of ignorance or conscious manipulation, as in the story of Hadım Süleyman Paşa’s death. Conversely, we cannot expect Ottoman authors to distinguish between different strata and ethnicities which inhabited Portuguese ships: aristocratic upper classes of the Goan society, assigned to spend a few years in India, were very different from the former convicts who were forced to man the ships, the casados (settlers) who traded in the Indian Ocean and married local women, or the converted Malabari fishermen. Yet in the Ottoman official historiography, they were all küffâr. Even a category which may appear stable and recognizable

328 Similarly, we have encountered bona fide mistakes and intentional omissions in Ottoman, Hadrami and Gujarati sources. Only through careful reading and analysis of all three of them can we approach something resembling an objective truth.
to us, such as race, is highly mutable. Thus, in the Deccan, a Khorasani and a Rumi may be classified as *gente branca* (“white” people), as opposed to the southern Indian Muslims.330 Yet before the creation of explicitly racial categories based on standardized phenotypical features, and before the rise of the nation state, identities of military men who attached themselves to a household were quite malleable. Their ethnicity could be assimilated to that of their lord, hence, it was “conscriptive rather than ascriptive”.331 Through such elective affinities with Anatolian military men, compounded through the knowledge of Anatolian Turkish, an Italian (Khvadja Safar), a Circassian (Malik Ayas) and even an Abyssinian (Jhujhar Khan) could all come to view themselves as Rumis or Rumikhanis.

Scholarship which emerged in the twentieth century could not perceive most of these contradictions, since it presupposed a firm identification with nation-states. Rumis of the fifteenth century in India were not studied by Ottomanists, and the concentration of many of our sources on the Aegean group of corsairs clustered around Salman Reis produced a simplified understanding of Rumis. Rumis thus came to simply equal Mediterranean Ottomans, obscuring any previous connections and meanings. Additionally, by ignoring the roots of Rumi presence in the Indian Ocean from the thirteenth into the sixteenth century, scholars have unwittingly reinforced an *étatist* tendency, making it difficult for us to perceive the real motivations of Rumi men, and to separate the Ottoman state from Ottoman social realities. Thus, even a major scholar

330 In section three, chapter six, we will see that Abyssinians were not equated with black Africans in Ottoman sources either.
331 J. Gommans, *Mughal Warfare* (London, 2002). Similarly, one Alfonso of Venice, captured in 1537 in Belgrade at the age of seven and made a janissary, fought the Portuguese in Hormuz where he was captured. He spent the following decade in Goa as a slave of de Noronha. When he was brought to Lisbon, he planned to escape to Morocco and to the Ottomans. Pedro de Soto, a Catholic Indian from Goa, also converted to Islam in Marrakesh. A considerable number of north African corsairs in the seventeenth century were Dutch and English by birth, and they are known to have even made a raid in Iceland. See B. and L. Bennassar, *Les chrétiens d’Allah, L’histoire extraordinaire des renégats, XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 2006).
of the Ottoman involvement in the Indian Ocean, S. Özbaran, concluded his recent analysis of
the term “Rumes” by stating somewhat hesitantly that the Ottoman Rumis are perhaps
identifiable with members of the ‘askeri class, and hence to a large degree representative of the
Ottoman state.332

In reproducing Italian categories as they were received by the Portuguese, we look at
Ottomans primarily from the outside, and categories which were inherent to the Ottoman society
are stripped away. Instead, if we retain the distinction between a Rumi and an Ottoman, we may
understand how the Rumi emigration to the Indian Ocean took place. As Ottoman state power
became increasingly centralized, claiming a high degree of monopoly on violence, certain
possibilities of entering the uppermost strata were eliminated.333 An eastern Anatolian Muslim
youth, possibly but not necessarily of Turcoman or Kurdish background334, could be an excellent
archer and horseman, and he could participate in Ottoman military campaigns. Yet due to his
lack of court education, which included access to selective networks as well as cultural capital
(“refinement”), he could never be quite equal to a palace-raised gentleman. To express this fact
in more Ottoman terms: while under certain circumstances the precise distinctions may have
been fluid, a yiğit or a levend could not be socially synonymous with a kapıkulu. In contrast, by
deciding to emigrate to India, an adventurous and capable man could join the ranks of privileged
cavalry on the basis of his military skills. Political fragmentation across the Indian Ocean further
favored this tendency: if a ghulâm was dissatisfied with his lord, he could change his allegiance,
as Mustafa b. Bayram did. When the Bahmanid state collapsed, new opportunities opened for
further social ascent, including the throne itself.

333 R. Lindner, Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia (Bloomington, 1983).
334 Husayn al-Kurdi is also defined as al-Rûmî and al-Turkî in the Ta‘rîkh al-Shihr.
Certainly, the number of men who were willing to undertake such a journey was never spectacularly large. But we may assume that the flow was steady, as Indian demand for foreign men was regularly met. Although other sources of plunder were closer, the reputation of India as the land of fabulous wealth must have enticed many. Tighter social control and harsher punishment for infractions in the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Ottoman realm must have pushed many men toward the Indian Ocean. In addition to vertical mobility and patronage, some men must have been attracted by Indian tolerance for religious heterodoxy.

The Ottoman center came to orient itself toward the Balkans, central Europe (and increasingly the Caucasus) once the Iberian danger had waned in the Mediterranean. Those were the regions historically associated with the Ottoman rise, and most of the elite men originated there, as did the economic resources and the plunder. On the other hand, Rumi men, even of lowly origin, were clearly accepted by the local Indian Ocean populations and absorbed by them. This would not have happened if their presence had been perceived as a foreshadowing of extended Ottoman hegemony. Those men were also not men of letters, not leaving us their memoirs, but letting us trace their presence through their actions reported in Yemeni, Portuguese and Gujarati chronicles.

We should not idealize those men as anti-Ottoman anarchist heroes.335 Their brutality and greed are sufficiently attested, and, in any event, a measure of such qualities was expected from them as warriors. In that sense, our analysis inscribes itself within a recent tendency in

335 P. Linebaugh, M. Rediker, *The Many Headed-Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston, 2000), is an excellent study, but it sometimes approaches hagiography, as it presupposes a strong class consciousness among the Atlantic pirates. Similarly, the existence of a pirate republic in Madagascar has been disputed, but it is certain that western European pirates established themselves there and plundered Mughal ships. See P. Nutting, “The Madagascar Connection: Parliament and Piracy, 1690-1701”, *The American Journal of Legal History*, 22 (3), 1978.
historiography, in which the opportunistic nature of early modern sailors and soldiers emerges vividly, especially from the works of Dutch scholars. From recent studies, we learn that the servants of European companies in India deployed their humanity by drinking, carrying out illegal deals, changing sides, pirating and carousing without discrimination. The early modern Indian Ocean, a fantastically wealthy area quite remote from the controls of western European states, offered a measure of anonymity and few concerns about religious constraints. Capable men could enlist as gunners for the Sultan of Aceh and winemakers for the Mughals, pilots for the Chinese or seamen in Indian Muslim vessels, ignoring the official requirements of cartazes. In the Bay of Bengal, it became possible for Portuguese mercenaries to carve out their own holdings. Within a generation or two, lower level Anatolians and Portuguese solteiros and alevantados were most likely to become Creolized and to retain only a vague memory of their original home.

To what extent did Ottoman state power stretch to the Gujaratis? A letter from the 1550s sent to Radjab (Receb) Khan of Surat in response to a letter concerning Seydi ‘Ali Reis claims that the Ottomans, in spite of difficulties and the barrier of the sea, will persist in their djihâd against the Portuguese. Nonetheless, the real reason for the composition of the letter lies elsewhere; the cannons which had been brought by Seydi ‘Ali and his companions, and which

336 The presence of Portuguese mercenaries in Agra and Delhi is well-documented, for instance on contemporaneous paintings. As for Dutch adventurers, renegades and other “lowlives”, see R. Barendse, The Arabian Seas (London, 2002); L. Blusse, Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in V.O.C Batavia (Leiden, 1986); and L. Bes, “The Setupatis, the Dutch, and other bandits in Eighteenth Century Rammad (South India)”, JESHO, 44 (4), 2001, as well as such unlikely scenarios as a reference to brothel fights between the Dutch and the Persians in Masulipatnam.

337 G.V. Scammell, “European Exiles, Renegades and Outlaws and the Maritime Economy of Asia c.1500-1750”, in Modern Asian Studies, 26 (4), 1992. Their heyday would be the seventeenth century, but even as early as 1521, the Portuguese encountered a man from Portugal in Bengal who used his archers against them.

338 M. Guedes, Interferência e Integração dos Portugueses na Birmânia, ca 1580-1630 (Lisbon, 1994) and M. Flores, Os Portugueses e o Sião no século XVI (Lisbon, 1995).
were left behind after they decided to reach the Ottoman territory overland, were to be sent to Egypt, if possible. If not, they are to be used in situ against infidels. Although the letter formally displays all characteristics of a command sent to an Ottoman administrator, the content reveals that the letter is at best a pious wish.  

The same cannons will continue to haunt the Ottoman authorities even a decade later, when during the preparations to sail to India several recommendations are made that the cannons be located in Gujarat and brought back to Suez. There is an explicit emphasis on avoiding the loss of resources. Significantly, the orders to recover the Ottoman cannons do not mention the men who enrolled in Gujarati military in 1538 or 1554. We may conclude that for the Ottomans, labor was more expendable than other resources. As for the cannons, we know that they remained in Gujarat, tempting the Mughal conquerors to take them to northern India.

Curiously, the claims that Mustafa Bayram or Seydi ‘Ali Reis were the first Anatolians in India have never been questioned, although they are manifestly wrong. Perhaps a simple

341 “Emrolunan donanma ile ol diyârâ vusûl müyesser olup […] bir yere veyâyûd bir kal’a döjmgeî top çekmelü oldûkta gemîlere bozmayaup kemâ-kân cençî ve kûrekî ve sâyîr tîpci ve âletcîleri ile turup müsûrûn-îleyh Mahmûd dâme izzühû gemîlerîden çkmayaup gemîleri hifzeyeleye ki, anun gibi sen kuruda hidmet überinde ink deryâdan veyâyûd esîrıden gemîlere bir zarar ihtimâî olma. Ya O. Yıldırım,7 Numaralî Mûhimme Defteﬁri, no.587. Also see no.583.

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manner in which we could resolve the issue is by noting the emphasis on their occasional “Ottomanness”, whereas the Rumis who preceeded them did not sustain such allegiances. As we have seen, Seydi ‘Ali Reis was indeed an Ottoman in his self-perception and he refused to stay in India; however, Mustafa Bayram and many other Rumis were more pragmatic with their loyalties, in accordance with *ubi bene, ibi patria*.

**4. How the Rumis became Ottomans**

Once we understand that many of the Rumis were only loosely connected to the Ottoman state, it is also easier to grasp some features of Ottoman involvement in the Indian Ocean. The older generation of historians has assumed that the Ottoman state was either completely indifferent to the Indian Ocean or not able to position itself adequately because of the outdated nature of its weapons and information. In contrast, younger, revisionist scholars assert that the Ottoman interactions in the Indian Ocean constituted a full-fledged policy, complete with the cast of ambitious and adventurous planners and their adversaries, “conservative”, wary administrators who destroyed this possibility to become a mercantile empire.\(^{343}\) We will address the commercial elements of this *problématique* in the general conclusion. Some apparent contradictions concerning those ambitions may be solved by stressing different interests of groups within the Ottoman polity. Most significantly, at the time the Portuguese forces entered

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\(^{343}\) See Brummett’s enthusiastic conclusion to her monograph: “In a world where Indian merchants came to Bursa to trade and where the Portuguese Lodovico d’Varthema met Chinese merchants selling silk in Bengal, the Ottoman sultan was subject to the same temptation urged on the English king by his agent, Robert Thorne, in 1527: *Come, be a merchant, like the king of Portugal.*” Brummett’s thesis of the Ottoman rulers as merchants contrasts nicely with that of M. Pearson, who argued that the ruling class of Gujarat was utterly indifferent to trade. See P. Brummett, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* (New York, 1984) and M. Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat* (London, 1976). Both of these theses are somewhat facile, in part because the authors concentrate on Romance language sources and leave out the Yemeni element.
the Indian Ocean, Ottomans were struggling for control over Anatolia and territories adjoining it, including Syria, Egypt, and the Red Sea; subsequently, the focus of many members of the Ottoman elite was the conquest of eastern and central Europe. In contrast with the Persian Gulf, where control remained elusive for all parties, Ottoman rule over the Red Sea remained astonishingly stable over the course of centuries.

As we have seen, there were many men loosely associated with wider Anatolia or the Ottoman state in all parts of the Indian Ocean, from the Ethiopian highlands to the Konkani coast and from eastern Sumatra to the Bay of Bengal. For some of them, Ottoman identity was a source of pride. Others were indifferent or hostile to Ottoman administration. Most of them were not janissaries. In the course of the sixteenth century, a gradual shift occurred. While many men must have left Ottoman territory because of religious heterodoxy, adventurous ambitions, or a disagreement with local administration, they were also likely to have internalized some Ottoman values and pass them onto their children. With the passing of generations, the dichotomy between a Rumi and Ottoman identity slowly dissolved. In other words, whereas the generation which was active in the 1520s and 1530s may have understood itself as primarily “Rumi” and not Ottoman, the Rumis of the 1550s and subsequent decades were more likely to view Ottoman hegemonic claims in an attractive light, as long as they did not interfere with their local power ambitions and structures. Accordingly, we may explain the presence of Ottoman

344 Remember the astonishment and delight by Rumis and Gujaratis when Janissaries disembark, as recorded by Teive, Comentário da gesta portuguesa.
345 We may view the Rumi presence in central Asia in this light. The Uzbek rulers realized that they needed specialized forces, including tüfekçis, when they were defeated by Tahmasp, whose own tüfekçis were from the Iraqi-based Rumlu tribe. However, when the Uzbek Begs received janissaries and artillery in 1554 from Istanbul, they used them against each other. See M. Haidar, Central Asia in the Sixteenth Century (New Delhi, 2002); H. İnalci, “The Socio-Political Effects of the Diffusion of Fire-Arms in the Middle East”, in War, Technology and Society in the Middle East, ed. by V. Parry and M. Yapp (London, 1975), and A. Bennigsen, C. Lemercier-Quelquejay, “La Grande Horde Nogay et le problème des communications entre l’Empire Ottoman et l’Asie Centrale en 1552-1556”, Turcica, 8, 1976.
state symbols in the Deccan, Sumatra, and other places, predating the Pan-Islamic policies of the nineteenth century. Although the Ottoman state did not correspond with the rulers of Bijapur and Minangkabau, it is quite likely that those symbols were carried there by Rumis, military specialists who perhaps entertained few connections with the Ottoman center, but may have acknowledged some elements of an Ottoman identity. As they became “Creolized” and assimilated, a vague memory of Ottoman connections remained and could be resuscitated in the nineteenth century.346

Thus, we conclude that most of the decision and actions in the Indian Ocean were carried out by men who were not in the uppermost ranks of the Ottoman society. In the 1510s and 1520s, those men were low-level mercenaries, corsairs and opportunity seekers. After 1538, Ottoman authorities became more interested in Indian Ocean matters as they conquered Iraq, Yemen and the Ethiopian coast. However, many of the decisions were still made locally by mid-level administrators, such as the vâlî of Zabid or in the Persian Gulf. They and their Portuguese counterparts thus affected local patterns of trade and war. We can see this in the example of the al-Lahsa (Hasa) province.

Prior to the Ottoman annexation of al-Lahsa in 1554, Rumi arquebusiers had already served the local ruler for nearly three decades.347 Unlike Mocha, Aden, or Basra, its protection was never of supreme strategic interest for the Ottoman center.348 The attempt to invade Bahrain

346 Of course, many of those linkages were reinforced in the nineteenth century, making the flags more similar to the mid-nineteenth Ottoman standard with not only a crescent, but also a star of certain proportions.
348 J. Mandaville, “The Ottoman Province of al-Hasa in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries”, JAOS, 90 (3), 1970. The second expedition to invade Bahrain, which was under the nominal control of the Lari governor and regarded as dâr al-harb in the 1570s, was ordered by the center, but indefinitely postponed.
was the idea of the governor of al-Lahsa, rather than the imperial council in Istanbul, and it failed ignominiously in 1559. More successfully, the Ottoman campaigns in Ethiopia, while carried out with the approval of the imperial center, were small-scale missions with men from Egypt and Yemen, and they advanced or stalled based on local engagement and local decisions.

After the partial success of the Indian fleet in 1538, and its failures in 1551 under Piri Reis and in 1554 by Seydi ‘Ali Reis, the Ottoman authorities must have made certain pragmatic conclusions in terms of their priorities. When merchants from Hormuz arrived in Egypt and demanded restitution of their goods, they were dismissed with the reason that Piri Bey had already been punished, and the government had appropriated his goods. This constituted a disavowal of Ottoman short-lived attempts to conquer Hormuz and Oman. As long as trade relations with India persisted, there was no need to interfere in Indian political matters. More significantly, securing of Ottoman territories and resources took precedence over participation in any western Indian *djihâds*. Thus, although the fervent rhetoric of anti-Portuguese *djihâds* on the western Indian coast in 1560s implied that the entire Muslim *umma* participated in it, the sources tend to emphasize the role of the Malabaris, and there are few mentions of Rumis or Ottomans. The men who were sent to Aceh were explicitly told to obey the local ruler,

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353 Also see a laudatory poem included in the manuscript and probably composed by Zayd al-Din’s brother. M.A. Mu’id Khan, “Indo-Portuguese struggle for Maritime Supremacy” in P. Joshi and M. Nayeem, *Studies in the Foreign Relations of India from the earliest Times to 1947, Professor H. K. Sherwani Felicitation Volume* (Hyderabad, 1975).
placing them somewhat outside the Ottoman sphere while ensuring that their behaviour would not affect state relations.  

Consequently, it makes little sense to compare Ottoman and Portuguese hegemonic claims, since they arose from different geopolitical realities. In spite of the long presence of Anatolian men in the Indian Ocean, the aim of the Ottoman center was never to establish a proto-colonial beachhead in Goa, Diu or Aceh with a policy of formal government and colonization of the “natives.” Any such attempts would have provoked local resentment and a drain on Ottoman resources. Instead, symbolic pledges of loyalty were valued, and as long as local linkages contributed toward trade with India, there was no need for additional efforts from Istanbul. Mostly, local decisions were made by mid-level officials, punctured by occasional central government action. Indeed, in this respect, Ottoman policies somewhat resembled those of the Portuguese in Bengal, where the Estado da Índia was not able to establish a military base, in spite of trading and presence of Portuguese mercenaries. Yet, the fundamental difference between Portuguese and Ottomans was the deficiency of military labor among the former and its occasional excess among the latter. Geographic distances and the presence of unruly armed men had implications for trade relations as well. Alliances which were rejected in Lisbon or Constantinople made sense in Gujarat, Melaka, or in the Persian Gulf, whether as a permanent neighborly arrangement or a temporary measure. Religious barriers could not be obliterated, but they could be ignored if required by necessity.

355 S. Subrahmanyam, Improvising Empire: Portuguese Trade and Settlement in the Bay of Bengal, 1500-1700 (Delhi, 1990). Subrahmanyam points out that the arrenegados and alevantados were at the margins of the Portuguese colonial enterprise, yet they could rehabilitate themselves with the center. We may view Salman Reis’ interactions with the Ottoman center in this light as well.
356 For instance, while the negotiations between Lisbon and Istanbul came to no conclusion in the 1540s, the Ottoman governor in Basra and the Portuguese authorities in Hormuz traded extensively.
Many of the earlier patterns persisted. In the 1660s, Rumis could be encountered in Siam and Java. Even as late as 1640, Portuguese visitors to the Hindu Nayaka kingdom of Madurai in Tamil country claimed that the rulers had numerous foreigners in their armies, including “three or four hundred Turks who formed his bodyguard.” Alleged Ottoman origins multiplied, from a former slave who composed a chronicle to the ‘Adil Shahi rulers of the Deccani sultanate of Bijapur, from men scattered in Sumatran villages to Malabar pirates who claimed descent from Seydi ‘Ali Reis. Yet, irrevocable changes occurred in the course of the sixteenth century. Militarization of the Indian Ocean sphere had changed, making the enrollment of mercenaries more difficult in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Since many Portuguese, English and Dutch privateers plied the seas, it became riskier to embark on a ship as a non-merchant. Notably, the seventeenth century also saw the emergence of Omani and Baluchi pirates, which has been well-nigh ignored by scholarship, but which thoroughly transformed power relations in the Persian Gulf and east African coasts.

The sixteenth century also saw a reshaping of the northern Indian political landscape. Independent Rajput lords and the smaller Muslim sultanates of Khandesh and Malwa were on the wane, while power struggles consumed the aristocracy of Gujarat. The 1550-70s were decades of conquest and consolidation for the Mughals, during which most of northern India was absorbed,

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358 The slave, who may even have the best claim to Ottoman provenance of the lot, is the author of Kitâb-i Qissa-i Tahmas Miskin. While the chronicle has been employed frequently by Indian historians, his personal experiences have only recently been elucidated by I. Chatterjee, “A Slave’s Quest for Selfhood in eighteenth-century Hindustan”, The Indian Economic and Social History Review, 37 (1), 2000.
359 M. Nayeem, External Relations of the Bijapur Kingdom (1489-1686 A.D): A Study in Diplomatic History (Hyderabad, 1974). Also see P. Hardy, “‘Adil-shahis’, EP.
360 Saffet Bey’s “Bir Osmanlı Filosunun Sumatra Seferi”, TOEM, 10 (1), 1910.
including the coastal areas. While the Mughals did not disdain Rumi experts\textsuperscript{363} or Abyssinian slaves, they preferred to work at a reinforcement of local allegiances. In addition, they were able to draw upon an extended pool of mercenaries, which included local Portuguese as well as central Asians, Afghanis (Pathans) and Rajputs. Thus, we encounter only a few former Ottomans or Rumis among their soldiers.\textsuperscript{364} In southern India, the Golconda sultanate assumed Shi‘a allegiances, making it less likely for Sunni Rumis to enter their hierarchy.

Significant changes occurred at the recruiting end as well. The region saddling eastern Anatolia and western Iran became divided between the Ottomans and the Safavids. Although the religious and political barriers were not at all analogous to the twentieth century “Iron Curtain,”\textsuperscript{365} they impeded frequent shifts of alliances; for instance, a Safavid nobleman could not change sides several times and expect to retain the same social position. Gradually, different state institutions produced different military cultures, as Safavids and Ottomans resorted to different methods in “taming” the armed men.\textsuperscript{366} In the aftermath of the sixteenth-century civil wars in Safavid Iran, Turkic speaking uymaq\textsuperscript{s}, many with roots in Anatolia and Syria, lost much of their strength. No longer able to contest the central power, many of them were at the disposal of the ruler, meaning that their men could be recruited as qurchi\textsuperscript{s}, royal guards who initially may

\textsuperscript{363} A number of Rumi musketeers (barq-andâz savâr) had been employed by the Mughals in Rajasthan, in 1678-80. See I.A. Khan, “The Matchlock Musket as an Instrument of Centralization”, in Gunpowder and Firearms, Warfare in Medieval India (New Delhi, 2004).


\textsuperscript{365} R. McChesney, ““Barrier of Heterodoxy”? Rethinking the Ties Between Iran and Central Asia in the 17\textsuperscript{th} Century”, in C. Melville, Safavid Persia, The History and Politics of an Islamic Society (London, 1996).

have been maintained by tribal leaders, but subsequently became associated with the court. In order to control the Qızılbaş tribes, Safavid rulers also resorted to recruiting men from the Caucasus and bringing them up in the palace, in an imitation of the Ottoman devşirme practices. Bernier noted the presence of Russian, Circassian, Mingrelian, Georgian and Ethiopian slaves.

The Safavids were still aware of the scarcity of qualified military men and the attraction of Indian wealth. When the Mughal ambassador requested permission to recruit men from the Safavid realm, Shah ‘Abbas issued an order which forbade Safavid subjects from leaving to India. Many men still immigrated from the Safavid territory to India, often because they were Sunnis; however, most of them were not men of arms, but rather administrators, ‘ulamâ’, or poets skilled in elaborate Persian expression. Thus, the specialization of western Asian men in India had changed from the sword to the pen.

The classical Ottoman pattern of favoring kapıks who were mostly of Balkan origins changed only gradually in the course of the sixteenth century. As in Safavid Iran, men from the Caucasus became increasingly present in leading positions at the court, reshaping alliances and loyalties. A similar pattern concerning Caucasians reasserted itself in all three empires. A later tradition, familiar to the Mediterranean adventurer Nicolao Manucci who lived in India for decades, stated that the ruler of the Bijapur was a Georgian carver at the table of the legitimate


emperor, while the ruler of Golconda was his chief huntsman and Georgian as well.\textsuperscript{371} In a later generation, foreign wives were still common even at the Mughal court. In spite of her name, Udaipuri Mahal was Circassian (or Georgian), fond of alcohol, and married to the rival princes Dara Shukoh and Aurangzeb.\textsuperscript{372} Of course, in all three realms greatest power could be reached through proximity to the throne from a young age, although even this would change gradually, as regional households gained more power. In the Ottoman world of the seventeenth century, we often obtain glimpses of ethnic and cultural cooperation and clashes, as an uneasy balance was achieved between the “easterners” and “westerners.”\textsuperscript{373}

Simultaneously, the increased presence of arms among the members of the re’áya and the question of their integration within the state apparatus necessitated new solutions. The state eventually asserted some degree of control over armed violence, although not without intense contestation.\textsuperscript{374} In contrast to the 1510s, when Ottoman hegemony had been gravely contested from the inside, Ottoman rule was sufficiently established at the time of Celali revolts, offering the rebels the great temptation of a position within the hierarchy.\textsuperscript{375} Henceforth, although they could not become members of the innermost circles in Istanbul, men from eastern and central Anatolia did not need to emigrate: they could engage in local raid opportunities, in the Balkans, the Ukrainian steppes and the Caucasus, and obtain state employment, not only, as previously, in

\textsuperscript{371} Thus, we may conclude that the Georgians were perhaps more present in seventeenth-century India than Turkish- and Arabic-speaking Rumis. N. Manucci, \textit{Storia do Mogor}, III, p.94, also p.219 ff.  
\textsuperscript{374} A complete monopoly of violence by the state was scarcely possible in the early modern period. Western European states encountered great difficulties when they tried to circumscribe their armed men. In the eighteenth century, most armies still relied on mercenaries. See J. Thomson, \textit{Mercenaries, Pirates and Sovereigns: State Building and Violence in Early Modern Europe} (Princeton, 1994). For an old-fashioned view on English mercenaries in eighteenth-century India, see S. Bidwell, \textit{Swords for Hire: European Mercenaries in Eighteenth-Century India} (London, 1981).  
\textsuperscript{375} K. Barkey, \textit{Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization} (New York, 1997).
the guise of müsellem and yaya (and their successors, levends, after 1580), but also more powerful positions of sekbân and tüfeng-endâz, occasionally even acceding to the cavalry ranks as garîbân.\textsuperscript{376} By mid-seventeenth century, the sekbân were an established feature in Ottoman military planning, although Osman II had lost his life in part because he planned to replace the janissaries with the sekbân. In addition, influential provincial households asserted their independence from the center by employing them.\textsuperscript{377} The extent to which the waxing and waning of Rumi migrations to the east may have influenced population changes in Anatolia cannot be determined at this time. Such a study could not be limited by the contours of the Ottoman-Safavid borders; it must encompass areas of Iraq and Azerbaidjan as well, giving a place of pride to the former Qaraqoyunlu lands in the upper Euphrates.\textsuperscript{378}

The period of an overt “Muslim internationalism” in Eurasian arts and politics, bequeathed through India’s fragmented political conditions and Timur’s fantastic conquests, drew to a close with the establishment of three large political spheres in the Islamic oikoumene. Centrifugal tendencies across Eurasia were replaced by large continental empires.\textsuperscript{379} Scope for

\textsuperscript{376} See İ.H. Uzunçarşılı, Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtından Kapukulu Ocakları, 2 vols. (Ankara, 1988) and İnalcık, “The Socio-Political Effects of the Diffusion of Fire-Arms in the Middle East”, in War, Technology and Society in the Middle East, ed. by V. Parry and M. Yapp (London, 1975). In his discussion on the socio-economic effects of the diffusion of fire-arms, İnalcık comes close to intimating the difference between Rumis and Ottomans, but he does not elaborate that distinction, perhaps because he may not have been familiar with Gujarati and Portuguese sources and the role of Rumis in the Indian Ocean before the sixteenth century. However, since Anatolian men were renowned specialists in fire-arms even before the Ottoman realm extended to all parts of Anatolia, most likely the date for the arming of the re’aya needs to be pushed much earlier than the rebellion of prince Bayezid in 1559.


\textsuperscript{378} Within the Ottomanist field, the standard study which encompasses eastern Anatolia and Iran, although within a restrictive framework of ethnicity, is F. Sümer’s Safevi Devletinin Kuruluşu ve Gelişmesinde Anadolu Türklerin Rolü (Ankara, 1992). For recent trends in demographic studies, see O. Özel, “Population Change in Ottoman Anatolia during the 16th and 17th centuries: The “Demographic Crisis” reconsidered”, IJMES, 36 (2), 2004.

activities in which soldiers of fortune could rise to the uppermost levels decreased in the course of the sixteenth century, as the number of rulers who offered employment diminished and hierarchies of the remaining realms hardened.\(^{380}\)

India remained a temptation for many men. Yet, in the following centuries, it became more profitable to engage in Indian trade than to become a mercenary. This does not mean that the three empires (and the Uzbek rulers) did not interact on other levels; indeed, these interactions constitute one of the most understudied aspects of the period. After the slow demise of Rumi mercenaries, Indians and Ottomans met under different auspices. We will turn to these other manifestations in the subsequent chapters.

Section II

The Age of Empires
Chûn pâdishâh shudam, ba khâtir rasîd kih nâm-i khvad râ taghayyur bâyad dâd, kih în ism mahal-i ishtibâh ast ba qayâsira Rûm.
Jahangir, the Mughal emperor

Tezkire-yi kesret-i büldân u emsâr-i Hind u tekrâr vûs’at-i diyâr-i Sind ile iftihâr olunmuş [...] ma’ zâlike Ïzed [...] mücerer kesret-i mûlk u vûs’at-i memleketlerin hesâb etmey Up...
Ottoman response to Shah Jahan

Tell thy master, said the Mogul, that he is my Slave, for my ancestor conquered him.
E.Terry
Chapter 3
Powerful Silences

1. Before the Mughals, or, when is a caliph a caliph?

While the Ottoman expedition to Gujarat in 1538 has been revisited numerous times, most histories of Ottoman contacts with India start some eighty years earlier. Ever since diplomatic exchanges between Ottomans and Indian rulers attracted academic interest, the name of Mahmud Gavan has been evoked as the first Indian official to write a letter to the Ottoman court in the 1460s. This claim seems to be indisputable. Yet, the implication that the first Indians arrived in Anatolia merely because of Gavan’s commercial designs is mistaken. As we will see from Ibn Battuta, the Battâlnâme and other sources, Indians were a familiar sight even in the Anatolia of Byzantines and Seldjuqids.¹

Yet, Mahmud Gavan, a Gilani by birth, was emblematic of his age. He participated in the flow of men between western Asia and India, having arrived in India as a horse merchant after sojourns in Egypt and Syria. His upbringing and reputation had already brought him lucrative offers of state employment in Khorasan and Iraq, but he decided to become involved in state matters under the Bahmanid sultan Humayun (1458-61), who bestowed upon him the title of the mâlik al-tudjdjâr. It was under the young Muhammad III (1463-82) that he also became the prime minister (vazîr-i saltanat) in 1466, de facto putting him in charge of the Bahmanid state.²

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¹ See the section 3, chapter 5 on the presence of Indians in pre-Ottoman Anatolia.
By war and diplomacy with Bahmanid Muslim and Hindu neighbors, Gavan extended the Bahmanid influence across the Deccan. But his main claim to fame is his manual of writing, the *Manâzir al-Inshâ*, in which he refined some of the unclear points concerning *inshâ*, differentiating *manshûr, farmân, mithâl, maktûb, ‘arîza, ruq’a* and other categories depending upon the precise status of the sender and the occasion. Gavan’s manual was still highly respected by Katib Çelebi, who stated that the author’s learning had spread from India to Europe itself, where learned men studied the work as well. His other preserved work, *Riyâd al-Inshâ*, is a collection of personal papers in the *masnû* tradition of Persian writing in the subcontinent, including letter sent to luminaries such as Jami and Dawwani, both of whom he attempted to lure to the Bahmanid court, and also to the Timurid ruler Bayqara and the Ottoman sultans. Numerous copies of both works survive in Turkish manuscript libraries.

While most scholars of Indo-Ottoman relations have felt obliged to mention Gavan, practically all of them did so *en passant*. The few articles which constitute secondary sources on Bahmanid-Ottoman relations and address the letters in any depth are of ambivalent value, since they contradict each other in the evaluation of the letters and their chronology. B. Lewis’ much-quoted article was intended as a short summary, and it does not offer many details. The study by M.A. Nayeem, a respectable scholar of the Islamic Deccan, includes several minor errors in

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his excessively literal presentation of the letters. S. Abdurrashid does not realize that one of the letters (number 56) is falsely attributed, and he gloomily concludes that no “active or fruitful commercial contacts” were possible because of the coming of the Portuguese, even though the interactions between the Ottomans and the Bahmanids predate the arrival of the Portuguese by more than 30 years! N. Farooqi omits a few interactions (since he does not quote the Riyâd al-inshâ’, but only Feridun’s Münše’ât), concluding his brief discussion with valuable references to contemporaneous chronicles, which, however, introduce yet another problem in the chronology of the Bahmanid-Ottoman relations. The most precise dating comes from N. Maghrebi, who consulted Ottoman archives as well as the printed edition of Riyâd al-inshâ’. However, it is relatively difficult for most Ottoman historians to access his article, since it was published in an Urdu literary journal. In addition, his interest is merely descriptive; he does not analyze the content of the letters or their historical context.

The letter number 5 in the printed edition of Riyâd al-inshâ’ is usually assumed to be the initiation of correspondence between Indian rulers and Ottomans. It is commonly interpreted as congratulation on the occasion of the conquest of Constantinople, in which Gavan’s use of the


7 S. Abdurrashid, “Ottoman-Mughul Relations during the Seventeenth Century”, VI. Türk Tarih Kongresi, III. Seksyon (Ankara, 1967), arranging the letters as follows: “in the first letter (5) the Wazir extols the various qualities of the head and heart of the sultan, admires his conquests and expresses the desire to meet him. No date is given but it was probably written soon after the conquest of Constantinople. The second letter (33) also undated, is in reply to the sultan’s farmân received by him in which he reaffirms his allegiance to the sultan. The sultan’s farmân was sent to him through one Amir Jalal ud-Din. The third letter (201) is written on behalf of the Bahmanid ruler Mohammad Shah. The Wazir praises the courage, benevolence and magnanimity of the Sultan and expresses his jubilation on the Sultan’s recent victories. The letter was sent through the Bahmanid agent Faris Khan. The fourth letter (391) is in reply to a farman sent by the Ottoman sultan to Mohammad Gavan through Khwaja Jamal-ud-Din Hasan.”

8 N.R. Farooqi, *Mughal-Ottoman Relations, A Study of Political and Diplomatic Relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire, 1556-1748* (New Delhi, 1989), Chapter 1.

word khilâfa to describe the Ottomans tends to be stressed.\textsuperscript{10} There are several problems with this identification. First of all, no scholar seems to have noted that Gavan arrived in India as a horse merchant in the very year of the conquest. He was only able to address the Ottoman ruler in an official capacity after his rise to power, which happened in 1460s. The victories exalted by the letter must therefore refer to different campaigns, or to the general prowess of the Fatih in military matters, rather than to the specific conquest of Istanbul.

Secondly, it seems certain that Gavan was eager to establish the supremacy of Shi‘ism, to which he and many among his fellow ăfâqîs belonged. Bahmanid architecture reveals the strong influence of Anatolian, Iranian and Mesopotamian aesthetic patterns.\textsuperscript{11} Gavan built a large Shi‘i madrasa in 1472 which reflected Iranian and central Asian tendencies, and which still stands in Bidar, although ravaged by time.\textsuperscript{12} Hence, he is scarcely likely to have addressed Fatih as the caliph in the religious sense of the term. In addition, Ottomans were at that time concentrated upon expanding into the Balkans and they did not rule over entire Anatolia, let alone over Egypt or the Hijaz. Their claim to a universal caliphate, if it even existed at the time, must have been meager.

Only one scholar has interpreted the term “caliph” correctly. Although A. Özcan merely gives a compressed picture of the interactions between Ottomans and Bahmanids, he astutely comments that the use of the title “caliph” in the letter must indicate that the usage of the title

\textsuperscript{10} M.A. Nayeem, “Foreign Cultural Relations of the Bahmanis (1461-81 A.D.)” in Studies in the foreign relations of India.
\textsuperscript{12} G. Michell, M. Zebrowski, Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates (The New Cambridge history of India I.7) (Cambridge, 1999). Michell’s other works on Vijayanagara are also worth consulting.
had been the prerogative of each Muslim monarch in their respective territories.\textsuperscript{13} We also concur that there was a proliferation of the term “caliph” in the fifteenth century, as it was interpreted in a generous sense, additive rather than exclusive. In our discussion of the Mughal period, it will become clear that the title subsequently “appreciated” in value, becoming jealously contested in the seventeenth century. Yet, in Gavan’s time, it must have meant little more than a gracious compliment. He also addresses other rulers as caliphs, being especially reverent with the ruler of his native Gilan.

We must note that Gavan entertained correspondence with Ottoman rivals as well. In fact, he had been quite pleased because Uzun Hasan made the routes in eastern Anatolia and Iran passable. In 1474, the Venetian envoy Barbaro was present at the reception of ambassadors “of an Indian prince”, where two elephants, a giraffe and three parakeets were presented. The Indian prince must have been Gavan, as we know that between 1473 and 1477, two Bahmanid envoys were sent to Uzun Hasan’s court, and they accompanied a merchant. The relations continued in 1485, when according to Idris Bitlisi another ambassador from India was received at the court.\textsuperscript{14}

The scions of Qara Yusuf, the Qaraqoyunlu, also moved from eastern Anatolia to Hamadan and then to India in 1468. Indeed, Sultan Quli arrived at the Bahmanid court during the precise period in which Bahmanid-Ottoman relations were established, under Muhammad III (1463-82), and he initially served the Bahmanids, establishing the house of Qutb-Shahis of Golconda only after the Bahmanid collapse in 1525. The circle of Ottoman-Bahmanid relations closed when the son of the last nominal Bahmani ruler, having been exiled from the center of

\textsuperscript{13} A. Özcan, \textit{Pan-Islamism, Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)} (Leiden, 1997). See Introduction, ft.2.
power, is said to have moved to Mecca in disguise in 1537 and never returned to India.\textsuperscript{15} A precise discussion of Mahmud Gavan’s interactions with the Ottomans must include all of those threads, as well as his letters to the rulers of Gilan, Egypt and Iraq, all of which were significant nodal points in the political and economic world of the Indian Ocean.

We do not intend to present a complete disentanglement of the order of Gavan’s letters here, as it would involve consulting several manuscripts of the \textit{Riyâd al-inshâ’} and Ottoman epistolary collections, not all of which agree on the precise number of Gavan’s letters. The names of the ambassadors pose an especially thorny problem, as the same person may be referred to with different titles. Using \textit{Riyâd al-inshâ’} alone, as some researchers have done, does not include the Ottoman responses, and a few times the collection is misleading in its attribution of recipients. Feridun’s \textit{Münše’ât} is not immune to mistakes either; for instance, the letters presented in sequence may need to be reversed chronologically. In short, a separate study is necessary to analyze this matter properly.

Yet, several lessons can be drawn from the example of Mahmud Gavan’s interactions with the Ottomans. First, it reminds us that the danger of anachronism constantly lurks in any historiographic endeavor. Specific titles and other terminologies must always be contextualized within their proper frame of reference. Second, we cannot rely upon only Ottoman or only Indian sources to relate the story; if we consult only one of them, we run the risk of misinterpreting or misdating the evidence, as some of the letters are only available from Ottoman and yet others only from Indian sources.

Finally, close attention needs to be paid to the structure of the letters and the language. One of the major difficulties in interpreting and dating Gavan’s letters rests in their magnificent

\textsuperscript{15} H.K. Sherwani, \textit{The Bahmanis of the Deccan, An Objective Study} [sic] (Hyderabad, 1953).
display of his scholarship in Persian and Arabic. According to the fashion of the times, concrete demands and messages were conveyed orally; most of the letters do not include the names of the ambassadors or the aims of their mission. They must be deduced by reading carefully between the lines, but very often, the precise sense of allusions and their relevance to political and economic decisions of the moment are lost to us.

In contrast, Ottoman and Mughal interchanges two hundred years later cite the Qur’ân rather than classical Persian poets; they also almost always include the names of the ambassadors and the nature of their pursuits. Titulature, somewhat of a matter of gallantry in Gavan’s time, is taken exceedingly seriously and placed at precise strategic positions within the letter. Its study must form the core part of any diplomatic analysis. In other words, a comparison between diplomatic exchanges of the mid-fifteenth and the mid-seventeenth century demonstrates drastically that Perso-Turkic letter composition was no static matter and that topics as well as styles varied substantially throughout the ages.

Letter exchanges between Gujarati rulers and the Ottomans have also been sporadically analyzed, leading to a similar hasty conclusion that Ottomans were viewed as universal caliphs in the India of the early sixteenth century. Yet, a closer analysis of the letters does not concur with this analysis either, and there are missing pieces. Muzaffar Shah (1511-26) is reported to have sent an embassy to congratulate on Ottoman victories in Egypt. No such letter has been located until now and researches have primarily cited the article by B. Lewis, whose wording is slightly ambiguous and who probably refers to the letter by Muzaffar Shah which is found in Feridun’s Münşe’ât. This letter, bearing the date of 15 October 1518, acknowledges the letter by the Ottoman sultan Selim heralding the glad tidings of victories over the Mamluks. Muzaffar
Shah congratulates the sultan on the victory and enumerates his own victories, including his conquest of the formidable fortress of Mandu.\textsuperscript{16}

To further complicate the matters, J. Bacqué-Grammont located and published the Ottoman letter dispatched by Selim I, claiming it could be the very first time Ottomans and Indians interacted (thus unwittingly omitting the Bahmanid period). In this \textit{fathnâma}, written in mid-1517, Sultan Selim I referred to his firm determination to expel the Portuguese intruders, expressing his desire to continue the exchange of embassies. The Ottoman ambassador is mentioned as Mahmud Zayd.\textsuperscript{17} Perhaps the solution to the puzzle is that Selim I was indeed the first to contact the Gujarati rulers upon his conquest of Egypt, leading them to take a clear stance on the deposition of their former allies, the Mamluks. If this is the case, the letter by Muzaffar Shah, described above, would be the very first Gujarati letter to the Ottomans, with only measured demands for help against the Portuguese and an assurance of Gujarati military power, as their conquest of Mandu mirrors the Ottoman conquest of Egypt and Syria.

Of course, the two letters by the charismatic former slave of the Gujarati sultan, Malik Ayas, whom we mentioned in our first chapter, and who had direct experience of the Ottoman realm in his youth, do constitute a call for a joint action against the Portuguese. However, they are dated to November 1518 and can also be seen as a part of Gujarati response to the Ottoman conquest of Egypt. Malik Ayas reports at length about Amir Husayn’s failed endeavors a decade earlier, particularly blaming him for the alienation of the people of Aden, who were besieged by

\textsuperscript{16} The letter conveniently omits that Mandu was ruled by a Muslim king. See Feridun, \textit{Mecmu'ay-i Münşe’ât-i Selâtîn}, I (Istanbul, 1274), p.447ff.
him and who eventually turned to the Portuguese in desperation. Curiously, as we know, history would repeat itself in 1538, when the Gujarati sultanate ultimately rejected the Ottoman fleet because of their violent treatment of the Adeni ruler.

Similarly to the Bahmanid letters by Mahmud Gavan, Gujarati interactions with the Ottomans have not received the full attention that they deserve. They must be put not only into a Portuguese-language context, as most researchers have done so far; rather, the internal dynamics of the Gujarati sultanate must be considered on the basis of Indo-Persian chronicles. For our current purposes of assessing how Ottomans were viewed by Gujarati rulers, we can locate some hints in the Târîkh-i Mahmûd Shâhî, composed at the end of the fifteenth century. This chronicle mentions the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul briefly, with the caveat that it is merely “the small” Constantinople, and not the “large” one from the ahâdîth. However, an effusive and laudatory paragraph is devoted to the news of the death of Sultan Mahmud Rumi, comparing him to the sun and carrying that metaphor for several lines. The Târîkh also mentions conflicts between Murad II and Uzun Hasan, of which the Gujaratis must have been informed through the constant influx of Rumis. Once again, a deeper examination of the sources leads us to doubt the projection of nineteenth-century Ottoman symbolic hegemony among Muslim Indians onto earlier times.

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18 Abdullah Efendi, Münse‘ât-i Fârsî, 107-110, 114f. ms no.3333, Süleymaniye. The shorter letter sent by Malik Ayas is also in Feridun, Münse‘ât, I, 449.
2. Babur: ghâzis of Anatolia, ghâzis of India

Conventional understanding of the Mughal-Ottoman relations is based on a largely literal reading of the sources, with stress on stereotypical friendly expressions which close most of the letters, for instance the purported “agreement” (ittifâk) regardless of “great distance” (bu’d-i mesâfe mabeyn) for the sake of “the necessity for unity in religion and kin” (lâzîme-i ittihâd-i mezheb u millet) “in spite of enemies” (‘alâ rağmi’l-a’dâ), as expressed in the letter to Aurangzeb sent by the Ottomans\(^\text{21}\), or the emphasis on the common Hanafi madhhab in letters by Shah Jahan. Usually, their relations are viewed as unproblematic but inefficient, because the two empires were faced by the twin obstacle of heretical Safavids and imperialist Europeans.

This reading rests upon J. Hammer’s interpretation in the early nineteenth century. Writing at a time when Mughal glory and Indian centrality in world economy were becoming a distant memory, Hammer conflated all Ottoman interactions with India into a narrative in which Indians and Ottomans were consistently kind to each other in a series of colorful episodes:


\(^{22}\) J. Hammer-Purgstall, Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches, V, 592ff. Although Hammer is almost forgotten in the English-speaking world, his Geschichte exerted an enormous influence on the entire field of Ottoman studies. The multi-volume work was translated into French and into Ottoman as well (Istanbul, 1336 H.).
Indian and Pakistani Muslim scholars who had often held Ottomans and Turks in highest regard followed this line of argument throughout the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{23} We have seen that in the case of Mahmud Gavan, this led to significant misperceptions and even to conclusions that Indians had recognized the Ottoman claim to universal caliphate as early as the fifteenth century. In his meticulous study of diplomatic sources of Ottoman-Mughal relations, N. Farooqi mentions some contentions between the Mughals and the Ottomans, yet he views them as incidental, arguing conventionally in his conclusion that “the geographical distance between them was too great to arouse considerable mutual interest, either as close allies or as rivals […] Since the Mughals had no influence whatsoever in European affairs, close alliance with them was not calculated to be very fruitful for the Ottomans. The Mughals on the other side were preoccupied with defending themselves against the Uzbeks and the Safavids.” The friendship between Ottomans and Uzbeks is also seen as an impediment to close relations between the two powers because of Mughal hereditary enmity toward Uzbeks. Farooqi concludes that the Mughals, lacking “a strong and integrated middle class of commercial magnates, bankers and merchants […] never felt obliged to negotiate a full-fledged commercial alliance with the Ottomans [or] to extract commercial concessions from the Ottomans”, to their detriment.\textsuperscript{24} According to this line of reasoning, Ottomans were largely superior and benevolent to Mughals, who lost the chance to ally with them through factors such as a general weakness vis-à-vis western Europeans, inept commercial decisions and sheer geographical contingency. In another characteristic passage, the “acerbity and over-sensitiveness at minor discourtesies of diction” displayed by Shah Jahan are


\textsuperscript{24} N. Farooqi, Mughal-Ottoman Relations: a study of political & diplomatic relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire, 1556-1748 (New Delhi, 1989).
juxtaposed with “Ottoman moderation and large-heartedness” which demonstrates their “positive approach, ardor, and probity.” 25

We owe much to Farooqi, particularly concerning his integration of eighteenth-century evidence, previously ignored by most researchers. However, a close reading of the evidence suggests something quite different. Relations between Mughals and Ottomans did not waver between non-existent and friendly; rather, during the entire existence of the Mughal dynasty, bona fide friendly interactions with the Ottomans were exceptional, even feigned. For the first hundred years of Mughal history, most of their emperors actively disliked and avoided even the very mention of Ottomans at their courts. 26 In turn, Ottomans often depicted Indians as infidels. The distance between the two empires, far from being a hinderance, was actually highly convenient for Ottomans as well as Mughals, since most of their subjects were never tempted to compare the two realms or emigrate in very large numbers, as Iranians did, preferring the riches of India to the relative instability of Safavid lands. While Mughals were nominally Hanafi Sunnis, they were far more inclined to side with the Safavids than with Ottomans up until the 1640s, when former allies became bitter adversaries. Conversely, after the 1630s, Ottomans and Safavids no longer engaged in direct confrontations for several decades.

Yet, even Mughal alienation from the Safavids did not lead to increased warmth toward Ottomans. Silence of the previous period was replaced by bitter contestation over titles and diplomatic honors, and Murad IV came to be reviled, rather than honored, in many Mughal retellings of the first Baghdad embassy. The brief outburst of tumultuous but frequent diplomatic relations in the 1640s and 1650s was replaced by a second silence during the long reign of

26 Humayun was the only exception.
Aurangzeb. In spite of their prestige and power, Ottomans were consistently in weaker position, sometimes being forced to ask the wealthy Mughals for monetary assistance in spite of diplomatic humiliations. On at least one occasion, Ottomans actually conceded the title of the caliph to the Mughals. Emotions of envy and mockery resurfaced even in the eighteenth century, when Mughals were in need of Ottoman help, and in spite of occasional kind words Ottomans eventually found ways to arrange themselves with Nadir Shah and accept the plundered gifts from his Indian campaign. For more than a hundred years following the 1740s, Ottomans displayed conspicuous indifference toward any Indian rulers, although Indian textiles and Indo-Persian poetry were constantly present at the court. As for Mughals and Uzbeks, they were not consistently adversarial to each other after Babur’s times (indeed, often Uzbeks sided with Mughals), and Ottomans never expressed any open criticism of Mughal campaigns in Uzbek lands in the 1640s.

To our knowledge, the only scholar who discussed the unpleasant sides of the Ottoman-Mughal relation adequately was J. Rypka. In spite of his high reputation as a scholar, his articles never became known in India or Pakistan, partially because he chose to write in German and to publish in his native Prague or in southern Germany. Rypka focused on the interchanges between Shah Jahan and the Ottomans, but we will argue in this section that contestations of power were constant in the relations between Ottomans and Mughals, with some reprieves under Humayun and later in the 1740s, when the severely weakened Mughals needed Ottoman assurance that they would not side with Nadir Shah. Friendly relations in the period of greatest


Mughal strength and prosperity during the seventeenth century were exceedingly rare, and even favorable treatment of Ottoman ambassadors was mostly colored by the desire to impress them. The unease starts very early, even with Babur himself.

Inordinate praise has accrued to Babur, the first of the Mughals, ever since he became known to scholarship, but even more so in recent times, perhaps coinciding with the opening of central Asia to US influence.²⁹ Certainly the character of his writing, an autobiography, has led many readers to sympathize with him. Consequently, he is one of the few Chaghatay authors whose work has been published in Turkey.³⁰ Given that he was a Hanafi by birth and a contemporary of the Ottoman rise, many scholars have been surprised at the lack of interactions between him and Ottoman rulers.

Before delving into a more detailed view on Babur’s perspective on the Ottomans, we should remember that Babur was still living in a world marked by Timur. Indeed, he claimed he had encountered a centogenerian woman who had been brought by Timur’s forces from India to Transoxiana after the loot of Delhi, thus establishing a living link between him and his ancestor. Babur compared himself to Mahmud of Ghazna and the Ghurid dynasty as previous conquerors of India,³¹ yet the Timurid comparison was always prevalent. India was crucial in terms of Timur’s claim to power, symbolizing his rule over the entire world, and Timur himself purportedly delineated his own sphere of interest as stretching from India up to Sivas (whereas Bayazid Yıldırım’s sphere in Ottoman sources is somewhat anachronistically listed as from Sivas

²⁹ S.F. Dale, *The Garden of the Eight Paradises, Babur and the Culture of Empire in Central Asia, Afghanistan and India (1483-1530)* (Leiden, 2004). At a Fulbright Scholars Conference in 2007, a US official quoted Babur extensively to scholars going to India and central Asia.
³⁰ Editions of his autobiography and more recently his Chaghatay poetry have been published. See Babur, A.F. Bilkan, ed., *Risâle-i Vâlidîyye tercümesi* (Istanbul, 2001).
to Hungary). Thus, in conquering India, Babur was explicitly following Timur’s path to universal rule.

Babur’s successor Humayun seems to have been aware of the lore concerning Yıldırım’s humiliating defeat, as he admonished the ruler of Gujarat, Bahadur Shah, to deliver some men who had fled to his realm. When Bahadur refused, he told him that his fate would resemble that of Yıldırım attacked by Timur. Even if Bahadur had not been familiar with the story, the Rumi men at his court certainly were. The memory of Timur as the raider of India did cause some discomfort under the ecumenical rule of Akbar, but it was especially celebrated a hundred years later under Shah Jahan, who took on the title of Sâhib-i Qirân when he was entangled in central Asian campaigns. Significantly, the dynasty would have rejected being called the Mughals, which was most likely a slur from Lodi-period Delhi. Instead, their own name for themselves was the Gurkanid house, derived from Gurkân / kürägän, the Mongol word for “son-in-law” which granted Timurid his access to the Chinggisid line. We will keep the conventional designation “Mughals”, but we will also emphasize Mughal attachment to the Timurid heritage as we encounter it and contrast it with Ottoman discomfort concerning this topic.

As befitting a prince who spent most of his life in central Asia, Babur had a Persianate perspective on the world, with Iran and Turan at the center, Rum shading over into Firangistan,

36 Unfortunately, the study by L. Balabanlilar, Imperial Identity in the Mughal Empire: Memory and Dynastic Politics in Early Modern South and Central Asia (London, 2012), was published too late to be discussed in this dissertation.
Hind and China at its other end. For instance, we can intuit the borders of his world when he praises the riches and the mercantile activities in Kabul, his new domain. He mentions that in Kabul just as much profit can be made as in China and Anatolia, and that merchants from Iraq, Anatolia and China arrive in Kabul with their goods.\(^{37}\) Yet, this “medieval” understanding of the world also contained tangible aspects and planning, not mere dreams of conquest. Chinese bows, brocade tunics and porcelain cups were familiar to Babur.\(^{38}\) Much is made of his passionate dislike for Indian climate and culture.\(^{39}\) However, he seems to have been aware of presence of Indian masterbuilders in Samarqand and the employ of astronomical tables (\(*\text{zîdji}\*) which he explicitly defines as having been compiled at the time of Raja Vikramaditya in Ujjain and Dhar, and he carefully followed the political scene in northern India, attempting to expand his domain.\(^{40}\) His lengthy description of Indian flora and fauna also demonstrates that he had capable local advisers and that his life in India was certainly not devoid of pleasures. One may even suspect that Hindustan, the coveted land of the infidel, had to be subject to complaints to increase the image of Babur as a self-sacrificing \(\text{ghâzi}\).

The presence of Ottomans and Anatolia in Babur’s consciousness is closely connected with his communications with Safavid Iran; it could not be otherwise. In the course of his attempts to conquer the lands of his birth, Babur applied to Shah Isma’il for help after the Safavid had crushed the Uzbeks in 1510 at Marv. In exchange for military assistance, he pledged to acknowledge the Shah through the \text{khutba} and the \text{sikka}.\(^{41}\) However, Babur’s withdrawal from

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\(^{38}\) Idem., I, p.205.

\(^{39}\) Idem., III, p.623.

\(^{40}\) Idem., I, p.96 and II, p.578.

\(^{41}\) Exceedingly valuable for the later periods as well is R. Islam, \textit{Indo-Persian Relations, A Study of the Political and Diplomatic Relations between the Mughul Empire and Iran} (Tehran, 1970). R. Islam’s meticulous and almost superhuman endeavor resulted in an extensive collection of letters, including abundant details on correspondence
Transoxiana and his endeavors to establish himself in Balkh, Qandahar and even Herat increased Safavid distrust toward him. After Babur retreated from Afghanistan and embarked upon the conquest of northern India, his relations with the Safavids improved, and Babur sent a congratulatory embassy to Tahmasp in 1524. Babur also sent gifts and embassies to Iraq, Mecca and Medina. Khvadjagi Asad, the ambassador, returned with a Turcoman ambassador and two Circassian slavegirls for the royal harem. Those two men were subsequently sent back with gifts for the Persian Shah Tahmasp, carrying news of Babur’s triumph against the Rajputs. Yet, those embassies were not described by Babur as in any way relevant to the Ottomans; instead, the Hijaz was portayed as an independent realm and no separate embassy to the Ottoman court was sent.

In later years, Babur also expressed more ambiguity about the Safavids. Tahmasp’s efforts against Uzbek forces in 1528 were eagerly followed by Babur, but he somewhat condescendingly called him merely a “Şâhzâda” and “the Qızilbaş.” However, several pages later, when detailing the encounter, Babur describes Tahmasp as employing Rumi techniques with their matchlocks and carts. The Rumi quality of Safavid military and their strategies is emphasized time and again. Many of those men belonged to the Rumlu tribe and had lived in Iraq. The contrast to the image depicted in Ottoman sources is striking; in the east, Tahmasp

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43 Idem., III, p.736.
45 “Qızilbaş âdami Rûm dastûrî bilä arâba u derbzan u tufakandâz tartîb qîril özini berkitip urûsr.” Babur, Thackston, ed., Bahbûnmâ, III, p.751. Berkitip, related to the word berk (hard, firm, solid), which is rare in standard Anatolian Turkish except in proverbs, is translated in the Persian of ‘Abdulrahim Khankhanan’s version of
appears as a young, intrepid conqueror, while in the western part of his dominions, he is most likely to play a war of attrition and thus is seen as a coward by Ottomans. In a description of a feast attended by Iranian, Uzbek and Hindu ambassadors, Babur offers details on seating of the guests and the clothing given to them. In this context a Rumi man in Babur’s retinue is mentioned. At least two other embassies were exchanged with Tahmasp. Clearly, the Safavid-Mughal relationship was stable and important for the two courts, and Babur attempted to assume a fatherly role.

At least some people within Babur’s circles had roots in Anatolia. After the Aqqoyunlu took Azerbaidjan and Iraq from the Qaraqoyunlus, a Qaraqoyunlu beğ and his followers, together with their households, went to Transoxiana. Pasha Begum, the daughter of one of them, was one of the wives to Babur’s father. In Khorasan, Babur also encountered Turcoman begs who left eastern Anatolia after Shah Isma’il had taken Iraq and Azerbaidjan. Most significantly, there were a few Rumis among Babur’s men. Master ‘Ali Quli arranged the wagons in accordance with the Anatolian manner assisted by Mustafa, the artillery man. Mustafa is clearly described as Rumi when Babur praises his caissons, made in Anatolian fashion for the battle of Khanua. His matchlock and mortars (tüfek ve darbzan) also earn

Babur’s memoirs as “mazbût karda”, meaning fortified. Also see I. Kúnos, Şeyx Sulejman Efendi’s Čagataj-Osmanisches Wörterbuch [sic] (Budapest, 1902).
46 R. Kılıç, Kanûni Devri Osmanlı-Iran Münâsibetleri (1520-1566), (Istanbul, 2006) offers a very detailed, although often uncritical analysis, in which Kılıç often castigates Tahmasp for cowardice.
48 Idem., III.
49 Idem., I, p.55.
52 Idem., III, p.570.
highest praise.\textsuperscript{54} Master ‘Ali Quli was clearly Babur’s favorite, as he observed him closely and rewarded him frequently for his mastery with mortar (\textit{qazan}).\textsuperscript{55} One of the mortars was even jokily named “\textit{ghâzi}” for its services against Raja Sanga.\textsuperscript{56} Those two men, their assistants and their tools accompanied Babur throughout his conquest of India, even into the very different environment of Bengal.\textsuperscript{57} Not only Rumi war techniques, but also Rumi customs became implicitly emulated when Babur added the word “\textit{ghâzi}” to his \textit{tughra} after the battle, as he emphasized fighting “infidels and Hindus” (\textit{kuffâr u hunûd}), and a chronogram was also coined, calling his endeavor \textit{fath-i pâdishâh-i islâm}.\textsuperscript{58} Babur saw the Ottoman dynasty as the \textit{ghâzis} of Rum, but he also depicted himself as a \textit{ghâzi}, inviting comparisons.\textsuperscript{59}

Probably Babur mentioned Rum more frequently in the missing portion of his memoirs, which also described his allegiance with Tahmasp and his temporary conversion to Shi‘ism. However, several factors combined in downplaying any Rumi connections. First, Rum was geographically remote and comparable to China in its mythical, pre-Islamic layers. Much of Babur’s knowledge about Rum would have been filtered through Timurids of Herat, Qaraqoyunlu and Safavid subjects, who were disinclined to praise the Ottomans. Finally, the new arrangement of powers after 1517 disturbed the patterns of trade and diplomacy which had been established between the Indian rulers and the Arab peninsula. In addition, Ottomans under Selim II were planning alliances against the Safavids with Uzbeks, who were Babur’s perpetual enemies.

\textsuperscript{54} Idem., III, p.686.
\textsuperscript{55} Idem., III, p.646, p.663, p.705, p.711.
\textsuperscript{56} Idem., III, p.716.
\textsuperscript{57} Idem., III, p.783.
\textsuperscript{58} Idem., III, p.691.
\textsuperscript{59} See Muhammad ‘Abdu’l Ghani, \textit{A History of Persian Language and Literature at the Mughal Court [Babur to Akbar], Part II, Humayun} (Allahabad, 1930).
Significantly, in the last part of his memoirs, even after it became clear that Ottomans were a permanent force in Egypt and on the Arab peninsula, Babur avoids any concrete mention of the rulers of Rum except for the somewhat anachronistic ghâziyân-i Rûm, but he still boasts of competent Rumi men in his own retinue, one of whom healed him of an abscess with the help of hot stream, a method explicitly named as currently common in Rum. The presence of an alleged Lodi descendant in the Ottoman domains, if known to Babur, would have soured the relations to an even greater extent.

3. Humayun: neglected greetings

We had seen in the previous section that not only the Lodis of Delhi, but also the Gujarati embassy requested help from the Ottomans to fend off Humayun, Babur’s successor. Even though the Ottoman court provided for fugitive Lodi princes, it also made clear that Ottomans were not willing to engage in any actions against Humayun. Yet, Ottoman fame already spread to India and provoked further desires for cooperation. In addition to the Lodis, the last member of the Timurid dynasty of Herat seems to have found shelter with the Ottoman court. Sher Shah Suri, the Pathan ruler who ruled over India when Humayun was exiled to Iran, purportedly also


61 The disheartened Humayun, who ponders leaving India, is chastised by his general, Dughlat Muhammad Haydar, who points out the disgrace of the last generation of Timurids of Herat. “When Sultan Husain Mirza of Khorasan departed this life, his seventeen sons, in consequence of their disunion, abandoned Khorasan to Shahi Beg Khan, so that to the present day they are objects of reproach to the people, and rejected of all mankind. To add to this disgrace they have all been extinguished; insomuch that within the space of one year, excepting Badi-uz-Zaman who went to Rum, not one remains alive.” Dughlat Muhammad Haidar, N. Elias, E. Denison Ross, tr. and ed., Târîkh- i Rashîdî, (London, 1895), Chap. 113, p.419.
planned to offer an alliance to the Ottomans. According to Manucci, Sher Shah paid for his subjects’ pilgrimage to Mecca, seemingly out of interest in increasing interactions with the Ottomans.

When Humayun was deprived of his throne, he fled to the Safavid court in Qazwin and converted to Shi‘ism. Persian forces subsequently helped him conquer Qandahar, from which he carried out his campaign to conquer India from his brother, Kamran Mirza, who was blinded and subsequently exiled to Mecca. Yet, Humayun was the only Mughal ruler before the eighteenth century who made friendly overtures to the Ottomans without contesting their claim to power. In the course of his own exile, he repeatedly stated his intention was to go to the Ottoman realm or to Mecca. Of course, since this would have constituted a final renunciation of his throne, he remained within Safavid borders, gathering military support at the border and in the Gilan region. Nevertheless, he observed the power of the Ottomans, and he commented extensively on the presence of an Ottoman embassy in the Safavid realm, admiring the verbal skills of the ambassador.

While in Tabriz, Humayun conveyed his greetings to the Ottoman Sultan Süleyman through some Rumi merchants. The sources emphasize that Humayun communicated with them in Turkic, rather than Persian. A letter which is preserved in Ottoman inşâ‘ collections,

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62 Badauni, Muntakhab al-Tawârîkh, I, in particular the chapter on Shah Suri.
63 See N. Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, Bk. II, p.119; of course, much of the narrative is garbled, e.g. Manucci has Akbar take over Gujarat from Shah Bahadur’s putative sons, who never existed!
purportedly by Humayun, proposes a joint attack on the Safavid realm. Given the circumstances, its composition in Chaghatay and the exceedingly obsequious tone, it is most likely a forgery.\(^6^7\) Yet, a letter from the Safavid Shah Tahmasp to the Ottomans (albeit probably unsent) reveals tensions between the two rulers, as it situates Humayun as an example of pride before the fall. It represents Humayun as claiming divine powers and sovereignty over the Ottomans, Safavids and Uzbeks, and it warns Süleyman from trusting him. Clearly, Tahmasp was worried at the prospect of an Ottoman-Mughal alliance and tried to thwart it, to the extent of considering befriending an enemy and betraying an ally.\(^6^8\) Not surprisingly, Tahmasp wavered in his support for the exiled ruler, alternatively viewing Humayun’s presence as flattering and inauspicious. In the Persian tradition of kingship it was almost unheard of for a monarch to regain his throne after having lost it; thus, Humayun was exposed to puns involving his name and the royal humâ bird. Yet, Persian forces subsequently assisted him in the conquest of Qandahar, although not without self-interest. Ultimately, the relations between the Safavid and Mughal monarchs became fairly cordial, and embassies were exchanged in short intervals in 1546, 1548, 1551 and 1553.

Humayun’s polite reception of Seydi ‘Ali Reis and his Ottoman men is even more remarkable given that it occurred in 1556, a short time after the Ottoman-Safavid wars. Since we only have Seydi ‘Ali Reis’ account of the embassy, we cannot assume that the complimentary

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words about the Ottomans as the most powerful rulers of the world were indeed uttered. Yet, we can accept the claim that Humayun enjoyed Seydi ‘Ali Reis’ company. He was pleased with his verses in Chaghatay, although the comparison with ‘Ali Shir Nava’i, who was not only a master poet, but also a friend of Babur’s, can only be understood as courtesy. The letter transmitted through Seydi ‘Ali Reis to the Ottoman court is most likely genuine, although it is difficult to determine whether it was composed before or after Humayun’s death. For almost a century, it remained the only preserved letter between the two dynasties. Yet, Humayun’s benevolent sentiments toward the Ottomans did not encounter resonance; at least one Ottoman source paints a more favorable picture of Babur than of Humayun, perhaps because of the latter’s prolonged sojourn in Iran.

4. Akbar: anachronistic disdains

Paradoxically, the subsequent period of Ottoman-Mughal relations is complex and highly significant, although no embassies are known to have been exchanged under Akbar. While the animosity between Ottomans and Safavids had been prevalent in the previous period, this became a minor matter during the first two decades of Akbar’s reign. Indeed, in 1574, Tahmasp refused to cooperate with the Venetians against the Ottomans and break the agreements of


70 J. Hammer ascribes this letter to Akbar’s reign. See letter 1 in “The Appendix to his Memoir on the Diplomatic Relations between the Courts of Dehli and Constantinople in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries”, Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, II (London, 1830). However, C. Schefer claims that it is a copy of an imperial letter by the rulers of Hindustan which was sent to the court of Sultan Süleyman through “Galatah Seydi ‘Ali Reis Çelebi”, and preserved in the munsha’at of Khvadja Mahmud Lari; see C. Schefer, Chrestomathie persane II (Paris, 1883), p.207.

71 J. Matuz, L’ouvrage de Seyfi Çelebi, Historien ottoman du XVIe siècle (Paris, 1968). See in particular the chapter on Akbar, called Jallal al-Din, and his ancestors. This work will be discussed in section three.
Amasya. Simultaneously, relations between Safavids and Mughals were quite cordial and stable.

Yet Mughal irritation with the Ottomans, implicit in Babur’s writings, becomes quite explicit under Akbar. Probably it could not have been otherwise, given Akbar’s hegemonic claims. The transformation of the Mughal realm into a full-fledged empire, which took place during Akbar’s reign, has attracted the attention of a large number of scholars, but there is no definitive study addressing all major aspects of his hegemonic claims. Consequently, we can only address them in outline.

In the early 1560s, Akbar was close to Sunni theologians and displayed much animosity toward the Mahdavis and Shi’a groupings. His attitude toward Hindus was contradictory, as he encouraged conversion, but also married several Rajput princesses and abolished the *džizya* in 1564, thus making a new *modus vivendi* possible. For several years, he was strongly attracted to the Chishti Sufi order. In 1570, he walked from Agra to Ajmer, the site of Khvadja Mu’în al-Din Chishti’s tomb, to fulfill a vow of gratitude upon the birth of a son. Akbar’s genuine interest in religious matters is well-established, but it is fairly certain that the Indian-centered character of the Chishti order at the time also attracted him, enabling him to express political statements which were not dependent upon another Muslim ruler’s territory. To a large extent, the elevation

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of Ajmer as one of the holiest sites of Islam succeeded in India, being accepted by the masses as well as by Shaykh Badauni, usually a bitter critic of Akbar’s policies, who commented that Ajmer rivaled Constantinople. In reality, Ajmer has many architectural and natural charms, but it cannot be denied that it is completely centered upon the tomb of the Chishti saint; in size or political significance, it cannot be compared to Istanbul.

Yet, Akbar gradually moved away from a prevalently Muslim religious understanding toward pantheism, as his realm expanded onto Gujarat and Bengal, and his realm became an empire rather than a kingdom. In 1579, the mahzar, a special decree, proclaimed Akbar as the sultân-i ‘âdil and the pâdishâh-i Islâm, whose legal opinion had precedence over that of the jurists. Around 1581, a new imperial ideology emerged. Akbar himself was the “perfect man” insân-i kâmil, to be worshipped as a pîr within the context of a new set of rituals, the dîn-i ilâhi. The precise content of the ideology and the rituals has been a matter of debate, but it is certain that the social life of the court was redefined. Sulh-i kull (general peace) took precedence over any real or feigned attempts to promote Islam in India. The shift is exemplified by the marked change in the understanding of the pilgrimage to the Hijaz.

The difference between the Deccan and north India became accentuated. The ruler of the Deccani sultanate in Golconda sent pilgrims to Mecca every year, starting with 1580. The ships carried textiles from Masulipatnam and brought silver and immigrants back to Golconda. When Akbar became another Indian ruler who dispatched a regular caravan of pilgrims to Mecca in the

76 “Ajmer, which in grandeur may vie with Constantinople itself.” See Badauni, Muntakhab al-Tawârîkh, II, p.172.
77 Several historians of an older generation explicitly envision the Mahzar as an open challenge to other Muslim rulers and especially the Ottomans. See S. Nurul Hasan, S. Chandra, ed., “The Mahzar of Akbar’s Reign”, in Religion, State and Society in Medieval India (New Delhi, 2007).
period of 1576-81, he may have been driven by sheer expedience rather than piety: not only were political troublemakers sent to the Holy Cities in time-honored fashion, but also Akbar’s reputation as a Muslim ruler could remain untarnished. It was alleged that the official sending of gifts was discontinued because of the exigencies of campaigns in Panjab and Kabul and the corruption prevalent in Mecca. Purportedly, gifts would be sent in secrecy; in practice, no more gifts were dispatched after 1581.79

Ostensibly, the Mughal decision was due to the ordeal which ladies from the court, including princess Gulbadan, experienced when they performed the *hadj*, starting out in 1577. On their journey, they were accompanied by a Rumi from Aleppo.80 Yet, they were perceived as alien and disturbing by the local authorities, who insisted on expelling them from Hijaz.81 Subsequently, they were also abused by Yemeni authorities. Upon their return, flowers and shawls were spread along the streets to comfort them. For some among the pilgrims, this demonstration of Mughal superiority was convincing, and they became followers of the *dīn-i ilāhī*.82

Of course, this disturbing incident could have been interpreted as a minor occurrence. For centuries, going from India to the Arab peninsula to perform the pilgrimage was mostly reserved for merchants, princes who gave up their political claims,83 bothersome courtiers or occasional

81 This incident has been extensively studied by N.R. Farooqi. See his “Moguls, Ottomans and Pilgrims: Protecting the Routes to Mecca in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries”, *The International History Review*, 10 (2), 1988; and “Six Ottoman Documents on Mughal-Ottoman relations during the Reign of Akbar”, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 7 (1), 1996.
82 “In this year ‘azam Khan returned from Makkah, where he had suffered much harm at the hands of the Sharifs, and throwing away the blessing which he had derived from the pilgrimage, joined, immediately on his return, the Divine Faith.” See Badauni, *Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh*, II, p.398.
ambassadors. Two senior members of the religious establishment had been exiled to Mecca with the embassy of royal ladies, and admonished not to return to India. When they came back in spite of the order, they incurred severe punishment. Toward his own unruly nobles, Akbar was capable of bluffing: when Mirza ‘Aziz Koka, Akbar’s foster brother, left for Mecca on his own accord and sent him a letter in which he criticized Akbar’s religious innovations, ‘Aziz Koka also indicated that he intended to contact the Ottomans and obtain a high post there. Akbar countered in a letter, written in 1593, that he had desired for a long time to dispatch an envoy to the Ottoman court “to strengthen the bonds of love” between the two dynasties; obviously, such an embassy never materialized. Eventually, Akbar was triumphant. As in the case of the Mughal royal ladies, ‘Aziz Koka was disappointed by his stay in Mecca. He returned to the Mughal court after a year, quite impoverished. Badauni alleges that even mentioning the pilgrimage became sufficient to provoke the padishah’s wrath. Pilgrimage was clearly no longer a binding obligation at Akbar’s court, although most of his Muslim subjects may have thought otherwise.

Akbar expressed severe criticism of Ottomans. Upon the death of the Ottoman Sultan Murad II, his son and successor Mehmed executed 19 of his brothers, the eldest of whom was twenty. Hearing of this, Akbar reputedly marveled that sovereignty remained with the Ottomans, and speculated that their rule was intended as subtle means of divine punishment:

84 S.A.A. Rizvi, Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar’s Reign (New Delhi, 1975).
85 M. Haidar, ed. and tr., Mukâtabât-i ‘Allâmî (Inshâ’i Abû’l Fazl), Daftar I (New Delhi, 1998); see letter 12.
86 Badauni, Muntakhab al-Tawârîkh, II, p.246.
87 Badauni attributes this fatwa to Makhdum al-Mulk, who was initially disliked by Akbar. See Badauni, Muntakhab al-Tawârîkh, II, p.203. Badauni primarily blames Shaykh Tajuddin of Delhi for Akbar’s heretical inclinations: “Even the sidjadh (prostration), which people mildly call zamânhos (kissing the ground) he allowed to be due to the Insân-i Kâmil; he looked upon the respect due to the king as a religious command, and called the face of the king Ka’bah-i Murâdât”. Also see Abu al-Fazl ‘Allami, H. Blochmann, H.S. Jarrett, A’in-i Akbarî, I, (Calcutta, 1875-1907), p.181.
“In the end of this month Sultan Murad, the ruler of Turkey, died. Twelve days afterwards, when his son Sultan Muhammad was brought out of the fortress, he was buried, and Sultan Muhammad, from somnolence of understanding and stony-heartedness, put to death his nineteen brothers, the eldest of whom was twenty years old. On hearing of this, His Majesty said, “It is very strange that the river of sovereignty has remained full in his house. If some prosperity attends this malicious and selfish man, it apparently must be as a means of retribution for mankind. He who seeks to follow wisdom does not (try to) comprehend the marvels of destiny.”

In one of his dastûr al-‘amal, Akbar criticized the Ottomans for confiscating the property of those who died heirless (‘ankârî, in Mughal usage), a reproach which remains present in Gujarati sources a century later, although the Mughals were known to exercise this option as well. Akbar’s own legitimacy was contested by two of his noblemen, one of whom, Qutb al-Din, refused to be initiated into dîn-i ilâhi, asking the emperor whether the ruler of Constantinople would accept such a proposal, and emphasizing that they still shared the same faith. Quite displeased, Akbar retorted, asking him if he was on a secret mission for the ruler of Constantinople and suggested that he leave India and establish himself there. However, the quarrel did not have any substantial consequences. Relying upon travelogues and prosopography, most scholars agree the Mughal nobles were conscious that the position of a mansabdâr was preferable to that of their Safavid or Ottoman counterparts, for imprisonment and confiscation of

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88 Abu al-Fazl, Akbarnâma, III, p.239. A hundred years later, Manucci relates an anecdote according to which the mores are inverted: an Ottoman ambassador is outraged at the cruelty of Shah Jahan toward his subjects. Shah Jahan explains that the men of Hindustan are not like those of Rum, and therefore he must resort to harsh measures. The anecdote may carry an implicit compliment for the Ottomans, but it may also have been invented by Manucci to illustrate his complaints about disobedient and indolent servants. N. Manucci, W. Irvine, ed., Storia do Mogor, 1653-1708 (London, 1907), Vol. II, p.423.


91 Quṭbuddin said, “What would the kings of the West, as the Sultan of Constantinople, say, if he heard all this. Our faith is the same, whether a man hold high or broad views.” His Majesty then asked him, if he was in India on a secret mission from Constantinople as he shewed so much opposition; or if he wished to keep a small place warm for himself, should he once go away from India, and be a respectable man there: he might go at once.” See Badauni, Muntakhab al-Tawârîkh, II, p.273.
their goods were rare.\textsuperscript{92} As we had seen, the scholar Badauni, for all his discontent, preferred Ajmer to Constantinople; while grieving Akbar’s heterodoxy, Badauni similarly blamed the Ottoman sultans for the execution of Zayn al-Din of the famous Shi’a ‘Amili family, whose nephew escaped to Lahore and established friendship with the scholar.\textsuperscript{93} He also related the success of Hafiz Kumaki, a scholar from Tashkent, in attracting the attention from the monarchs of his age, and purportedly being offered the office of grand vizier in Constantinople, which he declined.\textsuperscript{94}

Clearly, the Mughals propagated the message to the members of the court that their realm was infinitely preferable to that of the Ottomans. This claim had some basis in reality. While taxation was certainly onerous on most peasants, revenue and land reforms ensured the general prosperity of the territory. The treasury was abundant and territorial conquests made allotments of land to the \textit{mansabdârs} possible. Unlike in the contemporary Ottoman empire, the value of the currency remained stable and being attached to the state brought many undeniable advantages. Intellectually and culturally, there was much creativity.\textsuperscript{95} Many elements, such as Suhrawardi’s illuminationism and Ibn al-‘Arabi’s pantheism, were incorporated in the official discourse\textsuperscript{96} and

\textsuperscript{93} “He is a true Arab and is nephew to that Shaikh Zainuddin of Jabal-i‘Amili who was an ecclesiastical dignitary and religious guide among the Shi‘ahs, and on whom the Sultan of Turkey after much finesse and many stratagems laid hands when he was in Makkah the glorious, and after summoning him to Constantinople, put him to death.” Badauni, \textit{Muntakhab al-Tawârîkh}, III, p.191.
\textsuperscript{94} “After receiving many substantial marks of the imperial favour he set out, by way of Gujarat, on a pilgrimage to the two holy places, Makkah and Madinah, whence he proceeded to Turkey, where he was presented to the Sultan of Turkey, and in that country received ten times more honour and attention than he had received in India, so that even the office of grand vizir of the empire was offered to him. This office he declined, and returned to Transoxiana, where he died.” Badauni, \textit{Muntakhab al-Tawârîkh}, III, p.213.
\textsuperscript{95} M. Athar Ali, “Translations of Sanskrit Works at Akbar’s Court” in \textit{Mughal India, Studies in Polity, Ideas, Society and Culture} (New Delhi, 2006). For a broader picture of this period in India, which includes some reflections on Russian historiography of early modern India, also see E. Vanina, \textit{Ideas and Society, India between the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Centuries} (New Delhi, 2004).
other modes of cultural expression, such as dance, were explored, as the hybrid form of kathak was invented. The door to cooperation with Rajputs and other Hindu elites was open. Akbar’s construction of hegemony proved surprisingly stable in times to come.

Inevitably, Akbar’s religious innovations invited criticism from his neighbors. The conquest of Qandahar by Humayun had displeased the Safavids, who besieged and took the town when Akbar was a minor. The city remained in Safavid hands, as Bayram Khan, Akbar’s mentor, insisted on friendly relations. Embassies were exchanged in 1563 and in 1572. However, the triangle of Ottoman-Safavid-Mughal relations became suddenly expanded with the rise of ‘Abdullah Khan, the ruler of Bukhara, who had his own hegemonic pretenses. In 1582, ‘Abdullah Khan consolidated Bukhara, Samarqand, Tashkent and Balkh into one state, taking Badakhshan from the Mughals in 1584 and Khorasan from the Safavids in 1588.

Because the Safavids were weak and the relations with Ottomans non-existent, the correspondence with the rulers of Transoxiana became even more important for the Mughals; we can see Akbar denying some of his universalist cultural policies and “domesticating” them in order to placate a presumably orthodox Muslim king. While at his court Akbar preferred not even to mention the Ottomans, he speaks of them nevertheless in a few exchanges with ‘Abdullah Khan. In 1572 and 1577, Uzbek ambassadors arrived at the Mughal court, proposing an alliance against the Safavids. Akbar refused, evoking old friendship and the honorable descent of the Safavids. While ‘Abdullah Khan alleged it was necessary to attack them to protect the

97 B.C. Wade, Imagining Sound: An Ethnomusicological Study of Music, Arts and Culture in Mughal India (Chicago, 1998).
pilgrims, Akbar responded that his recent conquest of Gujarat opened a new sea route to the Arabian peninsula, and people from Turan, Khorasan and even ‘Iraq-i A‘djam could use it.99

Silsilât al-Salâtîn, a contemporaneous source from Transoxiana, claimed that Akbar had abandoned Islam and adopted tanâsukhîyya, which led ‘Abdullah Khan to consider an invasion of northern India in 1585-86, sending an ambassador beforehand to ascertain the situation.100 But when ‘Abdullah Khan’s embassy arrived in 1586, Akbar announced his friendliness toward everyone and his faith in Islam. He explained that realm amounted to four-sixth of the world, and he had a firm intention to fight the Farangs on the sea. However, he intended to first assist the Safavids against the treacherous Ottomans, even asking the Uzbek ruler to accompany him in this endeavor. He explained that it was true that the Safavids were Shi‘a, but they were also Sayyids, against whom no wars should be waged.101 In another letter, sent to the ruler of Khandesh, one among the Deccani sultanates, Akbar defined Safavid followers as true descendants of Ottoman noblemen who were graciously freed by Timur. Hence, he argued, no-one should take advantage of Safavid weakness and attack Qandahar.102 A letter by the poet Fayzi, who was sent to the coast as a spy, confirms that the official Mughal interpretation of

100 M. Haidar, Indo-Central Asian Relations from Early Times to Medieval Period (New Delhi, 2004).
101 Abu al-Fazl Allami, H. Beveridge, Akbarnâma III (Calcutta, 1897-1939), p.754f.: “At present when the Sultan of Turkey, regarding the treaties and agreements made by his father and grandfather as non-existent, has looked to the ostensibly feeble condition of Persia, and has, several times, sent his troops there, we shall, passing over the circumstance of the deviation from the highway of Sunnism (sunnat u djama at) and looking only to the relationship (of that dynasty) with the family of the Prophet, proceed thither and help them.” Also see a longer version in M. Haidar, ed. and tr., Mukātabât-i ‘Allāmī (Inshā‘i Abū‘l Fazl), Daftar I (New Delhi, 1998), letter 7.
102 See M. Haidar, Mukātabât-i ‘Allāmī, letter 9, written in 1591. Khandesh was conquered by Akbar several years later.
Safavid ascent to power stressed the debt which they owed to the ancestor of the Mughal house, Timur himself.  

In reality, Akbar had his own designs concerning Qandahar. He had not received the Iranian ambassador in 1583 with much respect. The first formal embassy from Shah ‘Abbas I, in which the ambassador Yadigar Sultan Rumlu aimed at obtaining his agreement to assist the Safavids against the Uzbeks, arrived in 1591 and remained in India for three years, waiting for a decision. Akbar decided not to intervene against the Uzbeks. Instead, he initiated a campaign on Qandahar from 1590-95, only subsequently sending a formal embassy in his name to Shah ‘Abbas and proclaiming that his practice of sulh-i kull prevented him from attacking the Uzbeks. In the same letter, he also criticized the Ottomans implicitly for practicing sectarian warfare. In his response, Shah ‘Abbas informed Akbar that he concluded peace with Ottomans in order to fight against the Uzbeks. In 1605, another embassy was sent from Iran, proclaiming victory over the Ottomans, as the Shah had conquered Azerbaidjan, Shirvan, Nakhchivan and Yerevan. The fortress of Nakhchiwan, we learn from the Safavids, is now in the possession of the “mamâlik-i mahrûsa”, whereas before it was “dar tasarruf-i djamâ’at-i Rûmiyya”, but there is no mention of the Ottoman ruler himself in this context, who elsewhere is defined as “vâlî” of

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103 R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, A.35.
105 Abu al-Fazl, H. Beveridge, Akbarnâma, III (Calcutta, 1897-1939), p.1008-1014.
107 R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents vol. I, A.43, A.44. The text of the letter is in N. Falsafi, Zindagāni-i Shāh-i ‘Abbās-i Avval, IV (Tehran, 1332), p.82. Also of relevance is A.45, in which ‘Isa Khan, the Safavid governor of the province of Gurjistan, pays respect to Akbar, calling him farmān-farmā-i Hind o Mâchîn.
Rum or “pâdishâh”. The ambassador, Mahdi Quli Beg Turkman, brought many gifts which had been captured from the Ottomans, 20,000 of whom were purportedly killed.

We will now turn to the writings of Abu al-Fazl, Akbar’s secretary and the man who brought the new imperial ideology to its apogee. Notably, there is scarcely a mention of China, and the world seems to consist chiefly of Hindustan, Iran, Turan, Iraq and Yemen. While earlier geographers alleged that Hindustan was limited to one or two climes, the Ā’in-i Akbarî clarifies that Hindustan is purported to be in the first, second, third and fourth climates, which also translated into a range of complexion from black to fair, making it inappropriate to claim that all Indians were dark (thus, slave-like). Conspicuously, not only are most major Indian cities under Mughal rule described as belonging to the second climate, but also Mecca and Medina, implying that the Mughal realm partakes of the same auspiciousness. In another anecdote, we learn of a pilgrim returning from Mecca with a manuscript which proclaims a new age in which pilgrimage is superfluous for Indian Muslims. Hence, India was described as occupying all of the important climes of the world. Rum, to the contrary, is relegated only to the fifth clime, together with sundry Frankish cities and Rus, and perhaps comparable to Spain. Istanbul is curtly mentioned under the name of Bizantia, but other cities in Anatolia and the Aegean are given preference to it. The preponderance of Maghribi and Spanish cities indicates a deliberately antiquarian flavor of the geography which reflects the Seljuk times rather than sixteenth-century

\[^{108}\text{Z. Sabitian, Aṣnâd va nāmah-ye târikh va idjtimâʿi, p. 302.}\]
\[^{109}\text{As noted in the introduction, English translation will be used for his work here for reasons of access and contrary to our preference for consulting the original. However, the published version of this thesis will certainly include precise reference to the Persian.}\]
\[^{110}\text{Of course, this description fits the empirical reality of India better than the classical binary logic of “lordly” and “pale” Turks versus “base” and “dark” Hindus, starkly expressed in A. Schimmel’s study. Physical differences between humans are biologically obvious, but “race” an sich is largely a modern social construct; however, we should not ignore the historical specificity of such claims in classical Persian poetry. For discussion of Schimmel’s important article, see the next section.}\]
realities.\textsuperscript{111} For an earlier generation of geographers, such as al-Istakhri, Rum had belonged with the Franks, as they had the same king, and Abu al-Fazl certainly relegates Istanbul to similar marginality.

By another sleight of hand, the Rumi origins of Alexander the Great are downplayed. He is portrayed as the establisher of Marv, Herat and Samarqand, consequently battling Hindu rulers from Ghazna to Kannaaj. Of course, the allusions immediately accessible to an Indian reader lead us to Timur and Mahmud of Ghazna, two of the most illustrious predecessors of Mughal success in India.\textsuperscript{112} Once arrived in India, Alexander is taught knowledge by Brahmans, leading him to ponder the meaning of mortality and eschew conquest, since the realm of the Brahmans is already perfect.\textsuperscript{113} Incidentally, Alexander is further humbled in a remark purportedly made by Akbar himself in which he expressed disbelief that Alexander’s strategy against the Indian king Porus (\textit{Fûr}) and his elephants would have been successful.\textsuperscript{114} The allusion to Akbar’s \textit{sulh-i kull} and its superiority is unmistakable. Even the revered Maulana Rumi himself is complimented in a back-handed way, since the well-known poet is selectively quoted to appear as an idolater.\textsuperscript{115}

In this context, we encounter one of the most common hegemonic methods of denying the rival claims of another ruler. Since India and Anatolia were both relatively new to the fold of Islam, and since their lands contained large numbers of non-Muslims, they were vulnerable to

\textsuperscript{111} Abu al-Fazl, \textit{A’\textsuperscript{in} al-Akbar\textsuperscript{I}}, III, p.93.
\textsuperscript{112} For instance, see the references in A. Anooshahr, “Mughal Historians and the memory of the Islamic conquest of India”, \textit{The Indian Economic and Social History Review}, 43 (3), 2006.
\textsuperscript{113} “‘We have a king for considerations of dignity, not for the administration of justice or law. What use would punishment serve in a land where none is wicked and there is no thought of crime?’ The sagacious monarch [Alexander] was struck by this affecting address and leaving them their freedom, abandoned his project [of conquering India].” See Abu al-Fazl, \textit{A’\textsuperscript{in} al-Akbar\textsuperscript{I}}, III, p.365. Much of this material seems to be derived from the \textit{Shâhnâma}.
\textsuperscript{114} Akbar purportedly said: “The legend of Alexander’s stratagem against Porus does not carry the appearance of truth. A man thus raised to power by the Almighty does not act in this manner especially when he thinks his end drawing near.” Abu al-Fazl, \textit{A’\textsuperscript{in} al-Akbar\textsuperscript{I}}, III, p.237. Of course, in the hands of Ottoman subjects, such as Evliya Çelebi and the poet Ahmed, Alexander’s conquests are treated quite differently.
\textsuperscript{115} Abu al-Fazl, \textit{A’\textsuperscript{in} al-Akbar\textsuperscript{I}}, III, p.379.
accusations of infidelity to an extent which was impossible in prevalently Muslim Uzbek lands, or Iran, which had been ruled by the Abbasids and remained formative in the Muslim cultural identity for centuries. Not coincidentally, both Mughal and Ottoman writers, being anxious to affirm their identity as believers, portrayed the other realm in an antiquated fashion which could lead an uninformed or superficial reader to believe that Rum or Hind were still in the hands of infidels, and that they had not changed in several centuries. It is striking that in Ā’in-i Akbarî, the detailed “gazetteer” of the Mughal empire, no mention is made of a Muslim Constantinople.

Yet, a succinct history of the Ottoman dynasty is given elsewhere in the Akbarnâma, revealing familiarity with Anatolian and Rumelian geography, calling Constantinople “İstambul” and claiming Khorasani origin for the Ottomans, without tying them to a Mongol line, thus implicitly depriving them of Chinggisid ancestry. We are told that Osman’s dynasty started in 688 H., and he reigned for almost 40 years and “died while crossing the Euphrates.” Bayazid Yıldırım is depicted as having conquered Persia, perhaps in order to elevate him as a valiant opponent for Timur. Timur treated Bayazid (qaysar-i Rûm) with perfect kindness, placing him above other princes; still, the khutba was read in Timur’s name in Mecca and Medina.

Emphasis is also placed on the interregnum and the rulers before Selim I, who is depicted as a parricide, and Süleyman, whose main glory consists in taking Cyprus and sundry other remote countries from the Christians. It is noted that his son, the prince Bayazid, fled to

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116 For the Ottoman analogies of this strategy, see the following section.
117 Abu al-Fazl, Akbarnâma, III, p.1014 ff.
118 Even the precise date of the battle of Ankara is given: “Next year he raised his standards for the purpose of subduing Rum and on Friday, 19 Zi-l-hijja, 804 (20th July, 1402), having arrayed his army and adorned the flag of contest with the crescent of victory, he fought near Angora a glorious battle with Ilderim, the Caesar of Rum, and by the secret aides which rode always beside this royal cavalier of the plain of supremacy, the assembled armies of victory and conquest became his stirrup-holders, and the proclamation of success was issued in the name of that world-subduing lord. Ilderim Bayazid was made prisoner and when they produced him at the foot of the lofty throne, he was, out of perfect kindness and chivalry [on Timur’s part], given a seat above the princes.” Abu al-Fazl, Akbarnâma, I, p.206f.
Tahmasp, and that janissaries caused the death of Sokollu Paşa.\textsuperscript{119} Again, Abu al-Fazl systematically eschews some of the more recent information about the Ottomans, which was clearly available to the Mughals, as we know from the \textit{Tārīkh-i Ālfī}, which meticulously notes all important events by year, listing Ottomans at the very end of each year, but not omitting them.\textsuperscript{120} Contemporary references are compressed within a few paragraphs, but repeatedly there is reference to Timur’s campaigns in Anatolia. Abu al-Fazl’s preference was obviously for an Anatolia which had existed before the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul and whose ideological representation could always be justified by pointing out to the venerable character of older geographers in Arabic. The antiquated tone was not unconscious, however; it was intended and carefully fashioned in order not to offend Akbar with inappropriate comparisons.

Elsewhere, in particular toward the end of the \textit{Akbarnāma}, Abu al-Fazl softens his claims, “since the mutual affection of neighbouring nations, such as Persians, Turanians, Turks (Rumis) and Indians is too well known to be described.” All the more so should be the loyalty of those who live in the same location and are bound by the same favors, concludes Abu al-Fazl.\textsuperscript{121} In addition, he informs us that the colloquial meaning of the word \textit{iqlîm} refered to a realm, so Rum, Turan, Iran and India could all be conceived of as separate climates.\textsuperscript{122} Another work from Akbar’s court, entitled \textit{Rauzat al-Tāhirīn}, includes the histories of sundry Indian Hindu rulers as

\textsuperscript{119} Abu al-Fazl concludes: “In order to water my discourse I have gone somewhat out of my way to speak of this dynasty, and have provided a collyrium for the eyes. I return to the narrative of eternal dominion, which is my objective.” See Abu al-Fazl, \textit{Akbarnāma}, III, p.1014f.
\textsuperscript{120} Unfortunately, in the US, only the library of the University of Chicago has purchased the entire set of the \textit{Tārīkh-i Ālfī} by Thattavi, making a complete discussion of this important work impossible at the moment of writing. We consulted the abbreviated one-volume version, edited by A. Davud (Tehran, 1378), which may be the only one in the libraries of continental Europe as well.
\textsuperscript{121} Abu al-Fazl, \textit{Akbarnāma}, III, p.418.
\textsuperscript{122} “The word climate may be taken in two senses, viz., the ordinary sense in which men commonly speak of a tract of country as a climate, such as Rome, Turan, Iran and Hindustan; and the true signification already explained. In the latter meaning India is an aggregate of the first, second, third and fourth climates.” Abu al-Fazl, \textit{Āʿīn al-Akbarī}, III, p.51.
well as those of Bengal, Pegu (coastal Burma), and Sri Lanka and praises those rulers in spite of their “heathenism.” In other words, it seems that when Rum is mentioned specifically, it is mostly deprecated, and it is only lauded in combination with other peoples.

The contemporaneous work of the Safavid geographer Amin Ahmad Razi of Rayy, Haft Iqlîm, is worth mentioning in this context. His understanding of climes is not transparently hierarchical in the same manner as Abu al-Fazl’s, since China, Yemen and Nubia are all placed in the first clime. Yet, notably, almost all of India is presented as being merely one among many countries and cities in the third clime (although Razi’s relatives were among Mughal nobles), with Rum and Constantinople similarly occupying a portion of the fifth clime, admittedly famous, yet at the very edge of that clime, and only a step above the sixth clime, to which belong Ottoman lands north of Constantinople, occupied by “the Slavs and the Bulgars” and the tribes of Gog and Magog. The forth clime is entirely taken up by the Safavid domains, to which belongs Khorasan, defined as the most glorious of lands, ruled at that point by Razi’s uncle. Indeed, we are told that at the time of “Ma’mun, the Abbasid”, people considered Rum to be worth but one third of Khorasan. Unlike Abu al-Fazl, Razi seems to be particularly inspired by Mas’udi. The comparison between Razi’s and Abu al-Fazl’s work teaches us that the concept of climes was not an immutable medieval inheritance; instead, it was malleable, and explicitly political. Its venerable character could be manipulated to include or exclude most recent information about one’s own realm or that of others.

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123 Referred to in the second chapter of M.Alam, The Languages of Political Islam, India 1200-1800 (New Delhi, 2004).
124 For this comparison, see vol. II, which is entirely devoted to the forth clime ruled by the Safavids. Amin Ahmad Razi, Javad Fazil, ed., Haft Iqlîm, 3 vols. (Tehran, 1930).
125 For Evliya Çelebi, belonging to a particular climate seems to be less significant. He assigns India to the third climate and Istanbul to the sixth, along with Christian lands. Hijaz is in the third climate. See S.A. Kahraman, Y. Dağlı, R. Dankoff, Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi (Istanbul, 1996-2007), Vol. X, p.286. According to another version,
Returning to Akbar’s world, we realize that India of his time was not devoid of Rumis. Many of them were mentioned in an adversarial context. One of them was Djarkas, a Rumi servant of the Mughal court who fled to join the Gujarati sultan Muzaffar.\textsuperscript{126} There was a prominent physical reminder of Rumi and Ottoman connections: The mortar guns belonging to Hadım Süleyman Paşa had remained in Gujarat at the fort of Junagadh, and Akbar attempted to transport them to Agra, but he gave them up, since they were too heavy.\textsuperscript{127} Significantly, in one of the best-known chronicles of contemporaneous Gujarat, the \textit{Mir‘ät-i Sikandiri}, an extensive description of the rule of Bahadur Shah is given, yet completely omitting the Ottoman intervention of 1538.\textsuperscript{128}

Rumis continue to appear in the service of Akbar’s adversaries. In central India, the son of the queen of Gondwana had two of his nobles organize the sacrifice by fire of his wives \textit{(jauhar)} after his death. One of the noblemen was a Muslim by the name of Miyan Bhikari Rumi.\textsuperscript{129} When Akbar conquered the fortress of Chittor, he had some of the defenders imprisoned and subsequently brought to Agra. Among them were five Rumis. Akbar threatened to execute them, but eventually placed them in the service of an Armenian, allowing Jesuit

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\textsuperscript{126} Badauni, \textit{Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh}, II, p.332.  \\
\textsuperscript{127} “Next day his Majesty surveyed the fort, and ordered that some large mortars, which were called Sulaimani, should be conveyed to the capital. It appeared that they had belonged to Sultan Sulaiman, the ruler of Rum. He had intended to take possession of the European ports on the borders of Hindustan, and had sent great mortars, along with a numerous army. But as the governors of Gujrat did not assist properly, the troops were distressed for provisions and had to return. Nor were they able to take with them those large guns.” Abu al-Fazl, \textit{Akbarnāma}, III, p.41.  \\
\textsuperscript{128} See Iskandar Manjhu, S.C. Misra, M.L. Rahman, eds., \textit{Mir‘ät-i Sikandiri} (Baroda, 1961). Another shorter chronicle, written by Abu Turab Wali, E. Denison Ross, ed., \textit{Tārīkh-i Gujarāt} (Calcutta, 1909), concentrates on Humayun’s attempt to conquer Gujarat in the 1530s, but it also ignores the Ottoman \textit{intermezzo}.  \\
\textsuperscript{129} Abu al-Fazl, \textit{Akbarnāma}, II, p.330.
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fathers to preach to them and convert them. During the conquest of Sind in 1591, Akbar’s forces faced Rumis, Portuguese and Malabarics in the service of the local dynasty.

Men from Rum are also mentioned in the service of Akbar. Merchants from Rum, Syria, Iran and Turan enthusiastically greeted the Mughal march from Ahmadabad to Cambay and the establishment of Mughal power in Gujarat. Bayram Khan, Akbar’s regent, was born to a father of Qaraqoyunlu origin. He reached his high position through his service to Humayun in Iran, and he must have been one of first people to inform Akbar about Anatolia and the Ottoman realm. Some of his relatives were also Anatolian by origin and came to serve Akbar. Incidentally, the influence of Bayram Khan in Akbar’s life extended after his death, as he was compelled to marry his widow, Salima Sultan Begum, who was much older than he.

Akbar’s queens occasionally also bear the trace of Rum. In Fatehpur Sikri, Akbar’s short-lived capital, roughly across from Khass Mahal, one can see the building called “Rumi Sultana” and popularly associated with one of Akbar’s wives, supposedly a Turk named Ruqiyya Khanum. This claim seems to be folkloric, although it is enshrined in a plaque in front of the

130 “With them came five Turcs, that is to say, Turcs of Europe; for two kinds of Turkish soldiers are found in India, those of Asia, to whom the name of Turc is given, and those of Europe, who are mostly from Constantinople, which has been called the New Rome, on which account they are called Rumes both by Indians and Portuguese, who have corrupted the Greek name Romaios into Rumes.” See P. Du Jarric, C.H. Payne, ed., Akbar and the Jesuits, An Account of the Jesuit Missions to the court of Akbar (New York, 1926), chap. XVII.
131 F.Z. Bilgrami, “The Mughal Annexation of Sind – A Diplomatic and Military History” in I. Habib, ed., Akbar and his India (New Delhi, 1997). Also see I. Ahmad Zilli, The Mughal State and Culture 1556-1598, Selected letters and Documents from Munshaat-i Namakin (New Delhi, 2007), especially letter 112, in which complaint is made about Rumes and Farangis who continuously move in and out of the region.
132 Abu al-Fazl, Ā’in, I, p.161, on the mustering of men.
133 “The merchants of Rum, Syria, Persia and Turan regarded the advent of the Shāhinshāh as a great boon and paid their respects.” Abu al-Fazl, Akbarnāma, III, p.13. For the conquest of Gujarat, see the second chapter in F. Hasan, State and Locality in Mughal India: Power relations in western India, c.1572-1730 (Cambridge, 2004).
134 Given the life-long interest of E.Denison Ross in matters relevant to the Indian Ocean and Rumis, it is significant that he also edited Bayram Khan’s Persian and Turki diwan (Calcutta, 1910). For Bayram Khan’s life, see S.Ray, Bairam Khan’s Life and Times (Karachi, 1992).
135 “He came from Turkey to India in the days of Bayram Khan's supremacy, and profited much by his generosity.” See Badauni, Muntakhab al-Tawārîkh, III, p.85.
building. Yet other sources claim that one of Akbar’s wives may have been an Armenian from the area of Erzurum. Perhaps easier to acknowledge than unruly humans, commodities from Rum are often indicated in official sources. They include textiles (in particular, scarlet broadcloth), yet another kind of fabric put on elephants to greet the ruler of Badakhshan, and silver, as well as horses, pearls and jewels, although they may in fact stem from the Arabian peninsula rather than Anatolia.

5. Jahangir: the man who would not be Selim

Jahangir’s relation with the court culture created by his father Akbar was similarly complex. He was among those responsible for the death of Abu al-Fazl, but he also perpetuated the dīn-i ilāhī, farr-i īzādī and other institutions shaped under Akbar. Before ascending to the throne, Jahangir flirted with conversion to Catholicism, and even after becoming pādishāh, he was known to dismiss shari’a norms, to the delight of some Portuguese Jesuits who were present at his court. Their hopes to convert him never came to fruition, but elements of their culture were integrated by the court; for instance, the imagery of angels and the Virgin Mary in Mughal paintings was quite popular, to the extent of identifying her with Jahangir’s Rajput mother.

136 See R. Nath, “Sources and Determinants of the Architecture at Fatehpur Sikri” in M. Brand and G.D. Lowry, eds., Fatehpur Sikri (Mumbai, 1987). Nath contends that the buildings attributed to Akbar’s wives were all public, and the one known as the “Rumi sultana’s house” was most likely a library.
137 See M.J. Seth, Armenians in India, From the earliest Times to the present day (Calcutta, 1937). The claim that Mumtaz Mahal, for whom Shah Jahan built the Taj Mahal, was Armenian, is commonly made, but it has not been substantiated. It is significant, however, that the association of Rumis with architecture persists, as there are claims that the architect of the Taj Mahal was an Ottoman, Ustad ‘Isa Muhammad Efendi, a pupil of Sinan.
139 G. Bailey, Counter-Reformation symbolism and allegory in Mughal painting (Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1996).
140 See the description of the subah of Gujarat in Abu al-Fazl, Akbarnāma, III, p.13ff.
141 C.B. Asher, C. Talbot, India before Europe (Cambridge, 2006), see p.139 for an example.
Jahangir, as the universal ruler, continued to frequent the shrine of a Hindu ascetic called Gosain Jadrup, suggesting a fundamental equality between Hindus and Muslims as his subjects. He also regularly had a globe depicted in his paintings. The universalist, all-embracing character of his rule was self-consciously emphasized as a contrast to the Ottomans, and in a more implicit way, the Safavids as well.

Yet, even before his ascendance to the Mughal throne, Jahangir, as Prince Salim, cultivated good relations with the Safavid Shah ‘Abbas. In a friendly missive, the Shah criticized him for sending his zubdat al-tudjdjâr, called Khvadja Burdj ‘Ali Nakhchivani, to procure goods and specialties of Iran, without referring him to the Shah. Shah ‘Abbas also mentions a document referring to Timur which he found on a military campaign (dar ân miyân sanadî kih dar zamân-i pâdishâh-i maghfûr-i Timûr-i Gurkân dar bâb-i mahabbat u dostî fî mâ bayn âbâ’ u adjdâd-i mâ [...] wâqi’ bûd) and he sends it to Jahangir as a token of friendship. The warm tone of this letter, aiming at establishing a link between the two men as connoisseurs, marked much of their subsequent interactions. Not coincidentally, historians have also noted the increasing presence of Timur as a legitimizing figure in Safavid historiography at this point.

Jahangir’s court was marked by the prevalence of Persians. For most of his reign, he exchanged embassies with Shah ‘Abbas to the extent unmatched by any other rulers of that

145 Z. Sabitian, Āsnâd va nâmahâ-yi târîkhî va idjtimâ’î, p.274-78. In this letter, Shah ‘Abbas also carefully alludes to good relations between himself and the Sultans of Rum and the Europeans (“chûn fî mâ bayn-i mâ u salâţn-i Rûm u Farang qavâ’îd-i mahabbat u dostî istîhkhâm-i tamâm darâd”).
146 S. Quinn, “Timurid Legitimacy in Safavid Chronicles”, Iranian Studies, 31 (2), 1998. For an extended version of Quinn’s argument, see her Historical Writing during the Reign of Shah Abbas (Salt Lake City, 2000), p.87ff.
147 A. Husain, The Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir (New Delhi, 1999).
time. Older historiography, which treated their gifts merely as splendid trifles and toys for the mighty, remained on the surface of the matter. Through a meticulously planned exchange of rare objects, which included golden cups, animals and astrolabs, the two monarchs competed in ingenuity and maintained the pretense that they jointly ruled over the entire world, as they were able to acquire them. Accordingly, the letters and the frequent embassies have been a rich source for the material culture and art history of the period, as they often amount to long lists of presents.

In one of the early Mughal-Safavid interactions, a merchant called Kamran Beg was instructed by Jahangir to acquire horses and precious commodities from ‘Iraq-i A‘djam. In turn, the Safavid Shah sent his own merchant, Hadjdji Ni‘mat Qummi, on a mission to India to procure spices and other valuable articles. In another letter, the Shah specifically enumerates the commodities he desires: amla (myrobalan tree), rîsha-i zandjabîl (ginger root), tukhm-i birindj-i Bangâla, indigo as well as indigo planters, a horticulturalist, some dye makers and Indian gao-mesh (buffaloes) out of whose horns bows can be made, as well as wagon drawn by them. Shah ‘Abbas reciprocated with the offer of a crystal watch made by Franks. Along with another missive sent in 1615 through a Gilani merchant, the Shah sent two agate rosaries, one of which had been brought from Mecca. The Safavid implication was obvious: there was no need for Jahangir to address the Sharifs of Mecca or even the Ottomans, for everything he

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149 See R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents on Indo-Persian Relations 1500-1750, vol. 1 (Karachi 1979). For the correspondence between Jahangir and Shah ‘Abbas, we were also forced to refer primarily to this work, except where noted below. See letters J.60.1, J.62, J.78.
150 Idem., I, J.51.
151 Idem., I, J.56.
152 Idem., I, J.60.
needed could be procured in Iran. One Muhammad Hasan Çelebi, evidently of Anatolian roots, was subsequently sent from India to Iraq on a purchasing mission for Jahangir. The rubies which the latter requested were taken from the shrine at Najaf, and then adorned with Timur’s name and put into a box made by European and Persian craftsmen. Hasan Çelebi proceeded onto “diyar-i Rûm” and acquired additional valuable articles there. This provoked some displeasure from the Shah, who reiterated that anyone commissioned to make purchases for Jahangir should turn to him first. In a subsequent letter written in 1616, Shah ‘Abbas emphasized his victory over Ottomans who attempted to invade Azerbaidjan and failed. In general, the tone was warm to the point of intimacy between the Shi’a Safavids and the Sunni Mughals.

Yet the style and content of the letters obscure the changing political realities of the decade. Whereas the early years of Shah ‘Abbas’ rule were marked by defeats of 1590 and the Ottoman annexation of Georgia, Tabriz and Shiraz (although gains were made against the Uzbeks and the Russians), the tendency was reversed in 1603-5, when Safavid forces entered Georgia and Azerbaidjan, triumphing over the Ottomans in 1605, while the Ottoman territories in Syria and Anatolia were affected by rebellions. Yet the peace of 1612 established some measure of friendly relations, as the Safavids were willing to support the Ottomans against

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154 Idem., I, J.69.
155 Idem., I, J.70.
156 Idem., I, J.71. The text of the letter is also available in Falsafi, Zindagâni-i Shâh-i ‘Abbâs-i Avval, IV, p.293-4, alluding to excessively high prices paid by the ambassador to Rumi merchants and Europeans.
158 For those years, see F. Husein, Османо-Сефевидская война 1578-1590 по материалам трудов овманского летописца Ибрахима Рахимзаде (Baku, 2005) and especially the extended edition of B. Kütükoğlu, Osmanlı-Iran Siyâsî Münâsebetleri (Istanbul, 1993). The monograph by E. Eberhard, entitled Osmanische Polemik gegen die Safaviden im 16. Jahrhundert nach arabischen Handschriften (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1970), remains one of the best analyses of Ottoman anti-Safavid discourses.
Cossack raids and not instigate Kurdish rebellions, returning to the boundaries of 1555.\textsuperscript{159} Shah 'Abbas had also carefully restrained the influence of the Qızılbaş, partially through internal migration.\textsuperscript{160} In the 1620s, his sphere of power extended into the northern silk-producing provinces of Mazanderan and Gilan, as well as the coastal region of Lar, Hormuz and Bahrain which allowed control over the Persian Gulf. Hormuz was taken in 1622 and Baghdad 1623. Under Safavid patronage, Isfahan was made into a capital more glorious than Qazwin or Tabriz had been.\textsuperscript{161}

The glory of the Safavids was apparent to outsiders. Pietro Della Valle, the well-known contemporary traveler, may have composed his letters with the benefit of hindsight, but the majesty of Shah 'Abbas was clear to him as it was to his contemporary, the Englishman Thomas Roe, whom we will mention more extensively below. Della Valle was present at a gathering of ambassadors in Isfahan. The embassies came from India, the Ottoman empire, Spain, and Moscow. Della Valle shows how some of the underlying tensions manifested themselves, frequently in an almost comedic manner,\textsuperscript{162} making his testimony invaluable and different from official correspondence. Surprisingly, this amusing account has not yet been discussed in scholarship.

Shah 'Abbas initially made the ambassadors wait\textsuperscript{163} and then only honored the Mughal ambassador, Khan-i 'Alam.\textsuperscript{164} The Spanish ambassador started yelling loudly and refused to join

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\textsuperscript{160} J.A. Perry, “Forced Migration in Iran during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries”, \textit{Iranian Studies}, 8 (4), 1975.
\textsuperscript{162} P. Della Valle, \textit{Viaggi di Pietro della Valle, Volume Secondo: La Persia} (Brighton, 1843), letter VI, from Isfahan.
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him, since he considered him a merchant, claiming that most Indian ambassadors actually were such. Yet, this was a mistake, as Khan-i ‘Alam’s aristocratic lineage was quite illustrious and his embassy probably among the most pompous in the early modern period.\textsuperscript{165} He had brought numerous ox-carts from India, accompanied by musicians and elephants, and it took a considerable amount of time for his retinue to pass through the streets. In the subsequent evening reception, the Ottoman ambassador was seated to the left side of the Shah, in honorable, yet somewhat inauspicious proximity. Below him was sitting a relative of the sherif of Mecca, while the Indian ambassador was directly to the right of Shah ‘Abbas. After the dinner, the ambassadors went to the carvansarai, where Shah ‘Abbas offered Venetian paintings and mirrors to the Indian ambassador, who disdained them. Shah ‘Abbas then playfully punched the Indian ambassador several times. Consequently, perhaps lubricated by wine, Russian ambassadors took advantage of the mirth, and attacked the Ottoman ambassador, who almost fell, losing his fine turban, and seemed rather embarrassed at the informality of the occasion.\textsuperscript{166} The jovial atmosphere quickly dissolved into squabbles.

During the following festivities, the Indian ambassador refused to view the military display and the arquebusiers, alleging that the men of his own realm were superior.\textsuperscript{167} Shah

\textsuperscript{164} “Il re […] voleva in quella entrata far l’onor maggior all’Indiano, giacché la festa era per lui [...] egli solo con l’Indiano presso alla porta della città fece alquanto colazione, e poi, pur solo con lui [...] senza accompagnamento alcuno se ne entro ed andò in palazzo.” (Emphasis mine), idem., p.19.
\textsuperscript{165} “L’ambasciador di Spagna [...] si prese collera e comincio a gridar [...] dicendo che egli non voleva andare accompagnando quel mercante, e intendeava dell’ambasciadore indiano, perché la maggior parte degl’Indiani son tali.” Idem., p.19.
\textsuperscript{166} “L’ambassador turco, egli ancora, quatunque intonatissimo, come poco gradito, andava pure spesso strapazzato alquanto in mezzo alla folla, anzi una volta, nell’uscir dalla casa della zecca, con occasione di una gran folla che fecero i Moscoviti [...] lo spinsero ed urtarono di maniera, che non bastarono tutti gli uomini suoi a tenerlo che non andasse per terra, cadendogli il turbante, con risa di tutti i circostanti, e non senza molte maraviglie e borbottamenti suoi, di queste indecenze, tanto contrarie alle natia sua, e delle sua nazione seriissima gravità.” Idem., p.27.
\textsuperscript{167} “Ambasciadore indiano, sprezzando, secondo il suo costume, le cose del re, ripose che non voleva venire, e che bastava averle vedute una volta [...] sdegnato alquanto dei tanti disprezzi dell’Indiano, licenziò [...] gli archibugieri, e fece anche disfare il di seguito le luminarie e tutto l’apparato.” Idem., p.29.
‘Abbas hinted that he intended to conquer Qandahar (after having failed in 1606), and he also refused Spanish and Ottoman demands of land cessation, claiming that he conquered Bahrain and Bandar Abbas as possessions of the ruler of Hormuz, who used to be the vassal of the Safavids. Another meeting followed, to which only the Indian and the Ottoman ambassador were privy. In a consequent display, the Shah proudly showed the Indian ambassador several artillery pieces acquired in the conflict with the Ottomans, but he became quiet when the Ottoman ambassador turned his attention intensely toward them. Indeed, the Ottoman ambassador was dispatched without many concessions, because Shah ‘Abbas was aware of the Habsburg threats to the Ottomans, having received Spanish and Venetian suggestions concerning an anti-Ottoman alliance.

The Indian ambassador was also dissatisfied, because Shah ‘Abbas prohibited his subjects from going to India. Similarly, Shah ‘Abbas did not want Sistani horses to be taken to India. Few of these annoyances would have been obvious from the formal Persian diplomatic correspondence, which casts a very different light on the embassy, as from the letters alone the relation between the ambassador and the Shah seems to be exceedingly cordial. It is not only

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168 He addressed the Spanish ambassador, concerning the Mughal, with the following words: “Vedete l’ambasciador d’India che ivi sta? ma se il suo re, sciah Selim non mi rende Candahar, vedrà quel che farò” Idem., p.34. According to Thomas Roe, the Safavid ambassador to India told him that Shah ‘Abbas considered conquering Aleppo as well.

169 “Il re, mentre l’ambasciador turco andava una volta passeggiando coi suoi figliuoli in disparte, mostrò all’ambasciadore indiano certe artiglierie che stauo nella piazza, tolta già ai Turchi nelle guerre passate, e gli raccontava come e dove le aveva pigliate: ma quando poi l’ambassador turco tornò verso di lui, pose silenzio a quel racconto.” Idem., p.36.

170 “Solo so, che il re proibi con bando pubblico, che nessun Persiano andasse in India con lui, sapendo che l’ambasciador secretamente trattava di condurne molti, dando ed offrendo loro denari assai, perché il suo Sciah Selim non ha soldati migliori, e che più stimi che i Persiani, de quai perciò sempre ne ha buon numero dei rifuggiti di Persia, che o per migliorarsi di fortuna, essendo qui gente dozzinale, o per delitti fatti, temendo qui del re, vanno in India a ricovrarsi, e Sciah Selim gli accoglie molto bene [...] l’Indiao ancora e partito con poca soddisfazione, e non manca qui dica, che tra loro in breve sarà guerra.” Idem., p.42.

immortalized in several depictions, but Khan-i ‘Alam received many praises from Shah ‘Abbas, even a personal letter, and it is known that he remained in the Safavid realm for a few years.

The official Mughal policy toward the Safavids is summarized in a famous miniature, depicting the two monarchs in a close embrace while standing on a lamb and a lion. Graciously, in this depiction, Shah ‘Abbas is granted Iran and Rum as well, so that he stands at the shores of the Mediterranean. Yet, his feet rest upon the lamb while Jahangir’s remain on the lion. Notably, he is also depicted as smaller and darker in an inversion of the traditional Persian imagery of Hindus. Along similar lines, an anecdote, told during the times of Aurangzeb, depicts the Mughal ambassador as conceding that Shah ‘Abbas was the greatest king in the world, but concluding that his own ruler was God on earth.

Yet, a set of fantastic letters reveals the inner world of Safavid and Mughal scribes, not devoid of a sense of competition between the two realms. One of them includes threats to Shah ‘Abbas and indicates a future Mughal attack not only on Qandahar, but also Fars, Iraq and Mazandaran, telling the Shah that he will be extradited to the Mughals by the Ottoman sultan in case he flees to Anatolia. The same motif is varied in the response, with the Shah threatening to send 30,000 men to India and advising the Mughal emperor against seeking refuge with the Khâqân of China. Those letters could be classified as a literary exercise, as opposed to the epistolary practice with real political implications (defined as tarassul, or more frequently, inshâ’ proper). Yet they also tell us much about the pride which the scribes felt in their respective

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174 See R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, I, J.54 and J.55, respectively.
domain, and the hegemonic competition between the two realms which purported to view themselves as the center of the world, yet could never escape the invisible presence of the Ottomans. As much was implied when in 1620, Shah ‘Abbas dispatched the embassy of Zaynal Beg, whose mission was to request the returning of Qandahar to the Safavids. Subtly hinting at his recent good fortune and military prowess, Shah ‘Abbas also sent a few gifts granted to him by the Ottomans upon peace conclusions.\(^{175}\)

Qandahar was not the only contested area. In several letters sent in the 1610s, Shah ‘Abbas asked Jahangir to be lenient toward Qutb Shahi and other Deccani ruler, even purportedly offering Persian territory in exchange for theirs. In his capacity as the Shi‘a ruler whom they viewed as their caliph, Shah ‘Abbas stressed his prerogative to reward them or punish them.\(^{176}\) Jahangir subsequently boasted of incursions into the territory of Ahmadnagar, controlled by Malik Ambar, his great enemy.\(^{177}\)

Deccani rulers were certainly not pleased with harmonious relations between the Mughals and the Safavids. A purported embassy from the Ottomans at the Mughal court (which is not attested in any other sources) was mentioned in a letter from the court of Bijapur to the Safavids. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the rulers of Bijapur had also claimed to descend from an Ottoman prince; however, similarly to other Deccani sultanates, they also professed a loyalty to Shi‘ism and the Safavids. Requesting Safavid assistance in the case of a Mughal attack, Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II of Bijapur referred to the Safavid embassy to Jahangir in ca. 1609, when purportedly Shah ‘Abbas’ ambassador was dismissed, while “an insignificant

\(^{177}\) Idem., I, J.78.
envoy from Rum received reception and honor more than it was due to him.”

Given Jahangir’s strong predilection for Persians at this point in time, the incident described is quite unlikely, and this embassy could be yet another fabrication. European contemporaries enjoyed imagining an open confrontation to the disadvantage of the Ottomans, and the story told by contemporary English traveler Terry also illustrates the contentious nature of such comparisons.

“The great Mogul imagines all the Kings, nations and people of the world to be his slaves and vassals. And therefore when the Grand Signior, or Great Turk, sent an Ambassador to the Great Mogul, who came unto him attended with a great train and retinue; and after, when he was ready to take his leave, desired of the Mogul to know what he should say to his master when he was returned; tell thy master, said the Mogul, that he is my Slave, for my ancestor conquered him.”

The Mughal break with the Safavids occurred in 1622, when Shah ‘Abbas’ armies conquered Qandahar which Jahangir had left exposed in order to fight the rebellion of his son, Prince Khurram, the future Shah Jahan. After the Safavid conquest of this area of southern Afghanistan, several letters from Shah ‘Abbas detailed his justification. In the fathnâma from June 1622, Shah ‘Abbas finally announced his advance against the Portuguese in Hormuz as well as his victory in Qandahar and his lenience toward fleeing Indian noblemen. Indeed, the Safavid had expanded southwest and southeast to their maximal extent. An elegant, yet bitter response came from Jahangir. Henceforth, the Shah was no longer mentioned as “brother” in

178 In a collection of letters called Makâtib-i Zamâna-i Salâtîn-i Safavîya, (Asafiya Library, Hyderabad, ms no.1214), see N. Ahmad, Medieval India, A Miscellany I (Aligarh, 1969) and M. Siraj Anwar, Mughals and the Deccan, Political Relations with Ahmadnagar Kingdom (New Delhi, 2007). For the topic in general, also see M.A. Nayeem, External Relations of the Bijapur Kingdom (A.D. 1489-1686) (Hyderabad, 1974) which does not refer to any letters between Ottomans and Bijapur.
180 Prince Khurram had asked Shah ‘Abbas for help and received the admonition to act as a good son.
Jahangir’s memoirs, and embassies were dispatched to the Uzbeks in Transoxiana with a very different tone, offering assistance against the Safavid “heretics”.

Shah ‘Abbas I also took unusual steps, writing a cordial letter to the Ottoman Sultan Osman II (1618-22), suggesting an alliance between the Ottomans and the Persians against the infidels (i.e. the Spanish and the Portuguese). Another Safavid letter to the Ottomans, presumably dispatched, still stresses the common need to fight against the Portuguese and alleges that the conquest of Qandahar occurred because of ancient Safavid claims and because of Jahangir’s negligence to respond to the Safavids in due time, in spite of the great love and friendship between the two royal houses (ravābit-i mahabbat u dostī kih fī mā bayn īn du silsila-i rāfī′a [...] būd).†83 Perhaps the first version of the letter was not sent as Shah ‘Abbas’ was informed of the deposition of the Ottoman Sultan Osman II in May 1622 and the Anatolian rebellion of Abaza Mustafa Paşa, which surely must have pleased the Safavids. However, if Ottomans were ever inclined to conclude an alliance with Shah ‘Abbas, his conquest of Baghdad early in 1623 dissuaded them.

Anxious to prevent an alliance between Ottomans and Mughals, Shah ‘Abbas sent a depiction in 1625 of his conquest of Baghdad to Jahangir, along with a white falcon.†84 Older patterns of apparent peace and harmony seemed re-established two years later. Jahangir’s letter from 1627, shortly before his death, in which he avoided the mention of Qandahar, congratulated the Shah on his conquest of Baghdad and celebrated his own campaigns in Bengal and the Deccan.†85 In his following letters to Jahangir and his influential Persian wife, Nur Jahan, Shah

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†83 R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, II, Ott. 382-384, also see A. Nava’i, Shâh ‘Abbâs, Madjmû’a-i Aasnâd u Makâtabât (Tehran, 1368) III, p.217ff.
†84 R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, I, J.94.
†85 Idem., I, J.95.
‘Abbas mentioned his conquest of Georgia and the success in repelling Ottoman forces which tried to recapture Baghdad.\textsuperscript{186}

Jahangir had sent letters to the Uzbeks from 1622-25, suggesting an anti-Safavid alliance and blaming Shah ‘Abbas for religious difference and fanaticism (\textit{mukhâlafat-i madhâhib va ta’assub}), presenting himself as the defender of the \textit{sunna}. He received a favorable response from Imam Quli Khan, who asked him to keep the water passage to Mecca open.\textsuperscript{187} As we saw, starting with 1582, the Uzbek ruler ‘Abdullah Khan had consolidated Bukhara, Samarqand, Tashkent and Balkh into one state, taking Badakhshan from the Mughals in 1584 and Khorasan from the Safavids in 1588. However, after his death, the Shaybanids were replaced by the Ashtarkhanids, who started out from a base in Khorasan, but retreated in 1599. Fragmentation ensued; when Vali Muhammad stepped down in 1611, many Uzbeks left for India. Imam Quli Khan ruled henceforth over Bukhara, leaving Balkh to his son, Nazir Muhammad, who disdained anti-Safavid plans and instead dispatched an embassy to Shah ‘Abbas. Uzbek political configurations will be of significance when treating the 1640s.

The first known Ottoman letter to Jahangir, or indeed to any Mughal ruler, reacted to the conquest of Baghdad. It was sent in 1625 after the crisis of deposition of Ottoman Sultan Mustafa I and succession of Murad IV, who was still a young boy. The new Sultan asked Jahangir to convey an Uzbek prince to his destination and assured him of Ottoman assistance against Shah ‘Abbas, should he attack Indian territories.\textsuperscript{188} In the following section, we will address a flattering \textit{qasîda} to Jahangir’s honor, composed by the renowned Ottoman poet Nef‘i

\textsuperscript{186} Idem., I, J.96-98.
\textsuperscript{187} Idem., II, Tx.342-44.
\textsuperscript{188} Idem., II, Ott.385. For reasons of differing accessibility, both editions of Feridun will be given whenever possible, see Feridun, \textit{Münse ‘ât}, II (Istanbul, 1265), p.142-3 or Feridun, \textit{Münse ‘ât}, II (Istanbul,1274), p.234-5.
and probably dispatched with the embassy, as some of its language is similar to that of the letter. The letter itself includes a long list of epithets adorning Jahangir, full eight lines in the printed version, starting “.alişan-i sâmî, mekân-i Cemşid nişîn [...] mesned nişîn-i ekâlim-i Hindustân, fermânfermây-i Kulzüüm ve râyân-i ma‘delet ü şevket-nümâyân, hâmîy-i memâlik-i dîn perver, sâlik-i mesâlık-i ‘adalet-güster-i ráfî’ râyân-i musalmânî, hâris-i haytay-i gîtî [...] mefâhir-i cihândârî, vâsîtay-i tulû’-i emn ü imân [...] hâtîm-i kişver-küşâ [...] nizâmu’l-devlet ve ‘l-sultanat ve ‘l-şevket ve ‘l-şân-i Hindustân, pâdişâh-i Selîm Hân, là zâla hîyâmu saltanatihi.”

The legal and religious authority of Jahangir is never questioned, although the usage of the name Selim by the Ottomans seems unfortunate, giving his dislike of it, of which we will hear more below. Ottomans were not aware of Jahangir’s antipathy to the name and their usage of the name “Selim” may have been viewed as a subtle attempt to express common purpose, because it had also been borne by two Ottoman sultans.

The Ottoman letter initially concentrates on modest demands, describing the travails of Ay Muhammad, the uncle of the current ruler of Bukhara, who, after passing through memâlik-i rafz u ilhâd, arrived at the Ottoman court (pişgâh-i sarîr-i hilâfet-i bâhremiz). Although it clearly defines the Safavid lands as “the lands of heresy” the letter somewhat cautiously alludes to advantages accruing from a joint attack on the Safavids, stating that if Jahangir joined the Ottomans in attacking Shah ‘Abbas (in a convenient rhyme, called the eserrü ’n-nâs), it would be to the advantage of both realms and the Safavids would undoubtedly be destroyed (nâ-peydâ).

189 Nef‘i’s poetic virtuosity recommended him for this task; his birth in Erzurum, a center for caravans coming from India and Iran, and his facility in Persian were also to his advantage. See section three, chapter six. Note also that we will use the spelling qasîda when a poem is composed in Persian, but kasîde when it is in Ottoman.

190 See below for a discussion of his birthname.
In spite of Jahangir’s previous efforts to coordinate a joint attack on Safavids with the Uzbek rulers, the Ottoman embassy did not meet with a positive response, and it seems he did not even reply to it. Of course, Ottomans were in little position to offer tangible help, given Cossack incursions along the Black Sea coast, struggles in Iraq and the rebellions in the Crimea, Anatolia, as well as Egypt and Yemen, which even led to the permanent loss of that province. Indeed, as long as there were difficulties in Transylvania, Murad IV could not conquer Baghdad permanently, even after the death of Shah ‘Abbas in 1629, and he almost lost his throne in 1632.

Accordingly, Jahangir only rarely mentions the Ottomans in his memoirs. Yet, as in the case of Akbar, this is not an unconscious omission or ignorance. Jahangir’s antipathy for his birthname, which he shared with Ottoman sultans, is well-known (chûn pâdishâh shudam, ba khâṭir rasîd kih nâm-i khvâd râ taghayyur bâyad dâd, kih în ism mahal-i ishtibâh ast ba qayâsira Rûm). To his displeasure, many foreign travelers mentioned that his name was the same as that of the Ottoman Sultan Selim I, the father of Süleyman Kanuni, and Persian and Ottoman sources also generally know him under the name of Shah Selim. Since Jahangir’s relations with Shah ‘Abbas were exceedingly cordial before the loss of Qandahar, it is fairly certain that he dispatched monetary support to the Safavids to assist them in the wars against Ottomans.

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191 The memoirs of Jahangir have been translated three times into English, the first time by D. Price (1829). The most recent translation is particularly attractive, as it adds many illustrations and notes. See Jahangir, Thackston, tr. and ed., The Jahangirnama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India (New York, 1999). However, in this dissertation, the most commonly used translation by A. Rogers and H. Beveridge, known as the Tûzûk-i Jahângîrî (London, 1909-14), will be quoted for reasons of accessibility, but the Persian edition by M. Hashim, Jahângîrnâma, Tûzûk-i Jahângîrî (Tehran, 1359), will also be referenced.

192 Tûzûk-i Jahângîrî, Chap. I: “When I became king it occurred to me to change my name, because this resembled that of the Emperor of Rum. An inspiration from the hidden world brought it into my mind that, inasmuch as the business of kings is the controlling of the world, I should give myself the name of Jahangir (World-seizer) and make my title of honour (laqab) Nuruddin, inasmuch as my sitting on the throne coincided with the rising and shining on the earth of the great light (the Sun).” Rogers, Beveridge, p.3. For the Persian, see Hashim, Jahângîrnâma, p.2.

193 Referring to the embassy of Muhammad Riza Beg: “and thereby it is gathered his massage is for some ayde in mony agaynst the Turke, in which kind he often finds liberall succor [from the Mughal government].” See W. Foster, The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe at the Court of the Great Mogul 1615-1619 (London, 1899), II, p.296.
his memoirs, Jahangir reminisces explicitly upon the Ottomans only on few occasions. One of them occurs in 1608, when he received a portrait which allegedly depicted Timur and which had been sent to Timur by the Christian (Byzantine) ruler of Constantinople to congratulate him on his defeat of Bayazid Yıldırım. Although he noted that there could be no better gift (hîch tuhfa pesh-i man bihtar az ḵîn nakhvâhad bûd), the portrait did not please the Mughal pâdishâh, as he could not reconcile it with his own features (mushâbahatî nadârad).\(^{194}\)

In that same chapter, Jahangir relates his encounter with one Aqam Haji from Transoxiana, who purported to be an ambassador from the Ottomans. However, Jahangir rejected his pretenses and displayed astonishment, since, the Mughal pâdishâh alleged, “from the time when the Sâhib-i Qurân conquered Rum and when Yıldırım Bayazid, who was the ruler of that place (hâkim-i ândjâ), fell alive into his hands [...] and in spite of such grace (bâ vudjûd-i chûnîn ihsânî) [granted by Timur to the Ottomans in restoring them to throne], until now no-one from those lands of the Caesars (az djânîb-i Qayâsira) has come [to India] nor have they sent an ambassador.”\(^{195}\) Jahangir pretended that the letter itself was in an unreadable jibberish (kitâbat-i madjhûlî), probably alluding to Ottoman and Uzbek Turkî predilections.\(^{196}\) In this respect, the

\(^{194}\) “On the 6th of the same month Muqarrab Khan sent a picture (with a report) that the belief of the Franks was this, that the picture was that of Timur. At the time when Yıldırım Bayazid was taken prisoner by his victorious army, a Nazarene, who at that time was ruler of Constantinople, had sent an ambassador with gifts and presents in token of submission and service, and an artist who had been sent with the ambassador took his likeness and brought it away. If this story were true, no better gift could be presented to me. But as the picture had no resemblance to any of his descendants I was not satisfied of the truth of the statement.” Rogers, Beveridge, Tûzuk-i Jahângîrî, p.153f. For the Persian, see Hashim, Jahângîrnâma, p.88.

\(^{195}\) Translation mine; for another translation see the following footnote.

\(^{196}\) “A man of Mawarā'ā-n-nahr, of the name of Aqam Haji, who for a long time had been in Turkey and was not without reasonableness and religious knowledge, and who called himself the ambassador of the Turkish Emperor, waited upon me at Agra. He had an unknown writing (? illegible letter [question mark in the original English translation]). Looking to his circumstances and his proceedings none of the servants of the Court believed in his being an ambassador. When Timur conquered Turkey, and Yıldırım Bayazid, the ruler of that place, fell alive into his hands, he, after levying tribute and taking one year's revenue, determined to hand back into his possession the whole of the country of Turkey. Just at that time Yıldırım Bayazid died, and Timur, having handed over the kingdom to his son Musa Chelebi, returned. From that time until now, notwithstanding such favours, no one had
embassy sent out by the Ottomans in 1525, headed by an Uzbek and with a letter written in
Ottoman, may have encountered similar doubts on Jahangir’s part. Yet, this comment is
somewhat disingenuous, and it tells us more about Jahangir’s pro-Safavid sentiments than about
the actual presence of Rum and Rumis in his realm, or even about his Turkî skills.

As we had seen with Akbar, Rum and Rumis were denigrated on an ideological level, but
quite present in the Mughal world. Jahangir’s court was located in Lahore, facilitating a shorter
route to western Asia through Sind, and “baffitas, stuffes, lawnes [muslin], indico” were
exported to the Ottoman realm through Lahori Bandar near Thatta.\(^{197}\) It is attested that in 1623 a
group of Ottoman merchants arrived in Lahore, seeking restitution for 85,000 riales de a ocho
which had been taken away from them by English pirates. The divan informed them that the
Mughal emperor had no concern in this matter, since the incident happened between people who
were foreign subjects.\(^{198}\) Perhaps Jahangir did not view them as useful even at that time, since we
saw that his predilection had been for acquiring Rumi commodities through Iranian mediation, as
in 1615, when he received a rosary from Mecca through Shah ‘Abbas, or through sending his
own agents.\(^{199}\) Yet, Ottoman subjects, traveling between the two empires, were clearly present in
his capital.

\(^{198}\) M.A. Ali, “‘International Law’ of Conventions Governing Conduct of Relations between Asian states, Sixteenth
\(^{199}\) “I sent off Muhammad Husain Chelebi, who understood the purchase of jewels and collecting curiosities, with
money to go by way of Iraq to Constantinople and buy and bring for the Sarkar curiosities and rareties. For this
purpose it was necessary that he should pay his respects to the ruler of Iran.” Rogers, Beveridge, \textit{Tûzuk-i Jahângîrî}, p.237.
Mughal linkages with Anatolia and Turkic languages are fairly abundant. It is known that Jahangir employed his *Turki* skills with Europeans if necessary, and according to one of them he spoke the language fluently.\(^{200}\) Italian, Portuguese and other artisans who spoke Anatolian Turkish were present at his court\(^{201}\) and there was a flow of information concerning the Ottomans and Safavids through the channel of Persian immigrants, many of whom were merchants.\(^{202}\) Thomas Coryat, an eccentric Englishman who walked across Eurasia, mentions a religious disputation between himself and an Indian Muslim who knew Ottoman, and who also learned Italian after having been abducted from a ship which was sailing between Istanbul and Alexandria.\(^{203}\)

These links were even more immediate among those closest to Jahangir: Mirza ʻAbd al-Rahman Khan, the son of Bayram Khan, whose roots were in eastern Anatolia, and his successor in the rank of *Khân-i Khânân*, owned three ships in Surat. The salaries of the pilots were paid by Mirza Khan directly, and the ships employed for the benefit of pilgrims.\(^{204}\) He also spoke fluent Anatolian Turkish.\(^{205}\) Rajput-born Maryam al-Zaman, Jahangir’s mother, also owned a ship which sailed into the Red Sea and which was captured by the Portuguese in spite of a valid

\(^{200}\) This is according to William Hawkins, whose travelogue spans 1608-13, and who learned Anatolian Turkish as a merchant: “Perceiving I had the Turkish tongue, which himselfe well understood, hee commanded me to follow him unto his chamber of presence […] desiring to have further conference with me.” Because of his linguistic skills, Hawkins became a favorite for a while and was married to an Armenian girl. See W. Foster, *Early Travels in India* (London, 1921), p.81.

\(^{201}\) According to the English ambassador Roe, the Italian artisan also spoke better Turkish than Persian, W. Foster, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe at the Court of the Great Mogul 1615-1619* (London, 1899), I, p.130.


\(^{204}\) M. Haidar, “Some Aspects of Indo-Turkmenistan Relations”, in *Indo-Central Asian Relations from Early Times to Medieval Period* (New Delhi, 2004).

\(^{205}\) William Hawkins, 1608-13, W. Foster, *Early Travels in India* (London, 1921), p.80. “That done, he imbraced me, and so we departed. The language that we spoke was Turkish, which he spake very well.”
cartaz, causing a significant political incident.\textsuperscript{206} Prince Khurram, the future Shah Jahan, acquired his taste for western Asian horses by obtaining a horse called \textit{Rûm ratan} (Hindi for “Jewel of Rome”), sent by Shah ʿAbbas as part of the plunder after he defeated the Ottoman armies.\textsuperscript{207} Jahangir asked the English ambassador Roe himself for an English horse. Roe replied that the Ottomans would not let it pass through, but Jahangir dismissed his fears.\textsuperscript{208} Imperial officers in Surat were continually concerned with sending ships to the Arabian Peninsula and receiving them.\textsuperscript{209}

Yet, most courtiers must have known it was not advisable to compare Ottomans and Mughals explicitly. Thomas Roe, one of the first English ambassadors to the Mughal court, learned this lesson only gradually, as he employed numerous comparisons with the Ottomans in the first section of his letters about India. Those comparisons seem to have been common among western Europeans, based on the previous experience of many merchants who had traded in the Levant before coming to India.

The peripatetic Thomas Coryat, who was Roe’s friend, also made a detailed comparison between the two kingdoms. While Coryat maintains that the extent of the dominions is approximately the same, he concludes that Jahangir’s realm actually exceeds that of the

\textsuperscript{207} Rogers, Beveridge, \textit{Tûzuk-i Jahângîrî}, II, chap.45. In addition, some western European travelers state that the number of horses from the Ottoman domains formed the single largest contingent. See H. W. van Santen, D.H.A. Kolff, eds., \textit{De Geschriften van Francisco Palsaert} (’s-Gravenhage, 1979), list on p.120.
\textsuperscript{208} “By land the Turke would not suffer passadge. He replied he thought it not impossible by sea.” See W. Foster, \textit{The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe at the Court of the Great Mogul 1615-1619} (London, 1899), p.129.
\textsuperscript{209} “[...] license to goe to the Red Sea signed [...] a Moore comming court with 300 followers, sent to Meca, going to Suratt to take shipping [...] He had store of indico with him.” W. Foster, \textit{The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe at the Court of the Great Mogul 1615-1619} (London, 1899), p.74. Also see Faria y Sousa, \textit{Asia Portuguesa}, III (London, 1695), which details the changed allowance in the number of free ships, three a year instead of one. In 1615, many ships were expected from the Red Sea. See p.170.
Ottomans in several respects, among which most striking are its contiguous character, the “fatnesse of the land” and its revenue. Accordingly, Lahore is reported as being one of the largest cities of the whole universe, exceeding “Constantinople itself in its greatnesse.” In his “oration” made to Jahangir in an improvised Persian, Coryat tells him that he had seen the building in Constantinople where Timur and the Byzantine emperor reputedly feasted together after Timur had placed the chained Bayazid into a cage. Jahangir must have been flattered, but this amounted to little concrete advantage for Coryat.

John Mildenhall, a merchant who had presented himself to Akbar on the pretext of being sent in formal capacities, had also drawn an unwelcome analogy between Constantinople and Agra, suggesting that the English would send an ambassador every three years with rich presents, as they did in Istanbul.

Comparisons with the Ottoman realm seemed to impose themselves on merchants who spent time in Constantinople. Roe’s own report has become famous on the account of its length and the official character of his mission. He has been reviled for his rash character as well as admired for his purported sensitivities to the Indian reality. At least at the beginning of his report, his words reflect an overbearing and belligerent character, in addition to his lack of fluency in Persian and disappointment because he expected India to be a “China shop” of rarities, while the

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210 “In the conjunction and union of all his territories together in one and the same goodly continent of India, no prince having a foote of land within him. But many parcels of the Turkes country are by a large distance and otherwise divided asunder.” T. Coryat in W. Foster, Early Travels in India (London, 1921), p.246.
211 “[There is] no part of the world yielding a more fruitfull veine of ground than all that which lieth in his empire [...] whereas a great part of the Turks land is extreme barren and sterill.” Idem., p.246.
212 “He exceedeth the Turke and the Persian his neighbour by just halfe; for his revenues are 40 millions of crownes (of sixe shillings value) by the yeare, but the Turkes are no more than fifteene millions (as I was certainly informed in Constantinople) and the Persians five millions, plus minus (as I heard in Spahan).” Idem., p.246.
213 In this passage, which he composed in Persian, he calls the Ottoman empire “mulk-i Rûm.” Idem.
214 John Mildenhall, 1599-1606: “Know you all that Her Majestie hath her ambassadour leiger in Constantinople, and everie three yeares most commonly doth send a new and call home the old; and at the first comming of every ambassadour shee sendeth not them emptie, but with a great and princely present; according whereunto Her Highnesse intent is to deal with Your Majestie.” W. Foster, Early Travels in India (London, 1921), p.58.
prices of most commodities were as high as those in England.²¹⁵ His letters also gradually reveal
the despair of the English, whose cloth and tin did not sell well, and who could not offer jewels
and rubies as the Portuguese did, nor spices, chinaware, or Venetian crystals, which were already
available at the court.

In Roe’s report, we are repeatedly told that the realm of the Mughals is about as large as
the one belonging to the Ottomans; however, it is also stated that Jahangir is much wealthier than
the Ottomans, let alone the Persians.²¹⁶ Roe seems well-informed on relations between the
Safavids and the Ottomans; significantly, he prefers the Ottomans, chastising the Safavids for
attacking the Georgians and hoping that the Ottomans will wrest Baghdad from them in
punishment. Roe’s wariness of Shah ‘Abbas becomes understandable when he informs the
English king about the overtures made by the Spanish to the Persians.²¹⁷ In spite of Indian
riches, Roe felt on firmer footing with Ottomans and Safavids. He sent letters from India to Shah
‘Abbas and to the Ottomans when his negotiations in India seemed to go sour,²¹⁸ and he at least
once compared the Mughals and the Ottomans to the advantage of the latter.²¹⁹

²¹⁵ C. Mitchell, Sir Thomas Roe and the Mughal Empire (Karachi, 2001).
²¹⁶ “His territorie is farre greater than the Persians, and almost equall, if not as great as, the Turkes.” (p.90). “In
revenue he doubtlesse he exceeds eyther Turke or Persian or any Eastern prince.” (letter to the Bishop of
Canterbury, p.105). “It cannot be denied that this King is one of the mightietyest Princes of Asia [...] equall to
the Turke, far exceeding the Persian” (to the King, p.101). See W. Foster, The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe at the Court
²¹⁷ “Revenge is like to follow; the Turke preparing to enter his country with terrible hostilite by the way of
Bagdatt.” (p.101). “But this cloud from Turky threatening a storome on every side [...] to waste his borders that the
Turke may fynd no forradge, and to forbid all caravans or merchants passadge into Turky.” (p.111). W. Foster, The
²¹⁸ “I dispatched an expresse for Hispan [Isfahan] in Persia with letters for the Sophy [...] and after to the
ambassador at Constantinople, or the consull of Aleppo.” (p.109). In his letter to Shah ‘Abbas, he asks him to enable
the English to trade in Jask as soon as he has “returned victorious over the Turke”, (p.115). W. Foster, The Embassy
of Sir Thomas Roe.
²¹⁹ “The honnor and quality of an ambassador is not ruled by the customes of England, but by consent of all the
world. He represents the person of a kyng, and the Great Turke soe receives him.” W. Foster, The Embassy of Sir
Thomas Roe, p.140.

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Roe hoped that the interruption of trade through eastern Anatolia would provide ways for English merchants to enter Persia directly and sell broadcloth and buy silk there, but unlike many twentieth-century historians, he also understood that once the wars were over the trade would continue. Roe was concerned that in the case of a permanent diversion of the silk trade away from the Ottoman lands there would be serious repercussions for the English traders in the Ottoman empire, as the Ottoman authorities would be displeased with the changed route. Ultimately, his fear was that the English parliament would vote for the reduction of Levant and India trade alike, out of concern for the preservation of domestic bullion. He urged the East India Company to concentrate their efforts on providing freight for Gujaratis who were trading with the Red Sea.

Intriguingly, Roe also mentions an embassy by the Ottomans which was dismissed by Jahangir in 1614, and which is not mentioned by Mughal or Ottoman sources. From the wording, one may be inclined to assume the embassy was an invention by Roe in order to aggrandize his own station, as he had already compared himself to the Ottomans in an earlier

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221 "Whensoever the Turke and Persian make peace (for their wars are too monstruous to continew), this trade willbe [sic] agayne diverted, for the Turke will not make any conclusion but with the liberty of the free and ancient entercourse of trade. And observe one thing well: the parts of Persia that vent cloth [...] are the same that produce the silke, and are nearest Turky." W. Foster, The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe, p.313-4, 317.
222 "One considerable thing is the distast of the Grand Signior, who doubtlesse will seeke to hinder the passadge of the Persian commerce by sea, hee reaping as much by costume as the Sha by the prime commoditie.” (p.445). “A second objection is that the Grand Signior will embarque our English in his dominions for molesting his trades [...] if wee are soe jealous of our friends at Constantinople, how can wee procede in Persia, the stealing away of which trade will more sharpen the Turk than the rifle of a junck or two of rascalls that he takes noe notice off?” (p.461). W. Foster, The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe.
224 “So that the Turke the last yeere sending on ambassage to entreate him not to assist the Persian, hee gave him very harsh entertainment; made his salem to the ground, and as soon as he was dismissed, sent the Persian ten leckes of rupias.” W. Foster, The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe, p.92.
225 “He dismissed me with more favour and outward grace [...] than ever was shewed to any ambassador, eyther of the Turke or Persian.” W. Foster, The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe, p.85.

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encounter with the Mughal prince. Roe avoids such explicit remarks and comparisons in the later period of his stay at the court, probably having realized that they were inappropriate. In the last such comparison, he claims unequivocally that the wealth of the Mughals far exceeds that of the Ottomans. Yet, Roe spent much of his remaining life in Constantinople, including the period from 1621-28. He assisted a treaty between Ottomans and Poland, preventing the Spanish ambassadors from participating in the arrangement; indeed, it becomes clear that in the early seventeenth century, the animosity between the Iberians and the English was the paramount concern. Roe and many other English factors also indicated that if the direct trade with India did not exist, they would procure similar goods in the Ottoman realm.

At least in the pictorial realm, Jahangir could reassert himself against Safavids and Ottomans. In a late portrait, while Shah ‘Abbas’s absence is conspicuous, Jahangir is depicted as being attended by the rulers of the world, one of whom is the Ottoman emperor (and the other, presumably the English King James I). Yet, the pâdishâh of India disdains him and turns his attention to a Sufi of the Chishti order. As Bichitr, the Hindu painter, states: “Although Kings seem to be in foreground, he gives his preference to the Sufis.”

226 “I demanded lycence to come up and stand by him. Hee answered: if the King of Persia or the Great Turke wher there, it might not be admitted.” W. Foster, The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe, p.71.
227 From Roe’s letter to Prince Charles: “His revenew far above any eastern monarch knowne: farr above the Turke: incredible if I saw not the issues and incomes.” W. Foster, The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe, p.270.
228 Idem., p.147.
Chapter 4

Correspondences, Received and Missed

1. Shah Jahan: India the proud

Mughal hegemonic endeavors became particularly complex, indeed omnivorous, during the reign of Shah Jahan. While the sponsorship of painting was more pronounced under Akbar and Jahangir, Shah Jahan’s influence was seminal in many other areas of fine arts including architecture, and until today it defines the notion of “Mughals” for the general public. We will address some questions of imperial aesthetic in our seventh chapter, when we turn to the consumption of Indian textiles in the Ottoman empire. The art-historical aspect seems to have occupied historians more than any other, leading to a curious imbalance in historiography: although the empire was at the height of its power in the seventeenth century, the earlier rulers, especially Babur, Akbar and Jahangir have attracted much more attention than Shah Jahan. This is particularly unfortunate in our context, as he is the only Mughal ruler who maintained regular contacts with the Ottomans.230

Perhaps the relative lack of interest in Shah Jahan by scholars is due to an increased prevalence of legitimizing claims based on Hanafi religious practices, which completely disabused western Europeans of the hope to convert a Mughal emperor. Unlike his famously pantheist father, Shah Jahan turned toward the *sunna* by offering more support to the Naqshbandi

230 There are very few biographies, and they tend to have a popular bent. See B.P. Saxena, *History of Shahjahan of Dihli* (Allahabad, 1958) and M. Lal, *Shah Jahan* (New Delhi, 1986).
sufis, celebrating the milâd of the prophet and sending a ship to Mecca regularly. By contrast, Akbar and Jahangir were quite indifferent to such strategies. Shah Jahan’s reputation as a philanderer and wastrel was reinforced by the famous travels of F. Bernier, who portrayed the civil war among the Mughal princes in 1658 as presaging an eventual downfall for the empire. Indeed, Bernier’s work remains even today one of the most avidly read travelogues from early modern India, although it seems it was consciously conceived as a moral lesson against absolutism rather than a bona fide travelogue. Bernier colored much of the subsequent debate on despotism, as he was read by Montesquieu and Marx alike, and his understanding of “Oriental despotism” influenced their conceptualizations of Asia.

Historical writings gained particular importance under Shah Jahan, as more chronicles were produced under his reign than under any other Mughal ruler. Unlike the autobiographies by Jahangir, Humayun and Babur or Abu al-Fazl’s work, they were translated into English very recently and only partially. Yet, the Mughal empire was open to western Europeans, Turanis, Iranians and Hindus to an even greater extent, as Shah Jahan attempted to balance the struggling factions and integrate them within the state, without giving precedence to any one of the groups, unlike Jahangir and even Akbar, who had a clear preference for Iranians. Shah Jahan’s patronage and tendency toward universal rule also was symbolized through the support to translations from Sanskrit into Persian, witnessing the last period of intense creativity in Sanskrit

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232 F. Bernier, *Voyages*.
234 For a general perspective on Mughal historiography, which includes extensive quotes and detailed charts, see S. Conermann, *Historiographie als Sinschiftung. Indo-persische Geschichtsschreibung während der Mogulzeit (932-1118/1516-1707)* (Wiesbaden, 2002).
236 F. Anwar, *Nobility under the Mughals (1628-1658)* (New Delhi, 2001).
Even the Marathas, who came to represent the fiercest enemies of the Mughals, saw them as universal rulers. The emperor of Delhi was not only the “Badshah” but also the lord of the universe (jagadiśvaro), the lord of all land (sarvabhaum), the lord of the earth (prthvipati), even as late as 1760, when the Marathas were raiding Mughal lands.

While invocations of Timur were a common trait to all Mughal rulers, his apotheosis in historical writing as the ancestor of the dynasty took place in this period. It is true that Jahangir occasionally expressed the desire to visit Timur’s tomb, and that he called himself sâhib-i qirân-i thâni, but it is under Shah Jahan that such allusions become a topos. Immediately upon the crowning, Shah Jahan adopted the appellation, also including it on his coins. On several miniatures, one sees Timur bestowing a crown and other adornments upon Babur, or sitting together with Babur and Humayun, emphasizing the first period of Mughal history, when the emperors still spoke fluent Turkî and entertained ties with Transoxiana. Most explicitly, at the beginning of Qazwini’s Pâdishâh Nâma, the official court history of the first decade of Shah Jahan’s rule, one encounters facing portraits of Timur and Shah Jahan. This tendency persisted throughout Shah Jahan’s rule, but it was especially strong in the 1630s, when the emperor was presented with a work called Tûzukât-i Timûrî, supposedly located by one al-Turbati in the

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238 For the Ajnapatra and other Maratha sources, see the references given by A. Wink, Land and Sovereignty in India: Agrarian Society and Politics under the Eighteenth-century Maratha Svarajya (Cambridge, 1986), p.40.
library of the former Ottoman governor of Yemen, Çafer Paşa, and translated by him into Persian from “Turkî” which in Mughal parlance could signify either Chaghatay or Ottoman.  

Initially, it seemed likely that friendly relations between the Mughals and the Safavids would be re-established. As Prince Khurram, Shah Jahan exchanged numerous friendly letters with Shah ‘Abbas I, mitigating the animosity which arose following the conquest of Qandahar. Upon Shah Safi’s accession to the Safavid throne in 1629, Shah Jahan addressed a letter of condolence, stressing his affection for Shah ‘Abbas, whom he purportedly viewed as his uncle. Shah Jahan described Shah Safi therefore as his son (farzand), emphasizing that the Mughal domains extended to three-fourths of the inhabited world. In his response, Shah Safi equated Shah ‘Abbas with Akbar, making himself a brother to Shah Jahan rather than a son. Elsewhere, Shah Safi addresses him as uncle (‘amm).  

Yet, the Safavid court warmly received prince Davar Bakhsh (Bulaghi), a contender to the Mughal throne, who in thanking them alluded somewhat disjointedly to the historical precedents of friendly relations between Mughals and Safavids, including the conquest of Rum by Timur and the assistance extended to Humayun by Tahmasp. In both instances, Safavids assisted the prince’s ancestors; thus, he claimed, they should support his cause as well. In a subsequent letter, written in 1633, Shah Jahan addressed Shah Safi cordially, stressing his own conquests in Bengal to the detriment of Portuguese Farangs. More provocative were the allusion to the subjugation of the Deccani sultanates of Golconda, Bijapur and Ahmadnagar which had

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242 C. Stewart, tr., The Malfuzat Timury, autobiographical memoirs of the Moghul Emperor Timur, written in the Jagtay Turky language, turned into Persian by Abu Tali Huzy (London, 1830).
244 R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, I, Sh.109 and Sh.112, respectively.
245 Idem., Sh113.1, also see below in the context of the pretender. Baysanghur, who was present at the Ottoman court in the 1630s.
for more than a century pledged alliance to the Safavids. Shah Jahan explicitly evoked the four caliphs. Shah Safi responded only to the second letter in 1637 by boasting of repelling Ottoman forces from Baghdad and his conquest of Yerevan and Azerbaidjan. Although the Mughal ambassador was eventually treated with great honors and gifts, he was forced to wait for more than a year before he could deliver his letter to the Safavid Shah.

In addition, a bloody confrontation took place in Isfahan between the Indians and the Holstein embassy, purportedly caused by a joking Persian domestic, and resulting in deaths of some thirty people on both sides. Olearius, a member of the Holstein embassy, notes that most members of the Indian party were Uzbeks. According to him, the Mughal embassy had two aims: arresting the pretender Bulaghi, in which they failed, and acquiring a large number of horses, which the Shah did grant them. However, after the incident, even Indian merchants were not allowed to be seen on the street until the Holstein embassy left. Olearius even states that the Mughal ambassador was almost executed by Shah Safi. Even if that may be an exaggeration, the violent episode certainly added to tension between Mughals and Safavids.

Correspondence between Shah Jahan and the Uzbek rulers of Transoxiana reveals that from the point of his accession both ruling houses envisioned a rearrangement of power in Khorasan and Afghanistan at the expense of Safavids. Nazir Muhammad Khan of Balkh attacked Kabul in 1628, but failed to conquer it. Shah Jahan sent reconciliatory missions to him and his

246 Idem., I, Sh114, and Z. Sabitian, Asnâd va nâmâhâ-ya târîkhî va idjtimâ`î, pp.333-35 and pp.344-46, respectively.
247 R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, I, Sh.118.
248 “We were told, that the King hearing of this Matter [...] and withal that the Indian ambassador had Conniv’d thereat, had Commanded his Head to be brought him; but that the Chancellor had moderated [...] by representing to him, that both the Ambassadors were Strangers, and his Guests, and that it belong’d to their Masters, and not to him, to punish them.” See Olearius, Voyages in Persia (London, 1669), bk.V, p.198-200. Being a good classicist, he quotes the history of Quintus Curtius on the small size and speed of Indian arrows.
brother, Imam Quli Khan, who ruled at Bukhara. The latter is addressed as the “vâli of Turan”. In a letter from 1633, Shah Jahan alludes to common action against the Safavids, as suggested by Nazir Muhammad Khan’s envoy. However, diplomatic exchange seems to have halted then, resuming only in 1646, under very different auspices.

The desire to conquer Qandahar and expand into Turan pushed Shah Jahan toward new allies. As necessary as the strategy of contacting the Ottomans seemed, it was unpleasant to the Mughal court, which was still marked by the prevalence of Iranians in the administrative sphere and the tradition of disdain for the Ottomans. In turn, Ottoman elites cultivated their own sense of superiority over Indians. Baysanghur, the fifth son of the prince Daniyal, fled to the Ottoman court, seeking assistance against Shah Jahan. Whether he was an impersonator or a real prince, he displeased Sultan Murad IV through his uncouth habits, which included carrying a deer hide on which he always sat, and giving away royal presents to wood carriers and door keepers. No less irritating must have been, as Hammer expresses it, “his stupid pride in his descent from Timur.” After the arrival of Mir Zarif, the Mughal ambassador (and his presents), he was told not to hope for any assistance. Thereupon he left the court and purportedly died as a dervish.

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250 R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, II, Tx.346.
251 Baysanghur, the son of prince Daniyal, is briefly mentioned in the wider context of royal imposters and renouncers in J. Flores, S. Subrahmanyam, “The Shadow Sultan: Succession and Imposture in the Mughal Empire, 1628-1640”, JESHO, 47 (1), 2004. The prince’s life had already been adventurous before the flight and “resurrection”, as he had been one of those selected by Jahangir to convert to Catholicism in 1610, under the name of Don Carlos. Before arriving in Istanbul, he had already tried to make his claim at the Uzbek and Safavid courts, as mentioned above.
252 See Na‘ima, Târîh-i Na‘îmâ, II (Istanbul, 1281) p.450, p.575; Na‘ima, M. İpşirli, Târîh-i Na‘îmâ, Ravzatü‘l-Hüseyn fi Hulâsati Abhârî‘l-Hâfikayn (Ankara, 2007), p. 617, p.784; Hammer, Geschichte, V, 185 ff. Also see Begley, Desai, The Shah Jahan Nama, p.191, which states that he returned to India from Rum and was recognized as an impostor by the Uzbek ambassador at the Mughal court.
However, elsewhere Hammer states that he returned to India and was executed there. The contradictions of common purpose in the realm of *Realpolitik* and the conflicting hegemonial claims were to mark and greatly influence the interactions between the two courts.

After surviving the Celali rebellions and the dynastic crisis of 1618-1622, Ottomans were able to strengthen their position in a manner not seen since the 1590s. While the siege of Baghdad in 1625-6 failed, an Ottoman army under the grand vizier was able to enter Hamadan and even deeper into Iranian territory in 1630, but had to withdraw without further consequences. In 1635, as mentioned by Shah Safi in his letter to Shah Jahan, Sultan Murad IV led his troops to Yerevan and Azerbaidjan, plundering Tabriz. Safavid forces applied the same techniques of withdrawal which they perfected throughout the sixteenth century, facing the enemy only under exceptional circumstances and preferring to evacuate some of the populations and burn the crops, making provisioning difficult for the Ottomans. Yerevan was reconquered after six months by Shah Safi, marking the only major military success of his reign. Yet, Indian commodities entered the Ottoman realm in symbolic fashion following this campaign. For instance, Ottoman forces succeeded in capturing an elephant which had been brought from India for the Shah by the Mughal ambassador Zaynal Beg. In the subsequent embassy sent to Istanbul by the Safavids, which arrived in August 1637, many fine Indian textiles and horses from India were included as gifts. The list given by the redactor of Feridun’s collection includes Kashmiri shawls and Gujarati brocades.

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254 For a detailed depiction of these developments with some original documents, but not devoid of tendatiousness, see R. Kılıç, *Kanuni Devri Osmanlı-Iran Münasebetleri (1520-1566)* (Istanbul, 2006).
256 Idem., p.229f.
Murad IV left Istanbul in 1637 with the aim of conquering Baghdad. Whether ideological or economic reasons prevailed, Iraq was highly significant to all Indian Muslim rulers. From the time of the Delhi sultanate onto the late eighteenth-century Deccan under Tipu Sultan, Baghdad had been mentioned in courtly literature and diplomatic correspondence as a holy place. Reputed scholars have argued that Baghdad also held special religious significance for Safavids and Ottomans, and that this symbolic role may have been crucial to the efforts to retain the city. Certainly, Safavids never formally gave up their claim to Baghdad. It is also significant that as soon as the city fell into Ottoman hands in late 1638, Murad IV commanded that the tomb of Abu Hanifa and the mosque of ‘Abd al-Qadir Gilani be checked for damage and repaired. Yet, Ottomans rarely allude to Baghdad’s special position as the city of the Abbasids or the site of the caliphate. R. Matthee suggests that Baghdad was ultimately more vital to the Ottomans as a nodal point of the Indian trade route, while Safavids had access to other entrepôts.257

In a mirror image of 1622-24, when Ottomans sent a courteous letter which cautiously suggested that Mughals attack Qandahar simultaneously with the Ottoman attack on Baghdad, Shah Jahan dispatched an ambassador to Baghdad in 1636, hoping to coordinate his conquest of Qandahar with an Ottoman attack on the Safavids. While in the 1620s the armies of Shah ‘Abbas were triumphant in Qandahar, Baghdad and even Hormuz, allowing him to entertain thoughts about Aleppo, in the 1630s, Safavids lost both Baghdad and Qandahar within the space of several months. Qandahar was won over by the Mughals in February 1638 because of a disagreement between the governor of the city and the Shah, rather than conquered by force of

arms. Yet, Shah Jahan expressed with some pleasure that Siyavush Khan, a hero in Safavid wars against Ottomans, was defeated in his attempt to regain Qandahar. Notably, at this point Iranians are described as *bad i’tiqām* and heretics, although Rajputs and other Hindus composed much of the Mughal contingent.  

The Mughal embassy to Ottomans in Baghdad, which arrived during the siege of the city, is remarkably well-attested within Mughal sources, whereas reports concerning most other Ottoman embassies are very curt. This detail alone testifies to the centrality of Iraq within Indian Ocean trade, and the sense in which the region, only seemingly peripheral, was at the intersection of all three Muslim empires of its day.

The first sentence of the royal Mughal letter, carefully crafted, praises God for elevating some men to be rulers, and among them, one as his own *khalīfa*. A naïve reader may be tempted to assume that the writer referred to the Ottomans, but the remainder of the letter disabuses him of such a notion. We find no explicit evocation of the Ottoman letter of 1624. Instead, we encounter a semblance of amnesia, alleging that there had been no communication from the other side for a long time (*har chand kih dar ìn muddat-i madīda ìn dūdmān-i khilāfat-nishīn u ān silsila-yi ‘azīm al-shān abvāb-i murāsīlāt maftūh nabūda [...]*). Ottomans are regaled with five lines of titles, most notably *khādim-i harāmāyn-i sharīfayn, iftikhār-i qaysariyya* and *sultān-i ghaza’āt u mudjāhidīn*. Yet, Agra is explicitly defined as the seat of the caliphate “*dār al-khilaftāt Akbarābād kih maqārr-i saltanat u mustaqarr-i khilāfat ast*.” These appellations are repeated three times in the letter, which presents itself as a *fathnāma*. Common *dīn* and *madhhab* are evoked in this context (*yaqīn ki ikhvān-i millat-i hanāfī u muvāfiqān-i mazhāb-i hanāfī az istimā’ īn futūhāt-i ghaybīyya [...] masrūr khvāhand kard*). Now that there is nothing left to do in

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Hindustan (dar sad-i hadd-i Dakar u sâ’ir-i mahall-i mulk-i Hindustân ba hîch vadjh kârî namânda), the emperor will turn his attention to the destruction and extirpation of Qızılbaş heretics. Mughals intend to conquer Qandahar (which is defined as a border province: kih dar sar-i haddân-i diyâr vâqi‘ shuda namâyad) and Khorasan, and they already count on support from the vâlî of Transoxiana and the hâkim of Balkh (ba vâlî-i mâ varâ’ al-nahr va hâkim-i Balkh nîz ishârat shûda). The additional Ottoman support leading to their liberation of Baghdad from the Safavids is crucial because of the tomb of the saint ‘Abd al-Qadir Gilani, which is disparaged by the Shi‘as. Ideally, the Ottoman army should remain at the frontier at Erzerum, Diyarbakir or Aleppo, not only for a brief period, but for a few years (du-sih sâl). While the letter remains highly courteous, a distinct contrast is drawn between the victorious Mughal forces who conquered more than thirty fortresses in the Deccan and the Ottomans, who had to lift the siege of Yerevan due to interal quarreling (agar chi ân hâqân-i mu’azzam dar sâl-i guzâshtta mutavadjdjuh ba-în muhimm zarûrî shûda, qil’at-i Ravân râ maftûh sakhta tâ bi Tabrîz tashrif burda bûdand, ammâ bâ vâsita-i ânkîh ba’zi az qazâyâ dar Istanbul rû-yi dâda bûd dar în sar-i hadd tavqîf namûda bâ rû-yi muradja’at-i bâ maqârr-i saltanat-i khvad farmûda bûdandân kâr ba itmâm narasîd [...] va chûn qil’at-i Ravân rû sar andjâm-i khûbî nanamûda bûd).

Yet, the purpose in stressing Ottoman failure was most likely not to demean them, but rather to display the ease with which Shah Jahan had access to most recent information (partially through communication with Shah Safî), and his greater felicity in war matters. Of course, the nature of his adversaries was deliberately left vague, so that most Ottoman readers could not ascertain whether the Deccani fortresses had belonged to infidels or to other Muslim dynasties (the latter was the case). Similarly, the reference to two crore rupees in gold and commodities...
may have necessitated some explanation. Unlike before (*ba khilāf-i sābiq*), the letter asserts that the doors of correspondence should remain open.\(^{259}\)

The Mughal ambassador who delivered the letter in Baghdad was not high-ranking. His name was Mir Zarif, renowned as an expert on horses, and he had been sent in 1629 with one Mir Baraka to Iran to acquire high-value horses. Humiliated by the success of Safdar Khan Khvadja Qasim, who returned from Iran with 500 horses in spite of the brawl mentioned above, he failed to satisfy the emperor and pledged to bring Arab and Rumi horses from ‘Iraq-i ‘Arab instead. As an official ambassador, Mir Zarif was given a letter for the *Qaysar-i Rûm* and another for the Ottoman grand vizier. His route led him from ―Bandar-i Lahor‖ in Sind to the Hijaz. After completing his pilgrimage, he went to Egypt, where the governor informed the highest circles of the presence of the Mughal ambassador. Mir Zarif and Ottoman Sultan Murad IV eventually met in Mosul as Ottoman forces advanced southward. The ambassador skillfully presented the Sultan with a belt adorned with jewels in a golden box. Other sources indicate that the gift was a decorated dagger. Regardless of the nature of the present, it was interpreted by Murad IV as a fortunate augury, for he said that a gift from a great king spelled victory.\(^{260}\)

On the following day, the Mughal ambassador presented the Sultan with some 1000 fabrics. The mood before the Baghdad battle being suitably bellicose and jovial, Murad IV asked him about cuirasses worn in India. Mir Zarif thereupon showed him his shield which could not be pierced by a bullet or an arrow. Murad was surprised by its unusual aspect and the many


names for the object. He reached for his spear and tried to break the shield, eventually succeeding. He then asked the ambassador about the glory (shigarfi) of the Mughal empire, being suitably impressed at his responses. The Mughal records allude to a somewhat boorish and violent character of the sultan, commenting upon his manner of conquest. His use of Ottoman toward an ambassador allegedly stunned Mir Zarif, who expected to hear Persian in that context rather than a Turkic language.

Mir Zarif received 10,000 guruş (20,000 rupees) and was ordered to remain in Mosul, where he could trade. When Murad IV returned victorious from the Baghdad campaign, he regaled the ambassador with an Arab horse from his own stable, called Minnet, whose saddle was covered with diamond and pearls, and yet another horse, taken from the Safavid crown prince. Perhaps the Sultan was inclined to be particularly munificent in the presence of the Safavid ambassador, who was in Mosul and Tikrit at approximately the same time. Both ambassadors accompanied the sultan to Istanbul and were dismissed approximately a year later. In addition, Mir Zarif acquired about 60 horses, some of which were purchased, and others obtained as a present from the Ottoman notables, among them his host (mihmândâr), the Silâhdâr Paşa, and the commander of Lahsa.

Upon his return through Sind in 1640, Mir Zarif was honored with 30,000 rupees from the subahdâr of Thatta, the subahdâr of Multan and other regional dignitaries. The money was

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261 The shield was probably made of buffalo hide, which made it impenetrable to arrows. Those shields were common among officers, whereas the princes carried shields made of rhinoceros hide, which reputedly resisted a musket-ball, according to N. Manucci, W. Irvine, ed., *Storia do Mogor, 1653-1708* (London, 1907), II, p.336. The availability of rhinoceri and buffaloes in India would explain why the shields were not familiar to Murad IV.

262 Na‘ima presents it as a gift from Shah Jahan, which is not likely to be the case.


partially given from the state exchequer, and partially as a private gift. It is significant that Mir Zarif received such large monetary recompense from the local dignitaries in the Ottoman and Mughal realm alike. This happened with the consent of the state, but also because of his role as an intermediary in establishing networks at the two sides of the ocean, which ran parallel to state channels. Three years after his departure, Mir Zarif finally met the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in Kashmir, presenting him with more than 50 horses, and subsequently received a *khil’a*, the *mansab* of a *hazârî* with 200 horses and the title of Fida’i Khan, along with the rank of the imperial stablemaster. He was also given the position of governor. However, he died quite soon afterwards, leaving him little time to enjoy his triumph.265

In contrast with the evidence presented above, the French traveler Tavernier relates a story according to which Mir Zarif’s reluctance to purchase horses of the highest value angered his master, so that he relegated him to a lesser province. This may be a jumbled recollection of his initial fall into disgrace, or an attempt to explain the subsequent conflict between the Ottomans and the Mughals.266 While N. Farooqi makes a claim that the purchase of horses was merely a ploy to deceive Europeans and Safavids about the nature of the Ottoman-Mughal alliance, it is clear that commercial interests were at least as important to Shah Jahan as political ones — indeed, given the centrality of Qandahar as a nodal point of trade, it could not be otherwise. In addition, the episode fits perfectly within the long history of obtaining horses through the Persian Gulf, and there is no need to explain it as a mere device.

266 “Le Mogol, irrité de ce que l’Ambassadeur ne luy avoit pas amenè ce bon beau cheval, & qu’il s’estoit tenu a peu de chose pour un grand Roy le plus riche de l’Asie, luy raprocha aigrement cette honteuse lesine, & le bannit pour jamais de sa presence en le releguant dans une Province eloignée de la Cour.” For the incident, see *Les Six Voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier, Première Partie* (Amsterdam, 1676-8), p.156f.
The British diplomat and historian Rycaut believed that the Safavids were defeated in Baghdad because they were forced to respond to the Qandahar attack by the Mughals, who purportedly acted in agreement with the Ottomans. Yet the coordination between Mughals and Ottomans does not seem to have been very smooth. Ottomans organized the conquest of Baghdad without any Mughal help. The Mughal embassy provided purely symbolic support. But at first, it seemed that it would be the beginning of a warm and friendly relation between the two empires.

The Ottoman ambassador, a chamberlain named Arslan Ağa, initially remained in Sind, waiting for a sign from the Mughal court. When he was finally allowed to present himself before the emperor in Kashmir, he was granted a khil’a, a belt with jewels, and 15,000 rupees. Both he and his son repeatedly given presents and marks of royal attention. Ömer Çelebi, the envoy of Muhammad Paşa, the governor of Lahsa (al-Hasa), was also given robes of honor and the considerably smaller sum of 1000 rupees (and ten times that for his master), but it seems that he was presented at the court even before the Ottomans. After more than a century of silence and missed communications, it seemed that diplomatic relations between Ottomans and Mughals would become cordial and frequent.

Yet, it is known that the Mughal response to the Ottoman embassy was disdainful. Most historians interested in this question have assumed that the letter carried by Arslan Ağa caused

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270 Also mentioned in Kamboh, ‘Amal-i Sâlih, II, p.333. In comparison, the ambassador of Nazar Muhammad Khan of Balkh, with 45 horses and 5 camels to the prince was given a robe of honor and 10000 rupees. Ambassador of Imam Quli Khan, who brought 60 horses, 100 camels, 9 hawks, Qalmaq slaves, other curiosities, was given a robe of honor and a jeweled dagger. Later he was also awarded a robe of honor, a jeweled turban ornament, a sword with enameled accoutrements, Qypchaq horse, his companions 5000 rupees. The same ambassador, bringing 27 horses, was given an Iraqi horse and 25,000 rupees, but his companions received 16,000 rupees.
Shah Jahan’s anger, and that the letter was lost. However, it seems to be available in at least some copies of *Dastûr al-Inshâ’*, and it contains little which could be considered offensive, especially since it includes a long list of respectful titles for the Mughal emperor. The Ottoman sultan stressed the need for continuous unity in the struggle against Safavid heretics, and pledged that he would not rest before accomplishing complete safety for Indian and Uzbek pilgrims.\footnote{R. Islam, *A Calendar of Documents*, II, Ott.387.} Except for the explicit mention of Ottomans as protectors of Mecca, which had been used by Shah Jahan himself, there is nothing incendiary in the letter. In spite of Shah Jahan’s claims that this letter offended him, the true reasons must be sought elsewhere.

At the end of the month of Sha‘ban, word was received that Murad IV had died in a letter sent by Sıdkı Efendi, now in the service of Ibrahim I. This Ottoman letter was sent immediately through a second ambassador. It suggested a continuation of the alliance between the two houses (‘ahd), praising Shah Jahan for his efforts to extirpate heretics and unbelievers. It referred to the Mughal ambassador Mir Zarîf in complimentary terms (*Amîr-Zarîf, dâma ‘izzahu nâma-i muhabbet-i hâtima ile gelup*). Yet, more than one line must have sounded discordant at the Mughal court. Shah Jahan was defined as *kâtil el-kâfîr ve ‘l-mütemerridîn, hülâsaya hânedân-i selâtîn-i Hind, nukâvey-i dâdmân-i Sind*, and a mere *nizâmu’l-devlet*! In contrast, the title of *sâhib-i kirân*, claimed by Timur himself and his descendants, was applied to the late sultan Murad IV, extolling his victories.\footnote{Feridun, *Münše’ât*, II (1265), p.275-76; Feridun, *Münše’ât*, II (1274), pp.351-52; R. Islam, *A Calendar of Documents*, II, Ott.388.} The second embassy arrived in the midst of the receptions associated with the first one and probably occasioned the disdainful response discussed below (rather than the previous letter, as speculated by R. Islam). The friendly atmosphere evaporated immediately upon receipt of the second letter, and Ottoman ambassadors
were dismissed from the court. Even the request made by Arslan Ağa to depart from Surat instead of Thatta was presented as unpalatable to the Mughals. Shah Jahan did not deign to respond in person.

The Mughal response, finally dispatched with Arslan Ağa, the first Ottoman ambassador to Shah Jahan, was singularly irritated in tone. It was formulated as correspondence between viziers rather than rulers. Omitting titulature, it immediately described the course of Mir Zarif and Arslan Ağa’s journey after they had been dismissed by Sultan Murad IV (defined as the iftikhâr-i qaysariyya-i Rûm). Once Arslan Ağa arrived at the khilâfat-manzilat Kashmir (Kashmir-i dîl pazîr, ki rû-yi zamîn shubh u nâzir nadârad), his letter was inspected by the munshis, and it was clear from the letter that the Ottoman ruler did not have experienced and capable servants273 (chûn ba mutâla’a-i munshîyûn-i balâghat-nîshîn dar âmad, zâhir shud ki dar khidmat-i ân mufakhkhir-i qaysarîyya [...] az kuhân-i sâlât-i qâ’idadân u dânîsh-i munsha’ât [...] shakhsi nabûd) who knew how to address great rulers whose ancestors commanded the entire world, a thinly veiled reference to Timur and Bayazid (adjdâd-i ishân bûd u ham kih salâtîn rû-ya zamîn taûq-i itâ’at u inqiyâd râ dar gardan andâkhtand).

*Scilicet*, Shah Jahan’s domains extend from Qandahar and Zamindavar in Khorasan to Bengal, from Kabul to Hindukoh in the Deccan to a full fourth of the inhabited surface of the earth. The letter enumerates some of the ports, stressing that even experienced merchants and travelers need more than a year to cross the empire (tudjdjâr u siyyâh-î djâhânkard agar har rûz qat’-i tarîq namûda [...] dar ‘arz-i yak sâl, balkih bishtar bamuntahâ namîrasand). Mountain-like elephants (filân-i kûh-paykar) in particular are presented as a sign of royalty. The

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273 Shah Jahan had employed the accusation of inexperience toward his Safavid counterpart when the latter refused to acknowledge him as his elder.
munshi attempts to downplay the political content of the embassy to the Ottomans, alluding its main concern was trade, and that Mir Zarif only went to Iraq to procure good horses, (asl-i firistadan-i Mir Zarif badjihat-i ibtiyâˈ-i asp-i nādir bûd), since no more horses would be bought from Iraq-i A’djam, as the vâlı there (presumably the Safavid Shah) does not want to sell them. The Ottoman dynasty (dûdmân-i ‘âliyya-i qaysarî) is indeed known for fighting against the infidel Farangs and the Qızılbaş. Yet, there was no point in sending an envoy on a long journey (va illâ ba ḍ in tûl musâfahât [...] bâ chi maslahat-i digar kasî mitavânad firistâd?) without a real unity in acting against the heretics, and one of the primary reasons was to prompt the Ottomans to protect the tomb of ‘Abd al-Qadir Gilani. The letter mentions the arrival of continuous and excessive news (ba tavâtur-i akhbâr) from Qandahar, Sind, Bandar-i Lahori, Gujarat, Bandar-i Surat and Khanbayat (Cambay), attesting to the demise of the Ottoman pâdishâh. Yet there is no mention of the actual reception of the nâma-i humâyûn from Ibrahim I, confirming our suspicion that this precise letter (and not the first one, sent by Murad IV) was the apple of discord. The letter concludes with the statement that the Ottoman ambassador will be sent home through the port of Surat. It was conceded that there should be exchange of envoys to keep the enemies in Islam in check, but no royal nâma was given to Arslan Ağa.274

The presents sent to the Ottoman ruler, nominally not from the Mughal emperor, but rather Arslan Ağa, the Ottoman ambassador himself (!), (az djânib-i khvad bâ iftikhâr-i qaysariyya-i nâmâr baguzârad), were modest to the point of offense: a bottle of attar of roses (‘itr-i djahângîrî) and two prayer carpets from the imperial manufactures (kârkhâna-i pâdshâhî) at Kashmir and Lahore. In comparison, when Aurangzeb three decades later received an embassy

from the king of Balkh, he sent back fine white fabrics brocaded with gold and silver, large carpets, two daggers with precious stone-hilts, five flasks of rose essence and nine robes for the ambassadors.  

The response by Ottoman administrator Kara Mustafa Paşa from 1642 is eloquent, exposing many of the areas of contention. There are initial friendly references to the Mughal vizier and his letter, but it is stressed that he must know that the Ottoman sultans are destroyers of unbelievers, (tedmîr-i küffâr), upholding the Sharî‘at and protecting the holy places. They also lay claim to the title of sâhib-i kirân and they are the rulers of Anatolia, Arabs and Persians (şehriyâr-i Rûm u ‘Arab u ‘Acem). The Ottoman Sultan Ibrahim I has become the caliph in accordance with the Qur’anic words (innanâ dja‘lnak khalîfatan fî al-‘ard). It is acknowledged there is affection for the ruler of Lahore (serîr-ârâ-i Lahaur), the greatest of all rulers of Sind and Hind (a‘zam-i selâtîn-i Hind u [...] efhem-i havâkîn-i Sind), the most powerful of hâkâns of India. Yet, in this process of lauding their friendship, matters of nomenclature are set aright, as Istanbul is referred to as dâr al-saltanat, whereas the Mughal letter had erroneously described Lahore as dâr al-saltanat. Several times, as if by omission, the Mughal realm is described as if it were limited to Sind only, somewhat corresponding to the Mughal attempt to reduce Ottomans to Anatolia.  

It is repeatedly stressed that Sunni Hanafi rulers should send letters to each other and be in agreement. The two houses have had friendly interaction since the times of old, and there is nothing but love between them (lâ siyemâ ittihâd-i mezheb-i hakk-i Hanafi ile [...] havâkîn-i a‘zam kadîm eyyâminden ebvâb-i mürâselât kûşâde ü esbâb-i mûkâtebat âmâde tutup [...] imdi

While the Indian court accuses Ottomans of grave mistakes in court etiquette (ri‘âyet-i merâsim-i adabda taksîr), it does not respect the Ottoman ruler in turn. Hence, it is a pity that no condolence and congratulation letter was sent with the worthy Arslan Ağa (elçi ile nâme-i ta‘ziyet nûmun tehniyet-meshûn muhabbet-makrûn ırsâl olmamak).

It may be that Mughal lands are large (tezkere-yi kesret-i büldân u ımsâr-i Hind u tekrâr vüs‘at-i diyâr-i Sind ile iftihâr olunmuş). Yet, the Ottoman provinces are so numerous they could not fit into a letter, but one should keep in mind that God appraises rulers by justice, mercy and kindness, not merely the extent of their empires. (ıfâde-i ma‘lûm kâbilinden olmasa dâhil hayta-i kuvvet-i kahramâni olan memâlık-i mehrûse-i ‘Osmânın zabân-i hâma ile ta‘adâdi bu sahife-i muhtasarde ser encâm bulmaz idi [...] ma‘ zâlike İzed [...] mücerred kesret-i mülk u vüs‘at-i memleketlerin hesâb etmeyup [...] şehvetlerin su‘al eder).

Correspondingly, rulers of the world acknowledge that the Ottoman family sultans are the greatest monarchs of the earth and they are also beloved by their subjects, Christian and Muslim (umûmen firk-i islâmiyye ü millet-i nasâra ‘atebe-i ‘aliyye cihândârilerinde sevda rûyân ilticâ olup salâtîn-i Sulaymân nigîn Âl-i Osmân a‘zâm-i havâkîn-i ‘ålamiyân idîğî mânanda afťâb nümâyan olduğu mecmu‘a-i pâdişahân-i cihân [...] i‘tirâf [...] etmişir). The Ottoman sultans are also above the trifles of carpets and felts which were excessively praised by the Mughals (hâşiye-i mektûbda Arslan Ağa mükerrem ittikleri namâzgâh u kaliçeler ziyâda medh olunup [...]
It is not surprising that communication between the two courts collapsed in the 1640s. Yet, in established Mughal fashion, applied when official relations were disturbed, princes and border noblemen mediated between the two realms. Dara Shukoh sent a letter to establish friendly relations, but also to mitigate the heat generated in the previous interactions. Ottomans responded that the articles intended for the tombs of Imam Abu Hanifa and Sayyid ‘Abd al-Qadir Gilani have been forwarded to their destination.

Although it is easy for us to dismiss the Mughal claim that Ottomans ignored the art of ‘inshā’ as sheer pretext, it seems that there were some real differences in letter writing practices which could easily be construed as Ottoman ignorance or malice. For instance, Mughals were somewhat more likely to follow the precedents set by their Persian-writing predecessors, adhering more strictly to the proscribed form of extensively lauding God and the prophet at the beginning of the letters. In contrast, Ottomans had been exposed to other diplomatic traditions as well, not always adhering to one language or one specific form. They often praised the recipient already in the opening lines of the letter, which was usually done for vassals only in Mughal practice. Thus, we encounter various substrata in their Persianate languages of power; practices which were self-evident at the one court may have been alienating at the other. Yet, in addition to reputed Ottoman failings to respect diplomatic protocol, other matters were at stake.


The successful Mughal conquest of Qandahar, mostly through diplomatic means, also meant that Shah Jahan was much less likely to consider further attacks on Iran. The attempt at an alliance with the Ottomans was consequently abandoned. Instead, the need to negotiate new relations of power at the borders of the three realms pushed Mughals and Safavids toward renewing relations. Unsurprisingly, cordial relations which dominated interactions between the two courts under Shah ‘Abbas and Jahangir no longer existed. For several years, diplomatic exchange between the empires had been restricted to the so-called “Shamlu letters” between border noblemen which de facto replaced the dialogue by the rulers. These letters make frequent references to caravan trade, assessing whether it will proceed smoothly in that particular year, and giving details usually absent from higher-level diplomatic correspondence.

Although commercial relations between the two empires ran smoothly, there were sufficient hints at political disagreements and new alliances. Thus, the Safavid beğlerbegi of Khorasan informed the Mughal governor of Qandahar that the Ottoman Sultan Murad IV had “asked for peace”, and that accords for friendly relations were made between the Ottomans and the Persians even upon his death, allotting Baghdad to Ottomans, but returning Yerevan to Safavid control. The shift toward mutual understanding between the Ottomans and Safavids was underlined by the presence of an embassy from the Ottomans which was recently received. It was stressed that peace made the Safavid realm flourish. The last remark indicated a new reality which would have astonished any of the preceding rulers: after more than a century of intermittent wars, relations between Safavids and Ottomans gradually normalized, but those between the Mughals and Safavids remained tense.

This tendency is not only reflected in this particular set of letters; it actually resonates throughout Safavid writing of the time. After the conclusion of peace agreements between the
Ottomans and the Safavids, which included a delineation of the border territory in 1638, the tone of Safavid chronicles toward the Ottomans (who had been usually designed as *munâfiqân* at the times of war) changes and becomes softer. Sultan Murad IV, upon his death, is called the *vâlî* of Rum. This description, while still seemingly condescending by implicitly defining Rum as a temporarily inaccessible province of the Safavid realm, also marks separate spheres, as the Safavid Shahs sometimes described themselves modestly as the *vâlîs* of ‘Ali. Indeed, until the fall of the Safavid dynasty, relations between them and the Ottomans were stable and relatively friendly.

Around 1640, Shah Jahan still made some covert endeavors to obtain informal Safavid consent for an attack on Uzbek lands. Imam Quli Khan, previously the nominal ruler of Transoxiana, abdicated in favor of his brother, Nazir Muhammad Khan, who became the only ruler of Turan in 1641. However, his rule was successfully contested by his son ‘Abd al-‘Aziz. Nazir Muhammad thereupon called upon Mughals for assistance, giving Shah Jahan the pretext which he needed to send his forces on Balkh, which he envisioned as the first step toward conquering Transoxiana. However, Nazir Muhammad eventually fled to the Safavid court, ignoring Shah Jahan’s invitations to join him.

Shah Jahan finally sent an embassy to Iran in 1646, ostensibly offering condolences on the death of Shah Safi, but also extolling ‘Ali Mardan Khan, the former Safavid officer who had betrayed the Safavids by delivering Qandahar to the Mughals, and praising the Four Caliphs.279 In another letter from Shah Jahan, the campaign to Balkh was explained as a prelude to a conquest of Samarqand and Bukhara. He declared that Nazir Muhammad Khan had sent his sons

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to India, one of whom remained in Mughal service, while others intended to embark on the hadjij. Correspondingly, he argued Nazir Muhammad himself should be allowed to proceed to Mecca (i.e. renounce his claim), as his brother had done. Shah ‘Abbas II responded that there was no need for the deposed ruler to go to Mecca, since Safavid hospitality was preferable. In any event, Nazir Muhammad already left the Safavid domains, intending to return to his kingdom. Shah ‘Abbas II also rejected the attempt by Shah Jahan to address him as his son.  

In a subsequent letter, composed while moving onto Khorasan in 1648, Shah ‘Abbas II asked that Qandahar, being insignificant, be given to him, while Shah Jahan was busy conquering Uzbek lands.

This was clearly mockery, because Safavids knew that Mughals had lost control over Balkh after merely a year. Accordingly, Shah Quli, the Persian ambassador, was not granted audience by Shah Jahan and he was sent back to Iran. The ostensible reason was because the Uzbek ambassador had been given precedence over the Mughals at the Safavid court. The provocative letter was a well-calculated risk on the Safavid part, since (in spite of their might and wealth) Mughals were militarily weaker than Safavids. In February 1649, Shah ‘Abbas II proclaimed his conquest of Qandahar. During the siege, the Mughal governor was threatened with the might of the soldiers who had “even defeated the Ottomans at Yerevan.” Notably, among Mughals officials offering submission in Qandahar was one Rumi Khan.

Upon the first Mughal attempt to reconquer Qandahar that same year, Shah ‘Abbas II sent a deprecatory letter to his officials, mocking the Mughal as a mere vālī of Hindustan. More details on Indian failure were sent to the governor of Shirwan in several letters, probably

281 Idem., I, Sh.146.
282 Idem., I, Sh.152 and 153.
subsequently filtering to the Ottoman domains. The governor of the province of Gurjistan was also informed about the destruction of no less than 20,000 Mughal soldiers. Following the tone set by the Shah, the beşlerbeği of Herat insinuated that the conquest of Qandahar would eventually lead to the conquest of all of India, and a contemporary chronicle portrayed Indians as cowards and perhaps infidels. The harsh winter and lack of fodder and reinforcements led to the failure of the first Mughal expedition in 1649. In 1652, after several months of siege, the Mughal forces had to withdraw because of the Uzbek raids around Kabul. The Mughal defeat in Qandahar was never fully acknowledged. As insinuated hyperbolically by the Mughal prince Aurangzeb, Mughals would not only reconquer Qandahar, but also all of Iran afterwards. Of course, these conquests were never attempted.

Unexpectedly, the Mughals were relatively isolated from alliances with other Muslim states, and a rapprochement with Ottomans was seen as desirable at the end of the 1640s. Less than a decade after the break in Mughal and Ottoman relations seemed irreparable, diplomatic contacts were re-established. The ostensible reason was Ottoman long-standing interest in Uzbek matters. They had sent some men and weapons to Transoxiana in 1560s, although to little avail. Yet, every time when there was conflict in the region, as in 1611, when Vali Muhammad stepped down, there was an influx of Uzbeks not only in India, but also in Mecca and even Anatolia, bringing information about Transoxiana and India into the Ottoman realm. Similarly, in 1649, a new Ottoman embassy to India was occasioned by interactions with Uzbek ambassadors, who arrived in Istanbul in March 1649, coinciding with a Persian embassy, which had brought several

\[283\] For the Safavid sources, see the masteful translation and introduction by B. Hoffmann, Persische Geschichte 1694-1835 erlebt, erinnert und erfunden, Das rustam at-tawarih in deutscher Bearbeitung, 2 vols. (Bamberg, 1986). Hoffmann strives to reproduce the rhetorics of Persian, making her translation very close to the original. For Mustafa ‘Ali, see section three of this dissertation.

\[284\] R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, I, Sh.105.
elephants which had been captured in clashes with the Mughals as a present for the new sultan. Thus, the power relations from about 15 years ago, when Ottomans proudly presented horses taken from the Safavids to the Mughal ambassador, became completely inverted.\(^{285}\)

Suddenly, Ottomans were in the position to make favorable alliances, some of which would have been explicitly anti-Mughal. The letter which was presented by the Uzbeks stated that the Mughal attack on Balkh had been an act of aggression (\textit{ve ol herc ü merc esnâsinda Hind canibinden dahi nice hücüm sudür bulduğu}).\(^{286}\) Yet, Ottoman statesmen had been aware for some time that the mediation of the Mughals was crucial to power relations in central Asia. As noted above, the first missive of the Ottomans to the Mughals in 1626 had concerned Ay Muhammad Khan, the son of the former Khan of the Transoxiana (hence the uncle of Imam Quli Khan) and his safe return to Bukhara from the Ottoman court. Instead of criticizing the Mughal aggression in Balkh, Ottoman elites decided to dispatch a conciliatory message.

Accordingly, in April 1649, Sultan Mehmed IV sent out Sayyid Muhyi al-Din, who had already acted as ambassador in the previous Ottoman embassy which had occasioned such a heated response. The ambassador reached the Mughal court through Surat, in contrast to his predecessors, who had been directed to reach the court through the Sindi port of Thatta. The stature of Shah Jahan was somewhat elevated in relation to the previous Ottoman letter (\textit{akârîm-i salâtîn-i a 'zam-i ekâlîm-i Hind}). The word \textit{khalîfa} was mentioned only once, rather coyly, in a Qur’anic verse rather than an adjective referring to a specific place. The Ottoman sultan himself is defined modestly as \textit{bu muhlis-i vâlâîy-i cû}. General admonitions to strive for harmony among rulers (and implicitly, direct the animosity toward infidel enemies) were repeated, as unity

among rulers and justice were preconditions for avoiding *fitna*. The Ottoman Sultan was asking Shah Jahan to mediate between Nazir Muhammad Khan and his son ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Khan. While the Ottoman letter seemed innocuous in its emphasis on unity among rulers of the world, particularly Hanafi Muslims, the Mughal court would not have missed that Ottomans had been informed about the Mughal attempt to conquer parts of Transoxiana.\(^{287}\)

In contrast to the unpleasant atmosphere which surrounded Ottoman embassies a decade ago, Muhyi al-Din, the Ottoman ambassador, was received with fanfare. Shah Jahan forwarded a *farman* and a robe of honor through a royal macebearer. The superintendent was ordered to issue 10,000 rupees from the state exchequer in order to assist the Ottoman in the course of his journey to the court. He received 2000 rupees in Burhanpur, 10,000 in Mandu and another 10,000 in Ujjain.\(^{288}\) The ambassador was escorted by a Mughal nobleman and received at the court in Lahore in early October 1651. He presented the letter and two Arab horses whose saddles were adorned with jewels and pearls. In addition, he also offered five of his own horses, receiving in turn a handsome robe of honor, a jeweled turban ornament and a dagger along with 15,000 rupees. No uncomfortable incidents occurred.

In November of that year, the Mughal Sayyid Ahmad Sa‘id was entrusted with an embassy to the Ottomans. He was given a robe of honor, a horse, an increase to his *mansab* and 2000 rupees. Unlike a decade ago, the gifts for the Ottoman sultan were costly and rare: a jeweled turban ornament and a sword valued at one *lakh* of rupees. The ambassador was ordered to complete his pilgrimage before going to the Ottoman court, in part because Shah Jahan


\(^{288}\) The envoy of Bijapur was at the same time given an elephant, 7000 rupees for himself, two elephants, a robe of honor, jeweled *sarpech*, and aigrette in the worth of 80,000 rupees to his ruler.
intended to send a large monetary amount of several lakhs of rupees for charity. On the same date, the “ambassador from Rum” was dismissed as well. As a parting gift, he was given a robe of honor, a horse with a gilded saddle and 15,000 rupees. However, we are also informed he was given 60,000 rupees and other goods in the course of his stay at the court. The amounts were astronomical for that period, making the mission of the ambassador superbly profitable.

In the response to the Ottomans, lengthy titles referring to Shah Jahan were stressed, including Sâhib-i Qirân-i Thâni and Pâdishâh-i Ghâzi. The letter relates Nazir Muhammad Khan’s reinstitution, his subsequent flight from Balkh, and his death in Iraq. ‘Adil Khan of Bijapur is mentioned, and some of his gifts are forwarded onto the Ottoman Sultan. The letter asks for an early dismissal of Sayyid Ahmad. Most surprisingly, it seems to have been written in Arabic, lending it a somewhat dubious or at least marginal character. Yet, the Ottoman historian Na‘ima mentions Sayyid Ahmad extensively, although he calls him “Sayyid Mehmed” for some unclear reason. At the Ottoman court, Sayyid Ahmad received several costly furs, a horse, a dagger set with emeralds, twenty slave girls and 6000 ducats. The ambassador made a good impression on the Ottomans, and he was acknowledged as a highly cultured man who quoted Ottoman poetry in praise of the Bosphorus. Although there was much deliberation to send a person of similar education as an ambassador to the Mughals, the eventual choice fell on the brother of the late grand vizier Salih, the müteferrika Zülfikar Ağa, to the chagrin and

The Indian ambassador was disenchanted with the companion and suggested that it would not be appropriate for them to travel together, as he intended to pass through the lands of the Yemeni imams, where an Ottoman would not be welcome. Consequently, the two ambassadors parted ways at Mecca.

The Ottoman letter which Zülfikar Ağa carried includes a long and careful introduction. Shah Jahan’s titles extend over several lines, stressing his role as the protector of Hanafi school, and the commander of Sind, the keeper of Kabulistan and Ghazna, and the successor of several Persian kings. The titulature may seem conventional, but it offers several significant observations. First, efforts were made to sound effusive without conceding the titles coveted and contested by Shah Jahan and the Ottoman sultans (khalîfa and sâhib-i qirân). Second, it is remarkable that there are no stable titles for the Indian rulers in Ottoman letters. As we have seen, the titulature varied greatly in each Ottoman letter to Shah Jahan, covering a spectrum from adulatory to dismissive. In contrast to the cautious introduction, the final part of the letter stresses the special position held by Ottomans. The Ottoman dynasty is entrusted with the protection of the faith and they are respected by world rulers as the holders of the site of the dergâh-i saltanat penâh and the hilâfat-i destgâh, to which Uzbeks had applied for assistance. It is added in subsequent lines that the Indian ambassador was given audience and lavish gifts at the serîr-i hilâfat-mesîrimiz. In spite of distance which is evoked several times in the letter (imtidâd-i masâfatîhi [...] ba’id olmakla), mutual love and friendship are stressed, giving

292 A note on his travel expenditures can be found in Ottoman archives. See document IE. HR 1/29, 1054M. Also see section three, chapter five.
sufficient reason for a continuation of the correspondence \textit{(ebvâb-i resilat küşâde tutulmak)}.\textsuperscript{293} Early dismissal of Zülfikar Ağa is requested.

The embassy was sent from Istanbul in June 1653. The governor of Surat reported in January that Zülfikar Ağa, who is described as the brother of a grand vizier under the previous Qaysar of Rum, arrived with an epistle. He was given 12,000 rupees out of the treasury, with additional funds along the way: 5000 at Sultanpur, 12,000 in cash and goods from Aurangzeb’s exchequer in Burhanpur, 5000 at Ujjain by the divan of the Mughal prince Murad Bakhsh, yet another 12,000 from the treasury and 3000 from the fort commander himself.\textsuperscript{294} In April 1654, the ambassador arrived at the court, offering a jeweled girdle, a dagger and two Rumi horses, one of which had a gem-studded saddle. His own present for the emperor consisted of nine Arab horses and other gifts. He obtained a robe of honor, 30,000 rupees and his own private mansion equipped with high-value household furnishings at the expense of Shah Jahan himself. Additionally, he was given a golden container for betel (\textit{paan}). Zülfikar Ağa’s reputation as a \textit{gourmand} was not high since the “cabbage incident” and one wonders how he reacted to the exotic Indian delicacy of \textit{paan}; in contrast, the Safavid ruler Shah ‘Abbas II appreciated \textit{paan} as a true \textit{connoisseur}, along with Lahori packing.\textsuperscript{295}

Zülfikar Ağa attended upon another Mughal prince who gave him a robe of honor, a jeweled turban ornament and more than 20,000 rupees. At the end of the month, he was also awarded an additional amount of 30,000 rupees from the treasury and two Turkî horses with gold saddles. Zülfikar Ağa then visited princess Jahanara and she granted him a robe of honor and

\textsuperscript{295} R. Islam, \textit{A Calendar of Documents}, I, Ab. 239, p.443, in 1661. See the next section, chapter six, for excruciating elaboration of Zülfikar Ağa’s predilection for cabbage.
5000 rupees. The Ottoman ambassador also received 15,000 rupees from another grandee a few days later. In June, he was also given a golden *mohur* of 400 *tolas* and a silver rupee of the same weight.\(^{296}\) At the end of August, he was dismissed, having been granted a robe of honor, a jeweled turban ornament, a sword and a shield with enameled appurtenances, a piebald steed with gold saddle and 30,000 rupees. The complete amount given to him is indicated as 2 *lakhs* and 75,000 rupees. Qa‘im Beg accompanied him as the “ambassador to Rum”, bringing various gifts which included a dagger studded with diamonds and rubies, a jeweled necklace, a pendant of pearls supposedly worth one *lakh* of rupees, a girdle studded with diamonds and rubies worth 40,000 rupees, a crystal hookah with ‘*itr-i jahāngīrī* and 10,000 fabrics manufactured in Gujarat, Kashmir and elsewhere, also worth one *lakh* rupees. Since Shah Jahan had been informed of frequent occurrence of pestilence, he also sent an armlet for the Qaysar of Rum, made of bezoar stone, into which precious stones such as emeralds, rubies, sapphires and pearls were inserted.\(^{297}\)

We will learn from Na‘ima that Zülfikar, “the Bosnian ass”, was a culturally insensitive *nouveau riche*,\(^ {298}\) yet his presence at the Mughal court occasioned an extraordinary flood of gifts and money. We also have a miniature from the Mughal court which seems to depict him, and there is nothing dismissive about the way he is portrayed.\(^ {299}\) Did the lack of verbal and cultural skill of the envoy not matter? Was Shah Jahan expressing his munificence to indicate he was pleased with the most recent letter? Did he need an ally against the Persians? Was this an expression of Mughal superiority over the Ottomans and thus a subtle form of mockery, or was it

\(^{296}\) The *tola* as a unit of weight continued to be used under the British rule in India and in east Africa as well until the end of the nineteenth century. It was equivalent to 11.6 grams, which would make each of the presents weigh more than four kilograms.

\(^{297}\) Kamboh, *’Amal-i Sālih*, III, p.177, pp.185-6, pp.190-2.

\(^{298}\) See chapter 6, section three.

\(^{299}\) See the image appendix.
a “bribe”, sent in order to impress the court in Istanbul? Only a detailed study of all reports about his embassy can yield an appropriate answer to those questions.

Whether he was disdained or liked at the Mughal court, Zülfikar Ağa did not enjoy his enormous wealth for long. In October 1655, a letter written by Qa‘im Beg and dispatched via Jiddah informed that the ailing Ottoman ambassador had taken out 30,000 rupees, a casket of jewels and a few other articles while traveling to Mecca. The ship on which most of the gifts and the money were loaded approached Mursa Umar, struck a reef and foundered due to the ignorance of the pilot and a hurricane. Zülfikar Ağa drowned with most of the crew. He received more gifts than any other Ottoman ambassador before him, yet as we will see, the Mughal response to the Ottomans was again acerbic. Should we blame Zülfikar Ağa and his personal flaws for this renewed tone of animosity in Mughal and Ottoman correspondence, as Na‘ima seems to suggest?

We had seen that with the exception of Humayun, the weakest among Mughal rulers, all Mughals expressed strong disinclinations toward Ottomans. Shah Jahan continued this tradition established by his grandfather and father. His court historians tell us that whenever he heard about cruelty and ferocity toward the subjects of the Ottoman realm, supposedly perpetrated by the “emperors of Constantinople”, or among Safavids and Uzbeks, he became saddened.300 In spite of the attempts to encourage Ottoman attacks on Baghdad, the portrait of Murad IV in the official Mughal chronicles from this period is far from flattering and it stresses his cruelty toward his adversaries and the purported boorishness of Ottomans, a favored *topos* of the time.301

301 Kamboh, *‘Amal-i Sâlih*, II.
We are also informed by Mughal sources that when Shah Jahan was reproached for his extravagant name by an unidentified Ottoman ambassador (just as the mention of names Khudavand, Akbar and Jahangir had been avoided by the Ottomans), his poet ingeniously played upon the numeric value of Hind and *Jahân*, equating them and affirming Shah Jahan’s right to universal rule.\(^{302}\)

Although the antagonism toward Safavids and Uzbeks and the isolation among Muslim rulers led to a new rapprochement with the Ottomans, the basic tone of Mughal letters was still one of irritation. Shah Jahan’s response, after a long prelude praising the prophet, stated that Zülfikar Ağa had been admitted to the *talsîm-i djânab-i khilâfat-makân*. In the following lines, that point is further emphasized, as the *dâr al-khilâfa* is explicitly defined as Shahjahanabad. Of course, the ambiguity was intended, since Shah Jahan had previously claimed Lahore and Agra as the site of the Caliphate, now moving it to the newly constructed Shahjahanabad in what is today north Delhi.\(^{303}\) The caliphate was movable and it followed the royal court.

While rejoicing over the friendship and unity of Hanafi rulers, the letter also noted that the unity between rulers and the many exchanges are necessary, but this is a strange unity (*begâna tarz-i yakânagi*) without wisdom. Ottomans again failed to address the Padshah properly, probably on the account of the youth of the new sultan and his companions, who are also young (*dar avâ’îl-i ‘ahd-i shabâband*) and inexperienced (*ghayr ashinâ*) in dealing with those who are superior to them. Shah Jahan responded in person this time, being, in contrast to


\(^{303}\) Of course, neither Topkapı nor Shahjahanabad escaped the ravages of time. Curiously, both had some of their grounds demolished to accommodate train stations. Arguably, the fate of Shahjahanabad was worse, since a considerable section of the imperial palace was destroyed in the British attempt to make Delhi their new colonial capital in 1911. S. Blake, *Shahjahanabad: The Sovereign City in Mughal India, 1639-1739* (Cambridge, 1991).
the sultan and his advisors, lenient and familiar with the ways of the world (lîk az mà kih qadrân u pàya shenâs-îm). The sultan is referred to the first letter sent to Murad Khan several years ago, a copy of which is included as reference. Shah Jahan suggested that Ottomans studied it (ihtiyâtan bâ în khirad-nàma) if they were inclined to continue the correspondence! Henceforth, he will only respond to them if proper form is observed. Otherwise, the friendship does not necessitate letters and mediators (va illâ dostî na dar martaba ast ki muhtâdj-i bargashtan-i nâmà u fîristâdan-i miyânchi bâshad). Yet, the letter closes on a slightly more reconciliatory tone, requesting that the response about the condition of the sultan (va khâtir-khvâhân-i ittilâ’ bar ahvâl-i khayr-me’al-i ân farazanda-i livâ-i shaukat ast), which is more important than gifts, be sent quickly to the Mughals.

The Mughal ambassador Qa’im Beg arrived in Istanbul in 1655 after a journey of twenty-two months, most of which were spent in the Red Sea region and Mecca. The initial description of the embassy by J. Thévenot, a contemporary French traveler, is somewhat contradictory. He states that the ambassador and his entourage of fewer than 80 men were ill, and that some of them were reduced to wearing rags (la pluspart tous nuds, n’ayans qu’vn haillon). They were not honored with a welcoming procession; instead, there was a secret meeting with the Sultan. Yet, in the course of the audience, the Indian ambassador presented the Sultan with “considerable presents.” Thévenot succeeded in convincing the kapîcî to let him into the Topkapî grounds,

304 R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, II, Ott.397; Feridun, Mûnše’ât, II (1265), pp.65-67; Feridun, Mûnše’ât, II (1274), pp.159-61.
305 “On me dist qu’il auoit fait au Grand Seigneur en cette audience vn present fort considerable, sçauoir vne ceinture toute de diamans, vn chapelet de mesme, & vn candinier ou poignard, dont le pommeau estoit vn diamant pesant huit sequinsou six cent grains, qui fut estimé cinq cens bourses, ou deux cens cinquante mille piastres; plusieurs y adjoustent une boête pleine de diaman bien cachetrée auec vn escrit dessus, qui portoit qu’elle ne deuoit estre ouuerte que par le Grand Seigneur, mais cela n’est pas asseuré, quoi qu’il en soit, ce present fut estimé six cens mille piastres; le Grand Seigneur lui fit donner vn KURK [sic] ou veste fourrée.” J. Thévenot, Relation d’vn Voyage fait av Levant (Paris, 1664-89), I, Chap. LVI, p.160ff. The embassy is mentioned even on the frontispice to lure the
but he did not dare to enter the second court. He was able to mingle with some members of the Mughal embassy while waiting for a glimpse of the ambassador himself. In accordance with the general description of embassies given by Uzunçarşılı, the second court was filled with janissaries who were as quiet as statues, waiting for the ceremony of payments.\textsuperscript{306} The ambassador was in the Divan hall, eating with the Viziers before being presented to the Sultan. Meanwhile, the gifts brought by the ambassador were passed through the hands of more than two hundred kapıcıs before being presented to the sultan. Most of them were precious textiles and spices.\textsuperscript{307} The presents were estimated at three million piasters by the merchants in Istanbul, “\textit{dort ne s’estonneront point ceux qui sçauent quelles sont les riches du grand Mogol}” commented Thévenot.\textsuperscript{308} The formal audience was brief and the ambassador and his men appeared wearing vests of golden brocades. In the following days, the ambassador was feted by various state dignitaries in Üsküdar, where he was taken on night sailings of the Bosphorus and given a selection of royal horses. According to Thévenot, the aim of the embassy was to incite Ottomans to war with the Shah of Iran while the “\textit{Grand Mogol}, purportedly a “\textit{grand ennemy du Roy de Perse}”, would attack him from the other end of the empire. A spectacular display was arranged subsequently to the honor of the ambassador with the Sultan and the members of his court marching through Istanbul. Thévenot does not tell us how the embassy was concluded.
Hammer, mostly relying on Na‘ima, offers additional information: Qa‘im Beg, the Mughal ambassador, was introduced by two hundred and sixty kapıçısı, and he brought a magnificent sabre with set diamonds and a dagger. His demands included: Ottoman assistance in the conquest of Qandahar, a special prayer location reserved for Indian pilgrims in Mecca and an architect to finish the tomb Nur Mahal in Ahmadabad. Only the last favor was granted. Ma’anzada Hüseyin Ağa, the son of Fakhr al-Din Ma’an and a chamberlain, was sent as the Ottoman ambassador. Qa‘im Beg initially went to Aleppo and Ma’anzada Hüseyin Ağa to Diyarbakır, but they both were supposed to embark together in Basra.309 In 1657, the Mughal court learned that their ambassador Qa‘im Beg, while returning to India, had reached Aleppo where he and his son-in-law were poisoned in an intrigue, presumably involving an affair with his host’s slave girl.310

Yet the Ottoman letter sent to the Mughals in 1656 addresses Shah Jahan with exceptional respect, describing India as the seat of the hilāfat-nisāb. Most significantly, the Ottoman response was singularly meek and even obsequious, including two pages of praise and a dozen lines of direct address to Shah Jahan, including hâmî-i bilād-i ehl-i sünnet, hilâfet-iyâb, mercî‘î ekârim salâtîn-i sâhib-i temkîn-i ekâlîm-i vâsi‘a-i Hind, who is comparable to an ocean! The author of the letter expressed regret that there was no proper respect in the letter brought by Zülfikar Ağa, alluding that in the face of Mughal greatness, no epithets were suitable. In the haste of conveying suitable greetings, the bridles became too relaxed (‘înān-sust) and the swift

messenger ended up stuck in the mud (pā dar gīl) in the valley of adjectives which relate to the caliphate (vādîy-i elkâb-i khilâfat intisâblarında).\(^\text{311}\)

The tone of the Ottoman letter provokes some question about its genuinity. It is tempting to see it as a forgery composed by an ambassador or a Mughal subject in order to flatter and please the pādishâh of India. But there are many arguments in favor of its authenticity: it is written in Ottoman rather than Persian, and it is included in Feridun and other Ottoman letter collections. Was it read as a sarcastic response by subsequent Ottoman generations, especially since Shah Jahan is called kāsir-i ruʿūs al-rafadâʿ precisely at the moment of his failure against Safavid forces? Or are the honorifics intended to encourage him to renew his attack on them? Ultimately, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, we must concede that the letter is genuine. Why would Ottomans send such a self-deprecatory letter to the irascible and remote Shah Jahan? Conditions of the empire offer a solution to this riddle.

In spite of the flattery of being diplomatically courted by Uzbeks, Safavids and Mughals, the decades of 1640-1660s were the scene of some of the worst crisis for the Ottomans. Ibrahim I was the last male in the house of Osman until his son was born in 1641. With the execution of the competent grand vizier Kara Mustafa Paşa in 1644, the balance of powers in the empire became unstable. In 1648, Sultan Ibrahim was executed, and there was no çıkma ceremony because of the empty state treasury due to the protracted war in Crete. The new sultan, Mehmed IV, was a seven-year-old boy. In 1648, the Ottoman state deficit amounted to 150 million aspers. In the course of the next decade, public discontent was frequently expressed by the janissaries and the sipâhis, leading to executions and a quick rotation of persons in power, including the

grand viziers, the chief eunuchs, the şeyhülislâm, the baş defterdâr, the çavuşbaşı, and the kapudan paşa. No grand vizier remained in power for longer than three months; out of eighteen of them, only one died of a natural death. In addition, the presence of the kadızâdelis contributed to further instability. 312 At this tumultuous point, the Mughal ambassador arrived in Istanbul. Some stability was indeed regained when Köprülü Mehmed became the grand vizier in 1656. But misfortune struck again in 1660, when a large fire devastated parts of Istanbul.313

Two aspects may have been decisive in the production of the flattering letter to the Mughals. One of them was a perceived Safavid resurgence, signaled by the conquest of Qandahar, which was almost equal to Baghdad as a nodal point of trade routes. Mughals and Ottomans both had reasons to fear a strong Safavid state. Yet, in spite of repeated evocations of shared Hanafi identity, there was little will to fight against Persians on either side. Shah Jahan had been bitterly disappointed by his campaigns to the north and west of his realm, and the Ottomans were not capable of opening a front against the Safavids. Probably the answer to our questions about unexpected Ottoman eagerness to interact with Mughals lies in Ottoman need for Indian commodities, and Indian money, coded in the two letters examined above as a ghurfân (forgiveness) given by Shah Jahan, and his emphasis that Ottoman ambassadors were given gifts, while Mughal ambassadors in the Ottoman empire did not require any from the Ottoman side. Perhaps Shah Jahan was indeed offering monetary incentives as he was envisioning another Ottoman attack on Safavids, during which he could regain Qandahar. However, it is also likely that he was striving for diplomatic satisfaction even more than combined military operations.

Curiously, interactions between Mughals and Ottomans collapsed once again. To the Ottomans’ further misfortune, their envoy Ma’an-zada Hüseyin Ağa arrived in India during the Mughal war of succession. He met with one of the contenders, prince Murad Bakhsh, but otherwise did not accomplish anything. It is remarkable that this occurred at a moment when both Mughal and Ottoman correspondents were willing to make concessions. Shah Jahan sent rich gifts to the Ottomans with Zülfikar Ağa, while Ottomans reciprocated by granting the Mughal pâdishâh the titles which he desired, presumably hoping for an even more lavish display of generosity. Yet much of the wealth fell to the bottom of the sea with Zülfikar Ağa, while the flattering missive never reached its intended target, the deposed Shah Jahan. According to his preference, the reader may see this temporary conclusion to Ottoman-Mughal correspondence as one of history’s hidden tragedies or a scene from the theater of the absurd.

In the turmoils of the following decade, in which the Ottoman and the Mughal empires went through crises of succession, Safavids could feel comfortable and even superior, receiving homage from claimants to the Uzbek throne and building the Chihil Sutûn palace in 1648. The Mughals, who had been one of the main supporters of the Safavids in previous generations, are subtly depicted as inferior and defeated, especially in the Chihil Sutûn painting of a Hindu woman ready to immolate herself. Humayun himself appears very dark and Indianized, without historical justification, as his ancestry was mostly central Asian. In a turnabout, the Mughals have come to assume the negative role which had been played by the Ottomans in sixteenth-century Safavid ideology.\(^\text{314}\)

Conversely, pleasant interactions with Ottomans increased. Shah ‘Abbas II had informed the Ottomans of his success in repelling the Mughal forces at Qandahar, sending them an elephant and Indian commodities. He also sent a letter to the hākim of Basra, offering his friendship. By the late 1650s, it was possible for the Safavid grand vizier (i’timād al-daula) to effortlessly seek Ottoman confirmation concerning the status of an English ambassador in Smyrna. Such an arrangement of relatively free passage of men and information would have been seen as impossible by most Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal statesmen of the preceding century, and yet it had come to pass. Once again, Realpolitik mattered more than ideological alliances or personal preferences of the rulers.

Significantly, the contemporary traveler E. Kaempfer, in keeping with European venerable tradition of Persophilia, defined the three monarchs of the Islamic oikoumene as follows: the Ottoman sultan is limited in his freedom by his rebellious slaves, and the Mughal by his male relatives who compete for the throne. Only the Safavid prince is a true ruler who is allowed to make his own decisions. Of course, this ideological presentation was only possible after the turbulent decade of 1650s, in the course of which the entire upper class of the Ottoman palace was replaced, while in the Mughal empire a civil war erupted. Kaempfer portrays this

316 N. Manucci, Storia do Mogor, vol.I, chap.VIII. In this instance, the ambassador asked the Shah for pecuniary assistance to the dethroned Charles II for the services given at Hormuz fifty years earlier! The ambassador was given carpets and cloth made of gold, brocade, velvet and silk before being told that because of the insecurity of the roads and the sea neither money nor cavalry could be provided. Since the secret instructions given to the ambassador included a letter addressed to the ruler of Morocco on the same issue, we may assume that the exiled Charles II was rather desperate.
state of things as immutable and naturalistic, whereas in fact it is a mere glimpse of the moment. After the civil war, the Mughals rose to yet new heights of wealth and glory.

2. ‘Alamgir: India the wealthy

During the upheavals of the seventeenth century in Eurasia, Mughal India had appeared to be the most stable and wealthy of all large states, even compared to China, where there was a change in dynasties from Ming to Qing. However, in the late 1650s, there was a period in which the state seemed at the brink of collapse, drawing the attention of many observers outside of India. In 1658, Shah ‘Abbas II sent an ambassador to Istanbul, with details on the Mughal succession war (*ikhtilâf-i davâ‘i- i avlâd- i pâdishâh- i mazbûr*). Shah Jahan, once again described by the Safavids as merely the *vâlî* of Hindustan, had reportedly died. The Safavids proclaimed support for prince Murad Bakhsh.\(^{318}\) Indeed, in a letter written to the prince in that same year, the Shah had promised that thousands of Safavid soldiers were ready for a year-long conquest, as they were gathering in Kabul and some of them were even being sent to India via Surat, especially the *tufekchis*.\(^ {319}\) Prince Dara Shukoh, a strong contender for the throne, was also advised by the Shah to follow his ancestors and come to the Safavid realm.\(^{320}\)

Rumi and Ottoman echoes also resurface during this period in India. It seems that at this time, most men in charge of Mughal artillery were western Europeans. Yet, as Dara Shukoh was retreating to Lahore, his second in command of artillery was a soldier called Rumi Khan, who

\(^{319}\) Idem., II, Ott.431.
\(^{320}\) Idem., II, Ott.433.
remained loyal to him. While fleeing from Aurangzeb’s forces, his brother Shah Shuja applied to the ruler of Arakan (Burma) to let him stay there until the season for westward ocean travel to Persia, Mecca or the Ottoman realm. After his death, rumors were common that he absconded to the Safavid realm and then to Constantinople, where he supposedly gathered much money in order to fight his brother. Regardless of the actual presence of Mughal princes in Constantinople, this idea seems to have become somewhat of a cliché, as we had seen in the case of other Indian princes and pretenders. In reality, most claimants to Indian thrones preferred to stay at the Safavid court, hoping to follow Humayun’s example.

While the Ottoman recovery was slow, the Mughal war of succession did not last long. Aurangzeb, the successor of Shah Jahan, has been portrayed as a bigot and a parricide since the first European travelers commented upon the beginning of his reign. Unlike his forefathers, he is rarely referred to by his regnal name, ‘Alamgir. He was crowned in 1559, having defeated his brothers and their allies. His reputation for intolerance has been reinforced in the twentieth century, through several volumes about his life and times by J. Sarkar. In India, he is usually juxtaposed with Akbar, and his character is often blamed for the ultimate downfall of the Mughals. Certainly, signs of crisis are available for those who seek them. The re-introduction of the *djizya* in 1677-79, which had not been demanded from non-Muslims for almost two hundred years, was symbolic of the re-formulation of hegemonic terms established under Akbar. It seems that Mughal politics of incorporation were failing under Aurangzeb: he repeatedly had to renegotiate the terms of agreement with Rajput kings, he certainly failed to submit the Marathas

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and the Sikhs to his authority, and he antagonized his Afghani allies as well.\textsuperscript{324} In 1668-9, Aurangzeb stopped displaying himself at the balcony of the palace during sunrise. Court patronage of historiography and music was subsequently suspended. Anecdotes abound about admonishing his children for immodest clothing and forbidding ostentatious celebrations of Nowruz.

Although Aurangzeb indeed reintroduced the \textit{djizya} and raided several temples, historical reality is more complex: Aurangzeb is also known to have protected Hindu temples, and his tolerant great-grandfather Akbar killed rebellious yogis without much ado.\textsuperscript{325} Surprisingly, the composition of noblemen in his court indicates that there were more Hindus than ever before. In many ways, Aurangzeb’s reign also marks the apogee of Mughal power. Once the initial shock passed about the deposition of Shah Jahan during his lifetime, continuities were more apparent than interruptions. Under Aurangzeb, we encounter many of the same hegemonic aspects present under other Mughal rulers. Men from Europe, Iranians, Turanis and others were still drawn to India. They arrived in Mughal lands and offered their service there, not only as military specialists, but also as physicians, clock-makers and jewelers. French goldsmiths were in his service as well. N. Manucci, a somewhat mysterious soldier of fortune who spent most of his life in India as a soldier and untrained physician, encountered Englishmen who served Shah Jahan as bombardiers, and who were sent to confiscate the property of a deceased English ambassador.\textsuperscript{326}

\textsuperscript{324} It is significant that Khushhal Khan, the leader of the Afghani Khatak tribe, who revered Shah Jahan and bitterly opposed ‘Alamgir, does not mention the Ottomans at all in his collection of poetry. The coordinates of his world are limited to Iraq, which seems to be a paradise-like place, and Mecca, which indicates a certain ambivalence. See C.E. Biddhulp, \textit{Afghan Poetry of the Seventeenth Century, Being Selections from the Poems of Khush Hal Khan Khatak with translations and grammatical introduction} (Lahore, 1969).


\textsuperscript{326} N. Manucci, \textit{Storia do Mogor}, I, chap. XIX.
Indeed, Aurangzeb’s reign coincided with the largest boom of Indian commodities in Eurasia in the early modern period: from Brazil to Borneo and from Ethiopia to England, Indian textiles were preferred to all others. Much of the wealth entering India was spent on Aurangzeb’s Deccani campaigns against other Muslim rulers. His intention was the conquest of Bijapur and Golconda and the extension of his forces into Arakan and Assam, forming a notable contrast to his father’s endeavors to conquer the northwestern regions of Transoxiana and Qandahar, in which Aurangzeb had also participated for years as a prince, without much success. In 1686, after Golconda had been reduced to the status of a vassal state, Bijapur was conquered, leaving most of the south Asian peninsula in the hands of the Mughals. No other Indian state except the Mauryas, whose memory had faded since their heyday in the second century B.C., ever commanded over almost the entire peninsula. Almost a fourth of the world’s population lived in Aurangzeb’s domain.

The connection between the global surge in demand for Indian commodities and Aurangzeb’s conquest of the Deccan has yet not been studied. Yet, his contemporaries understood that the Mughal emperor was perhaps the most powerful monarch of his time. Decorum was strictly observed, and it was rumored among Europeans that Aurangzeb would only touch letters which come from Ottoman sultans (grand signiors). Bernier, in contrast, alleged that this privilege was only granted to Safavid ambassadors, and only on special occasions. It was commonly agreed that all other letters, in accordance with the grandeur of the kings who send them, were put in the hands of the grand officers of the court, who presented them to the emperor; and the more powerful the king from whom the letter came, through fewer hands it passed. In Tavernier’s influential formulation, “For the present state of Europe and Asia

327 F. Bernier, Voyages, p.7.
is very well known in the court of the great Mogul, and the difference between the sovereigns of both in reference to their grandeur and puissance. There is no stranger entering the kingdom of whose arrival the nabab is informed by governor of the frontier province. If he is a person of ingenuity, he is sent to the court and well-received, whereupon he informs them of his country.”

Titles given to the Mughal emperor by his vassals were impressive, including not only the familiar ‘ālam-pañh and hazrat-i salãmat but also the more daring formulations of qibla-i dîn-u-dunyâ and qibla-yi du djahânân. Embassies from the Netherlands, Batavia, France, England and other parts of Eurasia and the Indian Ocean reinforced Aurangzeb’s stature as one of the most powerful rulers of his time, even before the death of his father in 1666 and his definitive ascent to power. While European embassies were mostly commercial in nature, others presented obeisance and presumably hoped for a suitable reward.

Two ambassadors who alleged to represent the rulers of Abyssinia and Yemen arrived at Surat when it was besieged by Maratha forces in 1664 and lost most of their presents. Yet, they were given khil’ats of brocade and six thousand rupees. The Ethiopian negus was sent one as well, in addition to trumpets of silver, kettle drums (insignia of royalty) and a khandjar covered with rubies. They are relevant to us, since the Muslim was a slave trader familiar with the Ottoman empire, while his Armenian companion, Murad, was born in Aleppo. As indicated by Bernier, Aurangzeb gave money generously to the ambassadors, assuming that they would spend

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328 Tavernier, A collection of relations and treaties not printed among his first six voyages, relation IV, of what passed in the Negotiation of the deputies which were at Persia and Indies (London, 1680), pp.39-40.
it on Indian commodities, and indeed, they spent the allowance on ornamented silk, fine cotton cloth for shirts, decorated in gold and silver, and spices.331

European and African embassies were not the only ones to arrive at the Mughal court of Aurangzeb. The Sharif of Mecca sent apologies in 1665 for not having accepted Aurangzeb’s presents two years earlier. The ambassadors brought a broom from the tomb of the prophet. The vâlî of Basra (called “prince” by Manucci) also sent an embassy, mainly in order to avail of trading opportunities, as ambassadors were free from taxes.332 In 1667-8, the ruler of Kashgar arrived in Delhi, seeking Aurangzeb’s help against his son. The elderly king was eventually sent to Mecca, but eventually, he returned to Delhi and died there.333

In his second year on the throne, Aurangzeb received an embassy from Shah ‘Abbas II. The letter emphasized friendly relations between the two houses with a somewhat condescending undertone.334 Another missive by Shah ‘Abbas II was sent in 1661, expressing delight in gifts brought by Budaq Sultan, the Persian ambassador to India. The Shah especially appreciated the betel leaf (paan) sent wrapped in cloth Lahori packing (bar djâma-i Lahauri). In turn, a khil‘at-i poshida was sent through a ghulâm of the shah. Iranians were again allowed to travel to India.335

In his own letter, Aurangzeb courteously alluded to the friendship established between Tahmasp and Humayun, flattering the Persians, who then sent melons and other commodities desired by

332 N. Manucci, *Storia do Mogor* II, p.106f. In some instances, as for an English ambassador who arrived in Masulipatnam in 1700, the orders were ignored, and on his way to the Mughal court, the ambassador was forced to pay customs duty and sell many of his animals. Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, II, p.357.
335 Idem., I, Ab.239.
the Mughals. It seemed that cordial relations would be re-established, all the more so since Aurangzeb’s mother was Persian, unlike the Rajput mothers of his predecessors Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

Yet, eyewitnesses indicate some anxiety focused on the protocol at the Mughal court. It was not certain whether the Persians would follow it. Initially, the Safavid ambassadors of 1661 were not permitted to sit down or deliver the letter directly to the hands of the Mughal ruler. Eventually, a compromise was established, as one of the princes took the letter from the ambassador and gave it to the emperor. When the ambassador presented his greetings in the more informal Persian manner, placing both hands on his chest, four men engaged for this purpose forced him bend his head and place his hand to the ground, as was custom among the Mughals. The ambassador had brought twenty-seven horses, eighteen camels, sixty cases of rose-water, twelve carpets, four cases filled with brocade, four damascened short sword adorned with precious stones, a sealed box of gold and medications against fever. Four months later, upon departure, he was given two horses, a dagger adorned with precious stones, an emerald for his turban, robes and a small escritoire of gold. However, all goods were inspected repeatedly, and slaves which the ambassador procured were taken away, as he was forbidden to take any men to the Safavid realm. It was also rumored that the ambassador was never forgiven by Shah ‘Abbas II for performing obeisance (kunîsh) in the Mughal manner.

337 Durri Efendi was treated in similar manner by the Persians in 1721, but his subsequent interaction with the Shah was quite pleasant. P. de la Croix, Durri Efendi, Relation de Dourry Efendi, Ambassadeur de la Porte Othomane auprès du Roi de Perse (Paris, 1810).
338 The ambassador’s name was Budaq Beg, and he arrived at the court in June 1661. N. Manucci, Storia do Mogor, II, pp.43-49.
The Mughals reciprocated the Safavid embassy. They sent Tarbiyat Khan, an Uzbek, to Shah ‘Abbas II in 1663, equipped with precious Indian textiles and elephants. The ambassador made sure to have supplies of betel (paan) and mangoes. He sent a report back to India in 1666, commenting that Shah ‘Abbas II was planning to invade Khorasan. The Safavid court was hesitant about its response; there are several versions of Shah ‘Abbas’ letter to Aurangzeb, with different nuances and appraisals of Tarbiyat Khan, ranging from laudatory to insulting. In the letter eventually dispatched, the Shah extolled his own house and deprecated Aurangzeb for dethroning his father and engaging in pidar-gîrî instead of ‘âlam-gîrî, surrounding himself with false religious men and not being able to subdue the Maratha leader Shivaji. Alluding to Humayun’s position as a supplicant at the court of Tahmasp, the Shah promised to bring an army into India to “assist” Aurangzeb in chastising oppressors. Since Shah ‘Abbas II died in 1666, it is not certain whether he or his son dispatched the letter, but its content is consistent with Manucci’s salacious retelling of bazaar gossip.

The Mughal envoy Tarbiyat Khan was severely mocked by Shah ‘Abbas II, who made the ambassador follow him by foot, called all Indians slaves, set his beard on fire and spat on Aurangzeb’s picture and called him a brother-killer and a father-capturer (birâdar-kush u pidar-gîr). Consequently, the ambassador returned humiliated and Aurangzeb refused to see him. Manucci tells us that he died of shame because he did not defend his king’s honor; in reality he lived nearly twenty more years until 1685. Mughal and Safavid diplomacy reached its lowest point. While Safavids were inferior to Mughals in terms of the size and wealth of their realm,

340 Z. Hasan, “Two recently discovered letters”, Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission, vol. II (Lahore session, 1920); also see R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, I, Ab.245.
they were aware that they surpassed Mughals militarily, even during the expansionist period of Aurangzeb. In an Indian context, the Mughals were a formidable force, but it was commonly known that they could not hope to overcome the Safavids because of the different topography and climate of Afghanistan. Only in such a light can we understand these blatant affronts.

In response, Aurangzeb temporarily restricted the movement of commodities from India to Iran. In his first letter to the Safavid Shah Sulayman, Aurangzeb boasted about the possibility of coming to Iran and meeting the Shah in person, as well as punishing *farangis* for interfering with trade, but it seems that the letter remained a draft and was perhaps never sent. Shah Sulayman, who was reigning until 1694, accepted Aurangzeb’s fugitive son Akbar. He also sent missions in 1689 to the court of Subhan ‘Ali Khan, the ruler of Balkh and Bukhara, to agitate against Aurangzeb, with little result, as Uzbeks were keen on preserving good relations with the Mughals. In 1678, Subhan Quli, whose long reign overlapped with Aurangzeb’s, had even proposed an anti-Safavid alliance to Aurangzeb, nominally for the sake of access to Mecca. Especially after an exhausting and futile Pathan campaign, Aurangzeb was reluctant to participate, although he sent a mission in 1682 to discuss the possibility. We do have reports of Uzbek ambassadors at Aurangzeb’s court, and he commissioned works by Uzbek authors, including the well-known *Bahr al-asrār*, one of the liveliest descriptions of pre-modern India by an outsider. Accordingly, relations between Mughals and Uzbeks improved as Safavid-Mughal diplomacy deteriorated.

In terms of the Ottoman realm, we are relatively well-informed about two vâlîs of Basra who defected from Iraq to join the Mughal hierarchy. One of them was Hüseyin Paşa, who had sent an embassy to Aurangzeb in 1661, personally arriving in India in 1669. His successor, Yahya Paşa, also fled to India in 1671. Hüseyin Paşa arrived accompanied by several hundred men on horses and with some wealth in pearls. He was given the title of Islam Khan and made governor of Malwa, but in 1672-3 he lost favor (Manucci speculates because he refused to marry his son to Aurangzeb’s niece), and he was sent to Deccan, where he died in June 1676, falling from an elephant.

The Ottomans must have been displeased by the defections of their Iraqi officials to the Mughals. In contrast to most other significant powers of their time, they had not dispatched any congratulatory embassy, neither at the end of the civil war, when Aurangzeb de facto gained the throne, nor upon the death of his father in 1666. Aurangzeb purportedly intended to send an ambassador in 1667 to Mehmed IV, perhaps suggesting cooperation against the Safavids, but the embassy never materialized.

Probably no Ottoman embassy to the Mughals was sent because after 1660 – in part due to the activities of the Köprülü viziers – the Ottomans seemingly recovered. Although the war against the Venetians had negative repercussions on trade, rebellions in Egypt were crushed. In 1660-1, the budget of the empire was balanced, and Crete was finally conquered in 1669, bringing an end to a war which lasted for more than twenty years, and allowing the Ottomans to turn their attention to Ukrainian territories. No attacks could be expected from the Safavids, with

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whom relations were largely friendly, making any overtures to the powerful Mughals apparently unnecessary.

Yet the recovery was short-lived. Ottoman forces were defeated in the Ukraine and at Vienna in 1683, and this tendency continued with the loss of Morea and the Hungarian territories, leading to severe deficits of 1687 and the introduction of the base coins called mangur. Taxes on coffee and tobacco toward the end of century indicate an intense need to find new sources of revenue while the treaty of Karlowitz sealed the losses of Hungary, Transylvania, Podolia and Azov. In contrast, Aurangzeb had conquered the Deccan sultanates of Golconda and Bijapur, and he seemed to have reassumed control over the Marathas as well. He was certainly regarded as the wealthiest ruler of his time in all of Eurasia, and in certain circles he even had a reputation as a saint. Two Arab men arrived to his court from Mecca, alleging that they had a vision of Aurangzeb praying there.346 Certainly, al-Muradi’s mention of Aurangzeb, extolling him for his faith and his ghazâ indicates that some Ottoman subjects were not only aware of his existence, but even respected him more than their own ruler!347

The Ottoman letter which eventually reached Aurangzeb in 1690 is the longest ever dispatched to any Indian king from Anatolia. It offers a striking contrast to the one sent to Shah Jahan more than 30 years earlier.348 It makes no concessions on the Caliphal authority of the sultan (makârr-i hilâfetimiz olan Dâr ‘üs-saltanati’s-seniyye-i mahmiyye-i Konstantîniyye); indeed, it is implied that Aurangzeb should extend his assistance to the Ottomans precisely

347 See al-Muradi, Silk al-durur fi a’yân al-qarn al-thânî ‘ashar, IV, (Cairo, 1874-83), pp.113-14. Al-Muradi was the chief Hanafi mufti of Damascus at the end of the 17th c. He defines Aurangzeb as amîr al-mu’îminîn without equal among Muslim kings in his respect of religion. Also see the reference to this passage in H. Gibb, H. Bowen, Islamic Society and the West (London, 1950). We will discuss this matter further in section three, chapter six.
348 For a photocopy and a transliteration by Y.H. Bayur, see “II. Süleyman’îm Alemgire Mektubu”, Belleten, 16 (54), 1950, pp.269-285.
because of their caliphal function, even using a part of Aurangzeb’s name to emphasize their claim to universality (serîr-i saltanat-i ‘Osmânî ve evreng-i hilâfet-i cihânbanî bu velâ-cûy-i musâdakat-perverlerine müyesser olmağın arzûy-i şeref-i hidmet-i Haremeyni’s-şerîfeyn). A mutual obligation to carry out the ghazâ was emphasized (farziyyet-i ghazâyi).

However, full seven lines were devoted to enumerating Aurangzeb’s titles, comparing him to Feridun, Keyhusrou, Nushirvan and even Alexander. His wealth and the expanse of his domains were hinted at (hülâsa-i selâtîn-i mûcâhidân [...] memâlik-i vesî’a-i Sind el-mûstağnî zâtühû ‘an ’t-ta’rîfi), although it must have displeased him that the Ottomans, unlike any other ambassadors, stressed his birth name before his regnal name (Şâh Evrengzîb ‘Âlemgîr), continuing the Ottoman tradition of unease with Mughal names which implied world dominion. The nature of the assistance (mu’âvenet) is indicated in the mention of Aurangzeb’s wealth and in one of the hadiths at the front of the letter (sezâvârdır ki cevâhir-i mâhiyyat-i mümkineyi “kuntu kanzan makhfiyyan faahbatu an urifa” hizânehânesinden ibdâ ve nev‘ü’l-envâ’ olan nüsha-i câmi’a-i insânu keyfiyyet [...]). In short, Ottomans asked Aurangzeb for financial assistance.\footnote{This insight is not original to us, although this dissertation is the first to support this claim by citing the evidence. Y. Bayur viewed the letter as a mere variation of a fathnama, accepting the view that Ottomans were seen as caliphs by the Mughals without any contestation. In contrast, in his discussion of the letter, N.R. Farooqi suggests the possibility of Ottoman request for financial assistance, but he also views it as irrelevant: “Whether or not the Sultan sought and received pecuniary aid from Aurangzeb is a moot point [...] nevertheless, it certainly indicates a change in the pattern of the Mughal-Ottoman relationship [since] The focus of attention was now diverted from the Safavids to the Europeans.” In: Mughal-Ottoman Relations, p.67.}

The request was made palpable by numerous quotations from the Qur’an and the sunna, while very few specific details were given on the precise nature and the context of Ottoman military activities against their adversaries (simply defined as milel-i muhtelve-i nasârâ). In constrast to Farooqi, who views the Ottoman request for money as a “moot point”, we maintain
that the abundant hints to words from related semantic fields, such as “treasure”, “jewels”, “self-sufficient”, clearly indicate that the Ottoman side of the relations had not changed since the 1650s, when Ottomans first sought pecuniary aid from the Mughals. Furthermore, even in the 1650s, Safavids had ceased to constitute a military threat for the Ottomans, because the Safavids and the Ottomans both wanted peaceful relations. What did change was the titulature employed, and it reflected a novel self-confidence of Ottomans, who did not hesitate to emphasize their claim to the caliphate, although Aurangzeb was both more powerful and wealthier than his father.

Europeans at the court did not have access to the grandiloquent Ottoman letter. Yet information given by Manucci agrees with the content, as he explicitly states that the Ottoman ambassador asked for monetary assistance. He was given nine lakh (900,000) of rupees, and Aurangzeb apologized that he could not send a larger sum, purportedly because he was engaged in fighting the Maratha leader Shivaji. Yet, Aurangzeb was clearly disappointed by the Ottomans and not even willing to send a Mughal embassy to Istanbul. According to Manucci, this visit brought the Mughal court to suspect that Europeans may be more powerful than the “Turk”.350

In the Ma’asir-i ʿAlamgīrī, the Ottoman embassy is mentioned very curtly. The ambassador Ahmad Ağa is said to have arrived at the same time as the ambassador of the vālī of Bukhara. Their presents met with the approving gaze of ʿAlamgīr, whereupon they were given jewels, robes of honor, horses, elephants, money and precious textiles. While other embassies are described in great detail in the chronicles, we never even learn about the presents given to ʿAlamgīr by the Ottomans. In another source from the same period, an embassy from Kashghar is mentioned mostly for the sake of their Chinese offerings. Even terser is the mention of the

Ottoman envoy, Ahmad Ağa, defined as the ambassador of the qaysar-i Rûm. We only know that mutasaddis of the provinces were ordered to provide for his entertainment and safety.351

Most scholars have assumed that Aurangzeb felt a special affinity to the Ottomans because of his Hanafi loyalties. But Mughal sources, as described above, barely address the rare interactions with Ottomans, which were disappointing to the emperor. While he probably would have welcomed any Ottoman embassy with exuberance at the beginning of his reign, he had been enthroned for more than thirty years when their first official letter arrived. In spite of the deposition of his father, many of Aurangzeb’s policies can be read as a continuation of his forefathers’ hegemonic strategies. At the age of eighty, he started calling himself a second Timur,352 whom he understood to be a great prince forced by “love of justice and of virtue” to undertake a campaign against Bayazid Yıldırım. In this version of the events, the cries of the oppressed and innocent Muslims of Anatolia motivated Timur to inflict a punishment upon the tyrannical Bayazid.353 Aurangzeb’s personal seal included the name of Timur on the top, as the establisher of the dynasty,354 and he continued the tradition of paying for the upkeep of his tomb. Reportedly, he expressed regrets because no ancestor of the Timurids, including Timur himself, died fighting the infidels.355 Aurangzeb also encouraged the study of Chaghatay language, indicating a desire for continuity with his ancestry and for maintaining close ties with central

353 “The great Taimur-i-lang, my ancestor, that illustrious conqueror and founder of empire, was a rare and magnificent exemplar of these fine qualities. Nothing except love of justice and virtue forced that great prince into the war he undertook against Bayazid, Emperor of the Turks. Everybody knows it was the cries of the oppressed and the innocent that put arms into his hands.” Idem., III, p.248.
355 Idem., III, p.255.
Asia.\footnote{Muhammad Yaqub Chingi, A. Ibrahimova, ed., Келур-наме, староузбекско-таджикско-персидский словарь XVII в. (Tashkent, 1982). Unfortunately, this edition does not include either the Persian side of the dictionary, nor the reproduction of the manuscript.} In spite of Aurangzeb’s pious reorientation toward Mecca and Medina, conventions which were established under his predecessors prevailed and Ottoman lands were not envisioned as superior to those of the Mughals in any manner.

Yet Mughal references to Rumi and Anatolia persist. Like his predecessors, Aurangzeb had little difficulty acquiring Anatolian and Arab horses through commercial channels, and he valued them highly. We learn from one of his letters that he sent a Rumi horse to one of his sons.\footnote{Ashraf Khan Husaini, S.M. Husain, ed., Raqaim-i karaim, epistles of Aurangzeb (New Delhi, 1990), XLII.} In another letter, Aurangzeb mentions a virtuous man from the Safavid realm who had to flee to Rum, presumably a shelter for believers.\footnote{See the first letter in Persian in Ashraf Khan Husaini, S.M. Husain, ed., Raqaim-i karaim, epistles of Aurangzeb.} Unlike his predecessors Akbar and Jahangir, Aurangzeb repeatedly stressed the importance of keeping the routes open for the \textit{hadjidj}. He also sent alms to the needy in Mecca, noting that the prices had been rising there.\footnote{Inayatullah Khan Kashmiri, S.M. Husain, ed., Kalimat-i tayyibat, Collection of Aurangzeb’s Orders, LXV (New Delhi, 1982).} Perhaps in the course of time Aurangzeb shifted some of his annoyance toward the sharif of Mecca, to whom he refused to send any further presents, instead of explicitly directing his animosity against the Ottomans, as Akbar had.

The general lack of studies on the Mughal court and the society of that period (as supposed to that of Akbar) is often traced to the discontinuation of court chronicles; nevertheless, other sources abound. It is also significant that researchers have not yet inspected Aurangzeb’s \textit{fatāwa} for any information on his view of the Ottomans. Many copies of the latter, amounting to 10 volumes in print, are available in Istanbul manuscript libraries, indicating that the collection

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356 Muhammad Yaqub Chingi, A. Ibrahimova, ed., Келур-наме, староузбекско-таджикско-персидский словарь XVII в. (Tashkent, 1982). Unfortunately, this edition does not include either the Persian side of the dictionary, nor the reproduction of the manuscript. \\
357 Ashraf Khan Husaini, S.M. Husain, ed., Raqaim-i karaim, epistles of Aurangzeb (New Delhi, 1990), XLII. \\
358 See the first letter in Persian in Ashraf Khan Husaini, S.M. Husain, ed., Raqaim-i karaim, epistles of Aurangzeb. \\
359 Inayatullah Khan Kashmiri, S.M. Husain, ed., Kalimat-i tayyibat, Collection of Aurangzeb’s Orders, LXV (New Delhi, 1982).
\end{flushright}
must have acquired some popularity even before the influx of Indians into Ottoman lands in the nineteenth century.

Regardless of Aurangzeb’s personal contradictions, sources reveal that Mughal elites still believed themselves far superior to the Ottomans. In the laudatory introduction of *Muntakhab al-lubâb*, one of the most important primary sources of the reign of Aurangzeb, there are several extensive mentions of Anatolia. The author of the *Muntakhab al-lubâb* is known to us under the name of Khafi Khan and he composed this unofficial chronicle in 1732, nostalgically evoking the days of Aurangzeb. Many lands are mentioned as paying obeisance to that ruler, the “world-dominating Khusrau”. Among the crowds of messengers thronging at the foot of the throne in Delhi (*tâ pâ-i takht-Dihli*), as obedient as slaves (*halqa ba gûsh*) are the representatives of Transoxiana, Khwarazm, Turkestan, the two Iraqs, Khorasan, Azerbaidjan, Fars, Mazandaran, Kerman, Khuzistan, the Qypchaq steppe, Egypt, Syria, and “most of the Roman lands” (*aksâr-i bilâd-i Rûm*) and of course the land (*bûm*) of Hindustan. The ruling houses of Safavids and Ottomans are not mentioned at all, but the somewhat awkward positioning of Rum among those lands and the remarkable emphasis of only a part of Rum being submissive to the Mughal ruler indicate that the mere mention of the Ottoman realm in Aurangzeb’s empire was still a delicate matter.  

Subsequent recapitulation of Mughal history includes several mentions of Ottomans. It is stated that even at the times of Akbar and Jahangir (surprisingly, called “prince Selim”) the rulers of Iran, Turan and Rum had been at the service of the dynasty. In the course of victorious Persian wars against the Ottomans, Rumi horses had been brought to India by the

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361 Idem., I, p.189.
Safavid ambassador Qasim Bey in 1030 H. There is no mention of any purported alliances between Jahangir and the Ottomans against Shah ‘Abbas I, or of any embassies between them. Instead, the Shah is depicted as famous for his conquest of “some of the lands of Rum” as well as Turan and other places (taskhîr-i ba’zi-i bilâd-i Rûm u Turân u digar atrâf).

Yet, the exploits of the Mughal ambassador Mir Zarif to Baghdad in 1638 are once again extensively recounted over several pages by Khafi Khan. Mir Zarif’s goals consist primarily in horse purchase, but also in attempting to learn about the campaigns of Shah ‘Abbas I. It is emphasized that the initiative belonged to Mir Zarif rather than Shah Jahan (“agar marâ ba Arabîstan u vilâyat-i Rûm firistand, tadâruk-i khidjâlat-i safar-i Irân mitavânam namûd”). The Ottoman ruler is repeatedly and carefully defined as “qaysar-i Rûm” no less than 6 times in the following 20 lines. “Pâdishâh” in contrast refers exclusively to Shah Jahan. There are no invectives about the Ottoman sultan, however, and the interaction with Mir Zarif focuses on the Sultan’s admiration for Indian lands and his curiosity about them. The subsequent return of richly awarded Mir Zarif and the Ottoman ambassador, whose name is also correctly indicated, concludes the engagement of the Mughals.

An extensive description of the Ottoman conquest of Baghdad follows, defined as a struggle (niza’a) between the Emperor of Rome (qaysar-i Rûm) and the commander of Iran (farmândâra’i Irân) in which presumably Mughal rulers have no vested interest. Although the depiction of “qaysar-i Rûm” is largely sympathetic, it is noted that he ordered the Safavid soldiers to be executed without a grace period. This action, which is viewed as contrary to divine commands (qatl-i u djâ’iz nadârand), is explicitly contrasted with the purported leniency of

364 Idem., I, p.574ff.
Timur toward the “rulers of seven climes” whom he subjugated.\textsuperscript{365} Thus, although the authority of Timur over Bayazid is not mentioned, the superiority of Mughals over Ottomans is subtly implied to the reader. In a subsequent context of Mughal supremacy over Balkh, Timur is explicitly mentioned as the having command as far as Anatolia and Syria (“\textit{tā Rûm u Shâm ba dastār-i amīr-i Timūr}”).\textsuperscript{366} We do not learn about the acerbic exchanges between the Ottomans and Shah Jahan, but there is cursory information about a congratulatory Ottoman embassy from 1651, sent by Sultān-i Mehmed Khān, \textit{Qaysar-i Rûm} and headed by Sayyid Muhyi ad-Din, the descendant of the keepers of the venerated tomb of ‘Abd al-Qadir Gilani.\textsuperscript{367} The monetary value of the gifts presented and received by the embassy is recorded extensively, but there is no mention at all about the content of the imperial correspondence, leaving an impression of unmitigated cordiality.\textsuperscript{368} The subsequent embassy of Zülfikar Ağa is also limited to a paragraph in which his place of arrival and the large monetary amounts awarded to him by the courtiers and the ruler are recorded, but while his embassy and its embarrassment loomed so largely for Na‘ima, Khafi Khan is silent about any unpleasant details.\textsuperscript{369}

When it comes to ‘Alamgir’s own reign, Khafi Khan is sparing with explicit mentions of Rum. The belated embassy of congratulation sent by Safavids fifteen years after Aurangzeb’s rise to the Mughal throne is accused of \textit{bad-i salūkî u atvār-i mazmūm}, but it brought three hundred choice Iraqi horses and other presents from Europe and Ottoman lands (\textit{tuhfahā-i bilâd-i Farang va Rûm}).\textsuperscript{370} There is a brief mention of Anatolian merchants in Gujarat, involved in

\textsuperscript{365} Idem., I, p.577-9. 
\textsuperscript{366} Idem., I, p.669. 
\textsuperscript{367} Idem., I, p.703. 
\textsuperscript{368} Idem., I, p.70. 
\textsuperscript{369} Idem., I, p.729, also see p.731. 
\textsuperscript{370} Idem., I, p.736.
textile trade.\textsuperscript{371} Wars with “determined” Ottomans (faudj-i Rûm-i tâ’in namûda) are also mentioned in the context of Safavid-Mughal conflicts over Herat and Qandahar, eventually leading to the collapse of the Safavid dynasty.\textsuperscript{372} The arrival of one ‘Ali b. Sultan-i ‘Arab from Rum was also noted.\textsuperscript{373} Nevertheless, the eighteenth century changed the balance of power forever.

\section*{3. Nadir Shah: kingdoms lost and gained}

Unbeknownst to the Mughals, a new world power appeared at this time in history: the Russians. Ottomans accepted the creation of a stable eastern European border in 1699-1700, even at the cost of alienating their Tatar clients. An ultimately futile war was fought between the Ottomans and Russians between 1709-1712, initiated by the flight of Charles XII of Sweden to Ottoman lands, but confirming the status quo. The 1720s witnessed an increased Ottoman interest in dispatching embassies into central Europe, including Paris, Vienna, Warsaw and Moscow.

Although Ottomans were able to push back and defeat the Russians, the turn of the century presaged important changes in the global geopolitics. While the rulers of Muscovy had by tradition been very much involved in the world of the steppe\textsuperscript{374}, the turbulent seventeenth

\textsuperscript{371} Idem., II, p.937.
\textsuperscript{372} Idem., II, p.975.
century (smutnoe vremya) was marked by expansion into Siberia, without many direct confrontations with Ottomans. We should note that within Ottoman historiography, we encounter the tendency to focus on the conquest of Kazan (1552) and Astrakhan (1556), welding it seamlessly onto the nineteenth-century conquest of Kazakhstan and Transoxiana. This ahistorical tendency of ascribing unlimited power to Europeans (already stressed at the beginning of the first chapter and inherent in many histories of early modern India as well), imposes an anachronistic view on Russo-Ottoman relations, which were mostly commercial and relatively friendly before ca.1677. Apocryphal letters from that period even depict the Ottoman sultan as the mightiest of rulers, protector of Christ’s tomb and the Caesar of “the rich India”! The practice of paying tribute to Crimea was only discontinued by the Polish and the Russians at the end of the seventeenth century.

Russia’s political endeavors to be recognized as the protector of Orthodox Christians concurred with the actual expansion of Russian influence among Armenian merchants, which in part shifted the silk route from Iran toward Moscow and central Europe. Orenburg became a meeting point for Armenian, Greek and Russian merchants on the one side and Indians and Central Asians on the other. There was another large community of Indian merchants in Astrakhan, many of whom were Gujarati. While Armenian traders successfully resisted English overtures, the agreements concluded between their representatives and the Russian court

376 D.C. Waugh, The Great Turkes Defiance: on the history of the Apocryphal Correspondence of the Ottoman Sultan in its Muscovite and Russian Variants (Columbus, 1978).
377 R.A. Abou-El-Haj, “The formal closure of the Ottoman Frontier in Europe: 1699-1703”, JAOS, 89 (3), 1969. Here, the term “Russian” instead of “Muscovy” is preferred, reflecting the tradition of Russian scholarship, which ends the Muscovy period in 1547.
378 S.F. Dale, Indian Merchants and Eurasian Trade, 1600-1750 (Cambridge, 1994). Also see S. Gopal, Indians in Russia in the 17th and 18th centuries (New Delhi, 1988).
in 1667 and 1673 led to an alliance of interests which diverted some of the Persian silk trade to the north.

The Russian embassy of Artemii Volynskii, sent to the Safavids in 1715, had specific instructions to conclude a military agreement with Shah Sultan Hussain against the Ottomans and to survey the Caspian region precisely. Peter I specified that the ambassador should investigate whether it was possible to reach India by any riverways from the Caspian Sea. The embassy was instructed to pay close attention to any injuries to Orthodox Christians and their receptivity to Russian protection. Yet, the success of the embassy was limited, as Volynskii realized that Persians would not grant exclusive privileges to the Russian traders and ban merchants from “Turkey and other countries” from whose dealings in Gilan the Shah acquired 100,000 tumân a year. Volynskii complained that his interlocutors did not deign to listen to the propositions of a military alliance against the Ottomans, although they were aware that Ottomans were preparing for a war. Even on the brink of collapse, the Safavids still disdained the Russians, deriding them as uncouth and similar to Uzbeks. Peter I also turned directly to the Mughal emperor Jahandar Shah, dispatching a letter in 1716 through a merchant and asking the emperor to enable him to trade without obstructions. The Mughal emperor’s blessing was still viewed as crucial to trade; the Dutch ambassador Joan Josua Ketelaar, who stayed at the court 1711-1713, spent an enormous sum on gifts to the emperor and the courtiers. When Shah ‘Alam

379 P.P. Bushev, Посольство Артемия Волынского в Иран в 1715-1718 гг. по русским архивам (Moscow, 1978).
380 P.P. Bushev, Посольство Артемия Волынского, Chap. VII.
381 R. Matthee, “Between aloofness and fascination: Safavid views of the West”, Iranian Studies, 31 (2), 1998, which includes observations on Safavid understanding of Russians, Uzbeks, and other “outsiders” as well.
382 See letter 24. in R.V.Ovchinnikov, M.A. Sidorov, Русско-индийские отношения в XVIII в. (Moscow, 1965).
Bahadur died and was replaced by Jahandar Shah, Ketelaar had to start the game from scratch. Russians thus joined the Dutch and other Europeans in vying for the favor of the Mughals.

Yet, the Mughal throne had become unexpectedly shaky; after the long reign of Aurangzeb, Shah Bahadur, his aged son, only ruled for a few years, dying in 1712. His son, Jahandar Shah, ruled for merely a year. Farrukhsiyar, another grandson of Aurangzeb, was enthroned by the Sayyid brothers, who effectively ruled the empire for the following few years. In October 1713, he sent the ambassador Hadji Niyaz Beg Khan to Ottoman Sultan Ahmad III (1703-1730), without much consequence. Farrukhsiyar was blinded and deposed in 1719. His successor ruled for only three months. Three other emperors and pretenders ruled for a brief period in 1719, until Muhammad Shah came to the throne, ushering a measure of stabilization. The decade was also decisive in the weakening of the Safavid realm. Mir Veys, a Ghilza’i Afghani chief from Qandahar, rebelled against the local Georgian governor and conquered parts of the eastern border territory before his death in 1715.

Many of those details reached the Ottomans, sometimes in fragmented form. Consequently, Ottoman self-confidence increased, in spite of the losses incurred in the wars with Austria and confirmed by the treaty of Passarowitz in 1718. This confidence is quite visible in Durri Efendi’s description of the Safavid realm, which presents itself as a successful embassy report with some anthropological inclinations, portraying the Safavids as somewhat exotic. Durri

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384 HAT 6/391-94, including the letter and the Ottoman response, which is a paraphrase of the letter sent to Aurangzeb.
386 Fortunately, the intense interest in the rise of the Russian empire of the eighteenth century has brought forth valuable Soviet and Russian contributions in the field of Ottoman studies. See especially A.V. Vitol, *Османская империя: начало XVIII в.* (Moscow, 1987); M.S. Meyer, *Османская империя в XVIII веке: Черты структурного кризиса* (Moscow, 1991).
Efendi, in recounting the glories of Istanbul to the Safavid Shah, notes that one should not be surprised that the rulers of India and the Uzbek and the Ottomans. Unlike the Uzbek and the Russian ambassadors, he is admitted close to the throne and has several intimate conversations with the Shah, not hesitating to chastise the Safavids because of their general lack of refinement, making the grand vizier blush and apologize for his lack of experience in state matters. Yet, Durri Efendi emphasizes that because of good relations between the Shah and the Ottomans, the Sultan is loved more among them than the Uzbek or the rulers of India.

Of course, much of Durri Efendi’s description sounds like conscious flattery of his own sovereign, but we can be fairly certain that Persians were eager for good relations with Ottomans. The Safavids were reluctant to mention any quarrels along the Anatolian border and concentrated instead on the matters relevant to trade and pilgrimage. We do obtain some glimpses of political culture, as the Ottoman author informs us and the Shah that neither hunting nor traveling in the provinces attracts the Ottoman ruler, who prefers to remain in Istanbul and engage in discourses on the tafsîr (this comment must also have been a covert compliment aimed at the Shah himself, who was rather bookish and left political decisions to his advisers).

Barely a year passed after Durri Efendi’s observations when the Safavid empire collapsed, assailed by formerly peripheral groups, including not only Afghanis, but also Lezghis, Kurds, Baluchis and Omanis. The son of the Afghani leader Mir Veys, Mahmud, eventually entered Isfahan in 1722. During the plunder of the city, state archives were destroyed. Safavid

388 P. de la Croix, Durri Efendi, Relation, p.43.
389 For traditional views of the Safavid collapse, rooted in the older approach which stresses competent members of the elites, see L. Lockhart, The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia (Cambridge, 1958). More recent explanations have endeavored to combine economic, social and institutional factors, see J. Foran, “The Long Fall of the Safavid Dynasty: Moving beyond the Standard Views”, IJMES, 24 (2), 1992.
neighbors reacted swiftly. As Russian forces entered the Caucasus, marking their greatest advancement southwards since the mid-sixteenth century, conquering Dagestan and even the Caspian provinces of Gilan, Mazanderan and Astarabad, Ottomans occupied the border regions, including Tiflis, Yerevan, Tabriz and Hamadan.\textsuperscript{390} Indeed, it seems that the English diplomats were supporting Ottomans against Russians, in reversal of their previous hopes of diverting the silk trade to the north.\textsuperscript{391}

In 1723, spheres of influence were delineated as Ottomans and Russians signed a treaty on partition of Safavid Persia.\textsuperscript{392} In 1727, the peace of Hamadan was concluded with Ashraf Khan, the successor of Mahmud Khan Ghilza’i, who attempted to manipulate the question of the caliphate, implying that he, as a Sunni, was the caliph of Iran. He ultimately conceded to the Ottomans on that matter. Yet, Ottoman success was not long-lasting, as their forces were ultimately defeated at Andidjan. Worse was to come: the ‘imad-i şerrefiye, ‘avâriz-i divâniyye and other campaign taxes, accompanied by increases in food prices and debasement of the akçe, provoked a violent popular reaction, culminating in the Patrona Halil rebellion and the deposition of the grand vizier Nevşehirli Ibrahim Paşa and Sultan Ahmed III himself.\textsuperscript{393} The rebellion also signified the end of the Tulip period.

Nadir Quli started the reconquest of Persian territories in 1730 as a Safavid general, having defeated the Afghans and nominally re instituted the Safavids. Russian forces withdrew

\textsuperscript{390} For some primary sources from this period, see W. Floor, \textit{The Afghan Occupation of Safavid Persia 1721-1729} (Paris, 1998); Z.M. Bunyatov, tr., \textit{Армянская анонимная хроника 1722-1736 гг.} (Baku, 1988); R.A. Abramian, \textit{Армянские источники XVIII в. об Индии} (Yerevan, 1968); as well as M. Aktepe, \textit{1720-1724 Osmanlı-Iran Mânâsebetleri ve Silâhşör, Kemâni Mustafa Ağâ’ının Revân Fetih-Nâmesi} (Istanbul, 1970).

\textsuperscript{391} N.A. Sotavov, “The Circum-Caspian Areas within the Eurasian International Relationships at the time of Peter the Great and Nadir Shah Afshar”, \textit{Iran and the Caucasus}, 5, 2001.

\textsuperscript{392} For a very detailed overview of the treaty and the subsequent period, see M.-A. Hekmat, \textit{Essai sur l’histoire des relations politiques irano-ottomanes de 1722 à 1747} (Paris, 1937).

from Caspian territories, not being able to financially sustain a long war. In 1736, Nadir was crowned Shah and he made demands to the Porte to recognize the Ja‘farīs as the fifth Sunni madhhab and appoint a Persian amīr al-hadījī, who would ensure equal treatment for Iranian pilgrims to Mecca, as well as institute permanent diplomatic representatives at both courts. These terms were not acceptable to the Ottomans. While Afghani rebellions and the riches of India temporarily lured Nadir to the east, Ottomans were not granted respite. Russians occupied Azov in 1736, and Austrians, as their allies, tried to conquer parts of Bosnia and Bulgaria. Ultimately, the peace agreement favored the Ottomans, to whom Belgrade and northern Bosnia, conquered by the Austrians in 1715, were returned; Russian movement in the Black Sea was also restrained, giving Ottoman elites more leverage and ability to focus on the events in Iran. Despite Ottoman resilience, the new Shah of Iran was a formidable adversary.

Nadir Shah wrote to the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud I in October 1739, detailing his conquest of northern India. He alluded that other sources would have informed the Ottoman...
sultan that the Mughal Muhammad Shah, the pâdishâh-i vâlâ-i djâh-i Hindustan had promised to restrain the rebellious Afghans and the rulers of Qandahar. However, not only did he fail to fulfill the promise, he also held Nadir Shah’s ambassador captive and refused to send a response. Nadir Shah correspondingly left Qandahar and marched onto Delhi. Although Muhammad Shah’s forces were far superior, Nadir Shah was able to defeat them at Karnal, so that some 50,000 Indian troops were killed, and others captured. Nadir Shah stressed that many among the noblemen of the empire were Hindus, implicitly making Muhammad Shah’s adherence to Islam somewhat suspect. The Mughal pâdishâh fled to a fortress, but surrendered after three days. Nadir Shah’s army then entered Delhi, plundering most of its riches.

Significantly, Nadir Shah indicated that he re instituted the Mughal emperor because of their common Turkmen heritage. Y. Bayur reads these statements as the example for Nadir’s advanced consciousness, making it somewhat of an avant-garde adherence to a politically motivated Turkishness (in Bayur’s words: “Türçülük veya Türkmencilik propagandasına önem veren bir devlet adamını irâe etmektedir”). Yet, it is more likely that Nadir Shah, by adopting the title Djahân-gushâ, intended to cast himself as the inheritor of Chinggis Khan and Timur, both of whom were world-conquerors, and who came from seemingly low origins, neither Persian nor Arab. By generously reinstituting the Mughal pâdishâh, their common connection to

1152S demonstrates that they also were informed about his conquest of the Mughal realm even before he sent an embassy to Istanbul.

398 “[...] sonra ‘inâyet-i Girdgâr ile gûrûh-i Hindûyân şikeste ve hâvânîn ve a’yân-ı devletle birlikte kırk elli bin neferi urza-ı şemsîr ve bir mikdarî dahi hayyen esîr ve dest-gîr olup bilcümle hazîyin ve esbâb, ve pâdishâh ve ümerâya mensûp Tobhâne tasarrufa gelmişür.” H. Bayur, “Nadir Sah Afsar’la I. Sultan Mahmud arasında Hindistan seferi hakkında te’âtî olunan mektuplar”, pp.325-340. It seems that Bayur is quoting a contemporary Ottoman translation from the Persian original. This practice, which we will see repeated throughout the eighteenth century, offers a further indication of a specifically Ottoman hegemony, in which Ottoman language was emphasized even to the detriment of Persian learning. Certainly in the fifteenth century no translations from Persian were needed.

399 Idem., p.331.
Timur was emphasized; the implications being twofold: the throne of India was at Nadir Shah’s disposal, but he would not harm a descendant of Timur.\(^{400}\) The letter also included references to further conquests in Khwarazm, Kabul, Ghazna, Sind, and the borders of Tibet and Kashmir. Out of the sight of the Ottoman court, but preserved for the posterity is the depiction of Nadir’s defeat of the Indians at Karnal, which was added onto the walls of Chihil Sutun. Nadir Shah’s missive to the Ottomans was boastful but largely accurate as far as his conquests were concerned.

Nadir Shah’s munificence with the fruits of Indian plunder was meant to benefit the Ottomans as well.\(^{401}\) His ambassador arrived in Istanbul in 1741 with a large number of gifts. Yet, the implications of Nadir’s letter were threatening. While the rulers of Bukhara, now also submitted to Nadir Shah, were likely to respond to the invocations of Timur with appreciation, the memory of Timur’s name and Turkmenness was certainly not appropriate at the Ottoman court, since Ottomans were aware that Timur’s erstwhile conquest of India was followed by incursions into Anatolia. Upon his return to Iran, Nadir Shah engaged in a campaign to conquer Oman, lasting from 1741-43.\(^{402}\) After a campaign in Daghestan, he moved onto Iraq, declaring war on the Ottomans, and it seemed likely that he would conquer most of the province.

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\(^{400}\) For the Persian original of the intriguing passage, see A. Nava’i, *Nādir Shâh u bâzmândigânash, hamrâh ba nâmahâ-yi sultânî va asnâd-i siyâsî va idârî* (Tehran, 1368), p.308f.: “Chûn in hayr-khvâh tûrkumân u pâdishâh [...] nîz az dauha-yi tûrkmâniyya-yi u salîl-i sîlsila-yi gûrkâniyya bûdand, dar ‘âlam-i ittihâd u djârsiyyat, pâdishâh-i Hindüstân râ kamâkân ba tâfviž u hutba u sikka râ bâz ba nâm-i u djârî sâhtîm.” In the Ottoman translation given by Bayur: “çün bu hayr-hâh Türkmen olup ve pâdîçâh-i müşarünileyh dahi devha-i Tûrkmânîyye ve selîl-i sîlsile-i Gûrkâniyyeyeden idiler, iliyyet ve cinsiyyyet âleminde Hindüstân pâdîçahlîğim kemâkân sâh-i vâlâ-câh-i müşarûnîleyhe tefviž ve hutbe ve sikkeyi yine kendü nâmına càrî eyledik.” (The difference between the Persian and the Turkish is minor and consists in ittihâd versus iliyyet).


Somewhat surprisingly, his siege of Mosul was halted in 1743, prompting his retreat. Yet, Nadir remained a great threat to the Ottomans; his project of uniting the Muslim world under his leadership had become explicit and approved at a council which joined ‘ulamā’ from Iraq, Iran and Transoxiana. Since almost the entire Muslim world seemed to incline toward Nadir, an alliance with the greatly weakened Mughals, however symbolic, became desirable for the Ottomans.

The Mughals had reached out to the Ottomans just before the rise of Nadir Shah. Muhammad Shah, the Mughal emperor since 1719, had written a short letter to the Ottomans in October 1723, informing them of his accession and recommending the ambassador, ‘Ali Verdi Bey, a Bukharan pilgrim. However, it seems that this letter was not awarded high importance by the Ottomans, and it remained without consequence. Much more significant are the letters exchanged by the Mughals and the Ottomans in 1740s, after the sacking of Delhi. They demonstrate that rapid communication was possible even at a time of political fragmentation, provided there was sufficient will on both ends. In addition, they demonstrate a new style of correspondence, one in which noblemen at the courts corresponded directly with each other, while the imperial letters were relatively symbolic. Obviously, this reflects the loss of Mughal power and the rise of the potentates who still paid lip-service to the Mughal emperor throughout the eighteenth century.

The Mughal ambassador to the Ottomans was yet another Bukharan, Sayyid ‘Ataullah, who had previously traveled to Mecca via Delhi. After the pilgrimage, he went to

\[\text{\textsuperscript{403}}\text{R.W. Olson, The Siege of Mosul and Ottoman-Persian Relations, A Study of Rebellion in the Capital and War in the Provinces of the Ottoman Empire (Bloomington, 1975). In his detailed monograph, Olson endeavors to show that commercial and political intentions were entwined.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{404}}\text{See the documents in HAT 6/453.}\]
Constantinople and met Ibrahim Paşa, who gave him a letter for his equivalent, the Indian grand vizier (iʿtimād al-daula). Sayyid ‘Ataullah returned and thereafter performed valuable services at the Mughal court because of his knowledge of eastern Turki and Ottoman. He was dispatched westward again, this time to Basra in ca. 1743, intending to resume the interaction with the Ottomans. He carried with him a letter from the powerful Mughal official Nizam al-mulk and other Muslim and Hindu grandees, defined somewhat eccentrically by the Ottomans as the hâkân-i Hindiyye mulâk-i madjûsiyya. In Baghdad, he was detained because of his shabby appearance (perişân-i hâl, elçinin rübesinden nâkis), but subsequently he was recognized as an ambassador and sent to Istanbul, where his expenses were provided for by the Ottomans and he was given a khil’a.405 Our main source for the embassy is the contemporary court historian ‘Izzi, who retells the story of the embassy in a non-linear way, interspersing his narrative about the embassy with the letters, making the thread somewhat difficult to follow.406 He frames the narrative by alluding to a purported ancient accord between Ottomans and Mughals, which was unfortunately cut off for several years, for no other reason than the distance and the vicissitudes of time (az kadîm resm [...] riştey-i dostî u meveddet müstahkem u mütemâdi olunup làkin ber muktaza-i takallûbât-i zamân senîn çandinden [...] ‘ahd baʿidden ber âmâd-şud munkatiʿa).407 ‘Izzi also mentions Nadir Shah’s aggression on Mughals upon false pretexts, their complete defeat (hezîmet) and his transportation of loot to Iran.

406 Hence the descriptions in Farooqi’s and Islam’s retelling are difficult to reconcile. It seems that Islam, while being a masterful scholar of Persian, relied on summaries for Ottoman. In turn, Farooqi follows ‘Izzi’s non-chronological retelling of the events.  
407 ‘Izzi, -i ‘Izzi, p.13a. It should be noted that this is ‘Izzi’s interpretation and not the letter verbatim, as it has sometimes been represented in the scholarship.
‘Izzi describes the letter by the Mughal emperor initially only with one line, stating that there was nothing else except the desire for a renewal of mutual friendship (nâmesinde tecdîd-i kavâ’id-müvelâtten gayri [...] olunmamış). He gives the full text of the letter elsewhere. Notably, in the letter the Mughal ruler is still defined as the pâdishâh-i ‘âlem-penâh, while the Ottoman sultan is described as the firmânfirmây-i bilâd-i Rûm, hâmî-yi melhûf u mazlûm. The other letters by Mughal noblemen were more explicit about the need to punish Nadir Shah’s aggression (istirdâd birle bilittifâk üzerine hücûm u iktihâm karar) and his purported ban on communication between Mughals and Ottomans, stipulated in the peace agreement (cevâz dâde olmamasını reca’). Urgency was expressed orally.

Also of significance was a tekrîr on the basis of which ‘Ataullah was recognized as a genuine ambassador by the Ottomans, indicating that the Mughal court was informed in 1741 of Nadir Shah’s intention to buy a large number of ships, financed by the treasury of Sind. The Mughals initially purchased eight ships on his behalf and dispatched them to Bandar Abbas, but when they learned the ships were to be employed in an attack on the Ottomans, they prevented the sending of further ships. The Mughals indicated that if the initial attempt at the conquest of Ottoman territories were to fail, Nadir Shah would fortify the borders of Iran and conquer the entire north India from Sind to Bengal, enabling him to sail to Suez and capture the Holy Cities as well as Egypt, Syria and Basra. Nadir Shah’s promises could not be relied on, as Mughals learned from bitter experience.

408 Idem., p.13b.
409 Idem., p.14b.
410 Idem., p.13b.
Ottomans responded with several letters. The first of them stressed the benevolence of the Ottoman sultan as a caliph, in whom those who are oppressed and grieved can seek refuge (ya ‘wî ilayhi kull mazlûm wa malhûf). It also firmly stated that Sultan Mahmud was the caliph (teşrîf-i şeref-i hilâfet). Reference to that perennial favorite, Qur’ân 38:26, innanâ dja’lnak khalîfatan fî al-‘ard, was also included. It was mentioned that the Mughals ruled over the lands of Hind and Sind, which were so large that there was no need to describe them (Sind, el-mustağni zâtuhu ‘an al-ta’rif); however, they were merely saltanat müstanid. The old cliché of a sweet-speaking Indian parrot (tüfy-i hoş lehçe), which had not been used since the times of Gavan in the fifteenth century, was employed to emphasize the friendliness of the letter.412 Ottoman letters also assured their recipients that the Ottoman forces (‘asâkir-i mensûre) were already victorious against Nadir Shah, spreading the perfume of conquest (nesa‘im-i feth ü intisâr).413 The second letter was a mere variation of the first, repeatedly stressing the importance of the caliph who assists the unfortunate and the extent of Mughal rule over Sind. Even more explicitly, there was mention of eslâf-i hilâfet [...] me’abimiz and saltanat nisâbiniz. Even the cliché of the parrot was repeated (tüfy-i hikmet).414

Thus, in a curious reversal of all previous patterns, it seems that monetary aid was given by the Ottomans to the Mughals, nominally in order to fight Nadir Shah. Ottomans insisted upon a clear stance on the matter of caliphate, which the letter from the Mughal emperor had avoided. In spite of many kind words, the ambassador stayed at the Ottoman court only for six weeks. He was given a royal letter and additional letters from the grand vizier, the chief black eunuch, the şeyhîlîslâm and the yeniçeri ağası, as well as a large sum of money and a precious handkerchief.

(rumâl). He was also accompanied by Mehmed Selim Efendi, a former treasurer, and Yusuf ‘Ali Ağa, who acted as his secretary. They speedily departed to Jiddah, soon arriving in India.\footnote{Idem., p.14a. Also see N. R. Farooqi, \textit{Mughal-Ottoman Relations, A Study of Political and Diplomatic Relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire,} 1556-1748. Farooqi located the letters in the Ottoman archives as well and compared them to the letters addressed to the previous short-lived padishah Farrukhsiyar.}

The response by the Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah indicated that one of the Ottoman officials had died upon reaching Aurangabad in December 1745, but Sayyid ‘Ataullah brought the two letters and fulfilled his role as ambassadors. The imperial letter asserts there had never been any disagreement or difference with the sultan, and that correspondence should continue. The mention of the word “caliph” was avoided; instead, the Ottomans were described as ruling over the \textit{bilâd-i Rûm, hâmê el-melhûf u mezlûm} and ruler over the \textit{saltanat-i ‘Osmâniyye}, evasively concluding upon the desirability of a friendly unity, which should be closer than before (\textit{ittihâd-i semîm, evvelkiden ziyâde istihkâm-pazîr ola}).\footnote{R. Islam, \textit{A Calendar of Documents,} II, Ott.408; ‘Izzi, \textit{Târîh-i ‘Izzi}, p.223a.}

Nizam al-Mulk Asaf Jah, the powerful Mughal vizier who came to establish his own dynasty and who claimed western Asian roots, also sent several letters to the Ottoman court. In the first letter, he praised the Ottoman victories and their consultations with the ‘ulamâ’, which were divinely inspired. He also asserted his loyalty to his master, the Mughal emperor, protesting that he was still his obedient slave (\textit{itâ’at ba dûş, halqa ba gûş}) and that the aspersions against him (\textit{iilhâm}) were unjustified.\footnote{R. Islam, \textit{A Calendar of Documents,} II, Ott.409; also see reproduction no.19 in his appendix. ‘Izzi, \textit{Târîh-i ‘Izzi}, 223a-223b.} Apparently, his name had become proverbial in Iraq for disloyalty.\footnote{R. Olson, \textit{The siege of Mosul and Ottoman-Persian Relations,} 1718-1743 (Bloomingto n, 1975).} In a letter to Hasan Paşa, the Ottoman grand vizier, Nizam al-Mulk reiterates those matters and stresses the importance of unity and solidarity among Muslim rulers so that the \textit{Sharî’a} may prosper and the infidels be degraded. He also sent a letter to the chief black
Yet another letter, probably sent by Asaf Jah, his son, was addressed to the Sultan. It was the only letter to admit that Ottomans were the ones to ascend on the ladder of the prophetic caliphate (‘âric-i ma’âric-i hilâfat-i nebeviyye), but not without slight ambiguity, since ‘âric means both ascending and lame. The following part of the letter described the Ottomans as the sovereign (fermânrev) of Qulzum and Rum. It asserted that it was incumbent upon those who claimed the caliphate (cenâb-i hilâfet intisâb üzerine) to embark upon a ghazâ and to fight against oppression (zulûm) and rebellion (tuğyân). ‘Izzi’s report on the Mughal emperor’s letters as well as those of Nizam al-Mulk ends in an inventory of gifts brought by Yusuf Ağa through Jiddah on behalf of Muhammad Shah, including jewelry, perfumes and hundreds of textile items.

According to R. Islam, the Ottoman court received these letters carried by Yusuf Ağa and Sayyid ‘Ataullah by 1751, certainly after the death of the emperor Muhammad Shah in 1748. While he was held up in Surat, Yusuf Ağa addressed a number of letters to Ahmad Shah, the new Mughal emperor and to Nasir Jang, the new vizier, and a number of officials at Delhi, asking them for additional funds and new letters. However, his efforts were thwarted, making his attempt to return to the Ottoman realm rather Kafkaesque. Incidentally, even the report about Gujarat by Mehmed Selim Efendi remained relatively ignored by the scholarship and misinterpreted, although it offers valuable insights on how Ottomans perceived India, and on

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419 R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, II, Ott.409.1, Ott.409.2.
421 R. Islam, A Calendar of Documents, II, Ott.410; ‘Izzi, Târîh-i ‘Izzi, p.224a. Also see H. Bayur, Hindustan Tarihi III.
commercial interactions. In spite of all attestations of lâzime-i ittihâd-i mezheb u ittifâk-i dîn, Ottomans do not seem to have responded to the letters which Sayyid ‘Ataullah brought on the behalf of the Gujarati governor. The era of Ottoman official interactions with Mughals had passed, without any clear concession on the matter of the caliphate from the Mughal pâdishâhs. For several decades, Ottomans displayed little interest in interactions with India and Indian rulers.

The reasons for lapsed communication seem clear enough. In the interim period, Ottomans had concluded a peace treaty with Nadir Shah in September 1746. At the beginning of the treaty, he is called tâc-bahş-i mülûk-i memâlik-i Hind ü Tûrân among other titles. A throne sent by Nadir Shah certainly made the Ottomans less inclined to quarrel with him; indeed, they may have believed that this was the famed Peacock Throne of the Mughals. Nadir Shah was assassinated the following year, making the Ottomans even less likely to seek out alliances against Iran, as we will see below. Nadir’s grandson ruled in Mashhad from 1747 to 1796. His rule coincided with Karim Khan Zand (1750-79), who captured Basra for a few years (1776-79). Iran descended into yet another period of political fragmentation until the rise of the Qajars.

424 See section “Hindistan Seyahatnamesi” in F.R. Unat, B.S. Baykal, Osmanlı Sefirleri ve Sefaretnameleri (Ankara, 1968). The text of the travelogue has been published, but its discussion deserves a separate article.
425 HAT 5/172 1165Z.29. Another embassy from India is mentioned briefly in HAT 5/177, 1170Z.29, but we only learn about their gifts.
426 See the text of the treaty in M. Saray, Türk-Iran İlişkileri (Istanbul, 1999), appendix 4, p.267.
4. Ahmad Shah Durrani: the Afghani interlude

Meanwhile, as the disintegration of the Mughal realm continued, power over northern India shifted toward Afghans and toward the Marathas who were situated in the Deccan. Usually, central Asia has been described as stagnant in the eighteenth century. However, recent scholarship emphasizes the vibrancy of the region in spite of wars. The Qing empire and the Russians made considerable efforts to expand politically into central Asia. Consequently, the Afghani cities of Balkh, Herat, Qandahar and Kabul shifted into the center of political movement instead of its fringes. We had seen that the Ghilzai Afghans\footnote{Rustam al-tawārīkh, which usually paints a positive image of Shah Ahmad as he did not oppose the Shi‘a.} ousted the Safavids as well as the Abdali tribe which had ruled over Qandahar. However, Abdalis dispersed in an area from Sind to Herat, preparing the ground for a new economic and political arrangement. After Nadir Shah’s death in 1747, Abdalis were able to re-establish themselves in Qandahar. The regions of Baluchistan, Makran and Sind, crucial to trade, became integrated in the Durrani empire, making connections with the Omanis and the Ottomans attractive and desirable, and enabling Makranis and Baluchis to enter Oman as mercenaries.\footnote{P. Risso, Oman and Muscat, an early modern history (New York, 1986).} Thatta and subsequently Karachi flourished. Since the Ghilza‘is had been sanctified by a Meccan fatwa and they had recognized Ottomans as caliphs in 1727, it was vital for the Abdali ruler to secure Ottoman benevolence as well.

Accordingly, the powerful Afghani ruler and self-proclaimed shâhânshâh and khâqân Ahmad Shah established a correspondence with the Ottomans. He suggested that the lack of a pâdishâh in India forced him to engage in conquest in spite of his ascetic predilections. His
forces entered India nine times between 1747 and 1769.\(^{430}\) Initially, his focus was on the rich province of Panjab and its tax revenues. In 1749-50, he conquered Herat. As a former protégé of Nadir Shah, he proclaimed himself to be the protector of his grandson, whom he enthroned in Mashhad. However, his attempts to conquer Nishapur failed repeatedly, leading to a new interest in Indian matters. In 1752, the revenues of Panjab and Multan were officially designed to him by the Mughal court. The arrangement functioned until 1758, when Maratha forces cooperated with the Mughal vazir Ghazi al-Din to enter Lahore. In his role as the protector of legitimate kings, Ahmad Shah directed his forces toward Delhi, defeating several Maratha leaders, most significantly in the battle of Panipat in February 1761. In this strengthened position, which ensured the flow of Panjabi taxes toward Qandahar, he wrote an extensive letter to the Ottoman Sultan Mustafa III. The letter is not precisely dated, but it is assumed by Y. Bayur that it was composed in 1762.\(^{431}\)

The initial part of the Afghani letter emphasized the role of the divine will in the granting of kingdoms, quoting the Surat ‘Ali ‘Imrân 26:40 to the effect that if one wants a kingdom, one should take it. Petty desires of common folk are blamed for the demise of the Safavid line, which is praised as a dynasty which ruled for three hundred years.\(^{432}\) Nadir Shah’s rise to power is depicted in ambivalent terms, as befitting a former patron who was also the enemy of the Ottomans. On the one hand, we are told that his strength was such that the umarâ’ of Hindustan

\(^{430}\) See G. Singh, Ahmad Shah Durrani, Father of Modern Afghanistan (Bombay, 1959) and Davies, C. Collin, “Ahmad Shâh Durrânî”, EP.

\(^{431}\) Y. Bayur, “Nadir Şah Afsar’in ölümünden sonra Osmanlı devletini Iran’ı istilaya kiskirtmak için yapılan iki deneme”, Belleten, 12 (46), 1948.

\(^{432}\) See G. J. Jalali, ed., Ahmad Shah the Great’s Letter to Sultan Mustafa III Usmani, Taken from the only Manuscript Preserved in the Imperial Archives at Istanbul (Kabul, 1967), p.7f.: “Khânadân-i salâtîn-i safavîyya kih qarîb sih sad sâl masûn az sad mîh-i zavâl wa ikhtilâl bûd baasb [...] u shûnî atvâr-i ahl-i Irân kih [...] [...] dar taqdim-i lavâzim-i khidmat u rasûkh-i ‘âqidat-i an dûdmân-i ‘âliyya kûtâhî namûda taqâ ‘ud u tasâhul mivarzîdand.”
and Deccan (as well as all the rulers of China and Russia) permanently feared him.\textsuperscript{433} On the other hand, it is implied that the writer patiently suffered his oppressive rule, which came to an end through sheer hubris. Subsequently, Ahmad Shah was brought to the Afghani throne. Although his intention was to regulate the disorderly state in Iran, his advisers pointed out that Hindustan was larger than any other state on the face of earth and that this endless land had been subject to numerous Afghani rulers prior to the rise of Timur, the Sâhib-i Qirân.\textsuperscript{434} No less than 29 of them, belonging to various dynasties, ruled India, which is correspondingly a \textit{mirâs} for the Afghans.

Accordingly, Ahmad Shah turned his horse’s reins toward India, and particularly to Panjâb, more fertile and wealthier than the more famous provinces of Bengal, Malwa and Gujarat. Like the rest of India, it was ruled by boisterous \textit{kuffâr} and Rajas who would not remit taxes.\textsuperscript{435} This necessitated an intense struggle against Mir Manu, the Mughal governor of Panjâb. At this point, we are also informed of the use of Firangi cannoneers in the two armies.\textsuperscript{436} The victory resulted in the conquest of Kashmir and Multan as well. Subsequently, the reader is treated with an extensive and quite vivid description of Ahmad Shah’s military campaigns in Iran, and the sieges of Herat and Mashhad. However, his attention was again turned toward India, where the \textit{dâr al-khilâfa} was threatened by the “caravans” of \textit{kuffâr}, who did not allow the

\textsuperscript{433} See G. J. Jalali, ed., \textit{Ahmad Shah the Great’s Letter}, p.9f.: “\‘Anqadr mavād-i quvvat u zūr andūkht kih umarā’-yi Hindūstān u Dakan u Rūsā-yi Turkistān ilā Khatā u Khutan u sakana-yi bilād-i Rūm (harasāhā allāhu ta‘āla min al-fatan) az va hama-yi vurūd, wa khaīf u hirāsān u hamīsha mutaraddid u khātir-i parīshān būda nafs-i khosh ba namāvārd.”


\textsuperscript{435} “Ba‘d az vurūd ba mamlakat-i Panjāb ma‘ūm shud kih mahālāt-i ān mamālik-i dar ābdād u vufūr-i māhsūlāt ziyādatr az mulk-i Bangāla u Mālwa u Gujarāt ast, va az ayyām-i kih dar ahvāl-i salātīn-i Hindūstān vahn va za‘f rāh yāfta, rádjahā-yi ān mamlakat kih har yak sāhib-i sarvat hastand, chizz rā az qabīl-i bādj u kharāj ba āmānā-i ān davlat namīdādand.” Idem., p.16.

\textsuperscript{436} In another instance, we are told that the cannoneers are even more skillful than the Firangis (atashbārī māhīrtar az ahl-i farang). Idem., p.56.
reading of prayers or the ritual slaughtering of cows. In the subsequent battles, the kuffâr are scattered like beasts of burden. Ahmad Shah entered Delhi and exchanged presents with the umarā’ and the courtiers of ‘Alamgir Shah “from the line of Timur”. However, the emperor is killed by the infidels, who for the first time are more clearly defined as “Deccanis” and “Marathas”, and reference is made not only to the generals, but also to the Maratha peshwa Nana Balaji Rao.

In the letter, the mercenary nature of military men is described in a sentence which evokes old Rumi times. “Indians, Muslims, Marathas, Rajputs, Brahmins, Shaykhs, Sayyids, peoples from Hindustan and Deccan, Rumis, Franks, Habashis and Zanjis, men from Bakh, Badakhshan, Samarqand, Turkistan, Iran, Tabriz, Qazwin, Mashhad, Isfahan, Fars and Azerbaidjan, taking the place of the second Sohrab and Nariman, swinging their maces like Rustam, all those different kinds of soldiers came to Hind thirsting for money.” Subsequently, the kuffâr were victorious over the Muslims, and they almost uprooted the Timurid family, not even leaving a trace of Muslims in India. Although delayed by the rainy season, Ahmad Shah directed his forces toward northern India, defeating the Maratha forces at Panipat and “sending many of them to hell” with the help of the soldiers of Islam, and some zamindars and rajas loyal to the Mughals, who were again instituted in Delhi. Rather abruptly, Ahmad Shah’s letter

440 “Az dasta-yi zamîndârân va râdjûgân” Idem., p.76.
comes to a closure with a request for a joint invasion on Iran because of the prevailing *fitna*, and its people “drunk with the wine of pride” and disobedient of their *pâdishâh*, whose identity is left unspecified. Upon returning to Iran, Ahmad Shah had been rather surprised that no Ottoman intervention had come to pass. He claims that everyone’s hope resides in the Ottomans, who should appoint an able commander to punish the pride of Iran’s Qızılbaş.\(^{441}\) In addition to assistance in this matter, he asks for the plot of land in Medina so that he may build a mosque.

Ahmad Shah’s letter to the Ottomans was packed with justifications and details. In this new interpretation of the events, palatable to Ottomans, Nadir Shah was depicted as a tyrant. However, Ahmad Shah consciously imitated Nadir in 1757, when in the course of his fourth Indian campaign he captured the Mughal emperor ‘Alamgir II, dethroned him and subsequently reinstated him as the sultan of Hind, giving him a *khil’a*. The same ritual was repeated with the nobles of the court, who paid *peshkesh* to the Abdalis. Ahmad Shah stated that this was a just punishment for their disobedience. In the Indian context, he claimed his duty was holy war against idolatry, which neatly encompassed his defeat of the Marathas in Panipat in 1761, as well as his attacks on Jats and Sikhs in 1762. His letter testifies to the translation of local categories (Jat, Maratha, Sikh) with which he was familiar, into a general and abstract category (*kuffâr*) for the sake of the Ottomans. In this respect, Ahmad Shah greatly differed from Mughals, who never referred to their own subjects as *kuffâr*. Yet he defined Shahjahanabad as the *dâr al-khilâfa*, being corrected in the Ottoman response that it was “*dâr al-saltanat-i Shâhjahânâbâd.*”

Nadir Shah and his Durrani Afghan successor, Ahmad Shah, saw themselves as the inheritors of Timur. All of them accumulated significant plunder and left a deep trace in the historiography of the region. However, they were also forced to realize that, while the riches of

\(^{441}\) Idem., p.77.
India were beckoning whenever the northwestern frontier was weak, a cavalry with large number of horses could not maintain itself in the north Indian plains due to the lack of suitable pastures. Timur and Nadir Shah withdrew from India as soon as they plundered Delhi. Ahmad Shah Durrani was more experienced because of the intimate Afghani connections with India, but his empire in India was also subject to waxing and waning.\footnote{J.J.L. Gommans, \textit{The Rise of the Indo-Afghan Empire, c. 1710-1780} (New Delhi, 1999). For a dynamic analysis of Afghans / Pashtuns in early Mughal history, see J.T. Arlinghaus, \textit{The Transformation of Afghan Tribal Society: Tribal Expansion, Mughal Imperialism and the Roshaniyya Insurrection, 1450-1600} (Doctoral dissertation, Duke University, 1988).} In 1763, Ahmad Shah was also planning to attack the Manchus who were expanding onto Kashgar and Tibet, under the pretext of defending Naqshbandi Sufis and traders. In spite of his great ambitions, Ahmad Shah did not succeed in building a permanent Indo-Persian empire, but his tomb continues to be revered among Afghans.\footnote{H.G. Raverty, \textit{Selections from the Poetry of the Afghans from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century} (London, 1862). Several poems penned by Ahmad Shah himself are included.} His letter to the Ottomans was well-intended, but it also demonstrated some unfamiliarity with the coordinates of their world. He had praised Timur, the Safavids, and the Mughals as great and stable rulers, not being aware of Ottoman traditional discontent with all of these rulers and states. Accordingly, his intention to divide the former Safavid lands with the Ottomans encountered little resonance.

In their response, the Ottomans were reserved and brief. Sultan Mustafa III (1757-74) praised Ahmad Shah for reinstituting the son of ‘Alamgir II on the Mughal throne. After the laudatory introduction, he stated that Ahmad Shah should not send any sadâqa to Madina, since the local mosques are sufficiently large. As for Iran, although it was in disarray, and it would be
easy to conquer it, the profits of such an invasion to the Ottomans were not clear and it would damage the agreements made prior to the death of Nadir Shah.\(^{444}\)

Even if Ahmad Shah’s letter had not contained several blunders, Ottoman cooperation with him would probably have failed. The Ottomans were unwilling to engage in any further conflicts with Iranians, since the wars which lasted for nearly a quarter of a century brought them little advantage, merely reaffirming borders drawn in the 1639 treaty of Zuhab. Ottoman political decisions were increasingly dictated by their need to fend off the Russians, effacing even the old Austrian threat. Perhaps most significantly, the course of events since 1738 had demonstrated that the Mughals were no longer a serious force in India, and even their symbolic claims could be disregarded. The Porte was still loyal to the French alliances, but events in the second half of the eighteenth century pushed the Ottomans closer to the English, with significant consequences for their relations with India.

In our first two sections, we have surveyed the course of history from the rise of the Delhi Sultanate and the raids of Timur to the glory of the Mughals and their downfall. Non-state actors such as the Rumis were gradually supplanted by the regular forces of the large new states of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals, although their presence was never entirely extinguished. The age of the intermediaries was followed by the age of empires. The new Islamic courts exchanged an ebb and flow of correspondence and gifts. Yet, we have seen that this period was marked by great power ambitions and rivalries even more than any presumed common political or cultural project. Western Europeans were constantly present in the region and they offer valuable insights into the machinations of the courts, but they remained at the margins of the political process and

\(^{444}\) Y. Bayur, “Nadir Şah Afşar’in ölümünden sonra Osmanlı devletini Iran’ı istilaya kıskırtmak için yapılan iki deneme”.

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were not privy to the top level of diplomacy as a rule. Our largely Indian perspective, justified in large measure by the attractions of power and wealth in south Asia, has foregrounded the Indian experience of Anatolia and the Ottomans. In the following sections, the other side of the coin will be explored as we examine Ottoman perceptions of India and its commodities.
Section III

Labyrinths of Imagination
Hâllerle 'ârizun cânâ görenler dediler
Bir nice Hindüler etmiş Rûmda gül sohbetin
Hayalı

Kezâlık Hind metâ’larına bu kadar hazıne envâl gider ve Hindiler Memâlik-i 'Osmaniyye'den bir şey almazlar ve läzimleri dahi değildir.
Na’ima

Esmer güzeline de Keşmiri, halk dilinde kişmire denir...
Gölpınarlı
Chapter 5

Dreaming India

1. Many Indias, everywhere

Initially, the task of mapping out Ottoman depictions of India seems to be facile and predictable, mirroring medieval European understanding of it as a remote and marvelous land. A deeper investigation, however, reveals numerous contradictions which indicate different historical layers within the interpretation of India in western Asia. It is possible that these numerous mentions of India are merely random signs, scattered across the Ottoman mental universe without any relevance to each other. Yet, following our practice in previous parts of this study, we may also be tempted to relate them to the covert struggles for hegemony between the major Islamic empires of the early modern period.

We will follow in this section the meandering palimpsest of Ottoman India, which includes older conceptualizations inherited from the late Abbasid period and modified through some later geographers. While rarely as fantastic as European visions of monsters and marvels, the India of Abbasid times bristles with strange fauna and mysterious islands on which the adventures of Sindbad the sailor take place. Yet, there also exists a much more concrete and practical understanding of India which reflects real diplomatic and commercial channels which were never interrupted. Thus, to some extent, the intellectual changes in the concept of “India”

1 Among many studies on this topic, the article by R. Wittkower, “Marvels of the East, A Study in the History of Monsters”, Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 5, 1942, still stands out.
could be compared with the development of the understanding of the antiquity in the renaissance, where older and newer modes of understanding existed side by side in the same minds, without much apparent contradiction.\textsuperscript{3} In a paradigm which was inherited from antiquity, India has always been both a hyperbolic metaphor and a real place.

India’s remoteness and fabulous wealth encouraged some flights of fancy and messy organization of knowledge among western Europeans as well. In the early modern period, European intellectuals were attempting to collect and categorize knowledge not only from direct experience, but also from various “Oriental” sources, criticizing Ptolomy while at the same time still worshipping the Ancients. Until the eighteenth century, even the best among the Renaissance works were still, and perhaps could not be otherwise, palimpsests on which knowledge from different times was superimposed and mingled. They were sites of displaying one’s familiarity with the ancients and delighting the reader with selected novelties rather than disseminating scientifically measurable, positivist knowledge.\textsuperscript{4} Incidentally, Abbasid chronicles of India and China, today decried as merely fanciful, also played an important part in the intellectual history of France. Especially Akhbât al-Sîn wa al-Hind became famous in western Europe upon its first translation by Abbé Renault, whose aim was to discredit Chinese historical annals which were admired by freethinkers.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{4} S. Brentjes, V. Schueller, “Pietro Della Valle’s Latin Geography of Safavid Iran”, JEMH, 10 (3), 2006.
\textsuperscript{5} See V. Pinot, La Chine et la formation de l’esprit philosophique en France (1640-1740) (Paris, 1932), which discusses sinophilia and sinophobia in French intellectual circles during the siècle des Lumières. The debate around the age of the Chinese history (known in French as the cérémonies chinoises) was initially limited to theologians, and it amounted to a decision between the Septuagint and the Mazoretic (Vulgate) tradition of the Bible, but it would soon involve the complex questions of necessity of revelation, monogenesis and religious dogma, and set Jesuits and a wide range of their opponents, from Jansenists to Protestants, into an arena of fierce dispute.
The multiplicity of India as a concept need not surprise us. There are still many Indias in everyone’s consciousness. Contemporary understanding of India is in most cases heavily marked by the so-called golden triangle of Delhi-Agra-Jaipur in northern India and more specifically folkloric Rajasthani culture; most tourists never venture much further. Yet, as perennial as it seems, this vision does not overlap with either ancient, Ottoman or early modern views of India. The Italian image of India was informed by classical Greek and Latin sources. For the Dutch of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, much of India consisted of the southern Indian regions of Coromandel and the Malabar coasts and only secondarily Bengal and Gujarat. Thus, for the Dutch the links between their colonies in the Malay world and southern India were prevalent; indeed, at the time of the independence of Indonesia (de facto if not de iure in 1949), the Dutch name for their colonies was still Nederlands-Indië. In contrast, the English impressions of India were always Mughal-colored, although the switch from Calcutta to Delhi as the imperial capital of the British raj occurred as late as 1911.

Ottoman India drew upon some sources which were similar and yet others which were radically different. It consisted of several overlapping impressions: western coastlands which were prevalent in Abbasid sources and close to Iraq by ship; a Ghaznavid India which was besung by Sa’di and ‘Attar and which mostly referred to Sind and Gujarat; yet another very large and diffuse India which stretched from Afghanistan to southeast Asia; a Muslim northern India as seen by the Timurids and the Uzbeks, who as we have seen often served as intermediaries between the two realms; and non-Mughal Indias brought into the Ottoman realm by the Dutch, English and French. All of those Indias shared the seemingly unshakeable imagery of fabulous

6 See the superb studies by K. Karttunen, India in Early Greek Literature (Helsinki, 1989) and K. Karttunen, India and the Hellenistic World (Helsinki, 1997).
wealth, adorned elephants and dark-skinned idol worshippers, yet they also evolved over time, infused by realities and dreams alike.

It is a mistake to dismiss Islamic (or Ottoman) thought and its dynamic character by assuming that inherited images and narratives from the times of classical Islam are frozen and sterile, for they changed subtly and gradually. These interpretations often seem oneiric to us, but it does not mean that they did not include empirically verifiable knowledge. They are not random; each one of them can be placed into a historical context. For instance, currently the terms “Hind” and “Hindustan” seem exchangeable to us; however, “Hind” was the Arabic term which originally refers only to the valley of the Indus, but subsequently often expands and encompasses the entire area between Afghanistan and southeast Asia. “Hindustan”, the Persian term, originally refers to northern India alone, and careful reading will reveal that this was also the English understanding of the term even in the nineteenth century. In contemporary India, depending upon one’s degree of education and political and cultural preferences, “Hindustan” can refer to all of the Republic of India or more correctly only to its northern part.

As we will see, there is a surprising amount of materials about Ottoman India, yet historians have been hesitant to tap into those sources. To some extent, the roots of this hesitation are to be found in wider debates about Ottoman scientific practices and the very nature of their knowledge. There is still a strong affective reaction, including embarrassment and outright shame, to studies which attempt to synthesize Ottoman literary and archival heritage because of the purported lack of positivist scientific content in Ottoman intellectual output. But such responses (as well as their currently fashionable counterpart, excessive romanticization and idealization of Ottomans), should surely be replaced by an attempt to understand Ottoman

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culture, both elite and popular, on its own terms. In the following pages, we will trace Ottoman ideas of India from the time of Oghuz arrival in Anatolia into the early nineteenth century.

2. The roots of an Anatolian India: geographies and heroes

It is commonly assumed that the main contributors to traditional Ottoman geography were classical Abbasid writers. Yet, in Ottoman descriptions of India, we very rarely encounter any allusions to the famed Akhbâr al-Sîn wa al-Hind, composed in the ninth century, and the Kitâb ‘Adjâ’ib al-Hind. Evliya Çelebi, known to be somewhat credulous, reports the old tale of the anthropomorphic fruits of the Waqwaq, but he does so briefly. Neither Piri Reis nor Katib Çelebi are interested in those tales; to them, India is a physical place, as concrete as Italy or France.

On a more popular level, among the most favored books of late classical Islamic learning proved to be the ‘Adjâ’ib al-Makhlûqât by Zakariyya al-Qazwini (d.1283) and the Kharîdat al-
Adjâ’ib wa Farîdat al-Gharâ’ib by Ibn al-Wardi (d.1349). A detailed analysis of Persian and Ottoman translations and adaptations of those two works, which became much more prevalent in the Ottoman world than the Arabic original, is not possible here. However, a short description of the contents of the Arabic version will be given, because they formed a prototype for later works.

Although well-known in western Europe for centuries, Qazwini’s geographical treatise has been decried as fantastic. Only recently has emerged a more sophisticated analysis of his work which still has not been translated from Arabic into any western European language. Qazwini’s purpose in recounting marvelous tales is not merely entertainment. Instead, as he states in Aristotelian fashion, he intends to lead the reader toward a focused contemplation of even the smallest details of creation. While ‘Adjâ’ib al-Makhlûqât concentrates upon strange animals and their habits, its companion, called Âthâr al-buldân, provides extensive information about India. We will concentrate on the later work here because it is often copied together with Adjâ’ib; above all, it treats human geography rather than zoology.

Qazwini was a contemporary of Sa’di (d.1283), whose episode of visiting the Hindu pilgrimage center of Somnath (Somanatha) in Gujarat made the city famous in the Islamic world. Of course, Sa’di’s adventure is purely fictional and didactic, as he relates his discovery of the manipulation of an idol by a Brahman, whom he kills by throwing him into a well. Yet, in spite of literary narratives, Qazwini’s (as well as Sa’di’s) India is shaped by the conquests of Mahmud

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12 See the first volume of by E. Ihsanoğlu et alia, Osmanlı Coğrafya Literatürü Tarihi (Istanbul, 2000). While this valuable book includes many references to Ottoman translations of those works, the value judgment about them is quite severe.”Bu eserlerde coğrafya, efsane ile karışmışdır. Bilhassâ Ibn al-Vardi’nin coğrafayı bilmediği anlaşılmaktadır. Osmanlı zamanında bu iki kitabin çok sayıda serbest tercümesi yapılmıştır.” See introduction, p. XXXV.
14 Idem., 97ff.
of Ghazna (d. 1030). Hence, his description is considerably more focused upon northern India than the earlier accounts, which arouse out of commercial and cultural contacts between Iraq and southern India.16

While the island of Sarandib (Sri Lanka) in the first clime,17 India is mostly located in the second clime. It is introduced to the reader through a city called Aram, in which there is an idol which can predict the fertility of the land in the coming year.18 Tibet is located in the second clime as well. Its cities are described as numerous and its land as exceptionally fertile, which is a reason for its people to continuously rejoice and permanently smile, even influencing their domestic animals (fa li-hâdhâ al-ghâlib `ala ahlihâ al-farâh wa al-surûr fa lâ yazal al-insân bihâ dâhikan farâhan [...] hatta yura dhâlika fî wadîh bahâ `imihim aydan).19

Qazwini offers extensive descriptions of Sind and Somnath. Sind is described as a region between Hind and Kirman and Sidjistan, separated from it by a fierce desert. Even Alexander was astonished by an observatory dedicated to Zarathustra which he encountered there. While fertile in similar ways to the environs of the Nile, the region is also infested with crocodiles and almost impossible to conquer; the caliph ʿUmar attempted it, but his soldiers dispersed and starved.20 The city of Mansura, established by Muslims, is described as being prosperous, but its citizens are unwilling to trade with any Sindhis in its hinterland because of a violent episode

16 For a comparison of Arabic writing on India before al-Biruni, see al-Masʿudi, Mirʾaj al-dhahab, as well as S.M.H. Nainar, Arab Geographers’ Knowledge of Southern India (Madras, 1942). Somnath is a crucial episode in modern Indian political consciousness. An excellent analysis of historical and ideological context is given by R. Thapar, Somanatha: The Many Voices of a History (New Delhi, 2005).
18 Idem., p.51.
19 Idem., p.52. While the Tibetan plateau has never been suitable for growing many vegetables because of its aridity, its idealization may hark back to the time of its political power in the region. See C. Beckwith, The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia: A History of the Struggle for Great Power among Tibetans, Turks, Arabs, and Chinese during the Early Middle Ages (Princeton, 1987).
20 See Qazwini, Wüstenfeld, p.62f.
involving a Sindhi slave who ruined his master.\footnote{Idem., p.83.} As for the pilgrimage city of Somnath in Gujarat further along the coast, with its famed idol, it attracted the attention of Mahmud of Ghazna, who was not able to discover how the idol was hovering in the air although he examined it closely until he removed two stones from the ceiling. The idol tilted and descended to the ground. Qazwini suspects that magnetism was involved.\footnote{Idem., p.63f.} Simur in India is another city filled with idols; however, there are also mosques, churches and temples of Zoroastrians, and the city is involved in trade with Turks from central Asia.\footnote{Idem., p.64.}

From another story about a traveler who is surprised because a tailor leaves his customer’s clothing in the mosque unattended we learn that there is no theft or injustice in Qazdar, an area in India. People in Kashmir, described as a kind of Turks, do not eat meat or eggs, but they are strikingly good-looking. A city named Qamar has a ruler who does not allow adultery and who severely punished the drinking of wine, unlike other Indian rulers. Another city possesses a bronze pillar shaped like a duck, out of whose beak abundant water pours out.\footnote{Idem., p.68f.} In Kaulam, presumably Quilon at the Malabar coast, a ruler from China is selected. People do not have any form of worship there, but they have doctors, which are supposedly rare in other parts of India.\footnote{Idem., p.70.} Qazwini then returns to western India, informing us that Multan is described at length as being a city of both Muslims and unbelievers. It is a pilgrimage center for people across India, comparable to Mecca. Although Qazwini acknowledges that there is a large Hindu temple in Multan and that Muslims only enter the city on Friday to pray, he also describes the destructions of idols by Muslim forces which had taken place in the past. Its elephants, onto whose trunks
swords are tied, are another cause for marvel.\textsuperscript{26} Malabar (Malibar), on the other hand, is described primarily in terms of production of pepper. We are told that the Franks (\textit{Farandj}), presumably Venetians, profit from it by selling it in Muslim lands.\textsuperscript{27}

Finally, toward the end of Qazwini’s section on the second clime, we are informed about India as a whole. It is a vast country, worth three months’ travel in its length and two in its width. There are more rivers and mountains than anywhere else. In some places the moon is worshipped, in others fire. There is extensive mining for jewels. Several plants, animals and stones have mysterious qualities. Qazwini reveals some of his sources, among which is the Persian treatise \textit{Tuhfat al-’Adjâ’ib}.\textsuperscript{28} Notably, although he revels in the fantastic and the miraculous, he mostly encounters it in the natural realm of animals and plants and occasionally in the artisanry of the people. In this particular work, there are no dog-headed monsters or gold-digging ants; even the seductive women-fruits of Waq Waq have disappeared.\textsuperscript{29} Indians are sometimes deluded magicians, sometimes virtuous Muslims, but always inequivocally human.

In contrast to Qazwini, Ibn al-Wardi’s mention of India is relatively brief. Following the oldest strand of Arabic-language thinking about India, he divides the section into two equal parts, one of which is devoted to Sind and the other to Hind. In Sind, the city of Mansura has such prevalence that it is purported to be one of the only four cities in the world which will never be destroyed. Muslims rule over this part of Sind, and in spite of its extreme heat, it is a well-provisioned city, visited by many merchants. The other city is Muliyan (in Panjab), with the greatest number of idols in Hind and Sind and correspondingly large quantities of jewels and...
gold. Hind, in the vicinity of Sind, is a vast area with many kings and gods. The kings display
themselves rarely to the people. There are more elephants in India than anywhere else in the
world.\footnote{Ibn Wardi, \textit{Kharidat al-Adjâ’ib wa Faridat al-Gharâ’ib} (Cairo, 1276), p.73f.}

In Anatolia, there was especially strong interest in the jewels of India. In the lesser-
known \textit{Durr-\textendash i Makan\textendash n}, Ahmed Bican stresses that God accepted Adam’s penance when he was
on a mountain, and angels strewed gold and precious stones. He mentions that no one can climb the
mountain now, but the stones get washed away by floods, which is why India is so wealthy.\footnote{A. Bican Yazicioğlu, \textit{Dür\textendash r-i Meknün, Sakh inciler} (Istanbul, 1999). Also available in a luxurious
edition and translation by L. Kaptein (Asch, 2007).} In both Ibn al-Wardi and Ahmed Bican, there is a common interest in Indian precious metals and
stones rather than its mores.

A second strand of traditions about India from pre-Ottoman times relates to fictional
narratives about the Islamic conquest of Anatolia. While there are scarce mentions of India in the
\textit{Danismendnâma}, the heroic epic of the \textit{Saltuknâme}, as it has come down to us, includes an
extended episode in India.\footnote{F. Iz, \textit{Saltuk-nâme}, 4 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1974).} Sari Saltuk, the famous \textit{ghâzi}, arrives in India from Yemen out of
sheer curiosity, after a conversation with a man he meets in Ethiopia. He embarks upon
numerous conquests in all parts of the country, banning religious practices such as burial of
husbands and wives with their deceased spouse, demanding \textit{harâç} from sundry Indian rulers or
convincing them to convert to Islam by praying in Arabic on Adam’s peak. Many of the
adventures are schematic, but occasionally there are surprising narrative details, for instance when
he leaves a note in “the Indian language” (Hintçe) after destroying idols, or when he hunts for a white elephant to please an Indian ruler, although he is an infidel.33

The heroic epic of the Battâlnâme contains the tale of Dja‘far (Sayyid Battâl), in which Indians abound and the narrative is more complex. The Battâlnâme, with the oldest manuscript dated 1436-7, retains many traces of popular Arabic-language epic tales, in addition to its Persian and specifically Turcoman characteristics.34 There are several kinds of Indians in the Battâlnâme; some of them are adversaries and others are allies. We encounter a blacksmith called Mahak the Indian, who is a Sunni Muslim spy who informs the Muslims of Malatya of the events in Byzantine Constantinople.35 Another ally of the Muslims is one “Patwaran” from India, joined by heroes from Gurgan, Transoxiana and Gilan.36 Battal personally at one point disguises himself as a “black Hindu” from Zanzibar who is tall and beautiful, apparently in contrast to the expectations.37 Further in the text, in same disguise, he is defined as a “black Ethiopian”, showing the blurring between different concepts of India which is part of the Hellenistic inheritance in Islam.38 Battal’s disguise as an Indian is not even endangered when the Christian army is reinforced by the “Sultan of India” an idolater who arrives in Jerusalem with five thousand men and his sons who bear Persian names. True to his origin, the Indian sultan (named “Kahu”) also brings five hundred large combat elephants. An Indian parasol and the caesar’s

33 In Iz, see 207a-233a et alia. Also see S.H. Akalın, Saltuk-Nâme, vol.1 (Ankara, 1987).
34 G.S. Dedes, Battâlnâme: giriş, İngilizce tercüme, Türkçe metin, yorum ve tıpkıbasım (Cambridge, MA, 1996). Dedes includes the number of the pages from the oldest manuscript (A) in both the English translation and the original. We will indicate the pages in the same manner, facilitating cross-reference.
35 Mahak has retained enough Indianess to keep a marble pool at his house, reminiscent of ponds which are frequent in Indian places of worship. He is a blacksmith, in accordance with classical Islamic reverence for Indian swords. See A70.
36 Idem., A197.
37 Idem., A166. Throughout the tale, he often claims Chinese origin as well.
38 Idem., A167.
throne are fastened onto the back of one of the elephants. Eventually, the sultan of India faces Battal and is killed by him after he compares him to one of his servants. The sultan’s followers, Qintar the Indian and his Zanzibari associates, attempt to avenge him. Elsewhere, we hear of an Indian who eats a Muslim’s liver.

Finally, Battal is requested to bring the famed white elephant from India with golden anklet bangles as part of a bride price. He is despondent about the task until the prophet Khidr miraculously brings him to India. The pâdishâh of India, Mihrasp, is an idolater. When his idol is faced with Battal, it miraculously speaks, comparing his own destruction to the ruination of the province of Rum. Parallels between Rum and India are further accentuated when Battal meets a wise man from the army of the Indian Caesar (qaysar-i Hind, defined as the ruler of a specifically Indian Egypt) who is a Sunni, and who confides to Battal that the father of the Caesar was an Indian who converted to Islam, but was killed by another member of the royal family. Armed with this magical knowledge, Battal pleads with the elephant to remember its past associations with ‘Ali. The elephant shakes off the infidel Indian Caesar and the Indian prince (called simply Hindi) is subsequently converted to Islam. While the previous elephant wore the caesar’s throne, Battal’s elephant is adorned with the caliph’s seat.

Some cultural elements are garbled. The Byzantine emperor and the Indians often have older Persian names which end in –asp, echoing Ferdousi’s universe. Their idols are non-distinguishable, and as idolaters, they seem naturally bound to hasten to each other’s help.

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39 Idem., A168.  
40 Idem., A206.  
41 Idem., A211.  
42 Idem., A262.  
43 Idem., A255.  
44 Idem., A266.
Indians are a mirror-image of the infidel Byzantines, also possessing Caesars. Yet, there are also unmistakably Indian associations in the text. The venerable tendency to conflate Ethiopia and India is exaggerated to the extent that Zanzibar and Egypt also belong to India.\footnote{45} Mahak, the Sunni Indian spy, is a blacksmith, reflecting traditional Arab preference for Indian swords.\footnote{46} While the Chinese heroes, mentioned later in the text, do not have any recognizable Chinese characteristics, Indians are almost always associated with elephants, specifically of white color, illustrating linkages between India, Egypt and southeast Asia. The royal nature of such a creature seems obvious to the Turkic-speaking audience of the tale, so that the reader almost forgets it is a culturally specific trait. The anonymous author of the Battâlnâme is clearly aware that there are Sunnis in India, some of whom purportedly can be traced back to the time of the prophet. Finally, while the Chinese protagonists of the tale do not tend to convert to Islam, many Byzantines and Indians do so.

Both narratives, along with Ahmedi’s Iskandernâma, have a common subtext of a prophet or a ghâzi arriving in India suddenly and easily conquering and intimidating the infidel Indians.\footnote{47} They could be read as entirely fictional element used to enliven the narrative (India being functionally interchangeable with China), but there is historical evidence of real interaction with India in this period.

The famous fourteenth-century traveler Ibn Battuta also played a role in the Ottoman encounter with India. While escorting a Byzantine princess (who had been married to the ruler of

\footnote{45} See P. Schneider, L’Éthiopie et L’Inde, Interférences et confusions aux extrémités du monde antique (Rome, 2004).
\footnote{46} See for instance Monroe, Hispano-Arabic Poetry (Berkeley, 1974). A few years ago, researchers from Dresden University in Germany confirmed that the fabled Damascene swords were originally made in India, but the technique was lost in the eighteenth century. See M. Becker, “Legendäre Klingen, Geheimnis des Damaszener Stahls gelüftet”, Der Spiegel (16. November 2006).
\footnote{47} Ahmedi, I. Ünver, İskender-nâme, inceleme, tipkibasım (Ankara, 1983) must be discussed separately in spite of common features, since it needs to be contrasted with other versions of the Alexander romance.
Crimea) to the place of her birth, Constantinople, Ibn Battuta remarked that she was accompanied by ten Greek and ten Indian pages. The latter were under the command of a eunuch called Sunbul the Indian. While the princess took distance from her other retainers when she arrived at the palace of her father, the Byzantine emperor, she remained accompanied by the Indian Sunbul, who also acted as an intermediary for her and Ibn Battuta when the latter was admitted to the palace. Sunbul told him that everyone must be inspected by the eunuchs. Ibn Battuta consented, adding in his Rihla that he later learned that was an Indian custom as well.

When he arrived in Delhi, Ibn Battuta also noticed the presence of Anatolian horses in India. As we have learned in the first chapter, Rumis (Christians and Muslism) were already well-established at the Delhi court.

The works of Qazwini and Ibn al-Wardi remained popular in Ottoman lands and they came to us through many translations and recensions, which require extensive unpacking to be fully understood. Although older geographers and travelers provided a cherished form of entertainment, we will see that Ottoman geography proper is much more realistic in its depiction of India. After the rise of the Mughals as an economic and political power, precise information concerning Indian developments was highly valued by members of the Ottoman court. Consequently, most Ottoman readers were well-aware of the antiquated character of Qazwini and Ibn al-Wardi, and they enjoyed their works on their own merits. In contrast, the heroic epics described above were largely forgotten. They were the product of a more folkloric and

48 The princess was the wife of Uzbek Khan who ruled the Golden Horde from his capital in Sarai. See Ibn Batoutah, C. Defrémer, B.B. Sanguinetti, Voyages d’Ibn Batoutah, Texte arabe, accompagné d’une traduction (Paris, 1855), II, 413.
50 Ibn Batoutah, II, p 372ff. through Sind.
specifically Anatolian heritage. Persianate classical poetry provided an image of India and Indians which was a lot more influential than any of the traditions that we have discussed so far. The many permutations of this *topos* will accompany us throughout this section of the study.

3. The poetic tradition of Hindis: 
   many incarnations of a trope

As with many other subjects in the studies of the Persian and Ottoman culture, J. Hammer-Purgstall’s *Geschichte der schönen Redekünste Persiens* marks the initial foray by western Europeans into systematizing the poetic tradition of the Persians and the Ottomans.\(^5\) In his list of poetic correspondences, he indicates India (*das Indostan*) as a possible symbol for the dark hair of the beloved, along with China, Zanzibar and the Tatar lands. “*Der Inder*”, along with “*der Äthiopier*” is also included as an allusion to the eyes and the down on the face of the adolescent beloved. In this context, the Indian is equated with an infidel or a magician. This convention allows for possibilities as well as limitations. Indians, it seems, cannot win battles by fighting, but rather by stealth and trickery.\(^6\) They are gardeners and keepers of secrets. Yet, they can never become Muslims; instead, as eternal Hindus, they must merge with the Zoroastrian fire worshippers and Africans from the Swahili coast.

The trope has not been extensively studied, perhaps because it seemed conventional and common-sensical. It is taken at face value in A. Schimmel’s short study as well.\(^7\) Yet the

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\(^5\) J. Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte der schönen Redekünste Persiens* (Vienna, 1818).

\(^6\) Thus the eyelashes, although dark, are signified by “the swords which bend the battle lines of the Indians”.

darkness of Indians and their infidelity is a constructed one. Omari in the fourteenth century praises the beauty of Indian women and their golden skin, which is preferable to that of other beauties who are also present in India, for instance Qypchaq, central Asian Turks and Rumis ('ala kathrat wudjûd al-turk wa al-qibchaq wa al-rûm wa sâîr al-adjnâs ‘andhum là yufaddil ahadun 'ala millah al-hindûyât').

The convention of Indians as a priori kuffâr and dark-skinned is traced by Schimmel to the raids of Mahmud of Ghazna and the subsequent frequent appearance of Hindus in the works of Sana‘i, ‘Attar and Rumi. Her interest is primarily in highlighting the habitual contrast between the desirable, pale and bellicose Turk and the submissive, dark and humble Indian. Yet gradually a contradiction emerges. While the Hindu still represents the alien and the lowly, he is much more than a despicable slave; he is also a symbol for the self as opposed to the beloved. According to Schimmel, ‘Attar is the first classical Persian poet who uses the trope in this sense. While Schimmel stops her analysis there, we must note that the mysterious nature of the Hindu is also heightened by his association with riches. Unlike the African (zandjî), who is perennially defined as a servant, or the Turk, per definition the cruel beloved and never the self, the Hindu is the enslaved self, but also the secretive guardian and owner of untold riches who dabbles in magic. He is dark, but as a fire-worshipper, he is associated with radiance. He is not harmless; he is ambiguous and somewhat dangerous.

This trope has cosmological as well as anthropological underpinnings. It goes back to the presupposition that Zuhal (Saturn), the lord of the seventh heaven, (menzîl-i keyvân) is black and ruling over India. In this orderly universe, Fars and the two Iraqs pertain to Mars (merîh).

54 For the Arabic, see O. Spies, ed. and tr., Ibn Fadlallah al-Omari’s [sic] Bericht über Indien, in seinem Werke Masâlik al-âbsâr fi mamâlik al-amsâr (Leipzig, 1943), p.27. For the German translation, see p.53.
55 Curiously, she does not mention Sa’di’s extensive description of the Gujarati temple of Somnath.
Turkestan, Qypchaq and the Mongols to the sun, China, Khorasan and Samarqand to Jupiter (müşterî), Arabs and Rum to Venus (zühre), Rumeli, Russia and Hungary to Mercury (‘utârid), and the Franks from western Europe to the moon. Incidentally, there is a Seldjuq depiction of some of the rulers of these planets with multiple arms, which indicates some direct influence of Indian arts.

These resonances open the door to many creative games which to us seem paradoxical, but which are also “logical” within the system of the seven planets and their attributes. Let us recall that the planets are primarily symbolic and that they represent certain qualities. The Hindû- yi bâm-i haftumîn belongs to the planet Saturn, the inherently inferior, dark and scheming enemy of Sun and the Moon. Those two heavenly bodies are in the first and forth heavens respectively, meaning that they are higher than Saturn. In a certain sense, then, Indians are inferior to all other heavens and planets.

Yet, Saturn, as the dethroned ancient father of Jupiter and other planets, is paradoxical. He rules over wealth and over poverty, over justice and over crime, over wisdom and base scheming. If the system is inverted, his heaven becomes the highest. Consequently, in the emerging classical tradition of Ottoman Anatolia of the fifteenth century, a Hindu is viewed as a beggar, a thief and an infidel. He is a slave and a servant, but also often a lord of wealth: a chamberlain, a guardian or a merchant of jewels. His darkness is both ugly and beautiful. Occasionally, he is even a powerful emperor who can demand tribute from the Ottomans. Thus, the mysterious figure of the Indian is surrounded by a nimbus of power.

57 Attributed by two Turkish authors to A.Çayci, Anadolu Selçuklu Sanatı’nda Gezegen ve Burç Tasvirleri (Ankara, 2002), but actually to be found in one of the rare Ottoman mecnu’as.
In this section, we will examine the Ottoman interpretations of the classical *topos* of Perso-Turkic literature up to the sixteenth century, when another, real India emerges within the Ottoman consciousness. There is a persistent tension between Indians as inferiors and as superiors which unfolds even during the first Ottoman contacts with Indian embassies. The poet Ahmedi (d. 1413) still adheres to the older poetic convention. His *Hindu* is a thief who successfully enters the gates of a rose-garden, referring of course to the mole on the rosy face of the beloved. However, there is also the risk of Porus (*Fûr*) not being defeated by the Alexander of the Greeks, alluding to Ahmedi’s own *Iskendernâme*[^59]:

```
Yüzünde hâlûni gördü ‘acablayup gönül eydûr
Ki Yâ-Rab bu gülistâna ne vaktin girdi bu Hindû

Fûr-ı Hind’de olsaydı ferr-i kem-ter kulmun
Hiç bulimazdı zafer Ýskender-î Yûnân ana
```

On the other hand, no lesser personage than the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed Fatih (d. 1481), in his poetic garb as Avni, was able to play upon the famous verse by Hafiz. His verse echoes a tradition which we have seen several times and to which we will return in our conclusion – Rum and India as mirror-images of each other, infidel lands coveted and conquered by Muslims. Thus, a Frankish infidel has a Hindu mole on his / her face, making him more desirable than both Istanbul and Galata.

```
Eğer ân gebr-i efrenci be-dest âred dil-i mâ-râ
Be-hâl-i Hindûyeş bahşem Sitanbûl u Kalâtâ-râ
```

[^59]: An analysis of the *Iskendernâme* will not be attempted here, since it involves intricate discussions of the reception of the Alexanderroman in various languages. The conquest of India is central in the narrative, and Alexander is portrayed as a participant in discussions with Indian wise men.


Indians are only mentioned sporadically in Ottoman poetry up to this point. Yet, quite suddenly, at the start of the sixteenth century, a wealth of Indian metaphors appears in the poems of Müniri (d. ca.1520), who was in service of Bayazid II. Arguably, the trope of the Indian could have been inspired by the appearance of Bahmanid ambassadors and merchants from India. However, the slaves who are evoked were not necessarily fictitious either. The kadi registers of Bursa from 1489 mention by name several Indian slaves, who seem to have been exceptionally dark, “almost black” to Rumi eyes, probably pointing to a southern Indian provenance. They include males, females, a “conditional” slave (müdabber köle) and a eunuch. H. Sahillioğlu, who provides us with this information, speculates that those slaves must have been purchased through intermediaries; however, in a later piece he also presents evidence of Ottoman Muslim merchants who died in India. Returing to the poet Müniri, we find that in his verses, Indians are also black. They symbolize locks of hair, the eyebrows and the mole on the face. As such, they are also associated with sorcery (câdû), fire-worshipping (âteş-perest) and fortune telling (fâl):

\begin{quote}
Zîr-i zülfes be-niger Hindiy-ı ân hâl Mînîr
Hîc bîrûn ne-nehed pây-ı hod ez-hadd Kelîm 66

Haddûn üzre böyle yüz bulduğu bu hâl-i siyeh
Magribî vejfâk u yâ câdû-yî Hindustândur 67

Dôstum di Hindû-yî zülfiine lutf it görelüm
Mushaf-ı hüsûnden açsun ben siyeh-bahta da fâl 68
\end{quote}

64 Very likely, they were former subjects of Vijayanagara, caught in wars between them and the Deccani sultanates.
66 Müniri / Ersoy, Persian ghazals, 120/5, p.225.
67 Idem., K14/7, p.188.
68 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 180/2, p.430.
The Hindu does not use his magic for merely nefarious purposes. Moreover, he is not even ugly, in spite of his darkness. He is repeatedly called “*mukbil*” (fortunate, prosperous). The hair of the beloved falls down in two curls, also described as Hindu. The mention of India brings to mind the sugar-loving parrot of the *Tûti-nâme* and his sweet tongue. As a charming child-thief (*düzd-i Hindû-beççedür*), the Indian begs the executioner for mercy.

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69 Idem., K14/6, p.188.
70 Idem., K26/4, p.239.
71 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 244/1, p.461.
72 Idem., K13/8, p.186.
73 Idem., Persian ghazals, 16/2, p.262.
74 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 253/5, p.465.
75 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 293/3, p.484.
76 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 306/4, p.490.
77 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 309/5. p.491.
Endearing and attractive as a child, the Hindu also possesses surprising skills and virtues. He is compared to Bilal, the virtuous black companion of the prophet, and he is also a skilled doctor (tabīb) and even an accountant (defterine derc ider Hindî rukûm).

Furthermore, this positive vision of the Indian is associated with allusions to conquest (feth), taxes (harâc, hâsîl) and pepper (fülfül), perhaps playing upon Ottoman encounters and clashes with the Mamluks, who still controlled the Indian trade, with its riches and exotic commodities:

Kişver-i Hindi ser-â-ser subh-dem feth eleyëüp  
Çekdi nûrânî ’alemeler ejdehâ-veyker günes

Ber-ne-dâred ser zi-zânû Hindû-yi zülfet meger  
Mültezim şod ber-harâc-i Rûm ezîn-rû gam-horest

Dün sebük-serlik kilup zülfün tagtûh gönlümi  
Tut ki Hindûdur eliyle yile virdi hâsîlın

Zülf ü hâl-i Hindûyeş-râ didem ü gofem belî  
Behr-i sultân-i Habeş şod sâye-bân[i] kâküleş

78 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 227/2, p.453.  
80 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 14/5, p.350.  
81 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 196/5, p.438.  
82 Idem., K18/6, p.203.  
83 Idem., K9/5, p.173  
84 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 232/4, p.455.  
Other poets from the same period retain the more conventional Persianate images of Indian darkness and association with Saturn, but the tension between Indians as trustworthy treasurers and devious thieves persists. Ahmed Paşa (d.1497) sees the Hindu as a *bekçi*:

\[
\text{Bir şahınsâh-i kader-kadr u kaza-radur ki olur} \\
\text{bâmina Hindû zuhal dergâhina çâker günes }^{89}.
\]

Two Indian guards (*pasbân*) appear also in Hamdi (d.1503), protecting the fortress of the beloved’s beauty:

\[
\text{Hisâr-i hüsnüniin câna gözün dizdâri olaldan} \\
\text{Yasag içiin du cânibe du Hindû pasbân asmiş }^{90}.
\]

Ca‘fer (d. 1515) also describes the Hindu as a Saturnian doorkeeper, but seen from another perspective, he is a beggar (*gedâ*) and a potential thief:

\[
\text{Oldi kamer işigüne der-ban-i-zer-kulâh} \\
\text{Đüşdi Zuhal sarayuna Hindû-yi pasbân}
\]

\[
\text{Geldi bir Hindû gedâdur var elinde ayine} \\
\text{Sen sahi ister k’ide cer kâkül-i muskun-i dost }^{91}.
\]

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86 Idem., Persian ghazals, 86/2, p.304.
87 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 42/3, p.364.
88 Idem., Ottoman ghazals, 328/4, p.499.
For Necati (d. 1509), the Indian in his childish incarnation is no longer the guardian of treasures, but rather the source of attraction himself, since he is the hair of the beloved. He repeats the epithet “mukbil” which had been employed by Muniri.

_Hindû-beççe-i micmere-gerdan-i cemendur_  
_Ragbet komadi tabla-i ‘attara benefše_

_Her de hidmetdir isen tigune baş üstine dir_  
_Rüşen oldı bu ki olur bende-i Hindû mukbil_  

There are also intimations of new lyrical possibilities which do not seem to be derived directly from classical Persian imagery. Intriguingly, Karamanli ‘Aynî (d. 1491?) employs a novel contrast between the Indian and the Turk, based upon different varieties of luxurious clothing. He contrasts the silk worn by the Indians to the red fabrics of the Turks, which made them resemble the rising sun:

_Gerçi Hindû-yi ufuk geymişdi atlas câmeyi_  
_Türk-i meşrik biği geydi hare-i hâver cihân_  

For Dede ‘Ömer Rûşenî, d.1486/87 or 1501, there are mostly positive connotations to the trope of the Indian. The Indian is a graceful slave who falls into the pool and dives in the water (havza düşüb gavtalar eyler). The poet plays with the hair of the beloved, commenting that its charms will defeat Rum (Rûmda mergûb olacahdur). The mole (hat) in spite of its blackness is radiant like the sun, unequivocally good and beautiful (hûb), and it is a soldier (sipâh). The imagery of Saturn seems to have been replaced by the alternation between the sun and blackness. The Indian of the mole and the hairlock performs a protective function as a soldier, however, and

retains his guardian role as a chamberlain (sipâh u çâvûş) and a nurse (dâye). The evocation of darkness and fire-worship inspires devotion:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Didemde hayâlün sanasın hâlinün iy dost} \\
\text{Hindû-beçêdûr havza dışûb gavtalar eyler} \quad 94
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Hindû saçını ragbet idûb oynadum ûpdûm} \\
\text{Didi bu oyun Rûmda mergûb olacahdûr} \quad 95
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Iy günes zîl-ı ilâhidûr hatun} \\
\text{Cennetin mîr-i giyâhudur hatun} \\
\text{Hind iklîmi sipâhîdûr hatun} \\
\text{Hüsîn ilinîn pâdişâhîdûr hatun} \quad 96
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Hûbdur rûyunda Hindû benlerûn} \\
\text{Anber-ásâ gâliye-bû benlerûn} \\
\text{Dânelerdûr geşte her sû benlerûn} \\
\text{Yîrlû yirinde ne nigû benlerûn} \quad 97
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Kaşdur pâdişèh-i hüsî û cemâle hâcib} \\
\text{Zûlf-i Hindûsî hevâ-dâr-ı sipâh u çâvûş} \quad 98
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Habeş-zâde-dûrûr hâl-i siyâhun} \\
\text{Anun Hindû külâlen dâyesidûr} \quad 99
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Lûle benzer ki gül-i rûyuna indürmedi baş} \\
\text{Mug-ı Hindû kimi yendi kararûb içi taşî} \quad 100
\end{align*}
\]

After the conquest of Egypt and the Holy Cities by Selim I in the early sixteenth century, India becomes substantially more real for the Ottomans. Indeed, this expansion and transformation of Ottomans into a world power which dominated the Red Sea is clearly reflected in the poetry of Revânî (d.1524). The Indian guardians of treasures have transformed into an


\[95\] Idem., 9/4, p.126.

\[96\] Idem., Kıt’alar, 12, p.220.

\[97\] Idem., Kıt’alar, 13, p.221.


\[99\] Idem., 19/7, p.133.

\[100\] Idem., 76/8, p.184.
unprecedented role, as a group of soldiers (*leşker*), sometimes riding on elephants (*fîl*) and attacking Egypt, China and the lands beyond:

\[
\begin{align*}
Yâ peyk-i Hindâdur & bu felek zînet eleyüp \\
Takdi núcûm & her yanadan ana nice zeng 101
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
‘İydğâh & içre sûvâr olmağa yâ Hindû-yi şeb \\
Fîl-i çarhun & başna yine urupdur çengâl 102
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
Zülůmûnûn & cem ‘iyyetini tağdan hattun durur \\
Hindden leşker & çekmiş Çín ü Mâçîn üstine 103
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
Tağdan zülfeynûnûn & cem ‘iyyetin hattun durur \\
Hindden leşker & çeker Çín ile Maçîn üstine 104
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
Mûlîk-i cemâli & leşker-i hatdur bozan yakan \\
Mîsr üstine & çekildî yine Hind leşkeri 105
\end{align*}
\]

Yet, the Hindu soldier is ultimately destined to be defeated and turned into a servant, especially when faced with the dragons of Rum (*ejdehâ-yi Rûm*). In this way, he returns to his traditional role of slave and Saturnian door-keeper.

\[
\begin{align*}
Hindû-yi şeb & bırakdı murassa’ kabâsını \\
Çûn tîğ-i zer-nişân & ele aldi âfitâb 106
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
Ağzîndan & od sacardı seher ejdehâ-yi Rûm \\
Hind ehli & eylese ne ‘aceb andan ictinâb 107
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
Bezm-i & garrâna buhûr itmegiçün her demde \\
Çarh & bir Hindu kulundur güneş altun micmer. 108
\end{align*}
\]

Yet another association emerges, in the form of the potentially Muslim Indian. Now that Ottomans dominate the Hijaz, Indian merchants (*tâcir*) arrive from all parts. For the first time, an

102 Idem., K 17/4, p.58.
104 Idem., G.395/5, p.244.
105 Idem., G.467/4, p.269.
106 Idem., 1/2, p.25.
107 Idem., 1/8, p.25.
108 Idem., K 10/12, p.44.
ambiguity appears in the description of the Indian’s religion. Thus, when the Hindu / Indian arrives at the Ka‘ba to perform the pilgrimage, he also remains a fire-worshipper, threatened with execution unless he converts to Islam. There is a possibility of a meeting between the two religious worlds, as the parrot of the poet’s word leaves for India (Hindûstâna çıkda).

In the subsequent period, historical developments occasionally intrude on the traditional aesthetics. Sultan Süleyman Kanuni’s conquest of Baghdad draws India yet closer to the Ottoman orbit. In the poetry of Fuzuli (d.1556), a Turkic speaker native to Iraq, India is indeed a real place, although this is not visible in all of his works. In his Mecnun ve Leyla, he employs the conventional imagery of India in order to flatter the Ottomans. While describing a war fought for the sake of Mecnun’s beloved Leyla, he implies that the sun won over the night, adhering to the convention of pale Rum and dark India. The allusion here must have referred to the Mamluks, who purportedly intended to conquer India, but who lost even Syria to the victorious Ottomans.

110 Idem., K 23/19, p.72.
113 Idem., G.338/5, p.222.
His work was finished a year after the Ottoman forces had arrived in Baghdad, and in 1535 it was dedicated to the vâlî of Baghdad Veys Bey.

*Bir subh ki kildi husrev-i Rûm
Şâm ehline Hindi fethini şûm*

Yet, Fuzuli, in our days seen as primarily a Turkic and Azeri poet, was above all a denizen of Iraq and a Shi’a. His loyalty to Ottomans only emerged toward the end of his long life.\(^{115}\) As a servant at the tomb of ‘Ali in Najaf, he praised the Safavid Shah Isma’il at the beginning of his poem *Beng ü Bâde*.

*Meclis efrûz-i bezm gâh-i Halil
Cem-i eyyâm: Şâh Ismâ’îl.*

*Andan âsûdedür ganî vu gedâ
Hallada ’llâhu mulkehu abadâ!* \(^{116}\)

Fuzuli considered going to either to India or to Anatolia to assuage his poverty, as he expresses in a *qasîda* written for the Ottoman governor of Baghdad, Ca’fer Paşa.\(^{117}\) We do not know whether this was indeed his intention or poetic hyperbole, but there are several other instances in which he employs the tropes of India and Rum.

*Gâhî dar farq bâ khvad nagsh-i ‘azm-i Rûm mîbandad
Gâhî az fâqih sûdâ-yi rah Hindûstan dârad*

Yet, at a crossroads of India and Anatolia, neither constituted mere dreams. Fuzuli was familiar with the political structures of power in India. Sultan Quli Qutb al-Mulk, the first sultan of Golconda and a Qaraqoyunlu by birth, sent a donation for the tombs of the Shi’a imams.

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\(^{115}\) For biographic information, see W. Andrews, M. Kalpakli, N. Black, *Ottoman Lyric Poetry: An Anthology* (Austin, 1997).


Fuzuli responded with a *qasīda* in which clichés about India’s darkness are inverted. We learn that because of the sultan’s kindness, the dark beauty mark turn pure. The black dots of *djâh* and *djalâl* have transformed into rays of light. He, the one who is in dark India, has become the discerning eye in the darkness. His protection over the inhabitants of Kerbela is like the wing of a peacock. His letter is compared to the sweet tongue of the Indian parrot. His generosity has turned other places as black as India’s earth; rather, India’s earth is no longer black, since he turned it into gold and it cannot be used for *kohl* any more. The darkness of India becomes a blessing and a mark of abundance.

119

\[\text{Idem., p.207-210.}\]

\[\text{120 Idem., Q. 40, 8-14, p.207f.}\]

\[\text{121 Idem., Q. 40, 15, p.208.}\]
In the center of Ottoman literary culture in Istanbul, such adulation to Indian rulers as found in Fuzuli was of course unthinkable. Yet new variations on the Indian trope, some of them quite daring, emerged in the decades following the conquest of Basra. Thus the Ottoman poet Bihişti (d. ca.1570) imagined the Indian mole coming to Rum to demand harâç from its inhabitants:

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{Konmış 'izâr sahnına Hindû-yı hâl-i yâr} \\
& \text{Gelmış diyâr-i Rûm'dan almagçûn harâç}\text{ }^{124} \\
& \text{Kâkülün sultân-i Hind anun semendiûr sabâ} \\
& \text{Kıldı mü-tâb-i felek ebr-i siyâhi ana çul}\text{ }^{123}
\end{align*}
\]

The divan of Hayali Bey (d.1556) can also be mined for a rich understanding of the Indian trope, although some of his imagery remains firmly conventional. The Indian is still a door-keeper (derbân) and a submissive chamberlain (hâcib). He is also a fire-worshipper and an infidel (kâfir). Yet, skillful manipulation of convention delights the reader through subtle inversions.\textsuperscript{126}

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{Nâme-i 'izzetine oldu 'utârid munşî} \\
& \text{Kadri bâbında zuhal Hindî-i derbân-şekil}\text{ }^{127}
\end{align*}
\]

\textsuperscript{122} Idem., Q. 40, 20-24, p.209. \\
\textsuperscript{123} Idem., Q. 40, 27, p.209. \\
\textsuperscript{124} Y. Aydemir, \textit{Behişti divanı: Behişti, hayatı, şahsiyeti, eserleri ve divanının tenkilî metni} (Ankara, 2000), G 68/3, p.215, also read as Hindî-i hâl-i nâb. \\
\textsuperscript{125} Idem., G303/2, p.347. \\
\textsuperscript{126} The primary source for Hayali is A.N. Tarlan, \textit{Hayâlî Bey Divânî} (Istanbul, 1945). C. Kurnaz, \textit{Hayâlî Bey Divânî Tahlîli} (Istanbul, 1987) has also been consulted. \\
\textsuperscript{127} Tarlan, \textit{Hayâlî}, K8/15, p.28.
Hâcibidür rûz-ü-şeb Hindû-yu bâm-i heştümin
Yüz sürer dergâhına sultân-ı taht-ı çârümîn 128

Ey sanem sol hâl kim konmuş bu hadd-i meh-veše
Kâfir-i Hindüdûrûr kim secde eyler âteşe 129

Hindû-yi şeb micmer-i mâh ile şeylillâh eder
Bir kizî altun ana her gün verür benzer güneş 130

Hâl-i Hindûn ehl-i dil vasf etse(divân bağlanur
Ibn-i Zengî yâdına gûyâ Gülistân bağlanur. 131

Hatt-i là ’lün ey sanem tutmuş Nesihû şerbetin
Rûy-u gülgûnunda hâlün Hindû-yi âteş perest 132

Rûy-u gülgûnunda hâlün Hindû-yi âteşkede
Lâ ’l-i cân bahşunda hâttun kâfir-i ’lsâ perest 133

In an explicit parallelism, the Hindu fire-worshipper is compared to the infidel who prays to Jesus. Both of those are laudable in his poetry, for these are acts of devotion toward the beloved. Moreover, the Indian is a merchant (hâce), but also a blood-thirsty purloiner (tarrâr) of jewels, which he craves (yâkuta heves):

İki yandan iki zulfün mü eğilmiş là ’lûne
Yâ metâ ’t cânı sarkar iki Hindûlar mdûr 134

Bir Hindi hâcedür ki diler cevherin sata
Sadû-a geçdiği budur diûkânâ tîq 135

Yüzünde hâl-i Hindû gibi tarrâr
Duşunda görmedi ’Ayyûr-ı Bağdâd 136

Hâlûn gâmi hûn-u dil ara didelerümde
Yâkuta heves Hindû gibi kim gele kâna 137

129 Idem., Harf-ûl-hâ, 17/1, p.351.
130 Idem., K5/5, p.17.
131 Idem., Harf-ûr-râ, 49/1, p.145.
132 Idem., Harf-ût-tâ, 2/2, p.113.
134 Idem., Harf-ûd-dâl, 5/2, p.121.
135 Idem., Harf-ûl-hâ, 64/3, p.375.
Hayali sees the possibility of traveling to India. Not only may the poet himself be exiled there, but the hypocrite (zâhid), being secretly an infidel, may also depart for Bengal (Bengâl). This appears to be an implicit injunction against the immigration of Rumi men to India. It may also be that transgression in devotion is permissible, but it is unacceptable hypocrisy to willingly travel to the farthest reaches of India.

\[
\text{Yahod beni vilâyet-i Hinde revâne kil} \\
\text{Ta kim elûmden anda dahi kan kaşana tîğ}^{138}
\]

\[
\text{Tarık-i Ka’be-i tahkika girdüm sanma ey zâhid} \\
\text{Seni Hinde revân etdi reh-i Bengâle bilmezsin}^{139}
\]

Rather intriguingly, the question of superiority is unresolved. It seems that Ottomans have conquered India with their weapons as well as with their fame, as Hayali declares in his \textit{kasîde} for Sultan Süleyman. Yet, there is also the distinct possibility of the ruler of India coming to Rum. The attractions of beauty carry the danger of turning its lovers into \textit{kuls}, the same subordinate class of men who serve the Ottoman state. Indeed, the Indian mole (hâl) and hair-lock (zülüf) could turn everyone in Rum, including the \textit{pâdishâh} himself, into Hindu slaves!

\[
\text{Rûm-u-Mısır-u Basra-vû-Bağdâda hükûmûndûr revân} \\
\text{Hindi aldun tàlib i iklîm-i Türkistân musin}^{140}
\]

\[
\text{Saldı iklîm-i Hinde velveleyi} \\
\text{Hây-û-hûy-i sipâh-i ‘Osmânî’}^{141}
\]

\[
\text{Bana kîlsa revâne Husrev-i Hind} \\
\text{Diyâr-i Rûma yûz pil-i demân genc}^{142}
\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{138} Idem., K6/30, p.21.} \]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{139} Idem., Harf-ün-nun, 68/4, p.332. Varieties include \textit{Hinde} / \textit{Sinde} and the fanciful \textit{Mengale} for \textit{Bengale}.} \]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{140} Idem., K20/14, p.60.} \]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{141} Idem., K16/14, p.50.} \]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{142} Idem., Harf-ül-cîm, G1/6, p.117.} \]

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4. The impediments of reality: India exists

Piri Reis (d.1554-5), whom we have mentioned several times above, was the admiral of the Ottoman fleet who died because of his failure to confront the Portuguese at Hormuz. He is celebrated for his uncannily precise maps of the Americas, and he wrote the *Kitâb-i bahriye* in 1521-6. The book was primarily a manual for Ottoman naval officers. Formally, the bulk of the text was composed in simple poetic garb and as such it would have served as a mnemonic device. He explicitly states that intention in his foreword.\(^{147}\) Immediately following a general discussion of the division of world’s seas is the section on the reason why the Portuguese went to India. In a fictionalized version of the Portuguese explorations of sub-saharan Africa, the motivation is attributed to an exiled Portuguese prince.\(^{148}\) After a forty-year long hiatus, the

\(^{143}\) Idem., K16/12, p.50.
\(^{145}\) Idem., Harf-üm-mm, 28/2, p.283.
\(^{146}\) Idem., Harf-ün-nun, 54/4, p.325.
\(^{147}\) Several luxurious editions can be purchased in the more upscale bookstores in Istanbul. Doubtlessly, the most scholarly among them is the massive four-volume edition by E. Ökte, et alia, *Kitâb-i Bahriye* (Istanbul, 1988), which includes a reproduction of the manuscript, a transliteration of the Ottoman as well as translations into English and modern Turkish. Most citations relevant to India can be found in the first volume. In the following, abbreviated to *KB*.
\(^{148}\) For the Turkish and English, see p.95. For the Ottoman, see the reproduction of the manuscript, p.16/a. In the following, abbreviated to Tur. and Ott.
Portuguese fleet laboriously reaches the Cape of the Good Hope and Ethiopia (Habes) while endeavoring to arrive in India. Regrettably, the men are unskilled (‘amelsuz) and most of them perish before reaching India. One of them returns to Portugal and consults with a priest (keșiğ) who is also a philosopher (feylesûf), who deduces the existence of the equator logically.149 Eventual success of the Portuguese fleet is explained in great detail, so that the readers may learn about it. Latitudes must be measured precisely with an hourglass or an astrolabe. Piri also mentions he had conversations with the Portuguese about their travels to more remote lands, including China (probably implying southeast Asia).150

In his section of China, we unexpectedly encounter the dog-faced men who are attributed to Chinese islands rather than India.

149 Piri Reis habitually intersperses the narrative with geographical and nautical information about the details of sailing those waters. KB Tur. p.107ff; Ott. p.19/a ff.

150 KB Tur. p.141; Ott. p.27b.

151 KB Tur. p.119ff; Ott. p.22a.

152 KB Tur. p.141; Ott. p.27b.

153 KB Tur. p.145; Ott. p.28/a.

154 KB Tur. p.144; Ott. p.28/b.
Since they are rare in the Islamic classical tradition, Piri must have learned about them from conversations with Portuguese or Italian sailors or from some familiarity with the lore of the classical antiquity. Ethiopia is another location of marvels, including gigantic snakes and a two-legged rhinoceros (gergedan var ikidür pâyu anun) which preferably attacks elephants.

What are we to make of these intrusions of the fantastic, some of which may stem from Qazwini’s zoological work? Piri Reis has been repeatedly idealized as the torch-bearer of an aborted Ottoman renaissance, representing empiricism and science rather than the dismissed fantasies of the Perso-Arab tradition. He was certainly a man of many talents, but we cannot measure him (or any of his European contemporaries) with late nineteenth-century positivist criteria. His bouts of irrationality may puzzle us, but he offered more than amusing tales. He knew that Portuguese sailors visited African coasts of Zanzibar and Madagascar because of amber (‘anber) and sandalwood (sandal ağaci), and he knew how to sail there. Perhaps the fictional elements, in addition to their didactic and entertaining aspects, were intended to facilitate memorization and avoid loss of concentration.

Yet, significantly, there are no miraculous tales when in Piri’s section on the Indian Ocean and India itself. It is a concrete, real place whose main obstacle resides in its climatic conditions. Piri devotes most of the Indian Ocean section to measurements of distances in rods (tahta); rather dry reading from the viewpoint of poetic lyricism. He calls it a method used only in the Indian Ocean, because the North Star is clearly visible there. His description of seasons in India, which are purportedly diametrically opposed to those in Lisbon and Istanbul, appears far-fetched until the monsoons in southern India are taken into account. Variation in southern

155 For more on the origins of cynocephaly in India, see D.G. White, Myths of the Dog-Man (Chicago, 1991).
156 KB Tur. p.169; Ott. p.34/b.
Indian temperatures are small; hence, Piri’s “winter” along the coasts is indeed not a time of freezing temperatures, but of constant rains, and Indian summers and winters are primarily defined by winds.

\[\text{Rîh-i şarkîdendür anda cümle yaz}\
\text{Bâd-i garbidür kışî iy ser-fîrâz}\
\text{Dahi Hind'de tá karaksî kim olur}\
\text{Bunda ağustos ayıdur ehli bilîr}\
\text{Kış olur Hind illeri dahi Habeş}\
\text{Muttasîl yağmur olur olmaz güneş}\]

While the political context in Piri’s work merely forms the background for practical navigational knowledge, the struggle for Indian Ocean goods brought a dramatic end to his long life. As we mentioned in our first chapter, he died in ignominy after his flight from the Portuguese, when he failed to conquer Hormuz. He was not executed as a scientist, but as an admiral who lost valuable resources.

Piri’s successor Seydi ‘Ali Reis composed two works upon his return to India. One of them was a nautical study of the Indian Ocean whose facsimile has been published, but not yet edited or analyzed. His other book, a description of his travels and travails in northern India and central Asia during a war between Ottomans and Safavids, has been translated several times, including versions in English, French and Persian. We will return to several important

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passages which we encountered in our second chapter, but this time in the garb of A. Vambéry’s translation, because its tone and style convey the original well. To the extent that the work became known, it was through Vambéry, and only a reader of the Ottoman original text would have noticed a few significant omissions and mistranslations.

Seydi ‘Ali claimed that his ships had been driven toward India by unfavorable winds after a battle with the Portuguese; in reality, he may have fled to India in a moment of panic, fearing that he would be executed in the same manner as his erstwhile mentor Piri. His travelogue must be read on several levels, one of them certainly allegorical: The lands of foreign rulers are associated with uncertainty and suffering. The eventual successful return to Ottoman domains symbolizes the salvation of the soul from perils. There are numerous references to Seydi ‘Ali’s pilgrimages in the Hijaz and in Iraq and to prayers proffered by him and his crew as their ship lost its course in a whirlpool, and we are told that only the rare ship escapes this menace of the Indian Ocean. The mere sight of an infidel temple on Indian shores provokes further fears.161 Another whirlpool destroys Seydi ‘Ali’s ships, but most of his crew survive the ordeal. During a period of five days, they never see the sun because of the heavy Indian rains and they cannot use their compass.

Indian Muslims greet the arrivals in Surat, explaining that they had survived a flood as large as the one in the times of Noah. Rather implausibly, Seydi ‘Ali reports that it is not in the memory of men that a ship from Rum landed upon the coasts of Gujarat and that only an intervention by Ottomans can save them from infidels:

is the only one in a European language to include translations of Seydi ‘Ali Reis’ poetry, some of which was composed in Chaghatay. See Seyyidi ‘Ali Re‘is, J. Bacque-Grammont, *Le miroir des pays, Une anabase ottomane à travers l’Inde et l’Asie centrale* (Arles, 1999).

“Great was the joy of the Mohammedans at Surat when they saw us come; they hailed us as their deliverers (lit. Hidr), and said: "You have come to Gujarat in troublous [sic] times; never since the days of Noah has there been a flood like unto this last, but neither is it within the memory of man (devr-i Ademden bu zamana gelince) that a ship from Rum has landed on these coasts. We fervently hoped that God in his mercy would soon send an Ottoman fleet to Gujarat, to save this land for the Ottoman Empire and to deliver us from the Indian unbelievers." [sic!]”

As we learned in the first section, Rumis were very much present in Gujarat. They belonged to one of the main factions vying for power in the weakened sultanate and Seydi ‘Ali Reis encountered many of them, among whom were the sons of former Ottoman clients such as Radjab Rumi Khan, who inherited his position from Khvadja Safar. Another Rumi was Fath Djang Khan, who obtained his title in 1547 and who was known for his habit to swear in western Turkish. Most of Seydi ‘Ali’s men eventually defected and remained in India (Âkibet Vilâyet-i Gürerât’da ekeri nöker olup [...]). Others resisted the temptations:

“There is in Gujarat a tree of the palm tribe, called tari agadji (millet-tree). From its branches cups are suspended, and when the cut end of a branch is placed into one of these vessels a sweet liquid, something of the nature of arrack, flows out in a continuous stream; and this fluid, by exposure to the heat of the sun, presently changes into a most wonderful wine. Therefore at the foot of all such trees drinking-booths have been placed, which are a great attraction to the soldiers. Some of my men, having indulged in the forbidden drink, determined to kill their Serdar. One of these profligates, Yagmur by name, one evening after sunset surprised Hussain Ağa, the Serdar of the Circassians. A few comrades rushed to his assistance, there was some fighting and two young men were wounded, and one, Hadji Memi, was killed. Then the soldiers pressed round, and implored me to punish the evil-doers, but I again reminded them that we were on foreign soil, in the land of a foreign Padishah, and that our laws had no force here. (Bu vilâyet âher padişâhındur. Bunda bizüm hükmümüz geçmez) "What," they cried, "the laws of our

162 A. Vambéry, p.26. There are two bewildering misinterpretations by Vambéry here. First, he inexplicably omits “such a skillful captain in the sciences of the sea” (deryâ ‘ilminde mâhir bir kapudân). Secondly, note that in the original there is no reference to Indians. The küffâr-i hâksâr are obviously the Portuguese. See Kiremit, Mir’ât, p.90 and our discussion in section one, chapter two.

163 Ulughkhanı, Zafar ul-Wâlih, p.460.

164 Kiremit, Mir’ât, p.94.
Padishah hold good everywhere. (Pâdişâhimuzun hükmi her yirde càridür) You are our Admiral, judge according to our law, and we will be the executioners!"^{165}

When he is also tempted by the offer to remain in India as a governor, Seydi ‘Ali has a prophetic dream which removes his fears. Yet there is no antipathy toward the Muslim rulers of Gujarat, nor does any mention of Hadım Süleyman Paşa’s failed expedition to conquer Diu mar the friendly relations. The Gujarati dignitaries as well as their Portuguese antagonists acknowledge the Ottoman Sultan as the pâdishâh of the entire Islamic world (notably, the title of caliph does not seem to be used at this time).^{166} In Seydi ‘Ali’s subsequent return journey overland toward Anatolia, he encounters surprising allies and antagonists. Infidel Rajputs renounce their usual habit of extracting protection rent when he declares that he is not a merchant, and the ruler of Sind offers him yet another governorship.^{167}

When Seydi ‘Ali arrives at the court of Humayun, he is greatly honored and admired for his poetic, diplomatic and astrological skills. Northern India is in the middle of a civil war; consequently, Humayun is depicted as a weak, but kind and educated ruler. He insists that Seydi ‘Ali remain in his kingdom for a year and that someone else be sent as an ambassador to the Ottomans. The Mughal ruler clearly concedes his inferiority in a conversation with the Ottoman admiral.

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165 Kiremit, Mir’ât, p.93; Vambéry, p.29.
166 Vambéry, p.32; Kiremit, Mir’ât, p. 96. Rather charmingly, he addresses the Portuguese adversary with a Balkanism: “Bre mal’ûn”, p.96.
167 Kiremit, Mir’ât, p.100. He repeats the earlier claim he made in reference to Gujarat, saying that he would reject it even if the entire province were given to him.
“In a word, poetical discussions were the order of the day, and I was constantly in the presence of the Emperor. One day he asked me whether Turkey was larger than India (Vilâyet-i Rûm mı köpdür, yoksa Hindustân mı köpdür).\(^{168}\) and I said: "If by Turkey your Majesty means Rum proper, i.e., the province of Siwas, then India is decidedly the larger, but if by Turkey you mean all the lands subject to the ruler of Rum, India is not by a tenth part as large." (Rûm‘dan murâd nîfs-i Rûm ise, ol Vilâyet-i Sivâs dur, Hindustân çökdür. Ammâ Pâdişâh-i Rûm’a tâbi’ olan memâlik ise Hind anun ‘öşr-i ‘âşirince yoktur.” "I mean the entire Empire," replied Humayun." Then, "I said," it appears to me, your Majesty, that the seven regions over which Iskender (i.e., Alexander the Great) had dominion, were identical with the present Empire of the Padishah of Turkey (gâlibâ Pâdişâh-i Rûm olduğu gûbidür) [...] I was told in Gujarat, by the merchants Khodja Bashi and Kara Hasan (God alone knows whether their story is true), that when the Turkish merchants in China desired to insert the name of their Sovereign in the Bairam prayers on Bairamday, they brought the request before the Khakan of China, stating that their Sovereign was Padishah of Mecca. The Khakan, although an unbeliever, had insight enough to see the justice of their request, which he granted forthwith [...]. Ever since that time the name of the Padishah of Turkey has been included in the Bairam prayers (Vilâyet-i Çîn‘de Pâdişâh-i Rûm adına hutbe okınup), and to whom, I ask, has such honor ever before been vouchsafed?" The Sovereign (Humayun), turning to his nobles, said: "Surely the only man worthy to bear the title of Padishah is the ruler of Turkey, he alone and no one else in all the world. (Hakk budur ki, rû-î-ye zemînde pâdişâhîk nâmı devletli hûndîgûrûn hakkadur. Özgening degûldûr.)"\(^{169}\)

Whether this was Humayun’s authentic reported speech or not, this episode was obviously flattering to Seydi ‘Ali Reis’ Ottoman patrons. Perhaps it also served as a good excuse, since Seydi ‘Ali Reis performed services to Humayun even after his untimely death from a hasty descent down stairs lest he miss the evening prayer. The Reis advised the Mughal court to hide the incident until the crown prince Akbar arrived safely, as Ottomans had done when Selim was replaced by Süleyman. Not surprisingly, there is not a trace of such advice in Mughal chronicles, which are also silent on the very existence of Seydi ‘Ali Reis and his men. Upon Humayun’s death, Seydi ‘Ali proceeded toward Anatolia, proclaiming in Chaghatay that he would rather be the beggar of the ruler of Rum than become the king of India:

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\(^{168}\) Humayun’s voice is given authenticity here because he uses the central and eastern Turkic “köp” instead of the western Anatolian “çok”. See the chart of Oghuz vs. non-Oghuz vocabulary in L. Johanson, “The History of Turkic” in L. Johanson, É.A. Csató, The Turkic Languages (London, 1998).

Before leaving India, he mentions that he was mostly impressed by two of their habits: the burning of Hindu widows upon their husband’s death and the manner of hunting wild antelopes by attracting them to tame ones. He concludes:

“I might go on enumerating many more interesting and curious things to be seen in India, but it would keep me too long. (Eğer Diyar-i Hind’ün garayibin zikr idersek sadetden çıkılır. Eyle olsa.)”

After sundry detours in Transoxiana, he arrives in the Ottoman lands, commenting:

“Questioned upon the different sovereigns and armies of the countries I had visited, I said: "In all the world (rûy-i zemînde) there is no country like Turkey (Vilâyet-i Rûm), no sovereign like our Padishah, and no army like the Turkish. From East to West the fame of the Ottoman troops has spread. For victory follows their banner wherever they go. May God keep Turkey in wealth and prosperity until the last day shall dawn. May he preserve our Padishah in health and happiness and our troops ever victorious. Amen!" When asked whether our name was known in those remote parts, I answered. "Certainly, more than you would think. (Etrâf-i âleme bizüm dahi vakûfımuz vardur. Fî l’vâki’ zikr olnandan bin mertebe ziyâdedür)" In the further course of conversation I learned that a report of my death had reached the Porte, and that therefore the post of Egyptian Admiral had been given to Kurdzade, the Sandjak-bey of Rhodus. I thought to myself: "Long live my Padishah, I shall easily obtain another office (Pâdişâh hazretleri sağ olsun. Mansib, ahvâli âsândur)"; and I comforted myself with poetic effusions. Of course I trusted in God Almighty, nevertheless I was always thinking about the conquest ofOrmuz and Gujarat (ama Bender-i Hürmûz ve Memâlik-i Gücerât, Vilâyet-i Rûm’a ilhâk olmak azûsi hâtîrdan çıkmayıp), and I argued thus to myself: "These fantastic dreams (hevâlar) have so filled thy brain, that thou art being drawn down to the earth by them; the spirit of wandering is so strong in thee that thou canst not give thy body rest until it shall return to dust.”

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170 Kiremit, Mir’ât, p.122. Remarkably, Vambéry does not translate any poems from the original text.
171 Kiremit, Mir’ât, p.124; Vambéry, p.61.
172 Kiremit, Mir’ât, p.164; Vambéry, p.104.
Our summary of Seydi ‘Ali Reis’ adventures may seem somewhat skeptical. Yet, it is obvious that the purpose of his work is not anthropological. While he includes numerous details on the political divisions of India and the relations of the local rulers to the Portuguese, the underlying narrative consistently stresses that the Ottoman domain is larger, more prosperous and powerful than any others, and that a righteous believer prefers it over honors granted by other rulers. His report was received favorably, and he eventually composed his significant work on Indian Ocean nautics.\textsuperscript{173} In addition, his name was immortalized in a proverb: “Başına Seydi ‘Ali hâlleri geldi‖, denoting a person who finds himself in a great difficulty.\textsuperscript{174}

The Ottoman court was evidently not dependent upon Seydi ‘Ali alone for information about India and its political developments. A geographical work composed by one Seyfi Çelebi in 1583 includes valuable details about the Mughals, projecting a very different image than the one intended by Seydi ‘Ali, in spite of its initial claim that the ruler of China converted to Islam in 1553.\textsuperscript{175} Tibet is described briefly as rich in gold and flourishing, but lacking a healthy climate.\textsuperscript{176} Seyfi is especially enthralled by Kashmir, which is described as the world’s wealthiest country, because it has never been plundered by any conquerors. In addition, its lands are covered in fruit trees planted by the prophet Solomon and a magnificent pavilion erected by him.\textsuperscript{177} As detailed by J. Matuz in his preface, the history of Kashmir as recounted by Seyfi is jumbled, combining some improbable elements, such as tracing of its ruler’s line to Mahmud of Ghazna, but also including many historically correct details about the interference of Mughals in

\textsuperscript{174} Katib Çelebi, \textit{Tuhfat al-kibâr fi asfâr al-bihâr} (Istanbul, 1329).
\textsuperscript{176} Idem., p.77f.
\textsuperscript{177} Idem., p.93f.
Kashmiri affairs. Accordingly, the following chapter, rather lengthy, relates information on Akbar’s reign and his ancestors. Ottoman dislike for universal rulership claims by Mughals is expressed here, as Akbar is consistently called by the more conventional name of Celaluddin. Seyfi describes India as exceedingly large and fertile, with two crops a year. Unlike Ottoman lands, it is also heavily populated, with few mountains (probably only the Indian plains and not the Himalayas are meant) or empty spaces. It used to be ruled by Afghans, until Babur, a descendant of Timur, defeated them in battle. Babur called upon Shah Isma’il for help, but regretted it when the Safavid ally announced his intention to destroy Transoxiana because Timur massacred the people of Isfahan. He went to India and defeated the local rulers by setting their elephants on fire. His successor, Humayun, learned to deploy elephants in his army, but he also visited Somnath, which he – true to the poetic convention – inevitably plundered.

Seyfi describes Humayun’s loss of power and his exile in Iran, explaining that this happened because of his pride and his addiction to opium (*Bir ‘ucb-u gurûr bağladi[...] Humâyûn tiryâqî idi.*). Instead of pious rushing to prayer, as in the conventional narrative also adopted by Seydi ‘Ali, Seyfi suggests that he died because of his unhealthy personal habits. Celaluddin (Akbar), his son, betrayed his eastern Anatolian vizier who protected him when he was a child; yet he was successful in taking over Agra from Afghans. Seyfi concludes “Now their rule over India has lasted for 60 years. Babur was *pâdishâh* for eight years, Humayun seven, and now Celaluddin has been *pâdishâh* for thirty-seven years. They are called

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179 As somewhat hesitantly noted by Matuz, this is completely implausible historically and it is a projection of earlier narratives about Mahmud of Ghazni.
180 Idem., p.111.
He is also careful to note that Akbar is not the only pâdishâh in India. There are the four Dekkani sultanates: Nizam Shahis, ‘Adil Shahis, Qutb Shahis and Malik Barid, who is a Sunni. They lead war against each other and against the Frank infidels. Their strength resides in their numerous elephants, who live up to four centuries. Once again, as in Qazwini, the fantastic element resides in zoological details rather than in historical narrative.

The ruler of Aceh is mentioned as a Sunni who rules over a spacious island. There are also infidel rulers of India, for instance in Pegu (the coastal part of Burma), whose ruler is manifold times more powerful than the Deccani sultans because of his access to rubies and gold. Serendib (Sri Lanka) also still exerts a hold on Ottoman imagination as a place whose ruler allows everyone to search for rubies freely once a year. Indian rulers are called “rây”, and their noblemen “râca”, as Seyfi informs us.

We do not know how many readers were familiar with Seyfi’s treatise. Katib Çelebi does not mention it, and neither does Evliya. Most likely, it was ignored. Yet it demonstrates a crucial detail. In spite of embellishments and imprecisions, relatively reliable information about India was available at the Ottoman court. Poetic conventions notwithstanding, it was at least well-known that there were Muslim rulers in India and that not all of them were Sunnis. We know from Katib Çelebi’s description of India that ‘Abu al-Fazl and other Mughal historians were known to Ottomans.

Yet, most Ottoman prose writers at this time preferred an allegorical and ahistorical India. Certainly there was no reason for Ottomans to elevate contemporaneous India and Indians,

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181 Idem., p.115.
182 Ve dahi Hindün deryâ kenârlarinda olan şehirlere Frenk kâfiri hükm eder. Hind pâdişâhları ile gâh cenk ederler ve gâh sulh ederler” Idem., p.121.
183 Idem., p.119.
as perhaps Akbar’s dislike of the Ottomans was known. While in Ottoman poetry there is intimation of Indian power and wealth, in prose India and its inhabitants were most frequently reviled or used as a negative example. Kınalızade (d.1571) offers an especially intriguing description of India. He does not deny that some Indians are good-looking and pleasant in their demeanor. Their intelligence is also notable. He quotes the famed Amir Khusrau of Delhi, who admired India and Indians in spite of his presumably superior central Turkic heritage. Yet, Indians are capable of great crimes, and their dispositions tend to be extreme. Thus, although eunuchs from India are fashionable, it is not advisable to acquire them. Their contradictory inclinations toward chastity (‘iffet) and immorality (fisk) were also noted by other authors, he suggests.

Latifi (d.1582), the author of the famed Tezkire, drowned on his journey to Egypt and Yemen. His biographical dictionary showed his familiarity with a few poets who visited India and Yemen. Another poet mentioned by him was Basiri, coming from Baghdad, among the first to familiarize the Anatolian audiences with Mir ‘Ali Sher Neva‘i. His poem emphasizes the connection between pepper and India. India is also mentioned in Latifi’s description of

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184 “Hindüyi merâ kâkul-i Turkâne bibîned / Zû sine-i men ân but u buthâne bibîned.” See the following footnote.
Istanbul, but there is no need to visit there, because Istanbul is preferable and every imaginable commodity can be acquired in the city itself.\footnote{Latifi, Evsâf-ı İstanbul (İstanbul, 1977), p.9f.: “Ve bir câygâh-i cennet-nişan vasi’ mekândir ki her tarafı bir iklim ve her kenifi bir vilâyet-i ‘azîmdir. Hitâ vü Huten ve ‘Aden ü Yemen gibi nice memâlik-i pür acâib bir kûşesinde gâib olur [...] ve içinde envâ’i hirfet ve yetmiş iki millet temekkûn ve tavattun edib her gene hhref bir taraf tutup herbiri bir işte durul dürlü cümleşide her kûse de bir türlü metâ’ ve her tarafı bâzâr-i minâ gibi mahal-i içtimâ’ olup karda diyâr-i Hind’den râcih ve ednâ yeri nice memleketden vázh. Limüelifîhi: Öğme ey hace bize Hind ü Hitâ vü Huten/bundadir lütuf u şeref bu ki Stanbul derler.”}

Mustafa ‘Ali Gelibolu is one of the best-known Ottoman authors due to studies and translations of his works.\footnote{C.H. Fleischer, Bureaucrat and intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: the historian Mustafa Ali (1541-1600) (Princeton, 1986). In addition, there are also translations of Mustafa ‘Ali’s works by A. Tietze and other notable Ottomanists.} His judgements are often idiosyncratic and colored by his dissatisfaction at lack of recognition by the court, and hence cannot even be understood as representative of most members of his class, let alone the popular level. Especially his views on Timur and on Mahmud of Ghazna are atypical of other educated Ottomans and reflect his own wish to obtain a stable position at the court.

Yet, in Mustafa ‘Ali’s book on social gatherings, as well as in his book on Egypt, there is a persistent tendency to elevate descendants of Bosnians and Croatians, and denigrate Abyssinians and Egyptians, which is a view that we may assume was fairly common among inhabitants of Istanbul. His travel to Jiddah is portrayed as potentially leading to destruction, and indeed, Mustafa ‘Ali’s antipathy extends to boza mixed with nutmeg.\footnote{A. Tietze, Mustafa Ali’s Description of Cairo of 1599: text, transliteration, translation, notes (Vienna, 1975).}

In another work by Mustafa ‘Ali, Indians are mentioned extensively only in one instance, but in a highly instructive manner. Upon the death of a prince without any male successors, an Indian from another part of the country was elevated to the throne by sheer chance. When carousing one night, he and his entourage decided to flee the country, so that the “negligent sovereign and the disgraceful Indians (Hinduyân-i erâzîle) known as his officers abandoned the
throne of the state and the sultanate and fled.” The religion of the Indians is not specified, the tale is told in a vague and abstract manner within the chapter on the escape of slaves. There can only be one conclusion: in comparison with the Ottoman realm, the land of India and its peoples are vile and cowardly, or in his terms, those are “the people of bad stock and root known as Indians” (Hind nämindaki bed asl u bed neseblerden).190

In a later period, the changed composition of Ottoman elites would not have allowed any writer to praise the Balkan peoples so effusively and mock the Georgians as filthy, which Mustafa ‘Ali does; yet, the juxtaposition fits the self-understanding of Ottoman elites at the time, and it perpetuates the clichés which perhaps first appeared a hundred years earlier in Tursun Bay’s chronicle in which the Balkans are elevated as more than equal to India.191 As in the case of Ottomans in Mughal chronicles, the sparse compliments by Mustafa ‘Ali to Indian rulers are back-handed. We are told that the Shahs of Persia and the pâdishâhs of Bukhara and India participate in social gatherings and that they should be praised for this practice. Among them was “Humayun Shah son of Babur, one of the sultans of India”192, who suffered defeat and came to the court of Tahmasp, who welcomed him rather graciously. Yet this mention merely serves for Mustafa ‘Ali to conclude that royal seclusion is a new and unseemly tradition in the Ottoman realm, having been started only under Selim II.193

Intriguingly, the disdain for India which is visible in Ottoman prose of the time does not extend to poetry. Ottoman images of Indians of this period are largely positive, with a few

192 Brookes, The Ottoman Gentleman, p.199. For the original, see M. Şeker, Gelifolu Mustafa ‘Âlî, p.139.
193 There are additional mentions of India in ‘Ali’s Kühâ‘î-l-ahbâr, but they are primarily focused on political developments of pre-Mughal northern India.
exceptions. Baki, often cited as the most significant poet of the Ottoman classical period, also employed the *topos* of India frequently, but in conventional, time-honored images of Indian slaves. Indians mostly simply stand for physical attributes, although they are associated with beauty or devotion. In one instance, there is mention of an Indian elephant guard and the poet’s complexion becoming similar to that of a Hindu.

Çeşm ü ebrû hâl-i Hindû zülf-i câdâ bulsa ger
Öykünirdi âfitâb ol âjet-i devrânına 194

Bâlâ-yı çarh-i heftüme Keyvân-i kühne-sâl
Oturmuş idi niteki Hindû-yi pîl-bân 195

Zamâne hâl-i Hindû-yi benefše zînetin görsün
Nisâr itsün Sitânbûla Semerkand ü Buhârâyı 196

Geldi bir Hindû-yı bi-çâre-sifat işigüne
Garazı bu ki kapûnda ola çâker sânbul 197

Dîl-i âşifte-sifat cevr ile pâ-mâl itme
Hindû-yı halka be-güşündur o zülf-i miskin 198

Nedür bu ‘ârız u hadd ü nedür bu çeşm ü ebrûlar
Nedür bu hâl-i Hindûlar nedür bu habbetû’s-seydâ 199

Merdüm-i dîde gibi Bâki kalan noktalart
Ol iki ya kaşun altındaki Hindûna fidâ 200

Sünbul-i ter zülfîûn Hindî gulâmîduru senûn
Hâksârîduru gül-i ruhsârunun gülzârlar 201

İzâr-i yâre ay ile yanaşdı zülf-i Hindûşi
Velî ayrılmadı yanından anun bir nice yıldur 202

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195 Idem., K1/8, p.3.
196 Idem., K15/4, p.28.
197 Idem., K24/20, p.47.
198 Idem., Kâdî-i Sâm, 24, p.52.
199 Idem., G6/3, p.75.
200 Idem., G16/5, p.80.
201 Idem., G85/4, p.112.
Yüzleri böyle kararmızdı eger ey mäh-rû
Ağıltaba tapmayaydı turra-i Hindâlarun 203

Diyâr-ı Rûma gülîstânın eyledîm teşbih
Benefsezârının Hindûsitâna benzetdüm 204

Çeşm ü ebrû hâl-i Hindû zülf-i câdâ bulsa ger
Öykünürdi âğıltab ol âfet-i devrânuma 205

Tâze tâze dâglarla kanlu kanlu şerhâlar
Hûrka-i Hindûya döndürdi ten-i sad-çâkimûz 206

Emri, roughly Baki’s contemporary (d.1575), is somewhat more original in his handling of the trope. The Hindu is not devoid of power; he even receives sacrifice from the lover. The Indian, formerly plundered, is now the plunderer (tarrâr). The sultan of Egypt is also compared to a Hindu.

İki nokta kalur ol da iki Hindûna fedâ
Dâl u lâm-i dîl iki turre-i tarrâra fedâ 207

Hâl-ı haddûn Mısra sultân oldû bir Hindû gibi
Var ise zülfün hümâsı sâye salmışdur ana 208

Lâle yangûn gûzelîm sûnbûl-i Hindî tükûn
Anlari mihr odûna yakmuş o zûlf ü ruhsâr 209

Hâl-i pûr-mûyuûn ki bir perçemîlî Hind oğlanûdûr
Yâ hûmâ perrin takûnûs bir habeş sultânûdûr 210

Aceb benzer mi Emri ol siyeh benden biten mûya
Giyâh-ı tâze-i fülfûl ki Hindistân’dâ bitmişûdûr 211

Zûlfi altında ruh üzre hat değil hallâc-tû sun’
Pisterin sultân-ı Hindûn ’anber-âgin eylemiş 212

203 Idem., G253/3, p.188.
204 Idem., G337/3, p.224.
205 Idem., G434/3, p.266.
206 Idem., Matla’lar, 5, p.317.
209 Idem., G129/4, p.77.
210 Idem., G107/1, p.66.
211 Idem., G165/Mahlas, p.95.
212 Idem., G225/4, p.125.
‘Ârzuñ koyup güne tapduklaryczûn ey güneş
Sun’ nakkâşi yüzün kara yazar Hindâlûnuñ 213

Leşker-i Hindû çekelden mük-i Rûm içre benün
Kâkûluñ tutar kafâda ejdêhâ-peyker ‘âlem 214

Hâlûn yüzini urmuş o ruhsâr-i meh-veše
Hindûyi gör ki niçesi tapmışdur âteşe 215

Düsdî zûlf-i siyehi hâl ü ‘izâr u hatuna
Basdi Çîn leşkeri san Hind ile Rûm u Habeşi 216

İki nokta kalur ol da iki Hindûna fedâ
Dâl u lâm-i dil iki turre-i tarrâra fedâ 217

Other lesser-known poets also offer charming images which are generally favorable to India. For Yakini (d. 1568), a Rumi can become a Hindu and Indians can come to Anatolia. They are generally beautiful.

Rûmü bi Hindûdur gûyâ ki râm itmek diler
Şeyr ider ruhsâruni cânâ ser-â-ser kâkûluñ 218

Ateş üzre düddur yâ san’at izhâr itmege
Rûma gelmiş Hindidûr Zengî-i âteş-bâz zûlf 219

Sanma cismünle güzeldir yed-i beyzâ ancak
hâl-i Hindû da güzel ol siyeh ebrû da güzel 220

Ham-be-ham kâkûluñ altunda o hâl-i Hindû
tâhten kilmag-icûn rûma zirihler giydi 221

213 Idem., G261/4, p.144.
215 Idem., G424/1, p.226.
218 Ö. Zülfe, Yakînî Divani Tenkitli metin tetkik dizin (Ankara, 2009), K4/10, p.145.
219 Idem., G88/7, p.203.
221 Idem., G193/4, p.259.
As the power and wealth of the Mughals became more entrenched in the early seventeenth century, the reality of Indian economic power began to impede upon Ottoman sensitivities. For Asafi Dal Mehmed Çelebi, who praised Özdemiroğlu Osman Paşa in the 1578-85 wars on Iran, India was almost always associated with Iran, and he noted that soldiers and advisors from India assisted the Shah. During the Celali rebellion, there is mention of men flocking to Anatolia from India and Yemen to cause unrest there. In another instance, the anonymous writer of the Kitâb-i Müstetâb complains that many janissaries remain on the payroll of the Ottoman state, but in fact withdraw themselves from serving it and prefer to go to India as merchants!

Indeed, almost all writers who mention India struggle with the inherited images and the contemporaneous power of India. For Ravzi (d.1600), Indians are no longer slaves; they are wanderers (seyyâh) who roam through Rum and Transoxiana, sometimes as “kings of love” (şâh-i ‘ışk). In either case, their presence brings about strife (fitneler) due to the vicissitudes of attraction:

Cîhânun rind ü fellâhî diyâr‘i Hind seyyâhî
Gözi ag u yüzi kara ‘Arab Mercân’a ‘ışk eyle 225

Hâl-i Hindû‘yi dil-ârâmunsuz ârâm eylemez
Şâh-i ‘ışk olan Semerkand u Buhârâ‘dan geçer 226

Birinûn hâl-i Hindûsından olur fitneler zâhir
Biri bir Sâmîrî sihrine mâlık çeşmi çâdûdur 227

225 Y. Aydemir, Ravzi Divanı (Ankara, 2007), K13/5, p.35.
226 Idem., G206/3, p.175.
'Arızunda görinen hâl-i Hab eş midür 'aceb
Mülk-i Rûm’i seyre gelmiş yohsa bir Hindû mı bu 228

Nasib olan gelür Hind ü Yemen’den
Eger turşî eger zeytûn irişür 229

227 İdem., G227/5, p.183.
228 İdem., G474/5, p.284.
229 İdem., Müfredler, 1, p.369.
Chapter 6
Confronting India

1. Ottoman Indias in the shadow of the Great Mughals

The Ottoman poet Nef‘i, known for his sharp tongue and inclination to satire, which eventually cost him his life in 1625, wrote a qasîda to Jahangir, calling him “Sultan Salim Khan”. Initially, the reader may be inclined to view the long-deceased Ottoman ruler Selim I as the imaginary recipient of the qasîda, because of the lines on conquest of Persia, but the following lines clarify the matter. Presumably, the qasîda was sent to Jahangir in 1625, together with the first recorded Ottoman embassy to the Mughals. The use of Jahangir’s birth name must have been meant as a flattery and an indication of his ties with the Ottomans, but given his dislike for it, the qasîda was destined to miss its mark and fade into oblivion. It is never mentioned in Mughal sources, and we have seen that Jahangir in fact prefers to pretend that no Ottoman subjects have ever visited India.

Unlike the bulk of his work, Naf‘i’s qasîda was written in Persian and it has been edited only relatively recently. In initial verses, the poet expresses his trepidation in front of a powerful king, detailing his ability to instill fear in the hearts of Khusraus and Shahs (implying Shah ‘Abbas I).

230 A. Schimmel refers briefly to it in her book Im Reich der Großmogulen, Geschichte, Kunst, Kultur (Munich, 2000). The reference is on page 284, but unfortunately without any indication where the qasîda would be located. Only the assumption that such a qasîda would be written in Persian rather than Ottoman enabled me to locate it and identify it correctly. Notably, Nef‘i’s Persian divan is considerably more difficult to acquire than his Ottoman one.
If the reader had assumed that the poem was describing the exploits of Selim I and his victories over Shah Isma’il a century earlier, the following lines disabuse him. There is mention of Kashmir, Indians and the poet Fayzi, already revered by Ottomans.

\[\text{Az hamla-i ù zi had-i Kashmir} \\
\text{Tâ kishvar-i Isfahân bidjumbad} \] 

\[\text{Dar Rûm-am u khâma-am ba madhat} \\
\text{Chûn Hindû-i nuktadân bidjumbad} \] 

\[\text{Fayzi nayam u dilam chû daryâ} \\
\text{Dar madh-i ù durr-fishân bidjumbad} \] 

As we know, the thunderous conquest of Isfahan by Indians was mere wishful thinking. Jahangir was Persophile and disdainful of Ottomans throughout his life and even after the loss of Qandahar, he found ways to reconcile with Shah ‘Abbas. We do not know whether the disappointment with Mughals was explicitly expressed at the Ottoman court, but subsequent mentions of Indians in poetry are antagonistic. In the imagination of Süheyli (d.1634), bellicose images prevail. Indians as a group are repeatedly chased, defeated and dominated. They are self-evidently infidels and sun-worshippers.

\[\text{Türk-i dür-efşân-direfş eyledi ‘azm-i Habeş} \\
\text{Oldî muzaffêr o dem dâver-i Hindû-şiken} \] 

232 Idem., K14/11-13, p.44.  
233 Idem., K14/15, p.44.  
234 Idem., K14/10, (note that the numbering of the verses is discontinuous, tied to a specific page), p.45  
235 Idem., K14/11, p.45.  
Tagılup hayl-i Habeş bozuldu cüm-i Zengibâr
Tu’m-e-i şemşir olup cümle gürûh-i Hindiyân 237

Hat u hål ü cemâl-i bâ-kemâl ü çeşm-i hûn-rîzûn
Diyâr-i Şâm u Rûm iklim-i Hind ü Sind’e hûkm eyler 238

Hatt u hålûn haddiûn üzre sınûl-i hoş-bû midur
Rûm’a ’asker saldı yahûd kâfir-i Hindû midur 239

Ruhundan dil girip çıktı hatundan döndü ol şahsa
Ki girmiş Rûm ilinden seyre Hindistândan çıkmış 240

Şâm’a beneşe lâle-i la’line sebzvâr
Sûnbûl Htâ’ya Hind diyârî karafülûn 241

İy hål-i la’l-i yâr nesin bir meges misin
Ateş-perest Hindî misin yâ meges misin 242

Görenler hål-i ’anber-bârûn ruhsûrûn üstinde
Didiler âftâba karﬂu varmus hvâba bir Hindû 243

New combinations appear in the work of Şeyhülislam Yahya (d. 1643), after correspondence between Mughals and Ottomans had been resumed. There is mention of letters being sent to India. The Hindus are bloodthirsty (hûn-hâr) thieves, but also merchants (bahâr tâcîr) rather than slaves.

Gûyâ bahâr tâcîr-i Hindûsitândur
Mûnî’ metâ’in âçmaga evzâ-i rûzgâr 244

İletmişler peyâm-i büyû-zülfûn Çin ü Mâçine
Bahâr-i hattin evsâfını Hindustân’a yazmışlar 245

Dili çalar dahî bir Hindî iken fig-i hûn-rîzi
Neden çak böyû makbûl olmak ol hûn-hâr yanında 246

238 Idem., K49/10, p.142.
239 Idem., G60/1, p.219.
240 Idem., G140/4, p.248.
241 Idem., G188/3, p.265.
242 Idem., G232/1, p.281.
244 Hasan Kavruk, Şeyhülislam Yahya Divâmi (Ankara, 2001), G50/3, p.75.
Katib Çelebi’s (d. 1657) works can be mined for many mentions of India. His *Kashf al-zunûn* mentions ancient Hindu India as a place of scientific knowledge, perhaps through the inspiration of al-Biruni. In addition, he stresses the importance of the works of Mahmud Gavan, the ill-fated Bahmanid vizier who established the first formal relations with Ottomans in the fifteenth century. According to Katib Çelebi, his works of *inshâ’* were still studied by the Ottomans two centuries later, and the numerous copies which are preserved in Ottoman archives seem to confirm this statement. India is also mentioned in the brief treatise on Ottoman naval history.  

Most significantly, the *Cihànnûma* offers more than 40 pages on India. We will not address it extensively here, because its multiple layers deserve a separate study. In the section about India, Katib Çelebi makes abundantly clear that he is familiar with at least some Persian-language sources from the Mughal empire, especially those from the sixteenth century, and with the general history of the Mughal dynasty up to his time. Gujarati towns are also described in differentiated manner, with a strong preference for Ahmadabad. A large map of India is included, with a considerable focus on the Panjab area and the adjoining Mughal capitals of Lahore, Delhi and Agra. The Gujarati coast and the Bay of Bengal are also depicted in great detail, and islands of the delta are labeled with names. Most likely, the map also represents practical knowledge of northern India accumulated by Armenian merchants, since it was drawn by one Mgrdich of Galata. Significantly, any researchers who rely upon the abbreviated Latin

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246 Idem., G342/2, p.369.  
249 My intention is to publish an article on India as depicted in the *Cihânnûma* in the near future. See Katib Çelebi, *Kitâb-i Cihânnûma* (Ankara, 2009).
translation of the *Cihânnûma* will be misled, since only a few meager paragraphs are offered in it, strengthening the common illusion of the early twentieth century that Ottomans were either indifferent to India or that India was not significant in the seventeenth century. 250 Katib Çelebi had witnessed the most active period of Ottoman-Mughal correspondence, and he was well-aware that Ottoman elites wanted to gain accurate information about India. His contemporary, the famous scholar Hezarfenn, composed *Tercüme-i Luğat-i Hindi*, a short treatise with some Urdu poetry and vocabulary lists, after encountering an Indian ‘alim in 1678.251

This consciousness is also reflected in the works of the official historiographer Na‘ima. His description of a diplomatic *faux-pas* has been translated and analyzed as early as 1830252 and as recently as 2007.253 We will not retrace it in great detail here, but the subtext of the “cabbage incident” must be addressed. The Ottoman ambassador, Zülfikâr Ağa, who was eventually selected for the mission to India on the basis of his wealth rather than for his diplomatic aplomb (“kendi kisemden harc ederim”), embarrasses himself by praising cabbage above all foods in the presence of Indian ambassadors in Istanbul. He claims that cabbage is the main source of Bosnian strength and misses a vulgar, but witty word-play on *rûh* and *rîh*.254 After an outburst of laughter at his uncouth manners, the Mughal ambassador surreptitiously calls him “an ox in the shape of a man.” (“Subhâna man halaqa al-baqar ‘ala sûrati al-bashar!”). Zülfikâr Ağa,

251 The manuscript is preserved at Istanbul University and bears the number TY 5796. For a brief explanation of how it came into being, see H. Wurm’s dissertation: Der osmanische Historiker Hüseyin b. Gafer, genannt Hezarfenn, und die Istanbuler Gesellschaft in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts. (Freiburg am Breisgau, 1971).
oblivious to the consequences of his ignorance, boasts that he showed it to those sly Indian “cats”, wondering what they would do if Ottomans did not buy their spices.\(^{255}\) Na‘ima, who was born in Syria, closer to the centers of Indian trade, bitterly comments that after such embarrassment at the Ottoman court, a better man should have been sent to India.

Yet, more than personal preferences – or even refinement – seem to be at work here. As visitors to northern India are aware even in our day, fresh lettuce and cabbage leaves can have a very limited life-span in India’s heat; conversely, Indian vegetables are often cooked in highly sophisticated ways.\(^{256}\) Boiled cabbage, alas, enjoys a particularly bad reputation due to its effects on digestion. But that “clueless Bosnian ass” (\(\text{ol har-i lâ-yefhem Boşnaği}\))\(^{257}\) was not merely ignorant of dictates of geography. He was also affirming his cultural identity as a “Westerner”. Even in Ottoman lands, sour cabbage was not commonly eaten in southern and coastal areas.\(^{258}\) Its presence denotes closeness to central Europe and its battlefields from Hungary to the Ukraine. In Istanbul itself, Zülfikar Ağa would have found numerous allies who would also extoll the virtues of simple Balkan food over the spices of the eastern regions.\(^{259}\) Thus, he signalled to himself and his audience his loyalties. This incident shows that while Arabic, Persian and forms of Turkic were means of verbal communication familiar in both empires, the culinary culture and its codes in India were very different. Reference to cabbage was meaningless in terms of building up emotional alliances. The rusticity of Ottomans, which had already been displayed as a theme


\(^{256}\) This can lead to unusual situations in today’s India. Often only “Western-style” restaurants will serve fresh lettuce salad, which is relatively pricey and served in small quantities, especially in relation to the usual generous servings of other dishes.


\(^{258}\) Although Na‘ima simply calls it “lahana”, leaving space for ambiguity, cabbage is almost always eaten in the shape of Sauerkraut (\(\text{kiseli kupus}\)) in Bosnia, and Zülfikar Ağa specifically praises Bosnian cabbage.

\(^{259}\) Bosnian cuisine is indeed somewhat lacking on spices other than paprika and oregano, especially in comparison to southern and eastern parts of the Ottoman empire.
in the description of the first Mughal embassy to the Ottoman lands, was once again confirmed in the minds of Mughals.

Another famous passage from Na‘ima concerning India’s wealth has been echoed throughout time, from Pliny to Na‘ima’s European contemporaries. India was powerful and insatiable, draining upon the world’s resources:

“So much cash treasury goes for Indian merchandise and the Indians buy nothing from the Ottoman realms nor even have need of anything. The profit taken in customs from these does not actually cover the loss, because they possess so much revenue, but they spend so little being in no need to buy from other countries; the world’s wealth accumulates in India. The same is also true for Yemen because of its coffee, and the wealthy [in these two countries] are becoming just like Karun.”

Na‘ima advises that Ottoman subjects buy Ottoman goods instead; without avail, because we know that even a century later, Selim III failed in trying to implement those policies. Yet, Na‘ima’s numerous comments on India, scattered throughout his chronicle, demonstrate that he did not merely resent and envy Indians. He was concerned about the plunder of their ships by

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260 For Pliny, see Plinius Secundus the Elder, H. Rackham, W. Jones, *Naturalis Historia*, Bk. 37 (Cambridge, MA, 1938): “Secuta aetas propiorem cursum tutioremque iudicavit, si ab eodem promunturio Zigerum portum Indiae peteret, duque ita navigatum est, donec conpendia invent merctor lucroque India admoda est: quippe omnibus annis navigatur, sagittariorum cohortibus inpositis; etenim piratae maxime infestabant. nec pigebit totum cursum ab Aegypto exponere, nunc primum certa notitia patescente: digna res, nullo anno minus HS / D / imperii nostri exhauriente India et merces remittente, quae apud nos centuplicato veneant.”

261 For the English translation, see “The Ottoman Cotton Market and India”, p.272f., in Inalcik, *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire, Essays on Economy and Society* (Bloomington, 1993). The original article was published in Turkish in 1979-80 and reprinted in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*, *Toplum ve Ekonomi üzerinde Arşiv Çalışmaları*, *İncelemeler* (Istanbul, 1993). The quote is given in *The Middle East and the Balkans*, p.271.


263 See the end of this chapter and the conclusion to the dissertation.
English pirates off the coast of Yemen.\(^{264}\) He was also interested in the succession details after the death of Jahangir, whom he calls “Hind Padişahi Selim Şah”, viewing Baysangur, the son of Danyal, whose father was purportedly killed by the Shi’a faction at the court, as the legitimate successor to the Mughal throne.\(^{265}\) When a claimant to Baysangur’s identity appeared at the Ottoman court, he deprecated him for his elevation of Timur, among other reasons.\(^{266}\) It is worth mentioning that Na‘ima also avoids calling Shah Jahan by that name, preferring his birth name of Hürrem Shah bin Selim. Nevertheless, he relents in the case of Akbar, probably because Akbar was already well-known to the Ottomans.

2. Evliya Çelebi’s Indies, vast and naked

While Na‘ima’s language is not very complex, he was still a courtier privy to the highest level of the Ottoman state and concerned about preserving status by acting in a dignified manner. In the shape of Zülfikar Aga, he preserved some of Ottoman prejudices against India, but he cannot give us a taste of how India was perceived by the masses. In turn, as with many other subjects, Evliya Çelebi (d.1682) illuminates us on the Ottoman equivalent of “middle-brow” conception of the world. His references to India are too numerous to be addressed here in full, but we will offer a few glimpses.\(^{267}\)

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\(^{265}\) See Idem., p.617.

\(^{266}\) See Idem., p.786. Also see S. Subrahmanyam, “The Legend of Sultan Bulaqi and the Estado da India, 1628–40” in Explorations in Connected History, Mughals and Franks (Oxford, 2005). Subrahmanyam does not mention purported Baysangur’s evocation of Timur, but he describes his fate in the context of another claimant to the throne, his cousin Bulaqi. See especially p.115f.

\(^{267}\) S. Faroqhi, “Red Sea Trade and Communications as observed by Evliya Çelebi (1671-2)”, reprinted in Making a Living in the Ottoman Lands, 1480 to 1829 (Istanbul, 1995). There are also a few scattered mentions of India in the
As we have seen in other authors, there are at least two Indias in Evliya’s consciousness. One is fabled, the other one real, and he moves between them effortlessly. When enumerating peoples known to him in the east, he states that there are “kavm-i Tatar ve Hind ü Sindî ve Muğânî ve Lûristânî ve Moltânî ve Banyânî ve âteş-perest-i Hindistân, on iki kavm ve on iki lisânîr”. Indians are from the start defined as bad omened and fire-worshippers, with an unclear difference between Hind and Hindustan. Multan, close to Sind, is an area where adoration of sundry animals and objects proliferates. Yet, Evliya also admires India. He admits that the Mughals, called the progeny of Timur, the emperor of India and Sind (evlâd-i Timur Gürgân pâdişâh-i Hindistân u Sindistân), rule over the most extensive kingdom in the world, followed by the Ottomans. Although India is an exceedingly hot place, it is also highly civilized and populated because of its climate is ultimately pleasant and conducive to prosperity. The powerful rulers of India become humble when they send their messages to Jiddah.

Evliya is also aware of Ceylon, defined as “an island of Hindustan”, as the first place where Adam descended to earth and lived in solitude after the paradise. Evliya speculates that

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268 Evliya Çelebi, IV, p.57.
270 In contrast, the Russian czar rules over an even greater expense, but much of it is void of human presence. Idem., X, p.36: “Rûy-i arzda ibtidâ‘ memâlik-i ‘azîmîye mâliik olan Hindistân pâdişâhîdîr, andan âl-i ‘Osmân‘dir. Gerçî Maskov kralî dahi büyük dünyâya mâliik olup, karanîğa varma mutasarrîfdîr, ammâ eli vilâyetînin çûgu şiddet-i şîtâdan mesûnkân değilîr.”
273 Also see idem., III, p.60, in which Adam’s despair and consolation are described.
India is so rich and extensively populated because it was the first home of Adam.\textsuperscript{274} India’s miracles extend to Anatolia. At the foot of the mount Erciyes (Kayseri), there is a garden called after one Baba Ruten, who is reputed to have been a saint who had lived there for 600 years, up until the times of the Caliph Umar, and who through his prayers repelled poisonous animals, although his tomb is said to be in his place of origin, India.\textsuperscript{275} The mysterious kûze-i sanavber of Mudurnu, made of stone pine, are proverbial among angry wives in India.\textsuperscript{276}

But India also is a real place. Like most of his contemporaries, Evliya reveals a practical knowledge of Indian geography which relies upon place names. In other sources, we encounter an astonishing wealth of names from Bihar and Bengal in eastern India, including Varanasi.\textsuperscript{277} Evliya comments upon the appearance of numerous opium addicts in the Üsküdar market, who are dressed in white Indian bezi from Ahmadabad in Gujarat.\textsuperscript{278} In Edirne, there used to be an elephant kept at a dilapidated hammam.\textsuperscript{279} Not only does Evliya visit numerous tombs of Indian saints even as far as Vukovar in Croatia, but he also encounters Indians in the Ottoman lands, frequently in the company of Uzbeks.\textsuperscript{280}

Traces of Indians and India become substantially more frequent as he travels to the east and the south. While residing in Fundijstan in today’s Sudan, Evliya describes Indians, black

\textsuperscript{275} See idem., III, p.111.
\textsuperscript{277} Yücel, \textit{Kitab-i Müstetâb, Osmanlı devlet teşkilâtına dair}, also see footnotes below, p.184f.
\textsuperscript{278} Evliya Çelebi, III, p.50: “Hâş olup o şiddet-i hârda nâzûk süf ferrâce ve beyâz Ahmedâbâd'în Hind bezi sădeleri geyp.”
\textsuperscript{279} Idem., III, p.259: “Ammâ Filyokuşu'nda fil damı harâb olmağıla Hindistân pâdişâhînin hedâyâ gönderdiği pîl-i Mahmûdî ve fil-i Menkerûsî ve bîl-i Semenkânîler Sarrâchâne cisri başında bir virân hammâmda dururlar.”
\textsuperscript{280} See for instance, idem., VI, p.293.
Africans and Portuguese in unfavorable light.\textsuperscript{281} However, he also includes a prayer by an Indian man in jumbled Hindustani.\textsuperscript{282} He becomes very fond of one sentence from it and repeats it on more than one occasion.\textsuperscript{283} In Erzurum, there are numerous traders with India, but from the context it is not clear whether they are Ottoman subjects or Indians.\textsuperscript{284} Not only merchants visited India; there are aged wrestling champions, one of whom is from Tokat and who displayed his art in front of the Indian pâdishâh.\textsuperscript{285} At Yerevan, there is the tomb of Hindi Baba Sultan. Evliya encounters Indians in Azerbaidjan even in smaller and more remote locations.\textsuperscript{286} He is told that at Indian borders Safavid soldiers demonstrate playing with neft.\textsuperscript{287} He also knows about Abaza Paşa, who fled to India and eventually returned to Erzurum.

India also remained symbolic within interactions between Safavids and Ottomans. In spite of the amicable atmosphere and previous acquaintance, Evliya is mocked by the Khan of Tabriz when he arrives at his court in pursuit of several thousand sheep which were stolen and taken into Safavid territory. The khan, who used to occupy high posts in Isfahan, mocks his demand, calling him “as humped-backed as Indians” (\textit{Hindivâne kuhanli}) and suggests to him that he should instead embark upon more heroic deeds, such as warring on Indians in Qandahar.

\textsuperscript{281} Idem., X, p.465: “Biri esmerül-levn Hindî-piçe, biri kâkûleri perişân Freng-piçe, biri ahmerül-vecch Südânî-piçe [...].”
\textsuperscript{282} The prayer has been mentioned and briefly analyzed by R. Dankoff, “The Languages of the World according to Evliya Çelebi”, \textit{Journal of Turkish Studies}, 13, 1989, and in L. Johanson, “The Earliest Text in Balkan (Rumelian) Romani” in V. Friedman, \textit{Turkish in Macedonia and Beyond} (Wiesbaden, 2003). For the macaronic doggerel, see Evliya Çelebi, X, p.469: “\textit{Men seyyâh-i ʿâlem-i kem Keşmir u Kâşân Serendîl hun / Men perlikan meh-leb ateş-perest-i Hind / Ve piçe-yi Lahorî zevan makper aye ʿâşık hun.}”
\textsuperscript{283} Evliya Çelebi, X, p.469: “\textit{iẓid Allâ kipenâh çaltı hûn}”; and repeated several more times, e.g. p.536.
\textsuperscript{285} Idem., III, p.230.
\textsuperscript{286} Idem., III, p.169.
\textsuperscript{287} Idem., III, p.152.
or on the Russian infidels at the coast of Gilan. Yet the scene is not devoid of humor, as Evliya reproduces his banter with an Azeri accent.  

Indian ships come and go incessantly at Basra. Evliya’s description on the trade of Basra is too extensive to be analyzed here in complete detail, and it offers too many specific details such as the names of Indian cities to be merely hyperbolic. The trade is prosperous, with many traders coming from astonishing distances which range from southern India to Denmark. He describes Iraqi rivers as doorways to India. Baghdad is also well-integrated within the Indian Ocean world. It is possible to find interpreters for “Hindi” (Hindice) there. Conversely, many Ottoman soldiers go to India to engage in trade.

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Indian coconuts. He describes the tree and the fruit extensively.\textsuperscript{294} Less plausibly, he comments upon Baghdadi pigeons, which are purportedly so well-trained that they carry messages from India, Yemen and other places back to Baghdad.\textsuperscript{295}

Evliya returns to the subject of Basra many times, emphasizing that it is precisely the trade with India which has made Basra wealthy and its ruler respected even in Yemen and Lahsa.\textsuperscript{296} There are many Indians in Basra, most of whom are “idolaters”. In this context, Evliya even mentions the Banias, who are familiar from many travelogues by Europeans along the shores of the Indian Ocean, but are a rarity in Ottoman domains proper.\textsuperscript{297} Evliya notes that skills in which Indians are distinguished include work with mother-of-pearl (sedefkârî), dyeing (boyacılık), sword-making and gardening (bağbânlık).\textsuperscript{298} Yet among many people who travel on large Indian ships, there are also the poor.\textsuperscript{299}


\textsuperscript{295} Idem., IV, p.256: “Ve hâlâ Bağdâd’ı güvercinler andan kalup Rûm ve Arab u Acem’de meşhûr-1 afâk Bağdadi güvercindir ve hâlâ ahâlî-i Bağdad besleyûp bir eşin Şâm’a ve Haleb’e ve Misr’a ve Hind ü Sind’e götürûr andan kanadına Hıtâyî käğızla rakîk hatlar yazup hapisden azad edûp Hindistân’dan ve Misr ve Yemen ü ‘Aden’den bir ânda gelir murg-ı zeyrek kebûterler vardır. Ekseriyâ Bağdâd’ın tüccârları besler [...] Tüccâr mâbeyninde birkaç kerre Hind ü Sind ve Yemen’e vârmış ve gelmiş himâmî beş yüz guruşu aldıkları çökdu.”

\textsuperscript{296} Idem., IV, p.288: “Basra paşasına beher sene bin kîse hâsil olur. Hemân beş yüz kîse günümüzden hâsil olur. Zîrâ beher sene iki yüz pâre Hindistân gemisi ve Firengîstân u Yemen ve ‘Aden u Habeş gemileri gelir.” Also see numerous other references to Indian ships and Indian trade, e.g. p.34, p.258, p.260, p.278, p.287, p.290ff.

\textsuperscript{297} Idem., IV, p.291: “Çümle [...] ‘aded kemîse-i püt-hânedir ve yetmiş iki millet-i firâk-i dâlle bu şehirde çökdu.”


\textsuperscript{299} Idem., IV, p.156: “Hazret-i Hindî‘dir.”

In addition, Evliya offers a brief report on the embassy sent in the 1630s by Shah Jahan, whom he does not mention by name. In his version of the events, the equally nameless Indian ambassador praises the Ottoman conquest of Iraq, requesting that Indians be granted the privilege of providing the covering for the Ka'ba that year. In Evliya’s completely ahistorical version of the events, Murad IV is amused as well as angered, suggesting that naked Hindus/Indians should take care of covering themselves and their women first and that all of them should be chased away from Ottoman domains for daring to suggest such impertinence, while all the Ottoman subjects in Indian lands should also leave India or suffer. Here we witness a moment of “cognitive dissonance” in Evliya. He had engaged in friendly interactions with Indian dervishes and did not mind the presence of Indian trade in Iraq, but for the sake of the anecdote, he preferred to imagine two neatly separated realms. Ottomans belonged in Ottoman lands, potentially infidel Indians in India; only in such way could contagions and disputations of authority be avoided.

In recounting the anecdote which he clearly relishes, Evliya also echoes a cliché which was beloved by Europeans as much as Ottomans and Ethiopians. We have seen Thévenot mention that the Indian ambassador and his entourage arrived in Istanbul wearing only rags (haillons), almost naked. Simultaneously (and paradoxically), he explains that they brought coins and objects of immense value. A well-known Swahili proverb also states: "Hindi ndiko kwenye..."

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The sheer impossibility of the half-clothed Indian bearing the world’s finest fabrics and jewels must have been a maddening spectacle for desirous outsiders. Hence, the early modern world west of India concurred ideologically that in spite of India’s intimidating wealth, individual Indians were cowardly, weak and naked. Curiously, this prejudice was strong in many parts of Eurasia when India was dominant economically; with the actual impoverishment of many Indians in the course of the nineteenth century, these evocations of nakedness and cowardice lost their power.

Incidentally, Evliya later describes the astonishing appearance of an Indian man at the court of the ruler of Funcistan. In spite of the abundance of garments, fire and food in Indian lands, the visitor is naked, cold and hungry. He swears by the God Rama. Most likely, this narration includes hints of some real encounter, giving us a rare insight into the Ottoman perception of a Hindu Vaishnavite. However, the man’s final decision to honor the fire by burning himself in it may be a dramatic embellishment.

As we have seen, the period after Ottoman embassies to India witnesses a burst of interest in India and Indians in Ottoman prose. India is no longer frozen in time and limited to conventional evocations. Yet, there is a curious lack of its mentions in Ottoman poetry in the second half of the seventeenth century, even among the proponents of the so-called “Indian style.”

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3. Ottoman tulip Indies:
Fire-worshippers and cold women

It is not possible to fully expand upon the topic of “sabk-i Hindi” in Ottoman poetry here, but a few remarks need to be made. Ever since the publication of Gibb’s several volumes of the History of Ottoman Poetry, western European Ottomanists have been aware that Persian poets from India exerted a significant influence on Ottomans. Many of the poets were Iranian-born, but along with many of their compatriots, they eventually immigrated to India.\footnote{\textit{A. Golchin-Ma’ani, Kârvân-i Hind,} 2 vols. (Mashhad, 1369).} Although the term “sabk-i Hindi” was only invented in the early twentieth century, and many critics prefer to stress its Iranian pedigree, Ottoman poets were aware of the Indian influence inherent in the new style of poetry.\footnote{The “Indian style” has been dismissed in Persian literary tradition for most of the twentieth century. Instead, the previous “Khorasani style” was elevated as the only Persian classical tradition. Only recently have there been several works which question this perception. See Daryagasht (1977), Fallah (1980), Kadkani (1998).} Even as early as Nef’i, references to Fayzi are found, as we have seen in his \textit{qasîda} to Jahangir. But Nef’i is even more daring, calling himself an Indian because of his adoption of Fayzi’s ways.

\begin{verse}
Mulk-i Rûmî ol kadar tutdi sevâdi şi’r’umun
Feyziyem gûyä ben ol Hindûstanumdur benum\footnote{M. Akkuş, \textit{Nef’i Divânî} (Istanbul, 1993), p.84.}
\end{verse}

Yet, an intriguing paradox seems to emerge. At the time of \textit{sebk-i Hindi} becomes exceedingly popular in Ottoman poetry, India itself is not mentioned often, nor are Indians. Playful images of Indians in multifaceted roles which were so copious in the sixteenth century, when there was far less actual interaction with India and Indians, are avoided. Instead, Beyani (d. 1664) and Na’ili-i Kadim, the most significant representatives of \textit{sabk-i Hindi}, rely upon highly...
conventional and repetitive images when they speak of India, although this tendency seems to contradict the very definition of the style.  

\[
\text{Kaçan hâl-i ruhun mihrâb-i ebrûna ola sâcid} \\
\text{Cemâliün afitâbına olur Hindi-sifat ‘âbid}^{307}
\]

\[
\text{Hüsni cemâliün bir ‘abd-i Rûmî} \\
\text{Hâl-i ‘izârun Hindû’ya benzer}^{308}
\]

\[
\text{Kard sütân hama âtaş-gada-i Hindâyân} \\
\text{Hâl-i Hindû-yı ruhat ahkar-i şahr-aşûbast}^{309}
\]

\[
\text{Ruhi âteş-kede olmağla yârun hâl-i Hindûsî} \\
\text{Süveydâyi Beyânı yakdî dilde nær u när etdi}^{310}
\]

Na’ili alludes to his poetic competition with Fayzi of Lahore. There is a sense of superiority over dark Indians and their rulers, who can be reduced to mahouts by Alexander the Great.

\[
\text{Hâkânyîm ki Feyzi-i Hindi vü Enver} \\
\text{fakûmdan istifâze-i nür-i cemal eder}^{311}
\]

\[
\text{Döndürüp Rûmi sevâd-i kalemim Lahûra} \\
\text{Etdi gum-nâm-i ‘adem Feyzi-i Hindi-ârâyi}^{312}
\]

\[
\text{Dârâ-haşem Sikender-i ‘âlem ki şâh-i Hind} \\
\text{Güm-nâm-i merzubümi olur fil-bân gibi}^{313}
\]

\[
\text{Hindûsî hâlün gibi âteş-perestân-i ruhun} \\
\text{Zahm-i çeşm-i cünbiş-i dâman-t müjgân görmesun}^{314}
\]

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306 Usually *sabk-i Hindi* is identified by the presence of unusual images which were not known in classical poetry and its occasional reference to contemporary places and events.


308 Idem., K164/2, p.171.

309 Idem., G (Persian), 19/3, p.590.

310 Idem., G809/5, p.549.


312 Idem., Na’tler, 5/24, p.47.

313 Idem., K10/22, p.69, praising the sultan.

314 Idem., G252/2, p.381.
Quite possibly, the lack of explicit references to India and Indians can be explained through strained relations between the two empires. In spite of Köprülü’s efforts, the Ottomans were still struggling to recover after the extended political crisis of the 1640s and the 1650s. They were also lacking financial resources. Across the Indian Ocean, the resources of the Mughal empire under Aurangzeb seemed inexhaustible. Perhaps it was considered bad form to even mention the Mughals, just as under Aurangzeb, explicit mentions of Ottomans are relatively rare. Yet, astonishingly, al-Muradi, the chief Hanafi mufti of Damascus, hence evidently a high ranking Ottoman subject, vociferously praises Aurangzeb. He calls him:

“Thisb-i ‘Alamgir [...], the famous Sultan of India in our time, the commander of the faithful (amîr al-mu’minîn) and their Imam, the pillar (rukûn) of Muslims and their support (nizâmuhum), the warrior (al-djâhid) on the path of God, the knowledgeable [...], the Sufi [...], who has no equal (laysa lahu nâzîr fî nizâm saltanatihi wa là madâni).”

315 See H. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London, 1950), I, p.35. They note that the title “Commander of the Faithful” had very rarely been applied to the Ottomans themselves.
316 The translation given by Gibb and Bowen is actually a compression of the passage which rearranges several sentences, diminishing the overall accuracy. They translate the sentence above more dramatically as “who has no equal among the kings of Islam in this age”. See al-Muradi, *Silk al-durar flî a’yân al-qarn al-thânî ’ashar* (Cairo, 1883-4), IV, p.113-14.

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kuffâr al-Hind wa là ya’khuduha minhum malikun qablahu) are emphasized. The reader of al-
Muradi’s work is not informed that most of Aurangzeb’s military successes (al-futûhât al-
‘azîma) took place at the expense of fellow Muslims in the Deccani sultanates, but al-Muradi
notes that there are many Persian books about Aurangzeb. Probably he obtained at least some of
his information through Naqshbandi channels.

For an entire century, the economic and political stability of the Mughal empire had been
the envy of Europeans as well as Ottomans. As we had seen, Na‘ima (d. 1707) feared the
constant outflow of specie from the Ottoman realm. Thus, one might expect that the relatively
sudden erosion of Mughal power in India in the 1720s and the devastating invasions of Nadir
Shah, which were known to contemporaries, should have eliminated the image of India as a rival
from the Ottoman consciousness. Instead, something remarkable occurs. As real India descends
into political instability and even Indian Ocean mercantile routes become insecure and are
continuously reconfigured throughout the eighteenth century, India becomes more ubiquitous
than ever in Ottoman imagination.

Accordingly, the poet Vahyi (d. 1718) mentions Indians in standardized images, evoking
the Indian as a magician (sihr-perver) who caused discord, yet remained graceful (latîf):

\[
\begin{align*}
Nedîr ol leşger-i sâhib-savlet \\
Mağribi-süret ü Hindî-süret \quad 317 \\
Ol hâl-i siyeh ne sihr-perver Hindûdur \\
Bir firmesinün helâki yüz bin câdûdur \quad 318 \\
Seyr eyleyen olsun mu diâğ-i ‘ışk bedel \\
Gerden de güzel o hâl-i Hindû da latîf \quad 319
\end{align*}
\]

\[318\] Idem., X/1, p.477.
\[319\] Idem., XXII/2, p.479.
Novel configurations appeared in the verses by other poets. Katib-zade Sakib (d. 1717) lauds Indian commodities (*metâ‘-i Hind*).

> Degüldür hâl-i ’anber-bûy-ı cânâne cebîn üzre
> Şinâver pence-i Hindûdur ol deryâ-yı Çîn üzre

> Müşâvîdîr muhakkikla mukallid nezd-i nâ-dânda
> Ki yek-sândur metâ‘-i Hind ü kâlâ-yı Haleb şimdi

In the text of the *Sûrnâme* by Vehbi (d.1736), describing the festivities which took place at the circumcision of Ottoman princes, there are many references to Indian textiles offered as presents by the members of the Ottoman elite. Varieties of *alaca* and *kutnu* of Indian and Kashmiri origin were especially favored, and perhaps as many as a third of fabrics listed were of Indian origin or imitations.\(^{322}\) Their point of origin is carefully marked, as the *kutnu* in particular are defined as *hindî*, ‘*acemî* or *rûmî*.\(^{323}\) Of additional significance are various types of *zardozi* clothing, which include woven-in metals, and Kashmiri shawls.\(^{324}\) Merchants displayed fabrics which were identified as being from Ahmadabad, a city familiar already to Katib Çelebi and to Evliya.\(^{325}\) Other Indian commodities were certainly admired and regarded as luxurious.\(^{326}\)

But in addition to those precious stones and the much more frequent, yet subtle presence of Indian textiles, there were several moments during the festivities themselves when Ottomans


\(^{321}\) Idem., G561/4, p.676.

\(^{322}\) See the next section for a discussion of these terms.


\(^{324}\) For *zardozi*, see C. S. Gupta, *Zardozi, Glittering Gold Embroidery* (New Delhi, 1996).


\(^{326}\) Idem., p.161: “Ve âyîneli Hind içi bir mücevher ü murassa‘ u musanna‘ çevâhir çekmecesi ki nakş-1 hurde-kârîsî insâni çem-ı âyîne gibi hayret-şî’-âr, belki temâşâyı hüsn-i resmi âdemi bütân-1 deyr-i Ferhâr gibi sûret-i divâr ilderdi.” Also see idem., p.188: “taraf-ı sâmilennenden bir mûnakaş sûzen-ı hind-kârî seccâde.”
enjoyed themselves at the expense of their neighbors, the Safavids and the Mughals. Associations with Indians are especially polyvalent. They are certainly regarded as dexterous and nimble. Among the acrobats sent to Istanbul by the governor of Egypt, there were some who reminded Vehbi of Indians when they played with swords. In another instance, he commented upon the ability of Indians to play with fire, since they were fire-worshippers. Incidentally, these associations accorded with the classical view of Indians as skillful slaves and infidels.

Several elephant-like contraptions were displayed during the festivities. In a particularly elaborate one, models of “fire-worshipping” Indians were positioned in a “castle” (kasr), and acting as mahouts (fil-bân), they were made to bow down and worship the display of fire which was dispatched from the trunk of the elephant. Vehbi comments that the spectacle was exceptionally loud and frightening. Surely, in spite of Indian embassies which had reached Istanbul a few decades earlier, many an inhabitant of Istanbul who was watching the spectacle could be excused for accepting the premise that Indians – including their ruler – were infidels.

The subject of textiles in the visual part of the Sûrname by Levni is an exceedingly intricate one, and a detailed analysis of the patterns of clothing depicted in it indicates that Indian textiles carried multiple connotations of power and subordination. While in the subsequent
period – and especially in the nineteenth century – Indian textiles were reconfigured in their meanings, in the early eighteenth century their provenance still had direct political implications.\textsuperscript{331} The visual language of textiles and their employ by the Ottomans belies the ease with which Indians are depicted in the procession and in Vehbi’s text. While the display confirmed Ottoman glory for the majority of the populations, Ottoman elites remained aware that there were indeed two other powerful Muslim realms further to the east.

This context becomes clear in the work of Nedim, another celebrated contemporary of the Tulip Age (d. 1730), who has been viewed as a bold modernizer in Ottoman poetry who introduced echoes of Europe into Ottoman high culture.\textsuperscript{332} Yet, this impression is somewhat flawed. Nedim in fact often refers to traditional lore about Abbasids, Barmakids, and the Persian kings of the \textit{Shâhnâma}. Along with those traditional tendencies, he also employs techniques of the \textit{sabk-i Hindi} with its references to contemporary events and figures. Isfahan, the Safavid capital, frequently appears as a rival for the Ottoman pleasure palace of Sa‘adabad, and Nedim expresses a wish that blindness may strike its ruler out of envy. References to Iran are constant, while there are almost none to Europe (\textit{ferengistan})\textsuperscript{333}:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Senin hâk-i derindir Isfahâni sürme âlemede}
\textit{Kör olsun içidip derd-i hasedle Isfahan’dâ şâh} \textsuperscript{334}

\textit{Cihânda vâdi-i ädâb-i hidmet gőrmemiştir hiç}
\textit{Derinde hidmete lâyak görenler şâh-i Îrân’i} \textsuperscript{335}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{331} For the importance of textiles and a discussion of their depiction in the \textit{Sûrnâme}, see the next section.
\textsuperscript{332} A. Gölpınarlı published Nedim’s divan in 1951 without any numbering of lines within the poems. The same divan was published in 2004 with a different page numbering. To facilitate reference to both, we will quote the number of the poem along with the page number from the first edition. See A. Gölpınarlı, \textit{Nedim Divânı} (Istanbul, 1951). Also see K. Silay, \textit{Nedim and the Poetics of the Ottoman Court, Medieval Inheritance and the Need for Change} (Bloomington, 1994).
\textsuperscript{333} Gölpınarlı, Nedim, Gazel II, p.264. As compared to mentions of Europe, Nedem refers to China about a dozen times.
\textsuperscript{334} Idem., Terkip IX, p.249.
Frequent mentions of Iran must be placed in the conquest of the demise of the Safavid dynasty, making those lines explicitly political instead of viewing them as mere exercises in poetic comparison between imagined realms. Ahmed III is repeatedly praised for his impending conquest of Iran. Nedim already calls him the ruler of Arab and Iranian lands, because the khutba will be read in his name in Iranian cities:

*Bu Rûm milketine olduğun gibi olasin Bütün memâlik-i İrân’a da ser-ı server.*

*Sâhenşeh-i mülk-i Arab hâkân-ı iklim-i ‘Acem Kim bende-i dergâhidir Kûsî vü Hûrûn-ur-Reşid*

*Mülk-i İrân’da ne denli şehr vâr ise anîn Câmiin tezyîn ede elkaab-i pâkinle hatîb*

However, when the Iranian campaigns stall, adversary images of the Kızılbaş, which had been largely absent during almost a century of peace with Safavids, resurface. There is also a concrete mention of Afghans who conquered Safavid lands:

*Edip deryâ-i sürh Îrân-zemîni hûn-i düşmenden Kızılbaşi gariyk-i lüce-i hûn etti ser-tâ pâ*

*Ya’ni Ahmed Hân-i Gâzi kim odur [...] Eyledi iklim-i İrân’i sefer Şebk-i istîlâ ile Efgânîyân Buldulardi nice bûldâna zafer*

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335 Idem., Kaside X (Bayram töreni), p.54. Also see idem., KXIV, p.56; KXVII, p.80; KXIX, p.82; XXXVII, p.94; Tarih XXIV, p.133; Tarih XXXIII, p.180; TXXXIX, p.190; TXL, p.200; TXLV, p.202; Gazel LX, p.211f.; Şarkı VII, p.300, p.365 and others for comparisons with Iran and allusions to its conquest.

336 Idem., Kaside XI, p.61. Also see Kaside XIV, p.71, for a mention of the fortress of Tabriz.


338 Idem., Tarih XXIV, p.182, (year 1140), ending in a reference to *feth-i karîb.*


As edited by Gölpınarlı, Nedim’s divan starts with a mention of Aden. We have seen that Yemen was already closely associated with India and with wealth by Na‘ima. Nedim’s metaphors extend to the realm of income and ships:

\[ Başlayıp çüşişe tab‘mda mezâyâ-yı sühán \\
Mevc-hîz oldu yîne lücce-i deryâ-yı ‘Aden 341 \]

\[ Ma‘den-i cûd-u kerêm ya‘ni ‘Ali Pâşâ kim \\
Harç-i yek-râzesi mahsûl-i Bedahşân-ü ‘Aden \]

\[ Vâye-bahş olsa eğer tâb-i süheyl-i çûdu \\
Kêş-tî Nû‘h’a dönêr âb-i akiye üzre Yemen 342 \]

While Nedim indeed very rarely uses the classical metaphors for Indians, his mentions of India are conspicuous and usually to the detriment of India and Indians. Yet, he is also one of the first poets to extensively mention Kashmir. Like his predecessors, he was closely familiar with the works of ‘Urfî Shirazi, one of the greatest poets at the court of Akbar:

\[ ‘Aceb hun-rîz Hindû beççedur zûlf-i siyeh-kûrûn \\
Ki gitmez destî dâim kabza-i şemşîr-i ebrûdan 343 \]

\[ Dili hemçün ketan fersûde etti bir siyeh-çerde \\
Ki ta‘ neyler behâz-i gerdenî meh-tâb-i Keşmir‘e 344 \]

Nedim stresses that Rum can only be compared with Tibet, China and India. Elsewhere, he makes the comparison with India even more explicit, referring to himself and the Ottoman sultan Ahmed III as the equivalents to the poet ‘Urfî and his patron Akbar:

\[ Iklîm-i Rûm‘a istese bir demde râkibi \\
Ahbâr-i Çîn ü Tübbet-ü Hindûstan verir. 345 \]

341 Idem., Kaside I, p.3.
342 Idem., Kaside I, p.5. Also see Tarih XXIV, p.185, for another mention of Badakhshan and the Indian Ocean and Terkip X, p.256.
343 Idem., Gazel XCVI, p.320.
344 Idem., GCXI, p.334.
345 Idem., to the grand vizir, Kaside III, p.18.
Yet, Rum is superior, since the likes of the grand vizier Ibrahim Paşa cannot be found in either eastern or western Indies, which he could easily subjugate. Unfortunately, ‘Urfî is dead and he cannot witness the glory of Istanbul, or he would cast his poems which celebrate Kashmir into the fire:

\[
\begin{align*}
Zihî o kuvvet-i bûzû ki Hind-i garbîden \\
Zemîne etse eger nîzèsin halîde ûz mûr \\
Cîkû o demde ser-i nîze Hind-i şarkîden \\
Ederdi sadme-i yelmâni pây-i râyi figûr
\end{align*}
\]

\[\text{347}\]

\[
\text{Bunu seyretmeden gitti cihân'dan neyleyim Örfî} \\
Ki Keşmîriyyesin bûrî edeydi âteşe ilkaa}
\]

\[\text{348}\]

In a \textit{kasîde} to Ahmed III, Nedim states that his sovereign’s \textit{tughra} is more priceless than the entire incomes of India and Iran. Later, there is a variation on that theme, which takes Kashmir and the Uzbek lands as a measuring yard for wealth. The name of Rum has reached both Jahanabad (Delhi) and Isfahan:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Anın bir harf-i åli-şânîna olmaz bahâ ancak} \\
\text{Eğer íràd-i Hind-i katsalar mahnûl-i Irân’e}
\end{align*}
\]

\[\text{349}\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Bir bendesin itmâ’ edemez hâsîl-i Keşmîr} \\
\text{Bir hasteye tîmûr olamaz milket-i Özbek.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[\text{350}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{346 Idem., to the sultan, Kaside IV, p.25. For another reference to Urfî, see p.65; p.75.}
\text{347 Idem., Kaside to Ibrahim Paşa, VIII, p.44.}
\text{348 Idem., describing a garden in Üsküdar in TLII, p.220. For similar imagery about Urfî destroying his work, see KXXXIX, p.114.}
\text{349 Idem., KXXXVII, p.134.}
\text{350 Idem., Tarih XXXVII, p.196.}
\end{align*}\]
In several instances, even Indian fabrics are deprecated. Confirming the might of the
Ottoman ruler, an Indian who comes to Rum will change his habit to a white rough cloth. In
another praise of Sa‘adabad, Nedim affirms that Indians, including their kings, are actually
naked:

\[ \text{Rûm'a geldikçe hep u tire-lîkâ} \\
\text{Hemçû Hindû giyer sefîd kabâ} \]

\[ \text{Nâvek-i perrânın olsa nola ser germ-i şitâb} \\
\text{Nâme-berdîr ráy-i Hind'în sine-i 'uryânîna} \]

Even luxurious Kashmir shawls are not worthy of the beloved derviş. Nedim returns to
Kashmir in another gazal, rejecting its inferior beauties for the sake of his beloved. They
would melt like candles if they witnessed the beauty of Istanbul:

\[ \text{Târ-u pûdu terk-i târ-u pûd-i hestîdîr anîn} \\
\text{Şâl-i dervîşî dokumaz sevdim Keşmîr'în} \]

\[ \text{Görse ol bârika-i hüsnü bûtân-i Keşmîr} \\
\text{Tâb-i hayretle erirlerdi bût-i mûm gibî} \]

The Ottoman poet Sâmî (d. 1733/4) also extols Ahmed III over the rulers of India and
other lands. However, his judgement on Indians is milder that Nedim’s. They are fire-
worshippers, but they can also be heroes:

---

351 Idem., KXVI, p.73.  
353 Idem., KXVII, p.84.  
354 Gölpınarlı explains that Kashmir is famed for its moonlight and dark-colored beauties are known as keşmîrî in folk speech (“esmer güzelinde Keşmîrî, halk dilinde kişmîrî denîr”). Idem., p.419; GCXII, p.329 N.  
355 Idem., p.312.  
The negativity toward Indians, however, remains common. For the poet Edirneli Kami (d.1734), Indians are associated with discord and fire-worship, in a manner similar to older conventions:

\[\text{Arpaemini-Zade Mustafa Sami, F.S. Kutlar, ed., Divân (Ankara, 2004), K13/78, p.94.}\]
\[\text{Idem., K16/10, p.103.}\]
\[\text{Idem., Târîh-i Feth-i Tiflîs, K28/2, p.195.}\]
\[\text{Idem., Musammamatlar, 10/V/3, 4, p.254.}\]
\[\text{Idem., G106, 3/4, p.366.}\]
\[\text{Idem., G18/5, p.180.}\]
\[\text{Idem., G64/2, p.205.}\]
\[\text{Idem., G208/7, p.277.}\]
Ibrahim Tirsi (d.1727-8) is more benevolent toward Indians. Instead of comparing India to the Ottoman empire, he returns to the playfulness of contradictions. He declares himself to be as poor as an Indian beggar (*Hindi dilencisi*), yet – because of the riches of his heart – he is also a wealthy merchant who sells Indian goods (*Hind işi*) in the market:

> Hindi dilencisine döndük emân  
> Bâri gel ızhâr-i nisâb itme sus

> Varup bizüm kibâra kaşmer olmak kâr içün ise  
> Bezistânda bizüm bir Hind işi dikkânümuz vardur.

Yet he suggests that perhaps there is no need for Indian commodities in Rum. Modesty, rather than wealth, is most virtuous in the poet’s eyes:

> Süzilse bâde-âsâ hâk-i Hinde benzemez aslâ  
> Kütahya toprağında kâse-i fağfür gördün mi

> Kış günü böyle bürüdetde değişim aslâ  
> Bir bayakli kebeyi Hind işi üç yorgana

> Pırasa safhasından terziye bir hırka yapdurdum  
> Pesend idüp görenler Hind işi şerb-âbdur dirler

Indians do not appear in poetry alone. Regardless of its political weakness, Ottoman elites were still eager to read about India. Nevres-i Kadim (d. 1761), who had witnessed the siege of the fortress of Yerevan in 1731, translated the *Tûzuk-i Jahângîrî* as *Tercüme-i Târîh-i*...
We know from other sources that Abu al-Fazl’s Akbarnâma was also available in the Istanbul, because it has survived in at least nine manuscripts. Among the printed books published in the eighteenth century, several, such as the history by ‘Izzi and the Gûlşen-i hülefa, pay close attention to Indian matters.

The Ottoman historian Şem’danizade also writes about India. He was intrigued by the Afghans, claiming that they were descendants of people who were exiled from Iran and settled in the environs of Qandahar by Timur himself. They intermarried with Armenians and Indian Muslims, forming a people of warriors, not merchants. When they brought down the Safavids, some of them suggested that they should ask the pâdishâh of India for assistance, because they were much smaller in number than Iranians, but their leaders Mir Uveys refused. Of course, these tales are apocryphal; yet, Şem’danizade seems to be aware of the presence of Hindus in Iran (Hindiyân), enumerating them as one of Iran’s peoples. He does not disdain Mughals at all, reserving praise for their attempts to build an alliance with Ottomans against Nadir Shah and for their copious presents of textiles and jewels.

Perhaps the most intriguing sources from this period are the two whimsical works by Enderunlu Fazıl (d.1810), Zenânnâme and Hubânnâme, most likely composed around 1776. In the Zenânnâme, a catalogue of “beauties” from different parts of the world, Indian beloveds are

372 H. Akkaya, Nevres-i Kadim and his Turkish Divan (Nevres-i Kadîm ve Türkçe Divani) (Cambridge, MA, 1996), pp.61-66, and H. Akkaya, Tarihçe-i Nevres, Inceleme ve Tenkitli Metin (Istanbul 2004). Nedim also wrote a kaside about the conquest of the fortress; see Gölpınarlı, Nedim, KXXXIII.
373 For an extensive list of Persian-language works in Istanbul, including those relevant to India, see F. Tauer, I. Afşâr, O. Özgüdenli, A. Erdoğan, “İstanbul Kütüphanelerinde Bulunan Farsça Tarih Yazmaları” in Prof. Dr. Ramazan Şese Armağanı (Istanbul, 2005).
375 Idem., p.50: “Bâri Hind pâdishâhina ilticâ edelüm”.
376 Idem., p.57.
given a prominent place since they are the first to be described. However, their description proceeds from alluring to entirely dismissive. We are told that those women are black-eyed and black-faced, similar to pictures on the wall. They appear to be hot from the outside but there is perennial winter within them, even to the point of endangering anyone who would approach them sexually; he will turn into ice (*olur dondurma*). Hence they need torch (*meş’ale*) and steel (*pul̀d*) [sic!] more than the touch of the living flesh (*et*):

> Ey benim bir güneş ü meh-veşem  
> Esbehem yosma civân gülşenim  
> Açalım râz-i suhan der bendi  
> Idelim vaş-i zenân-i Hindi  
> Yüzü gözü kara ‘avretlardur  
> Sanki divârdaki sâretlerdir  
> Olamaz nefs camâ’e tâlip  
> Çünkü gâyetle soğuktur galip  
> Gerçi zâhtürde harâretleri var  
> Lîk bâtinde burûdetleri var  
> Sanki buzhâne gigidir o mekân  
> Bel soğukluğuna uğrar insan  
> Öyle bârid o mekân hiç sorma  
> Gir biçâre olur dondurma  
> Âlemi yaksa dahi fasl-i Temmûz  
> Yine fercinde anun burd-i ‘acûz  
> Ona meş’ale ola âlet yerine  
> Dahi pul̀d gerek et yerine

In the *Hubûnnâme*, which probably refers to boys rather than women, the imagery is less violent. The reason for the blackness of Indian beloveds is that the land of Hind is hot and a human being cannot remain pale there. But since their insides are cold, their lust (*şehvet*) is also broken. They are black and dried out; in flirting (*şiive u ’işvede*) they are like animals. In addition, they are exceedingly thin, so that their body resembles a crescent moon (*hilâl*) and their

---

calves a toothpick (hilâl). They are feeble and infirm (zebûn) and become as fragile as a curtain if handled firmly (server-vân). Even if a person should feel a strong connection to them, it is questionable whether Indians would endure upon such a long journey (to Rum). The question remains whether the heart is fooled (âlda) by the attractive new Indian textile:

Ey ser-effrahte-i dilber-i Rûm
Hâl Hindîsi siyeh ahter-i Rûm
Hârdir memleket Hindisitân
Hiç beyaz olmaz o yirde hûbân
Şehvet-i nefsi dahi fâsîddir
Çünkü bâlârî çok bârîddir
Karaca kuruca hûbânlardir
Şîve u ’işvede hayvânlardir
Za’afle kaddî hilâle benzer
Baldırî var ki hilâle benzer
Süst-endâm ve zebun u bîcân
Perde olmuş tutulam server-vân
Kâmetî olsa dahi hûş endâm
Kâti reflâr ile nâzinde harâm
Bolsa dil başlıya çok ber dilber
Hindüler böyle seyâhat mi ider
Âldadır mı dil-i dânîşmandî
Tuhfe-i tâze-i kumâş-i Hindî́ \(^{379}\)

Lest we accept the cliché of whiteness vs. blackness as unyielding and self-explanatory, let us recall that the black beauty mark, often read as Hindu *tout court* in poetry, does not signify ugliness. Yemeni beloveds are described in similar fashion to Indians, with weak desires (*anda yok şehvet*) and a feeble body (*zebûn*).\(^{380}\) It is true that women from distant and unconquered Zanzibar are rejected in strong terms, although they are also seen as loyal.\(^{381}\) However, Ethiopian beauties are described as charming (*câzîb*), sweet-spoken (*tatlu sözlü*) and with strong desires

\(^{379}\) The last two lines are somewhat difficult to interpret. Ál, in the meaning of hîle, seems to be the most reasonable guess upon consulting the *Kâmûs-i Türkî*. Fazıl Hüseîn Enderuni, *Deftar-i ’aşk* (İstanbul, 1831), *Hubânnâme*, 27f. For the manuscript of the *Hubânnâme*, also see Istanbul University, TY 5502.

\(^{380}\) Fazıl Hüseyin Enderuni, *Deftar-i ’aşk* (İstanbul, 1831), *Hubânnâme* p.31.

\(^{381}\) Idem., *Hubânnâme*, p.30.
(şehvet ü kuvvet sâhiptir), without apparent disadvantage from the hot climate, revealing the ideological structure underneath the seemingly innocuous categorization.\textsuperscript{382}

Clearly, Ottomans viewed darkness and whiteness in somewhat different terms than nineteenth-century Europeans, since both books do not consider Ethiopian women to be black in the same way as a Zandji or a Sudani woman. We may also recall that Habashi clients to Rumi men in India were honored with the title of Rumi Khani, and clearly worthy of admiration. In addition, negative blackness in Ottoman perception could be derived not only from ascribed or perceived physical traits. It could also be clearly metaphorical, as in the expression \textit{zülfün mülk-i Efrenc} because of infidelity (\textit{kufr}). In other words, denying beauty to Indian and Yemeni women must be seen as primarily a matter of balance. Wealthy India and Yemen could have everything that money could buy, but beauty and vigor were the prerogatives of the Ottomans and their associates.

More puzzling is that the insides of Indian women are described as cold, although their land is warm and their spices chase away cold blood. But here cosmology can help us. As we discussed at the beginning of this section, Indians are ascribed to the planet Saturn, which is dark, morose and unapproachable. Secondly, symmetry, rather than proto-racialist notions, is at work here. If Indian women are dark and cold emotionally, Russian women (\textit{Moskû}), at the opposite end of the spectrum, are described as very pale and insatiable with sexual desire. Indeed, the comparison is made explicit:

\textsuperscript{382} Idem., p.31, immediately below the women of Zanzibar but not associated with them.
The ideal advocated by the poet is obviously a woman in the middle between the two extremes, and represented mostly by the sophisticated Istanbullı (“İslambol”) woman, to whom the longest description is dedicated. Incidentally, it is she and not the Indian woman who wears the Kashmiri shawl.  

4. Toward the land of Kashmir and its shawls

India remains a remarkably frequent symbol in the last flowering of traditional Ottoman literature. In the charming Muhayyelât, a free reworking of the thousand and one nights, Istanbul, Rumeli and Anatolia are marginalized. The heroes and heroines of the stories journey throughout the Indian Ocean. Kamercan, the amorous prince who stands at the beginning of the plot, eventually settles down in Basra, where he becomes the padişah. His four sons travel to Sri Lanka, Kashmir and India, and one of them even marries the princess of India and becomes the ruler of Shahjahanabad. Basra still remains one of the nodal points of the story, and its riches, coming from all parts of the Indian Ocean, are emphasized.  

The Ottoman poet Naşid (d. 1791) admires the Indian mole which became the king of Khitay because of its beauty (Hindû-yi hâli [...] oldu şâh). Conversely, the ‘ud transforms from

383 Idem., p.51.
384 Idem., p.37ff.: “Hind şâlı ola baş üzere/Belde bir telli pûşi müstesna/Bir dolamalık dizine düşmesin ammâ.”
385 Aziz Efendi, R. Duymaz, ed., Muhayyelât üzerinde bir inceleme (İstanbul, 1999), including the text in Ottoman in the Latin script.
its beginnings as an infidel Hindu fire-worshipper into a Muslim. The poet also envisions the black eyebrows as two Indian swords (şemşîr-i hindî):

Kâfir-i Hindû gibî âteş-perest iken henüz  
Meclîs-i cânâneye geldi müsûlmân oldu ’ûd  

‘Arak-rîz olsa ruhsûrun muraşşah fikra-i terdir  
Edên tersi ‘i levh-i hüsnû hâl-i Hinduvân’ undur.  

Dü-ebrû-ya siyêh-tâbun iki şemşîr-i Hindî’dir  
Nîgâh-i fitne-sâzun ya tatârî ya kaçari’dir  

Hindû-yı hâlî hîttâ-i hüsnûnde oldû şâh  
Aldî cemâlî müklînî san baykara-yı misk  

Yet the coda is reserved for two significant poets of the period. Şeyh Galib (d. 1799) seemingly adopts the traditional view of Indians as black and inferior. We know from his divan as well as the epic Hüsnû ve Aşk that he was a keen reader of Sa’di and ‘Attar, mentioning Somnatha several times. Still he claims that the new Indian style is not inferior to the old style, symbolized by Aleppo. Notably, he also refers to a textile which was named after Aurangzeb, evrenşâhi being a kind of silk according to Steingass.

Gîsûlîrî genc-i anber-i hâm  
Hâl-i ruhî ana Hindû-yı bâm  

Engûr-i siyâhı Hindû-yı bâm  
Ammâ yeri çâr tâk-i ecrâm  

Bir kal’a ki Sûmenât’a benzer  
Her seng-i siyâhı Lât’a benzer  

387 Idem., p.36.  
388 Idem., p.39.  
389 Idem., p.48.  
391 Idem., p.104.  
393 Idem., p.346.
India is mentioned more frequently, and with much more variety, in Şeyh Gâlib’s divan. Indians retain their capacity for mischief (fitne) and for fire-worship. But the poet also identifies with the infidel Hindu who fled from the fire-temple (Hindûyem ben, Hindûvân-i dâg). He describes the pupil of the enamored self as a Hindu (sevâd-i çêsmimiz Hindûsu). India itself is associated with love (sevdâ) and with imagination (hayâl):

---

394 “Kale” means “bez” here, p.64.
396 Idem., K52/5, p.232.
397 Idem., K78/6, p.250.
398 Idem., K157/1, p.300.
399 Idem., K249/6, p.360.
400 Idem., K299/7, p.393.
401 Idem., K37/9, p.224.
Closer to the fashionable practice of alluding to contemporary names, Şeyh Gâlib describes the Çirağan palace as a place which discerning people would not exchange for Kashmir and Kashan. He also mentions the dangers in traveling to India and Kashmir through Kabul:

Hezârân gülşen ü kâşâne var kim nakş-i rengînin
Degişmez ehl-i dikkat kişyer-i Keşmîr ü Kâşâna

Gark eder tâ kişyer-i Kâşmiri sebz âb-ı hayâl
Fikr-i Gâlib kim sevâd-i Hinde Kâbilden geçer

Yet, elsewhere he also lauds Kashmir extensively, in the tradition of Kashmiriyyat initiated by the Mughal poet ‘Urfi two hundred years earlier. Kashmir is of course largely symbolic here, but it remains remarkable that Şeyh Gâlib and his readership would celebrate the remote valley in such intimate and confident terms. Kashmir’s moonlit landscape, its waters, flowers and even its fire-temples (âtesgeh) are praised, along with the Kashmiri shawl:

Hat-ı nev-sebze-i mehtâb-i Kâşmir
Šerâpâ neş’e-i sebz-âb-ı Kâşmir
Negâhî Sûmenât-ı bahr-âşüb
Gözü mestânesi mihrab-ı Kâşmir
Ruhu gûlnâr-ı reng-i mâye gûlzâr
Leb-ı hat-âver-i visn-âb-ı Kâşmir
Esîr-ı çin-ı zülfi nâfe-i Çîn
Zebûn-i pençesi sincâb-ı Kâşmir
Acebdir rûz-ı Hîzr-i hat cemâlin
Eder âtesgeh-i pûr-tâb-ı Kâşmir
Miyânîn eylemišt bir gûlsînân nâz
Sarp şâl-i nev-i kemâyab-ı Kâşmir
Hurûşan oldu Gâlib çeşm-i terden
Bahâr hatda bu seylâb-ı Kâşmir

403 Idem., K108/11, p.269.
404 Idem., 33/3, p.89.
405 Idem., K61/7, p.239.
Pertev (d. 1807-8) is also enamored with Kashmir. He seems to know about the magnificent Dal lake in the valley of Kashmir, because he is describing taking a small boat (zevrakçê) on a night excursion:

\[
\text{Bu gice Keşmîrí bir meh-rû alup zevrakçeye} \\
\text{Sâyesinde Pertevâ meh-tâb-î Keşmîr eyledûk 407}
\]

\[
\text{Dün gice Keşmîrí bir meh-rû alup zevrakçeye} \\
\text{Hâl-i rûyandan da bir Hindû alup zevrakçeye} \\
\text{Şöyle esmer bir hîlâl-ebû alup zevrakçeye} \\
\text{Sâyesinde Pertevâ meh-tâb-î Keşmîr eyledûk 408}
\]

\[
\text{Bakun ol sebz-i teh-gûl-gûnda [ki] hatt-i siyeh-tâba} \\
\text{Gider Keşmîr’e şevk-i yâd-i ruhsâr ile meh-tâba} 409 \\
\text{Ey kâkül-i hod-rûste sen kışver-i Keşmîr’în} \\
\text{Ezhâr-i bahârîndan şeb-büsına benzersin 410}
\]

The age-honored tradition of the Indian mole as a playful child or a fire-worshipper is evoked by him as well. In addition, the Indian can be merciless, tearing apart the poet’s liver (Hind-i ciger-hvâre), the source of his passions:

\[
\text{Hâl reşk-âver-i Hindû-beçegân ise dahi} \\
\text{Habeşî dîl-ber-i ferhunde-likâdur perçem 411}
\]

\[
\text{Olmış ol yûzden tecellisi anun da Pertevâ} \\
\text{Âteşe itmiş teveccûh hâli Hindûlar gibi 412}
\]

\[
\text{Sitem-i Hind-i ciger-hvâre-i dehri gör kim} \\
\text{Eşkümün katrelerinde cigerûm paresi var} 413
\]

\[
\text{Bizûm birâder efendiye eyledi i’tâ} \\
\text{Bu Hînde bir oğulcuk Cenâb-i Rabb-i Rahîm 414}
\]

---

407 E. Bektas, _Muvakkitt-zâde Muhammed Pertev Divâmi_ (Malatya, 2007), G244/5, p.173.  
408 Idem., Tahmis, 43/5, p.369.  
409 Idem., G51/1, p.265.  
410 Idem., G170/2, p.229.  
411 Idem., G346/4, p.196.  
412 Idem., G404/5, p.272.  
Even as Nef‘i had done two hundred years earlier, Pertev compares himself to Feyzi, the Indian poet. Yet, he also references Bidil, the favored poet at the court of Shah Jahan, whose mention was avoided among Ottomans during his lifetime. Perhaps Bidil’s poetry, largely forgotten today, but widely lauded in Persianate world of the seventeenth century, inspired Pertev’s affection toward Kashmir and India:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Mülk-i Rûm}‘\text{i ol kadar tutd} \text{ı sevâd} \text{ı ş}‘\text{rûm}‘\text{ı} \text{Feyzî}‘\text{yem gûy} \text{a ben ol Hindûsitânumdur beni}‘\text{m}^{415} \\
\text{Olmuş} \text{ı anda mûlik o Dîvân-i Bidîl‘e} \\
‘\text{Azm-i reh itdiginde getürmiş} \text{ı} \text{bile}^{416}
\end{align*}
\]

Finally, it is possible not only for Indians and Bukharans to arrive in Mecca and Ottoman lands; the poet reflects upon a possible pilgrimage to India. He also refers to a leader (pişvâ) who went to India in 1209. At that period, pişvâ had become a common title in India because of the rule of the Marathas, but we cannot be certain about the reference in this context.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Müşgîn o zül} ‘\text{ı} \text{fûn ile o hâl-i mu’anber}‘\text{un} \\
\text{Gîmekdedür havâdîsî Hindûstân’} \text{a} \text{dek}^{417} \\
\text{Hind ü Sind ü Mekke vü Bathâ Buhârâ’} \text{dan gelen} \\
\text{Zâ’irâna dergeh-i pâkî} \text{idi dârû’l-emân}^{418} \\
\text{Hacc idüp git} ‘\text{di diyâr-}‘\text{i Hind ü Sind iklîm} ‘\text{ine} \\
\text{Nice ashâb-}‘\text{ı kerâm} ‘\text{et i} ‘\text{tdi iktir} ‘\text{ân}^{419} \\
\text{Bin iki yüz tokuz senesinde o pişvâ} \\
\text{İklîm-i Hind ü Belh ü Buhârâ’ ya gitt} ‘\text{ı tâ}^{420}
\end{align*}
\]

414 Idem., Tarih, 18/1, p.414.
415 Idem., Tahmis, 31/7, p.329.
416 Idem., Tarih, 13/9, p.410.
418 Idem., Tarih, 35/6, p.424.
419 Idem., Tarih, 4/6, p.405.
420 Idem., Tarih, 13/7, p.410.
Our investigation into many Indias inherited and created by the Ottomans has led us through many landscapes. We encountered Indians as slaves and rulers, merchants and soldiers, infidels and cultured Muslims, insatiably wealthy and yet naked. For the most part, they seem to be projections of Ottoman desires and fears, but they also appear as a part of physical reality. Certainly, a subtext of anxieties about comparative power and wealth of the two empires is never absent when India is mentioned. Yet, almost imperceptibly, with the demise of Mughal power, Ottoman perception of India also changed. Instead of disappearing, its presence in Ottoman imagination grew stronger until writing yearning poems about Kashmir became de rigeur. How can this seeming paradox be explained?

India was not only present in the poets’ minds, but also on their bodies. During the reign of Selim III (d. 1808), the first Ottoman regulations were imposed to restrict the substantial influx of Indian commodities into Ottoman territory. Selim III explicitly stated that he was concerned because of his subjects’ predilection for Indian clothing, while he himself was content with locally-made textiles. Regardless of their provenance, the textiles from the famous portrait of Selim III by Konstantin Kapıdağlı reveal that Indian aesthetic had come a long way since the depictions in the Sûrnâme a century earlier. Instead of being worn only by certain members of the court, especially those associated with servitude and amusement, Indian or Indian-inspired clothing is displayed openly as it adorns the layer closest to the sultan’s body, although his red cloak confirms to the older Ottoman ideals of outward bulkiness and monochrome simplicity. In addition, Kashmiri evocations were popular at the same time as Indian clothing was contentious. We will attempt to solve this intriguing puzzle in the next chapter.

Section IV

What Remains?

Continuities and Ruptures
MONSIEUR JOURDAIN.
Je me suis fait faire cette indienne-ci.
MAÎTRE A DANSER.
Elle est fort belle.
MONSIEUR JOURDAIN.
Mon tailleur m'a dit que les gens de qualité étaient comme cela le matin.

Molière, *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*, performed in October 1670

Gördüm ol meh duşuna bir şal atup lahûrdan
Gül yanaklar üstüne yaşmak tutunmuş nîrdan

Yahya Kemal Beyatlı
Chapter 7

Benzemez Hind Kumaşı Değil Ki

1. Cherchez l’indienne... mais comment?

We have repeatedly stressed the impact of Mughal wealth on Ottoman and Safavid imagination. The vast majority of the Ottoman subjects never saw the Koh-i Nur or the Peacock Throne, nor did they witness the Mughal practice of weighing their princes in gold. One might imagine that the wealth of India was simply a cultural or literary cliché. However, India was present in the Ottoman realm in seemingly innocuous, yet insidious ways: partially through its spices, but primarily through its textiles. This knowledge has become almost commonplace in the last three decades; yet, we still do not have a detailed study of Indian textiles in Ottoman lands.

A few renowned Ottomanists have published lists of Indian commodities available in sicils or other tereke defterleri. Unfortunately, contrary to their expectations, no new similar studies have been forthcoming. We would like to suggest several methodological considerations on the advantages and disadvantages of working with those sources and similar lists. First, we may a priori dismiss the notion that an early modern Dutch merchant in Surat on his first assignment is intrinsically more rational or precise than a scribe in an Ottoman customs house. The distinctions lie rather in the constraints and objectives of each social position. Unlike a

1 Ö. Barkan, “Edirne Askeri Kassam’na ait Tereke Defterleri (1545-1659)” in Belgeler, 3 (5-6), 1966; Y. Yücel, Es’êtı defteri (1640 tarihi) (Ankara, 1992); G. Veinstein, “Commercial Relations between India and the Ottoman Empire (late fifteenth to late eighteenth centuries): a few notes and hypotheses” in S. Chaudhury, M. Morineau, Merchants, Companies and Trade: Europe and Asia in the Early Modern Era (Cambridge, 1999).
frantic western European merchant who must pay close attention to his report, because it may endanger his promotion, uncover his own private arrangements, or get into the hands of the competition, the Ottoman scribe is not concerned with these matters. He confronts a different set of entanglements, including arrangements with inheritors.

Inventory lists help us envision and populate Ottoman domestic spaces and they provide information on the price of wheat in a city or on what kind of books may be available (for instance, it may surprise us that a man from Edirne had Târîh-i Haleb, Târîh-i Baghdad, ‘Antarnâma in five volumes in his house)\(^2\), but they cannot be mined for detail in the manner of a printed Sotheby’s catalogue. Epistemological and taxonomic problems of such lists have been discussed in an excellent manner recently\(^3\), including the difficulties of deciphering siyakat documents and the false equivalency of items. We may add a few additional observations: On such a list, we will encounter a bakraç listed before a câriye, and twenty items later, a gulâm surrounded by a tencere and a kebe-i köhne. Thus, a cooking utensil may appear before a slave girl or a slave boy may be associated with an old blanket, without a strict division by value or type of object, human or otherwise.

There was no set pattern of priorities for such lists, and the kadi or his scribe may be dependent on his own untrained judgment or the rush of the moment (hence, to our grief, there is a summarily dispatched cedîd gömlek or ‘arabî kitâb as a category, without further details) or the hidden agendas of inheritors who happen to be there. Furthermore, while to a trained eye, a piece of ferengî harîr may always be distinguishable as silk from western Europe, to his apprentice the term may also refer to Indian silk brought by Dutch merchants. A merchant selling precious

\(^2\) No.52 in Barkan’s list.

stones does not necessarily have many garments or spices in his household and vice versa. While a köhne dülbend of unclear provenance may have been expensive and cherished, or it may be tattered, indicating the parsimony of the wearer.

Thus, even if we were to tabulate the majority of Ottoman inheritance inventories after many years of research, we cannot be certain that a bağdadi kutni, let alone an alaca peşkir, is always of Indian provenance. Many of those objects may have been finished in Ottoman territory, but some of their components would have been brought from India, such as indigo or even raw cotton. Archaeologists and historians of textile patterns may be more fortunate in this regard, but they obviously need a physical sample and not a scribbled name. From the published terekes, we can ascertain that Indian-associated materials are much more frequent than Londura çuka, for instance. However, Indian commodities also appear widely scattered across the entire sample, and the categories are not systematic. Hence, the analysis of such a table cannot be strictly positivistic, but must instead rely on the relative frequency in which we encounter certain objects as opposed to others and on the Ottoman subjectivity which classified certain items as Indian. In other words, instead of maligning our sources as defective, we must learn how to read them.

One difficulty resides in learning how to view Indian textiles from an Ottoman or Safavid perspective. Regrettably, Indian climate is generally not conducive to the preservation of textiles, and the wonderful collection of the textiles museum in Ahmadabad offers only a small sample of pre-nineteenth century garments. Thus, most Ottomanists have relied on materials which were linguistically and physically available to them. One predominant source for the taxonomy of

4 For an exemplary discussion, see C. Establet, J. Pascual, Des tissus et des hommes: Damas, vers 1700 (Damascus, 2005). Not coincidentally, C. Establet also has long experience of travel in India, enabling her to discern subtle differences in various textiles and their terminology.
Indian textiles has been a study by K.N. Chaudhuri. In one of his appendices, Chaudhuri lists items which were bought and sold by the East India Company. This list was subsequently used by H. İnalcık and others. Although this method resulted in what is still the single best article on this question, there are certain difficulties in applying it to Ottoman textiles. In at least one case, a term has been misinterpreted. The badla is not a specific costume, but rather metallic thread. Nevertheless, İnalcık masterfully identified a wide range of alaca textiles in a later edition of the article, including depictions and local names still remembered by weavers in southern Anatolia.

There are cultural and linguistic questions which need to be explored in the context of taxonomy. While Persian was the language of the Indo-Muslim courts and the administration, most weavers were not familiar with it. Their native languages included varieties of Hindustani (including Bihari at its utmost edges), Gujarati, Panjabi, Bengali and Telugu. Specific names for textiles emerged through a process in which elite circles and the laborers interacted through mediators, such as merchants and brokers. In some cases, English and Dutch company employees and merchants knew the basics of the local languages and were able to translate the meanings, but most frequently, the names of the textiles underwent yet another transformation as they were muttered, garbled and written down in the relatively defective Persian and English scripts. It is often exceedingly difficult to identify those textiles from documents alone.

Furthermore, we must recall that already for centuries, the Indian textile market had been highly specialized and segmented. Indian producers and merchants excelled at creating and

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7 One of his main sources is the study by Z. Imer, *Gaziantep Yöresinde Üretilen Kutnu, Alaca ve Meydaniye Kumaşların Bazi Teknolojik Özellikler* (Ankara, 2001).
promoting a wide variety of textiles, in which production was swiftly adapted to the taste of the customer. Consequently, we know that early modern Indian textiles which were marketed in Thailand, Iran and England vary tremendously. Those were three very distinct markets with different tastes and predilections.

By relying on English-language sources, Ottomanists have often assumed that English and French taste in Indian clothing was substantially the same as that of Ottomans, and the Ottoman customers accepted any items sold to them by European merchants. This is a flawed assumption; fortunately, we have sources which can assist us in developing a history of Indian aesthetics in the Ottoman empire. As in the previous parts of this dissertation, we will embrace a comparative perspective in order to define a specifically Ottoman taste for Indian clothing, attempting to merge visual and textual evidence. As anyone who is familiar with Indian textiles knows, many techniques can be deceptive. Hangings imitate carpets, muslin textiles imitate other cottons, cotton imitates silk and vice versa. Differences between brocaded and embroidered textiles or other fabrics can be almost impossible to discern on the basis of depictions such as miniatures. We are on firmer grounds with patterns, and we will let them be our guide through the labyrinth. In addition, through them we will also encounter resonances of our previous chapters, in which we discussed the influence of Indian hegemony on Ottoman cultural production.

Contrary to the prevailing opinion that the Indian trade with Ottomans weakened since the Portuguese arrival, it seems that the period ca.1680-1850 (and particularly the period 1760-1840) was marked by the predominance of Indian aesthetics in the Ottoman empire. We intend to

8 While a much larger body of evidence has been accumulated by the present researcher, the following few pages will merely offer a summary. Hence, some important sources have been omitted here purely for the reason of space.
demonstrate that Indian clothes permeated the Ottoman realm, arriving from several different sources and converging in Istanbul. We do not argue that every single item of clothing discussed in the following pages was indeed of Indian make, but rather that Indian commodities were readily available and that they exercised one of the strongest influences on Ottoman taste. Furthermore, many influences which have been interpreted as French or Iranian actually originate in India. This aesthetic still represents important elements of “traditional” Ottoman clothing in the Balkans as well, shaping unconscious predilections to a considerable degree.

2. Patka: a powerful girdle

We contend that textiles are not innocent; rather, seemingly innocuous cultural practices still retain elements of previous hegemonies. While the statement may seem too weighty at first glance, its validity is asserted upon closer examination. As B. Fragner points out, the diffusion of certain customs indicates the distribution of political power within certain social strata in a given territory. He offers several convincing illustrations, among which are differing culinary cultures on both sides of the Turkish-Iranian border. In spite of the Turkish-Azeri (and Kurdish) linguistic continuum and similar geographical conditions, culinary preferences on the two sides of the border still bear the mark of Ottoman and Safavid hegemonic practices which developed for about four centuries.\(^9\)

Ottoman classical preferences offer another striking example on the persistence of formerly meaningful, hegemonic symbols long after their demise. The well-known çintamani

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\(^9\) His other example is the culinary divide between western and eastern Germany, clearly a consequence of different socio-economic conditions and interrupted communications for half a century. See the two contributions by B. Fragner in S. Zubaida, R. Tapper, *A Taste of Thyme, Culinary Cultures of the Middle East* (New York, 2000).
decorative motif, with three large circles arranged in a triangle-like shape, illustrates this tendency. Originally a Sanskrit term, chintâmani refers to the wish-granting jewel in central Asian Buddhist tradition. The Ottoman çintamani does not depict the jewel, but it refers in representational form to the Buddha, to his teaching (the dharma) and to his community (the sangha). In addition, the peленк, sometimes included in the depiction and sometimes absent, looks like tiger stripes, but it primarily refers to tumultuous ocean waves, symbolizing the perils of this world (samsara). Astonishingly, those symbols continued to be transmitted as royal and prestigious in Ottoman textiles, even long after their original meaning, probably originally transmitted to the Oghuz Turks through Uyghur Buddhist traditions, was forgotten.

Of course, those were not the only symbolic “languages” in the Ottoman world. The Turkmen tradition with a customarily red ground and geometric patterns is now common, but it used to be much more prevalent in carpets than in garments. More significantly for the court, there was a very strong impact of Italianate tradition in the crowns, medallions and rosettes on Ottoman silks. This tradition was inherited from Byzantine and Venetian layers of Ottoman past, but it had also spread across the eastern Mediterranean, including Egypt. It was familiar to Safavids, but not to Mughals.

While from our perspective, Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal clothing practices may look relatively similar, contemporaries, including European merchants, often developed exquisite attention to differing details. According to Tavernier, a merchant was best advised to wear Ottoman attire in Ottoman lands and adapt to Safavid customs when in Safavid realm, otherwise

11 See for instance, N. Atasoy, W. Denny et alia, İpek, The Crescent and the Rose: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets (Istanbul, 2002). This magnificent volume almost only includes silks from the apogee of the empire in the sixteenth century, placing much emphasis on the Italianate aesthetics of the period.
he would be viewed with suspicion, as a possible spy.\textsuperscript{12} He especially stresses a detail on turbans: among Persians, only “mullahs” wear white ones.\textsuperscript{13}

When Manucci, who spent most of his life in India, initially visited Dara Shukoh’s vizier, the latter was amused at seeing him in “Turkish” attire, with a turban of red velvet, dressed in red satin and with a waistcloth featuring a gold-flowered pattern against a red ground. His amusement clearly indicates that there was something discordant in Manucci’s clothing. Indeed, he asked him why he was not dressed in Mughal fashion.\textsuperscript{14} Clearly, even if Ottomans wore Indian textiles, they did not arrange them in the same way as Indians. One difference can be noted in terms of turbans. Already at the time of Akbar, there is a tendency for the Mughal turban to be flat and close to the head, very much unlike the round and abundant Ottoman turbans. Under his grandson Shah Jahan, the difference is even more accentuated. His turbans are tight, multicolored and sloping toward the back. While many Ottomans, especially those on active military duty, shaved their head, Mughals usually let their hair grow. Most of these aesthetic particularities have never been discussed in the scholarship.

Should we assume that Ottoman market for Indian clothing was traditional and that preferences did not change for centuries? While it is true that the famous “bulky silhouette” of Ottomans remained a constant between the fifteenth and the eighteenth century, and while the preference for Indian clothes has been constant in western Asia and Egypt in the course of the last two millennia, the vagaries of taste were greater than previously suspected.

\textsuperscript{12} Tavernier, \textit{Les Six Voyages}, p.112: “Quand on part de Constantinople, de Smyrne ou d’Alep pour se mettre en Caravane, il faut s’adapter selon la mode des pays ou on doit passer, en Turquie à la Turque, en Perse à la Persienne, & qui en vseroit autrement passeroit pour ridicule, & quelques mesme auroit de la peine à passer en bien des lieux, ou la moindre chose donne de l’ombrage aux Gouverneurs qui prennent aisément les étrangers pour des espions.”

\textsuperscript{13} Manucci, \textit{Storia do Mogor}, I, p. 630.

\textsuperscript{14} Idem., I, p.630.
One of the few areas in which Indian textiles have been preserved is Egypt, especially the area between Qusayr al-Qadim and Fustat. The dry desert climate contributed to the preservation of one specific group of fragments, making them deservedly famous. Those textiles seem to have been mass produced, as they mostly consist of coarsely spun and woven cotton. Many scholars have assumed that they are representative of the production of later times as well. However, even a cursory examination reveals that the textiles preferred by Ottomans are not the same as those favored by eleventh- to fourteenth-century Egyptians.

Several trends can be detected in the Fustat fragments. Some of them were originally hangings (picchwai) which served as didactic materials for the Jain communities of western India, leading to the inclusion of their religious symbolic, with characteristic depictions of human beings, most notably with elongated ears, three-quarter profiles and eyes which project beyond the cheek. More rarely, Hindu iconographic images are included, for instance a figure with a trishula (trident), associated with Lord Shiva. Other images, more easily readable for an Egyptian audience, but also imbued with religious significance in the Indian context, include mythological tales and depictions of Indian animals such as elephants, parrots, peacocks and the sacred bird hamsa, similar to a goose or a swan. Indeed, the oldest fragments also depict hunting

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15 The textiles from Fustat have been extensively analyzed and they feature prominently in almost any work on Indian textiles. See the initial description by R. Pfister, Les toiles imprimées de Fostat et l’Hindoustan (Paris, 1938); J. Irwin and M. Hall, Indian Painted and Printed Fabrics (Ahmadabad, 1971); the chapter entitled “Master Dyers in Antiquity: Fostat” in M. Gittinger, Master Dyers to the World, Technique and Trade in Early Indian Dyed Cotton Textiles (Washington, 1982); R. Barnes, Indian Block-Printed Textiles in Egypt, The Newberry Collection in the Ashmolean Museum Oxford, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1997).

16 M. Gittinger, Master Dyers to the World.

17 Textile Museum, Washington, D.C. 6.88, also depicted on p.39 in M. Gittinger, Master Dyers to the World, Technique and Trade in Early Indian Dyed Cotton Textiles (Washington, 1982). In an entirely different context, the word “trishula” survived in the Ottoman environment as well, as it has been reinterpreted by Balkan Roma to denote the Christian cross! See entry “trušul” in G. Calvet, Dictionnaire Tsigane-Français, dialecte kalderash (Paris, 2009).
scenes, casting further doubt on any strict prohibition of human depictions in the western Asian markets.  

Some patterns are immediately recognizable as western Indian in their technique and a more folkloric taste, for instance the *bandhani* (tie-dye) geometrical patterns of dots and stripes, alive even today and popularized in the 1970s by the hippies. Those textiles are still avidly consumed by tourists, but rather disdained by wealthy Indians. A few fragments also imitate patterns which were popular in late Roman and Byzantine periods. Particularly favored are large petal forms, with the flowers often encased within a leaf or an arched form and emphasized by white dots. These patterns are strikingly similar to those in the *daun bolu* heirlooms, also produced in western India and preserved among Toraja communities in central Sulawesi (eastern Indonesia). The leaf patterns are crucial in local ceremonies which emphasize the role of sacred trees.

The overlap between Indonesian and Egyptian markets for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries indicates that the markets for Indian textiles were not as fragmented and specialized as in later periods. Apparently, a common aesthetic was present across the Indian Ocean in the very same period during which Islam expanded into southeast Asia. Indeed, it seems that many of the patterns which we have briefly examined here remained popular in the Malay world up to the

19 The only instance of tie-and-dye which we were able to locate is in A. Hatzimihali, *Η Ελληνική λαϊκή φορεσία*, 2 vols. (Athens, 1977), II, p.345.
20 Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., 73.412.
21 For an excellent analysis of Indian clothes in Indonesia see J. Guy, *Woven Cargoes, Indian Textiles in the East* (New York, 1998), in particular the plates on pp. 40, 48, 52, which juxtapose patterns found in Egypt and Indonesia. *Patola*, a form of double *ikat* particular to Gujarat, is not unknown in western Asia, but it has emerged as the most praised form of textiles in Indonesia, further accentuating differences in taste which were not as prevalent in previous times. J. Guy includes an analysis of Indian cottons and silks which circulated in Thailand and Japan in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and which were distinctly patterned and produced with the local market in mind.
nineteenth century, while in Egypt they were gradually replaced by other Indian-made textiles. The implications of those cultural interactions are complex, regarding not only fabrics or religious texts, but also other cultural practices. Notably, connections between the Javanese kulit wayang, Egyptian shadow plays$^{22}$ and Anatolian Karagöz$^{23}$ are immediately apparent even to the casual observer, but they have not been well-studied, although they must have followed the same lines of communication as holy men and Indian textiles.$^{24}$

Yet, as far as we can tell, almost none of those elements are present in the Ottoman period. While scrolling lines will show up in our evidence, and while they constitute an ancient pattern persistent within north India, their execution across the centuries varies widely. In the Fustat fragments, they are large, round and swirling.$^{25}$ In the fifteenth-century fragments, there is a tendency toward an interlocking tangle of plants, covering the underlying surface almost entirely. In spite of frequent depictions of animals and humans, geometric and stylized forms are almost always preferred to a more naturalistic manner of depiction, and flowers are often depicted within lattice grids or interlocking. The prevalence of local Gujarati traditions of the Hindu and Jain communities in the Indian Ocean trade was strongly reflected in the patterns themselves; however, much of this changed with the installment of Mughal hegemony, and a very different aesthetic imposed itself on western Asia.

Initially, Mughal taste closely reflected Perso-Turkic traditions of central Asia and Iran. In the depictions stemming from Akbar’s period, Babur and Humayun were represented wearing central Asian chogas and qabas. But we also know that Akbar and Jahangir both engaged in

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$^{24}$ M. And addresses these linkages to some extent in *Dünyada ve Bizde Gölge Oyunu* (Ankara, 1977).
changing the names of clothing items, as when Jahangir ordered a coat called by Iranian immigrants “Kurdi” to be named “Nadiri”. In spite of some common elements, such as their inherited fondness for tulips and carnations, Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal styles in the early seventeenth century are quite distinct. We read of Indian textiles in the Ottoman empire and Europe in the sixteenth century, but visual evidence does not seem to bear it out. In documents, European merchants mostly mention Indian spices rather than Indian textiles. Perhaps many among the textiles at that time were monochrome, which makes it difficult to distinguish them.

Yet, a shift was in the making in the seventeenth century, and one clothing item played the central part. The *patka* is a long unstitched waistband with an end element which hangs in front of the legs. It functions as a tight girdle into which the wearer can tuck rosaries, weapons or soft cotton kerchiefs (*rumals*). Its textile part can be traced to India, initially as a female garment, but the *patka* also has a strong central Asian component, especially if adorned with leather and metals. The Lodis, the predecessors of Mughals in northern India, did not always wear those girdles, but depictions of Humayun and his Mughal and Turkic followers almost always feature them in the form of a belt.

We know that Akbar attempted to introduce new elements in court clothing, including hybrid names for items of apparel, but many notable changes in decoration only appear during Jahangir’s reign. We see silk and metallic yarn in *patkas*, with geometric forms and scrolls adorning the ends. Many *patkas* were still made of plain white materials, while others were

26 For a succinct overview, see A. Pathak, *Indian Costumes* (New Delhi, 2006).
ornamental with gold brocade and mostly geometrically patterned. Those two girdles were often worn combined. As noted by European travelers, there was a marked difference between Persian and Indian manners of wearing them. “They [Mughals] tie their girdles before and let the ends hang down whereas the Persians only fold it several times, around the body, and hide the ends within the girdle itself.”\(^{29}\) Indeed, the portrait of an Mughal courtier of Iranian origin, ‘Isa Khan, (by Bishan Das) stands out, as it very much reminds of depictions of Ottomans more than a century later: over a bulky white muslin turban, he wears a striped shawl. Another striped shawl is worn as a tight girdle, gathered and wound around the waist, without hanging ends.\(^{30}\)

About 1619, there was a shift toward featuring a naturalistic cluster of blossoms or a flowering plant, attributed (perhaps too simplistically) to European “herbals” or botanist engravings present at the court.\(^{31}\) By the 1640s, a specifically Shahjahani patka evolves at the Mughal court. The earlier plain muslin one is often discarded. Instead of horizontal flower scrolls, the vertical element is emphasized. Reflecting the abundance of precious metals in India at that time, these patkas are often made of silk and brocaded with silk thread and gold zari (serâser in Ottoman terms) with metal thread fringe ends. The patka consists of three main elements: the side borders, the central area, and the end border. The side borders are usually adorned with narrow strips of meandering vines and leaves. The undulating, sinuously creeping vine (beli, lata) had been present in Indian art for more than a thousand years, but here this pattern experiences a reinterpretation. The vines line the cloth along the edges and create a frame for the larger area of the end border, which is reminiscent of the structure of a sari. The broad

\(^{29}\) The Voyages and Travels of J. Albert de Mandelslo into the East Indies, usually printed together with the report about the same embassy by Olearius, (London, 1669), p.42.

\(^{30}\) Goswamy, Indian Costumes, II, fig. 34, p.40. Also see fig. 39, p.48, to the right, with an elderly courtier who is wearing a shawl without a flowering pattern, but with similar vertical stripes and chevrons.

and decorative end border (*pallu* or *pallava*) is filled with a single row of two to five large, naturalistic flowers. Initially the flowers stand on their own, but gradually they also come to include copious branches, leaves and buds. The flowers in the *pallu* are often executed on a plain gold or silver, whereas the main field is pliable, made of cotton and can be wrapped several times around the waist. While the central part of the *patka* is often left empty to emphasize the contrast with the end border, another component also emerges. In contrast to the large flowers from the *pallu*, the center piece is filled with small flowers and sprigs which are often spaced regularly from each other.32

All three elements of the *patka* had a significant influence on Eurasian fashions west of India. Because *patkas* were associated with the court and high positions, and because they spread even after the collapse of real Mughal power and became popular in the south as well, many eighteenth-century *patkas* have been preserved. Of course, being an Indian hegemonic statement, they were not exported to the Ottoman realm initially. In the eighteenth century, when their production became much more diffuse and encompassed western and eastern Europe, *patkas* as such may have been imported into Ottoman lands, divested of its original overtly political content through sheer popularity.33 While we cannot ascertain their pattern, we know from ‘Izzi’s history that the Mughal embassy of 1751 brought hundreds of textiles, including brocades, printed chintz (*basma chit*), muslins, *alachas*, and a number of girdles and shawls.

32 A recent publication by the Calico Museum in Ahmadabad contributes greatly to understanding the production of *patkas* with magnificent close-ups and details of the weaving. For our purposes, it is especially important to gauge the extent to which metallic thread was used, and how the flowering pattern on the *patkas* evolved. See R. Jain, *Mughal Patkas, Ashavali Saris and Indo-Iranian Metal Ground Fragments in the Collection of the Calico Museum of Textiles, Woven Textiles Technical Studies Monograph No.1* (Ahmadabad, 2008).
33 Yet, it seems that at least some *patkas* were sold regularly among the Polish aristocracy, passing through Ottoman lands in the hands of Armenian intermediaries. See the eighteenth-century *patka* with only two flowering plants, with initials F.S. in Latin script., acc no.1090, no.36, in Goswamy, *Indian Costumes II*. 
‘Izzi does assert that many of them were adorned with flowers and golden thread.\textsuperscript{34} We also know that Safavids and their successors influenced \textit{patka} designs and imported them, and such “Iranian” \textit{patkas} are often quite different from the “Mughal” ones. The color scheme is different, tending toward orange and yellow. Most significantly, the flowers in the end field are replaced by geometric patterns and 8-point-stars, familiar from pottery or architecture.\textsuperscript{35} Some unusual \textit{patkas} also feature elements atypical for Indian art, such as a bunch of grapes. While grapes are relatively uncommon in India, they would have been immediately appealing to an Ottoman customer. The ground alternates from silver bands with a scrolling wine to red bands with underlying chevrons and birds-in-flight in silver brocade.\textsuperscript{36}

Even if the \textit{patkas} were relatively rare in the Ottoman realm, they are crucially important for two reasons. First, many of the techniques and designs displayed in the main field illustrate other kinds of textiles which were widely imported into Ottoman territory. Most early \textit{patkas} were made of varying mixtures of silk and cotton, and their parts could also be cut out and refashioned into different pieces. The cotton ones were obviously more modest and accessible to non-courtiers. They were commonly block-printed. More luxurious ones are adorned with brocaded gold leaves, or hand-painted with attention to the details. Yet others feature silk thread embroidery, often with satin stitches. All of those techniques can be encountered on Indian textiles among the Ottomans. Yet, even more significantly than the techniques of weaving, the flowery component of the \textit{patka} initiated a craze. These new textiles stand in distinct contrast to previously imported Indian textiles in Ottoman lands and Europe, which were often diaphanous or white muslins, or plain black or blue cottons favored by English puritans.

\textsuperscript{34} ‘Izzi, \textit{Târîh-i ‘Izzi}, p.226f.
\textsuperscript{35} Goswamy, \textit{Indian Costumes II}, acc. no.2855, no.37, p.156.
\textsuperscript{36} Idem., pl. 20, p.122 and also featured on the front cover.
Unlike the more stylized preferences of the earlier period, the plants are emphatically naturalistic. Mughal flowers are usually fully open, sometimes swaying and sometimes drooping with heaviness and abundance. The leaves and the stem are twisted and sinuous. There are also occasional buds, signifying renewal. The flowers in the *pallava* are often executed on a plain gold or silver, whereas the main field is pliable, made of cotton and can be wrapped several times around the waist. Very similar flowers can be seen in the Taj Mahal and on Mughal paintings.\(^{37}\) They came to be ubiquitous in Aurangzeb’s period: one still finds them in architectural elements, on carpets under the throne, on trays and carafes and on coats and shalwars.\(^{38}\) They send the signal of a blooming realm in which there diversity is overwhelming and there is no scarcity. The empire disposes of such abundance that the plants bend with the heaviness of the flowers and the fruits.

It would be a mistake to dismiss the flowers as “pretty trifles”. In our age, symbols of power are mechanistic, but flowers, along with hunting, had been common symbols in many royal houses across Eurasia for centuries.\(^{39}\) Pre-industrial aristocrats sought to project an organic imagery of eternal blossoming, connected with the ideal of the well-reigned realm as a protected and structured garden.\(^{40}\) Most people lived from agricultural labor and close to fields and plants. Men and women were trained in analyzing different floral landscapes, real as well as imaginary. We come across their symbolic in the biblical lily of the valley, in Ophelia’s lament to her brother Laertes, in the Dutch tulip craze and in flirtatious messages encoded in bouquets and


\(^{40}\) There is much recent scholarship on Islamic gardens. See for instance M. Conan, ed., *Middle East Garden Traditions, Unity and Diversity* (Washington, 2008).
botanical books of the eighteenth century.\(^{41}\) External observers shared those values, and they quickly came to define the new Mughal aesthetic as attractive and powerful.

In the 1650s, we can distinguish Ottoman flower language from that of the Europeans or the Mughals. However, price lists and \textit{terekes} inform us that there were many Indian textiles in the Ottoman empire. Were they adorned with flowers? Our evidence is contradictory. Tavernier, who traveled in the Ottoman, Mughal and Safavid lands, makes the following recommendations. Clothes sent to France “should not be not adorned with gold or silver,” but those sent to the Ottomans must feature those metallic threads. For similar textiles to be sold in Moscovy and Poland, they must also be adorned with gold threads, but the gold should be blackened.\(^{42}\) Coming to flowers, he notes that “a flower impressed upon the clothes will render a cloth \textbf{unmarketable in France}, but it is a necessity in most other places and the cloth cannot be sold without it (in the center of the cloth).”\(^{43}\)

Visual evidence, however, contradicts Tavernier. We have a relatively large number of depictions of Ottoman women, Muslim and non-Muslim. Notably, the women wear different kinds of fabrics on their lower and upper bodies. Their chests are covered by Italianate fabrics which are somber in color and heavy. Most of them are plain, but those with patterns are reminiscent of sixteenth-century velvets (\textit{kadîfe}), with large-patterned leaves, crowns and

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \(^{41}\) J. Goody, \textit{The Culture of Flowers} (Cambridge, 1993).
  \item \(^{42}\) Tavernier, \textit{Les six voyages}, Livre premier, chapitre IV, p.31 and Livre second, chapitre XIII, p.276: “Mais il faut remarquer que les Indiens en fabriquant leurs toiles, quand la pièce passe deux écus mettent aux deux bouts des filets d’or & d’argent, & que plus la pièce est fine plus ils mettent de ces filets, dont le prix monte presque aussi haut que celui de la toile.[...] mais pour les toiles qu’on voudroit envoyer en Pologne & en Moscovie, il y faut de cet or & de cet argent à l’Indienne, parce que les Polonais & les Moscovites ne font point de cas des toiles s’il n’y a de ces files d’or & d’argent. Il faut même prendre garde qu’ils ne noircissent pas [...].”
  \item \(^{43}\) Tavernier, \textit{Les six voyages}, Livre second, chapitre XIII, p.277: “Mais si c’est pour transporter dans les Isles des Indes & dans toute l’Asie, & même dans une partie de l’Amérique, \textbf{il faut que cette fleur soit au chef des pièces}, & la conserver entière le plus qu’il est possible, parce que autrement on ne les pourrait vendre.”
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Simultaneously, most of the women sport a distinctly Indian textile as the outermost layer over their legs: the muslins. In Ottoman lands, those transparent fabrics were used for male turbans, women’s clothing and many other items which we will discuss below. For our purposes here, it is sufficient to note that there are no distinctive Indian flowery patterns on Ottoman clothing a decade or two after the Shah Jahani patka was invented. Even a rare depiction of Kashmiri shawls from this period demonstrates that they were plain.

3. Not all flowers are the same

In the second half of the seventeenth century, designs with prominent flowers came to be highly prestigious in Europe. Starting in the 1660s, and reaching its first peak in the 1680, there was a boom of Indian floral patterns and textiles. In contrast to earlier times, orders were placed specifying that “good, brisk color, the works of any sort of rambling fancys of the country, but no English patterns” were desired. Instead of plain or monochrome calicoes which had been sold in England and France since the 1620s, western Europeans now craved the vibrant colors of Indian cottons. Notably, many of the colors could not be reproduced in Europe before the nineteenth-century technological revolution. Conversely, in India, biochemical qualities of the Tapti river in Gujarat and the Krishna river in Andhra Pradesh combined with the sophisticated weaving and dying practices to create textiles with long-lasting colors. In large parts of Eurasia and Africa, elites and middling classes were demanding Indian textiles. Although this tendency

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was common to Ottomans and western Europeans, local taste indicates that, rather paradoxically, as the markets expanded, they also diverged in their preferences.

Ottomans, Safavids and western Europeans all consumed chintzes. Those cotton fabrics, called chit in Persian, were produced in two main locations in India, namely Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh. The former, under the rule of the Mughals, was well-known for its block-prints, while the latter, formerly under the Qutbshahis until Aurangzeb’s conquest of Golconda in 1687, specialized in more luxurious hand-painted techniques. Initially, all three markets favored chintzes (also known as “printed calicoes”) for furniture decoration, particularly bedspreads and hangings. Then, rather suddenly, their practices diverged.

Dutch and English merchants had a strong impact on production in southern India, especially in and around the city of Masulipatnam. A hybrid aesthetic was developed for the European market, featuring European, southern Indian and even Chinese elements, especially in one of its most popular symbols, the tree of life. Simpler large-patterned flowers or human figures were also favored. The English and the French had a very strong preference for flowers set against white or beige backgrounds. The Dutch also appreciated a southern Indian and southeast Asian aesthetic, with dark red backgrounds. While the Dutch regarded these Indian

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46 While the term in our day refers to any printed linens or cottons, with a strong connotation of “kitch”, in the eighteenth century “chintz” referred to glazed cottons to which techniques of printing and painting were applied. Particularly the qalamkārī pieces, in which pencil work rather than block printing was used, were highly appreciated.
47 The etymology has been commonly assumed to be from the Sanskrit chitra (variegated), but other explanations from Gujarati and Telugu have also been suggested.
49 See a doll-house in E. Hartkamp-Jonxis, Sitsen uit India / Indian Chintzes (Amsterdam, 1994) and R. Crill, Chintz, Indian Textiles for the West (London, 2008)
textiles as fitting for a gentleman’s wardrobe, this process took place only gradually in England.\textsuperscript{50}

Chintzes also enjoyed great popularity in Iran. In summer, painted or printed cottons were used for curtains which served to divide the room into several spaces on the account of its lightness and elegance. Writing in 1848, J. Kitto admires this practice, noting that it had been adopted by the English courts of law at Westminster Hall.\textsuperscript{51} He mentions that in Iran, it was also common to employ “a long narrow strip of chintz, or colored cotton, called \textit{sofra} (or as we should say, table-cloth)”, to serve food.\textsuperscript{52} Prayer mats (\textit{djâ-i namâz}) and door curtains (\textit{pardah}) were particularly frequent.

The Iranian market featured a wide variety of chintzes. One example from the mid-nineteenth century is a block-printed southern Indian cotton, imitating the more expansive variants, which were painted with a brush. In accordance with its function, the prayer mat evokes a \textit{mihrâb} in its central field.\textsuperscript{53} Even less refined chintzes “of cheapest price and coarsest quality”, made in Lahore in Panjab, were favored for furniture and for clothing.\textsuperscript{54} More expensive and delicate \textit{qalamkârî} work was imported from the Qutbshahi sultanate which often sent ambassadors to Iran. In accordance with the combined European-southern Indian aesthetic, depiction of animals and humans on clothes was common. Another variety was strongly

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\textsuperscript{51} J. Kitto, \textit{The People of Persia} (London, 1799), p.33.
\textsuperscript{52} Idem., p.41.
\textsuperscript{53} R. Barnes, S. Cohen, R. Crill, \textit{Court, Temple and Trade: Indian Textiles from the Tapi collection} (Mumbai, 2002), color plate on p.86-87.
\textsuperscript{54} Tavernier, \textit{Les six voyages}, Livre second, chapitre XII, p.261: “Toutes les Chites dont je viens de parler sont toiles pressées, dont on fait des couvertures de lit, des sofra ou napes a la mode du pais, des tayes de coussins, des mouchoirs, & sur tout des camisoles pour l’usage tant des hommes que des femmes, principalement en Perse.”
\end{flushright}
imitative of the court paintings, and tents with images from the *Shâhnâma* were produced.\(^{55}\) At the fringes of the Iranian world, the famous Armenian poet Sayat‘ Nova, who wrote in Azeri, Georgian and Armenian, compared his beloved to Indian muslins and *qalamkârî* textiles.\(^{56}\)

We have gone into the description of chintzes in some detail because Ottoman taste diverges quite strongly from that of Europeans and Persians on this matter. G. Veinstein, relying on English-language lists, was surprised to find very few chintzes attested.\(^{57}\) His impression that chintz was probably not very important in the Ottoman market\(^{58}\) seems to be confirmed, as most textiles from the seventeenth-century sources are muslins.

Yet, we do have attestation of chintzes in the Ottoman market, but they remained primarily wall-hangings and bed furnishings. We never find any mention of human figures; peacocks and lions were more likely to find wide approval among the Ottomans, but flowers were by far the most common element.\(^{59}\) Chintzes were also likely to be used for tents. In India itself, the tent of Aurangzeb, made of hand-painted chintz when he was on his Deccan campaigns, became famous. A century later, Antoine-Louis Henri Polier, a Frenchman in the service of the English Company, yet acculturated to the Lucknow courtly manners, made very

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\(^{55}\) See e.g. F. Shirazi-Mahajan, *Costumes and Textile Designs of the Il-khanid, Timurid and Safavid Dynasties in Iran from the Thirteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries* (Doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University, Cleveland, 1985).


\(^{58}\) G. Veinstein, “Commercial Relations between India and the Ottoman Empire (late fifteenth to late eighteenth centuries): a few notes and hypotheses”, in S. Chaudhury, M. Morineau, eds., *Merchants, Companies and Trade, Europe and Asia in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, 1999).

\(^{59}\) See for instance the blanket with a tree motif which was made “for the Muslim market” at the coast of Coromandel and is now preserved in the Ethnology Museum in Rotterdam. See the chapter on motifs and printed cottons in E. Hartkamp-Jonxis, ed., *Sits, Oost-west relaties in textiel* (Zwolle, 1987), p.81.
precise demands on the tent makers, specifying that his tent should be of white cloth, with multicolored printed cloth on the inside. Rather surprisingly, we also find a rare archival mention of Indian textiles being used for an Ottoman tent (otāğ-i hūmāyūn) from this period. The only clothing item made of chintz which was permissible on an Ottoman lady was the ubiquitous yemini, often made in Yemen or in the Arabic-speaking provinces, and spun around a hotoz.

In England and France, chintzes had an adventurous history. In 1687, a ban on all chintz imports was declared in France. It would only be rescinded in 1759. In Britain, several attempts at restrictions were made, but an effective ban was only implemented in 1721, partially in order to protect the domestic production, but also to preserve social distinctions. Instead of the earlier preference for brocades and silks among the higher orders, light and colorful cottons from India had gained the attention of ladies as well as their chambermaids. No less a personage than Daniel Defoe wrote a damning statement:

“The general fansie of the people runs upon East India goods to that degree that the chints and printed calicoes, which before were only made use of for carpets, quilts, etc [...] became now the dress of our ladies, and such is the power of a mode as we saw our persons of quality dressed in Indian carpets, which but a few years before their chambermaids would have thought too ordinary for them: the chints was advanced from lying upon their floors to their backs [...] it crept into our houses, our closets and bed-chambers; curtains, cushions, chairs and at last the beds themselves were nothing but Callicoes or Indian stuffs.”

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61 IE.ML 46/4386, 1108M 27. Unfortunately, the following work was not accessible at the time of the writing. N. Atasoy, *Otağ-i Hümayun, Osmanlı Çadırları* (Istanbul, 2000).
Evidently, merchants from the East India Company still succeeded in importing or smuggling in smaller amounts of southern Indian cottons. However, an unintended side effect also came about: in both France and England, domestic production and imitation of Indian-style cottons came to flourish. We are familiar with its eventual outcome, the steam engine, which enabled factory production away from rivers. Elaborate chintzes remained a prestige marker particularly in the Netherlands and Britain, leading to a domestication of the aesthetic to the point that they became thoroughly integrated into the everyday life and are even seen as conservative.

Ottomans had its own craze of Indian textiles. In the mid-seventeenth century, many of the textiles on Istanbuli price lists bore the same names as in India itself, arguing for a strong presence of Anatolian Armenian merchants in India. Those men would probably have communicated in Persian with the local populations. Even more astonishing than the mere overlap of names is the Ottoman awareness of Indian locations. Price lists from Istanbul mention not only cities from Gujarat, which were familiar to Katib Çelebi, but also from the mid-Ganga, such as Benares, Patna, Lukawar (50 miles south of Patna), Kanpur (in modern Uttar Pradesh) and Bahrampur in Orissa. Notably, many of those places were remote from the coasts and located in Bihar.

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64 Evidence is still scant, but it is emerging. See the letter sent in 1743 by an Armenian priest in Tokat to an Armenian merchant in China, in S. Aslanian, “The Salt in a Merchant’s Letter, The Culture of Julfan Correspondence in the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean”, *Journal of World History*, 19 (2), (2008), text of the letter given in footnote 42. M.J. Seth, *Armenians in India, From the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (Calcutta, 1937) also mentions an Istanbuli Armenian tomb in Delhi. While we have not been able to locate the tomb, other tombs in Surat seem promising. An Ottoman Armenian merchant whose death in India caused difficulties for the execution of his will is mentioned in MVL 441/112 1280-Za 16 and MVL 443/42 1280-Za 15.

65 Y. Yücel, *Es’är defteri*.

66 Very little work has been done on Bihar in comparison with Gujarat or Bengal. See P. Khatua, *Some Aspects of Textile Industry and Trade in Eastern India during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries* (Doctoral dissertation,
In order to understand the specific nature of Ottoman taste in Indian clothing, we must recall the patka. We have seen that in its design there were three kinds of flowers. Motifs from the end-board were large and carefully executed. They came to have a distinct and surprising history in the nineteenth century. However, the early eighteenth-century Ottoman imagination seized upon two other features. First, there were the narrow strips along the sides of the patka, filled with meandering naturalistic leaves and heads of flowers, which were somewhat reminiscent of the seventeenth-century Ottoman hatayı preferences. Second, the main field of the patka featured the buti, much smaller and daintier sprigs and flowers, often against bright backgrounds. The buti in particular attracted Ottoman attention.

Until the late seventeenth century, Ottomans preferred their own floral tradition with only slight naturalistic Indian influence. However, the large, round forms of tulips, hyacinths and carnations preferred by the earlier generations of Ottoman notables become gradually rarified. Indian fashions were followed closely. In northern India as well as in the Ottoman empire, geometric shapes became much smaller, while broad design lines, common in chintzes, were limited to upholstery fabric. Piece-goods came to be decorated with an all-over design of small flowers and sprigs which derived from the imperial patka aesthetic. Sometimes the design was organized in staggered rows and sometimes in the alternating stripes of single flower-heads and continuous meandering flowers and leaves. Some flowers were composites, often with accented buds on either side, and wavy leaves and stems. Influenced by Indian patterns, Ottoman

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69 For the seventeenth-century aesthetic, see H. Bilgi, Osmanlı ipekli dokumaları, Çatma ve Kemha (Istanbul, 2007).
flowers become much smaller and much more numerous, with precise spaces between them and often quite naturalistic.\footnote{See for instance the illustrations of Muslim woman’s clothing given by M. D’Ohsson, \textit{Tableau Général de L’Empire Othoman} (Paris, 1788), IV, 1, plates 75, 76.}

This new aesthetic bursts forth in Levni’s work on festivities. Its social implications are quite intriguing. While the earlier carnations and hatayi\footnote{Also known as sâz (reed) for its leaves.} as well as the large Italianate leafage bore the mark of aristocratic refinement and hence are unmistakable and prominently displayed, we have to train our eyes to spot Indian textiles in the \textit{Surnâme}. The sultan, along with other prominent men of the Ottoman court, wears a sober coat with fur. Tents which surround him are also patterned in traditional Ottoman style, with large lozenges or Italianate leaves and ogival shapes. All senior males follow the same style, mostly monochrome or occasionally large-patterned.

Yet, there are signs of change. The \textit{zülıflû baltaci} who serve food wear coats with bright, meandering patterns.\footnote{E. Atıl, O. Koç, \textit{Levni and the Surnâme}, p.71.} Similarly, many of the pages wear clothing which features small flowers.\footnote{Idem., p.185.} Among soldiers, the \textit{solak} imperial guards sport a layer of muslin which covers their short broad pants, while the messengers (\textit{peyks}) wear the new flowery patterns underneath.\footnote{Idem., p.122.} Unlike earlier male clothing, which was often darker in color, all of those feature daringly bright, multicolored schemes.

There are other men who wear Indian-patterned bright textiles in the \textit{Surnâme}, but most of them are slightly ill-reputable. Among them, there are \textit{köçek} dancers and musicians.\footnote{Idem., p.154.} Others appear in performances and displays. In one of them, masked men wear coats with small floral patterns...
sprig patterns. Their task is to mock the Safavids.\textsuperscript{77} Indeed, Safavid clothing for powerful men at this period did not disdain a strong Indian influence of small flowers against a bright background. A famous portrait of Shah Sulayman Safavi depicts him as wearing an outermost kaftan of bright yellow with sprigs and flower buds. Musicians, senior member of the court and the soldiers to his left side all wear Mughal-inspired clothing without embarrassment and the clothing worn by a Dutch ambassador to his right is also bright and conspicuous. Iranian textile culture from this period shows a striking tendency to combine European, northern Indian and southern Indian languages of flowers, and Persian evidence must be used in order to understand Ottoman similarities and differences to it.\textsuperscript{78}

The \textit{Sûrnâme} shows seemingly intimidated members of a Safavid embassy who cluster together while wearing their distinctive clothing.\textsuperscript{79} The floral patterns on their clothing are visible and magnified. We also see huge puppets dressed in coats with small floral patterns. Those giants are said to be Iranian or fire-worshipping Hindus.\textsuperscript{80} We already mentioned an Indian elephant with a howda and its purportedly Indian mahouts.\textsuperscript{81} Another female puppet is also dressed in a Mughal coat with meandering vines.\textsuperscript{82} The main message is clear: Mughal and Safavid clothing, while attractive, is unworthy of a proper Ottoman statesman and only fit for servants or entertainers. The Ottoman realm, in its sobriety, is far superior to the two other frivolous empires.

\textsuperscript{77} Idem., p.225.
\textsuperscript{79} E. Atıl, O. Koç, \textit{Levni and the Sûrnâme}, p.170.
\textsuperscript{80} Idem., p.195.
\textsuperscript{81} Idem., p.164.
\textsuperscript{82} Idem., p.162.
Yet there are contradictory elements. We also see barbers with novel floral motifs on their aprons. The flowers are naturalistic, undulating, with many single rows covering the field, while flowers of slightly different style are featured at the edge of the cloth. In short, they look like an Ottoman *patka*. Carpets on which the sultan is sitting also sometimes feature naturalistic flowers whose weight bends them to one side.\(^3\) As we have seen, Vehbi’s text references a very large number of Indian *kutnu* textiles given and received by all members of the upper hierarchy, including the sultan.

Of course, since the sultan in question is Ahmed III, we are writing about the tulip period. Our suggestion here is certainly not that the tulip as a symbol was a wholesale import from the Mughals; tulips have always existed in Ottoman art and they belong to their central Asian heritage.\(^4\) But we do contend that the history of Ottoman flowers of this period is much more complex than it has been previously assumed, and that instead of merely French influence, Safavid and especially Mughal aesthetic elements must also be accounted for. Particularly in the realm of textiles, the small Ottoman flowers and their backgrounds resemble Indian forms much more closely than they do the chintz-influenced French ones.

Additionally, although the eighteenth century witnessed the rise of the French commercial presence in the Ottoman empire which to some extent replaced the Dutch and the English (who had their priorities in the Bay of Bengal and the Chinese trade), there were French complaints of changes in taste which made Ottoman consumers less likely to purchase western

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\(^3\) Idem., p.198.

European goods, as they favored local manufactures and Indian shawls over French cloth.\footnote{See E. Eldem, \textit{“French Trade and Commercial Policy in the Levant in the Eighteenth Century”} in K. Fleet, \textit{The Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century} (Rome, 1999).} Incidentally, we also have record of Nadir Shah banning the use of French woolens among his troops, thus favoring Iranian and Indian woolens.\footnote{J. Hanway, \textit{An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea}, 2 vols. (London, 1753), II, p.27.}

While Safavid and Mughal men wore the floral patterns openly, they were not displayed publicly by senior Ottoman men of this period. However, they come to dominate women’s clothing within a very short time-span. Let us consider Levni’s, portraits of women, more intimate and informal than the \textit{Sûrnâme}. Unlike the women of the 1650s, whose only recognizable Indian item had been the muslin overskirt, Ottoman women of the 1730s wear multiple layers of Indian clothing.

First, there is the thin undershirt (\textit{gömlek}), which is closest to the body, and whose top portion and fine diaphanous sleeves peek out. Women who could afford it donned Indian muslins, which belonged to a wide price range, while others used domestically made gauze or even linen. The \textit{salvar}, often covered by one or two layers of muslin, usually features a striped design which is reminiscent of Mughal pants worn throughout the seventeenth century. The coat-bodice or robe (\textit{entari}) is the most conspicuous piece, with its bright ground and many small flowers scattered across it. There is certainly variation, and the flowers are occasionally replaced by older Ottoman patterns such as lozenges. Yet, often the inner linings of the sleeves also feature floral elements, and the more traditional patterns are miniaturized in relation to their former prevalence, and they are arranged against the background as if they were Mughal \textit{patka}
flowers. Most depictions feature small flowers rather than any other kind of pattern. Depending upon the weather, there are other layers completing the arrangement, but the components which we described above are stable. This fashion will prevail for the entire eighteenth century with only slight modifications, as we know from the 1793 illustrations to the *Hubânnâme* and the *Zenânnâme*.  

As we hinted above, interaction with French fashions is complex. Often the flowers have been said to reflect French fashions. Yet, the French, just like other western Europeans, tended to prefer large-patterned flowers against a white background, based upon the southern Indian model. This preference was reinforced throughout time, because their commercial presence in India was also largely based in that same area, the Coromandel. Note that the famed portraits of French women in small-flowered *entaris* and striped *şalvars* by Liotard are explicitly defined as “turqueries”, meaning that their specific arrangement of motifs (and their very appeal) is “exotic” and “Oriental” and not viewed as common French fashion at the time. In fact, many older descriptions are careless in describing all of those fashions as “Oriental” and thus collapsing Indian, Persian, Ottoman and Chinese influence on French fashion and imagination. Most researches do not offer detailed comparisons between French and Ottoman garments, only

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87 With only one notable exception: The replacement of the metal belt by the Kashmiri shawl, or *kemer* by *kuşak*. See below.
88 See for instance N. Micklewright, *Women’s dress in 19th Century Istanbul: Mirror of a Changing Society* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1986), whose description of the 19th c. transition is excellent, but who only devotes a few paragraphs to the eighteenth century, implausibly claiming (without evidence) that as of 1700 most garments in the Ottoman empire were already of French and English make.
89 See the portrait of Marie Adélaïde of France, daughter of King Louis XV, in Turkish dress, 1735. The ground of her *entari* is white, which is rare in Ottoman textiles and much more typical of French chintzes, but the style of the flowers is Mughal or Ottoman, as opposed to western European.
adducing flowers and the soft quality of fabrics as an argument.\(^{91}\) Hence, it is wise to remember that not all flowers are the same, especially in an epoch when flowers symbolized power. Ottoman families were aware of these distinctions; even in the twentieth century, ‘Abdü laziz Bey notes different occasions on which smaller or larger flowers are appropriate.\(^{92}\)

The main French influence lies elsewhere: in the visual depiction of the high-positioned breasts which are visible through the thin muslin layer, and to some extent in the headdresses. During the second half of the eighteenth century, some of the French flower aesthetic was indeed received by Ottoman subjects, especially Greek women from the islands. In most cases, the clothing is immediately readable as French, with green or white backgrounds and large flowers.\(^{93}\) Even when flowers are smaller, they retain a different shape of stems and distinct chintz colors (deep pink and red). The influence was not only one-sided. We also know that there were many Armenian merchants in Marseille, and that they often assisted the French in creating and procuring new flower-based patterns, many of which were Ottoman imitations of originally Indian patterns. In fact, starting with 1759, the French again allowed imports of Indian textiles, leading to yet another wave of direct Indian influence. Linkages between Diyarbakır, Mosul and Aleppo on the Ottoman side and Marseille and Lyon on the French side were particularly significant, and only a precise study of visual and textual sources can give us details about those

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\(^{91}\) Some well-known sources do not offer much detail either. Lady Montague does not distinguish between fabrics, except noting that parts of clothing were brocaded. She mostly describes the basic components of Ottoman woman clothing.

\(^{92}\) Abdü laziz Bey, K. Arisan, D. Arisan Günay, eds., Osmancı Âdet, Merasim ve Tabirleri: Âdât ve Merasim-i Kadime, Tabirât ve Muamalât-i Kavmiye-i Osmaniye ( İstanbul, 1995). For instance, p.24 and p.120.

\(^{93}\) See the costume from the Cyclades, p.19, and from Euboea, p.37, in I. Papantoniou, Ελληνικές Τοπικές Ενδυμασίες (Nafplio, 1996).
interchanges. For instance, the costume worn by Annette Duvivier seems to be Ottoman in cut and French in pattern.

In the Ottoman center, Indian silk gradually became even more important than the pure cottons. According to D’Ohsson, in spite of the *hadîth* injunctions against silk, almost all wealthy families wore it. Indian fabrics, with a long tradition of expertly weaving cotton and silk so that the silk warp was displayed while only the cotton weft touched the skin, were most eagerly desired. Their diversity was seemingly infinite, ranging from monochrome to striped, with many kinds of flowers and silks. Most of flowery motives which we described above seem to have been brocaded silks or printed cotton imitations.

Gold and silver brocades (*kemhâ*) were initially the prerogative of females; most males shunned them out of a sense of *gravitas*, except for servants. Here, a theme to which we will return is addressed: in some wealthy Ottoman households, favored servants or slaves and children often displayed more conspicuous and luxurious clothing than their masters or parents. Yet, the portrait of Charles Gravier, comte de Vergennes, by de Fabray in 1766 also indicates that at least some Ottoman men had succumbed to the charm of flowers. Around the same time, Flachat also commented that “*Les hommes sont magnifiques dans leurs habillements; ils veulent des draps de belles couleurs. Ce n’est que depuis quelques années qu’ils se plaisent à voir de

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95 They are called *mashru* in literature on textiles, since they were legal.
96 M. D’Ohsson, *Tableau Général*, IV, I, p.133: “Celles des Indes sont les plus recherchées. Leur diversité est infinie tant pour le prix que pour la qualité. Il y en a d’unies, de rayées, en fleurs de toute espèce, en soie, en or et en argent. Ces deux dernières étoffes ne sont cependant que pour l’usage des femmes. Les hommes ne portent jamais ni or ni argent sur leurs habits.”
In part, this was facilitated by accepting yet another element of Mughal male fashion, donned already by Aurangzeb, which seemed more dignified and consisted of vertical stripes with a smaller number of flowers than customary for women.

Some of the most common names of Indian textiles that we encounter in Ottoman sources are kutnu and alacha. They are both mixed cotton and silk textiles (mashru). The kutnu retained the floral elements, but they were usually striped, with alternate rows of cotton and silk warps. They were often satin-weave, which increased their luster. There were also kinds of kutnu which had cotton warp and silk weft, and those were probably the ones we find mentioned so frequently in the Sûrnâme. Alacha or ilaychi had a very long history in Turkic-language sources. In some areas, including Greece, it was coded as signifying Turkic tribal identity. Those cotton alachas are monochrome and simply striped. They are also attested in the Caucasus. However, in the Indian context, alacha often refers to the patterns with the dagger (khandjar) or stylized flying bird motif, which are attested even in the Ajanta paintings. The alachas which were worn prevalently in Syria are in more vibrant colors including bright orange and red, with the old “dagger” motif donned by Muslims and Christians alike up until the early twentieth century. Unlike kutnus, alachas usually had a cotton weft and a silk warp. As with so many of these textiles, the extent of domestic production versus importation from India and Iran is difficult to measure, but visual evidence suggests that those two currents influenced each other. One appeal

99 In this context, the work of Y. Agrawal is particularly significant. She is familiar with both the varieties of mashru from India and with some of the commercial networks across the Indian Ocean. See Y. Agrawal, “Mashru as a Trade Textile” in R.Crill, *Textiles from India: The Global Trade* (Calcutta, 2006).
100 Y. Agrawal, *Silk Brocades* (New Delhi, 2008), plate 13.
of the alachas was that they were geometrical rather than flowery. This aesthetic seems to have appealed to men in Arabic-speaking lands of the empire. Notably, in north Africa, where geometric patterns prevail in domestically produced textiles, the presence of naturalistic flowers is explicitly coded as upper-class and “Turkish” (i.e. Ottoman), not French.102

During the Mughal period, many of them were made in Agra for lower-body garments (izâr), lining for brocade dresses or as furnishings. In Europe they were also used as handkerchiefs.103 Among English ladies of the 1680, alachas became popular as undergarments,104 imitating Mughal styles. This usage was not unfamiliar to the Ottomans as it also spread among court ladies. As noted before, the consumption of these fabrics also indicates differences in taste and distribution networks. Notably, while alachas were preferred in many other areas of the empire, in Istanbul we find many more mentions and more depictions of kutnus.

As the memory of a strong Mughal state with which the north Indian flower aesthetic was initially linked was fading, delicate Indian textiles became an important marker of social standing. Faced with the flood of Indian imports, Ottoman sultans had recourse to restrictions and bans, similarly to the British and the French in the first half of the century. To some extent, their intentions were analogous: They wanted to protect domestic producers (which would be stated explicitly by Selim III), to prevent the outflow of Ottoman silver to Iran and India, and to preserve social distinctions. They were not particularly successful, as members of all groups

104 S.P. Sangar, Indian Textiles in the 17th century (New Delhi, 1998).
protested against restrictions on Indian clothing.\textsuperscript{105} The claim by Es’ad Efendi that people from lower strata decided to regulate their consumption and buy domestically-made instead of Indian or Persian shawls must have been a pious wish.\textsuperscript{106} In addition, the Ottoman court also often received gifts of Indian textiles from Arab provinces, and it resorted to the confiscation of the large amount of Indian goods accumulated by the deceased governors of Jiddah and Iraq.\textsuperscript{107} Incidentally, in this period, Indian fabrics become the target of a widespread social protest in Yemen, where they are mentioned by a poet called al-Kaukabani. Although he praises them, saying that they were “dyed like blossoming gardens”, he also protests against the imam who collected those garments, since they are costly and unnecessary, because the Prophet himself never wore any.\textsuperscript{108}

At this time, many Ottoman elite males come to display their Indian clothing in public. Ahmad Paşa, formerly of Adana, died in Manisa in 1776. He possessed an extensive number of clothing articles, including many of Indian origin. Partially, this reflects his personal predilection, as he had also been known to bring other objects and servants from Egypt.\textsuperscript{109} On his famous portrait, Selim III also wears a kutnu which was either Indian or an Ottoman imitation, with blue and yellow vertical stripes and small flowers. Presents received by the Şeyhülislam from the same period include an Indian prayer carpet, Indian cottons and Kashmir shawls. We

\textsuperscript{106} Z. Yılmazer, \textit{Vak’a nüvis Es’ad Efendi Tarihi} (Istanbul, 2000).
\textsuperscript{107} For Jiddah, see C.ML.38/1717, 1179R23, C.ML 471/19195, 1188$, in which Indian textiles are explicitly mentioned (\textit{Hind kumaşları ve şâl} along with other priceless commodities (\textit{eşyâ’-yi nefise} and jewels).
have depictions of wealthy Greek merchants wearing Indian clothing as well, including brocades and shawls.\textsuperscript{110}

The probability that many of those garments, worn by men and women, were indeed of Indian provenance, and not Ottoman imitations, strikes us when we compare those images with Indian textiles preserved from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Particularly in the case of brocades, direct Indian influence is immediately visible and undeniable. Some of the preserved items from India look precisely like Ottoman clothing from the same period.\textsuperscript{111}

In addition, the description of “old Ottoman customs” by ‘Abdülağiz Bey (by which he intends to cover those of his childhood and youth from the 1850s and 1860s) includes many detailed descriptions of specifically Indian garments, which served as a class marker. For instance, while describing the entaris of high-born brides, he stresses that it they are made of heavy and valuable Indian textiles adorned with silver thread.\textsuperscript{112} ‘Abdülağiz Bey’s descriptions provide us with an Ottoman view from the inside which includes the world of women as well, starting with childbirth and infancy, and any description of late Ottoman clothing must include his perspectives; astonishingly, this does not seem to have happened yet in the scholarship.

European women in early nineteenth century Istanbul generally adopted a mixture of European and Ottoman clothing in joyous heterodoxy which d’Ohsson found as charming as his nineteenth-century successors judged it embarrassing. They covered their heads with Indian shawls,\textsuperscript{113} while Greek and western European women in large cities outside of Constantinople

\textsuperscript{111} Y. Agrawal, \textit{Silk Brocades} (New Delhi, 2008).
\textsuperscript{113} M. D’Ohsson, \textit{Tableau Général}, IV, I, p.161: “[...] quelques-unes prennent la robe, feredje, mais elles se dispensent du voile, et se couvrent la tête d’un schal des Indes.”
often used nothing more than long muslin veils to cover themselves in their own neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{114} Most depictions of wealthy Greek and Armenian women from this period do not differ from those of Muslims.

4. Indian textiles in Ottoman lands: an intimate anthropology

The change in Ottoman fashion during the Tanzimat affected the consumption of muslins, which were no longer needed in such large quantities for males’ turbans. We know that floral patterns had been popular on muslins, and that the grand viziers used to wear turbans of white muslin, often embroidered and adorned with gold.\textsuperscript{115} Ottoman turban terminology mentions numerous kinds of muslins, distinguished by fineness and provenance,\textsuperscript{116} but after the abolishment of the turban for most Ottoman subjects, many of those distinctions have become obscure to us. Before the Tanzimat, in spite of the strictness of division in domestic and public spaces in terms of gender, same fabrics were worn by Ottoman males and females, and their contours were also similar. Contemporary western European clothing seems to have been more gendered in its cut and fabric, influencing the shift toward a distinction which is familiar in many

\textsuperscript{114} Idem., plates 81, 82, IV, I, p.161: “Elles ne portent même qu’un voile de mousseline, dont la bordure large de quatre doits est de fils d’or ou d’argent.”
\textsuperscript{115} R. Walsh, A Residence in Constantinople (London, 1836), I, p.353.
\textsuperscript{116} Y. Yücel, Es’ar defteri (1640 tarihli) (Ankara, 1992). Also see H. Necdet İşli, Ottoman Headgears (Istanbul, 2010), which provides excellent evidence, but which is unfortunately marred by the lack of English-language editing.
societies of our day, in which women wear “traditional” clothing while men are more “westernized.”

Yet, muslins remained one of Ottoman favorite fabrics. Many tales swirled around them for centuries. We know that they had been brought to the Mediterranean since Greek and Roman times. Highest quality muslins were not allowed to be sold to anyone else but the Mughal court. They were often named after Mughal pâdishâhs, including Humayuni, Djalal-Shahi (after Akbar), and Jahangiri. Other names, such as āb-i ravân or shabnam, were lyrical and familiar as technical terms among Ottomans as well. The Persian ambassador Muhammad ‘Alibeg presented Shah Safi II with a coconut adorned with pearls, which when opened revealed an exceptionally fine muslin. The best of the muslins were so delicate that they could only be worn in the monsoon season, when the humidity was high, and they could not be mechanically reproduced.

Portuguese merchants were the first among Europeans to purchase large quantities of muslin. Their preference was for designs featuring foliage, horses and birds. The fabrics could also be ornamented with sprays of flowers, or with gold and silver wire, which is a practice we often encounter among Ottomans as the century progresses. Jamdani weavers of “figured”

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117 This trend is especially relevant to the last twenty years in India and Egypt, where even working-class men now wear Europeanized clothing.
120 Y. Yûcel, Es’âr defteri.
121 Tavernier, Les six voyages, Livre second, Chapitre XII, p.263: “Quant elle [the coconut] fut ouverte, il en tira un tourban qui avoit soixante cobits de long, & d’une toile si fine qu’on ne pouvait presque juger ce qu’on avait dans la main.”
122 “Machinery has been introduced [...] giving us a decided superiority in every Market in the world, except in the delicate fine muslins from India. The patient natives of the east still maintain their ancient preeminence in the finer kinds of muslin, some of which of most exquisite beauty and fineness are sold in this country, as high as ten or twelve guineas per yard [...] The common kinds of Indian muslins, or such as are adapted to general use, are also preferred by our English ladies, to those of our home manufacture, as enduring greater hardships, and as better retaining their white colour.” See T. Martin, The Circle of the Mechanical Arts (London, 1813), p.239.
muslins took over the theme of small repeating patterns of rows of flowers or sprigs as well as more opaque vines and foliate embroidery designs.\textsuperscript{123}

With the early eighteenth-century bans on the chintzes, western Europeans also increasingly diverted their focus onto Bengal. Subsequently, the British conquest of Bengal ushered in significant local changes in production and distribution, but the demand for muslins was still exceptionally high in Europe as well as in the Ottoman empire. The famous paintings of Marie Antoinette and of the Cayetana, Duchess of Alba by Goya display many layers which were most likely imports from India. While Marie-Antoinette dons a simple white muslin dress, the duchess is represented in a somewhat more elaborate dress embroidered with small flowers and hemmed with gold.\textsuperscript{124} Because elites in Europe were also interested in high-quality muslins, we can rely on their descriptions of the fabrics and compare them with Ottoman markets more easily than in the case of chintzes. It is from European lists that we learn for instance that “sallowes” is a kind of fine muslin used as turban cloth, embroidered or brocaded, bought in Burhanpur and in demand in Anatolia and North Africa\textsuperscript{125} and that “\textit{shâsh}”, the generic Arabic term for fine muslins, often implies that they are embroidered or brocaded. Turban cloth was called \textit{sarband} and it was often sprigged with a small design already on the loom, or alternatively stamped with gold once it reached the court.

Yet, there are crucial differences in how muslins were worn. In France, muslins were culturally marked as mostly female clothing, usually cut into a dress which covered the body and

\textsuperscript{124} Marie-Antoinette’s portrait of 1783 is commonly called “The muslin portrait”. The duchess of Alba appears in “\textit{The white duchess}” by Goya (1795).
\textsuperscript{125} “Sallowe red and white, very fine, edged with gold at the end, yard broad”, Factory Records, quoted by Irwin, \textit{Journal of Indian Textile History}, I, 1955.
fell in wide folds to the floor. Many layers were used.126 Although shawls or jackets might be worn over them in winter, muslins were publicly displayed as the uppermost layer of clothing. In Mughal art, muslins are also depicted in manners which often strikingly differ from Ottoman customs. One of the few similar usages includes wearing a silk kutnu shalwar with a muslin skirt over it, but in the Mughal case, even the most powerful men wore this type of clothing (including Jahangir), while it is would be unimaginable for an Ottoman sultan to wear a transparent muslin skirt. Manucci commented that women at the Mughal court wore thin muslin clothing through which their skin showed because of the heat. They usually wore two or three garments, each weighing no more than one ounce. They supposedly slept in those fabrics, renewing them every twenty-four hours and giving them to their servants. During winter, the same kinds of textiles were used, covered with a woolen cabaye (qaba, a long open gown) of Kashmir make and fine shawls, “so thin that they can be passed through a small fingering”.127 Even allowing for exaggeration, it seems that the revealing quality of muslins was particularly admired by Mughals. Court ladies, including the wives of the pâdishâhs and their daughters, are depicted on paintings in transparent thin muslin dresses, although they often lived in seclusion and could not be seen by most men.

The contrast with Ottomans is conspicuous. While visual evidence presents many women whose chest is partially visible through the gömlek, Ottoman sensibilities for muslin textiles are diametrically opposed to those of the Mughals. We can learn about some of them from Julia Pardoe. Pardoe, writing in 1836, was a particularly keen observer of Ottoman

clothing. Initially, she disdained the *yaşmak*, “veil of white muslin, which covers all the face except the eyes and the nose”, claiming that it gave “the appearance of an animated corpse” to the wearer. She grew to appreciate the *yaşmak* later, describing two women whom she saw on the occasion of Kurban Bayram as being perhaps even more attractive with them. Their *yaş maks* were “of the whitest and clearest muslin, through which I [...] saw the flowers that rested on their foreheads, and the diamonds that sparkled in the embroidered and richly-fringed handkerchiefs bound above their heads.”

Seirin Khanum, present at gathering in Bursa, also coquettishly employed “the most snowy muslin” to emphasize the contrast to her dark skin.

While the *yaşmak* could be skillfully manipulated so that much of the face could be revealed, it retained what we claim is the key function of muslins in the Ottoman world. Unlike the French, who often wore them to imitate Graeco-Roman fashions, and unlike the Mughals, who valued the sheerest of them, Ottomans almost always connected muslins with layering, protection and hiding. They also had a strong connotation of sanctity. Upper-rank *ulemâ* usually wore turbans made high-quality muslins. Pardoe realized during her visit to Bursa that some men still wore impressive turbans, at least in their houses, and sometimes “ells of muslin” were needed to produce it. Being a lover of old fabrics, she commented somewhat maliciously: “Turbans with mountains of muslin, and volumes of cachemire; Sultan Mahmoud would infallibly faint at the sight of them; worn, as many of them are, falling upon one shoulder, and confined by a string in consequence of their great weight.”

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130 Idem., I, p.179, and in II, p.275. She even wore it herself, placing it on her face.
131 Idem., II, p.104.
White muslin scarves were specifically worn during prayer.\footnote{Idem., II, p.387.} Portraits of saints in the Armenian church in Bursa were adorned with Dutch tiles and draped with silver muslin.\footnote{Idem., II, p.91.} The tombs of sultans, including Süleyman and his successors in Istanbul and Orhan in Bursa were adorned with turbans of “cob-web” white muslin, attached to the sarcophagi by costly shawls, whereas the tombs of princesses were “covered plainly with cachemire of a dark green colour.”\footnote{Idem., I, p.403, and II, p.25 and p.54.} When she visited the hospital attached to the Military College of Dolmabahçe, Purdoe noted that that the doors of the laboratory and the surgery were veiled with white muslin, and the beds were draped in it as well.\footnote{Idem., I, p.202.} Muslins were also employed to cover a woman’s arm when a doctor examined her.\footnote{D’Ohsson, IV, I, p.319.}

In the domestic setting, similar logic of protecting precious objects with a layer of muslin applied. ‘Abdülaziz Bey recalled in his anthropology of Ottoman customs that babies in wealthy Ottoman households were wrapped in “Indian muslin” immediately upon birth, even during his lifetime.\footnote{Abdülaziz Bey, K. Arısan, D.Arisan Gúnay, eds., Osmanlı Âdet.} Bohças for valuable items were made of clear muslin wrought with gold threads.\footnote{Pardoe, I, p.29, p.101, p.110.} Perousse Sultan, the secretary of the sultan’s sister, used to compose letters while supporting herself upon the lid of a chest inlaid with mother-of-pearl and surrounded by papers, some of which were tied up in squares of clear muslin.\footnote{Idem., I, p.310.} Walsh also observed that the vizier wrapped his message to the sultan in muslin.\footnote{R. Walsh, A Residence in Constantinople (London, 1836), I, p.354.}
Handkerchiefs were often made of clear muslin sometimes fringed with gold-colored silk, and they were used for carrying fruits instead of hand-baskets. Particularly fine muslin, “almost as impalpable as a cobweb” was used for napkins in a paşa’s household, additionally embroidered in gold. Striped muslin was used to cover beds, and pillows were also encased in richly embroidered muslin, through which the satin underneath could be clearly seen. At a wedding, the presents were “silk stuffs of the most rare qualities, produced by the Indian looms – Cachemires of Tibet and Lahor [...] trays of shawls, folded in colored muslin.” Wrapping objects in muslin always added to their value.

In less prominent houses, Ottoman muslin imitations, frequently painted, were worn. Greek peasant women wore large pieces of “soft” muslin on their heads, falling in large folds on their shoulders, sometimes with a shawl over it. Serbian girls covered their hair with painted muslin handkerchiefs. They also wore scarfs of pink muslin embroidered with gold or metal threads. According to E. Lane’s sister, elite women in Egypt wore white face veils made of fine Indian muslin, which was narrow and covering the entire body, as it fell from the eyes to the feet. If they could not afford Indian muslins, they wore veils and undershirts of gauze. Poorer women wore black veils, which Lane preferred. Her brother added that poor men wore coarse

142 Pardoe, I, p.122.  
144 Pardoe, II, p.237.  
145 Idem., I, p.32, also I, p.123.  
146 Idem., I, p.263, and I, p.497: “Trays of shawls, each one a fortune in itself, enveloped separately in wrappers of colored gauze.”  
147 Idem., II, p.349, p.388. The fezzes were made by local women from several communities, and Russian and Spanish wool was used.  
149 Lane-Poole, The Englishwoman in Egypt (London, 1844), p.143f.
cotton or domestic muslin wound around a cap.\textsuperscript{150} While Ottoman muslin turbans were mostly white, some Egyptian Muslims wore turbans of olive-colored muslin, whereas Copts and Jews used black or blue muslins.\textsuperscript{151}

While muslins exemplified Ottoman ideals of purity, modesty and skillful concealment, there were other Indian fabrics which were highly valued for entirely different reasons. Perhaps the most spectacular among them were Kashmiri shawls. British and American scholars assume that the shawls emerged in the fifteenth century when weavers from Transoxiana arrived in Kashmir, while Indian scholars usually surmise an even earlier date.\textsuperscript{152} According to the Italian traveler Pietro della Valle, whom we encountered as a guest at Shah ‗Abbas‘ court, those shâls were worn as girdles in Persia, but in India itself, they were more usually thrown across the shoulders. Regardless of the quality of the shawls, this cultural distinction seems to remain valid. Persians and Ottomans had a preference for gathering the cloth around the waist or around the head, whereas Indians often wore shawls around their necks and or spread over their shoulders.

While the term ―şâl-i keşmîrî‖ in Ottoman sources can be traced at least into the seventeenth century, it is almost certain that it referred to plain, high quality Kashmiri woolens which are also attested in Mughal visual evidence. They are often grey or beige in color. Durri Efendi, the Ottoman ambassador to Iran, already noticed that while agricultural fruits were expensive in comparison with the Ottoman realm, textiles in the Safavid kingdom were abundant, and there was very little need for additional importation, except for the cashmere

\textsuperscript{150} Lane, An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians (London, 1860), p.31.
\textsuperscript{151} Lane, An Account, p.84.
\textsuperscript{152} Scholarship on Kashmiri shawl has become wonderfully abundant. We have drawn upon the following sources: J. Irwin, Shawls: A Study in Indo-European Influences (London, 1955), subsequently reprinted as The Kashmir Shawl (London, 1973); M. Levi-Strauss, The Romance of the Cashmere Shawl (New York, 1987); F. Ames, The Kashmir Shawl and its Indo-French Influence (Woodbridge, 1997); S. Rehman, N. Jafri, Kashmiri Shawl: From Jamavar to Paisley (Woodbridge, 2005); A. Pathak, Pashmina (New Delhi, 2008); J. Rizvi, M. Ahmed, Pashmina: The Kashmir Shawl and Beyond (Mumbai, 2009).
shawls from India and cloths from France, whereas the Persians made their carpets themselves. Durri Efendi did not add that the shawls were not imported from India because of any lack of local ability; indeed, sometimes only experts could distinguish between a Kerman shawl and a Kashmir one. They were exported into Constantinople as well into the 1880s.

Intriguingly, the French translator from the Ottoman, Pétis de la Croix, felt a necessity to add a footnote explaining to his readers what was meant by a Kashmiri shawl. He defined them as “schals de kichmir – sorte d’étoffe de laine ou de poil de chèvre dont les Orientaux se servent pour se couvrir le col et la tête, lorsqu’ils sortent et qu’il fait froid ou qu’il pleut.” This suggests that as of 1810, Kashmiri shawls were common in the Ottoman lands, but not yet in western Europe. However, David’s portrait of Anne-Marie-Louise Thélusson, Comtesse de Sorcy, showcases a white Kashmiri shawl which imitates the earlier patka patterns, with an empty main field and an end border adorned with clusters of flowers. In this early period, elite French consumption preferences resembled the Ottoman; later, they sharply diverged.

We have record of Ottoman merchants trading in Kashmir itself; some of them were Armenian and others Muslim. One type of Kashmiri embroidery, known as amlikar, is attributed to one Khvadja Yusuf from Constantinople, an Armenian who visited Kashmir in 1803. Many Kashmir shawls in the Ottoman empire emphasize striped patterns, which were particularly

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153 Rélation de Dourry Efendy, p.50: “Ainsi ils n’ont pas besoin de l’étranger pour cette partie du nécessaire, excepte seulement pour les schals de kichmir et les draps de France, encore ne s’en sert-on beaucoup; les tapis sont faits par eux-mêmes.”

154 Kashmir shawls did not shrink when wet, and they had a reputation for being finer and suppler, although in terms of design and color there was very little difference. For Kermani shawls, see P. Nemati, Shawls of the East, From Kerman to Kashmir (New York, 2003).


popular during the period of Afghan dominance of Kashmir (1753-1819). One striped *patka* from ca.1810-30, similar to Kashmiri shawls in the Ottoman empire, features deep red and white stripes with very small decorative patterns scattered across the main field.158 Others are multicolored. Yet, Ottoman favorites were surprisingly consistent throughout the nineteenth century, mostly blue and white, more rarely with a yellow background.

In Ottoman usage, shawls were folded around the waist so that the upper part appeared to be plain, on a blue or white background, with the flower section hanging across the hips and pointed upwards. Effectively, the flowers, instead of being fully displayed, were treated as another stripe. Alternatively, striped patterns were worn around the waist, more tightly gathered for males and hanging loosely on the one side for the females. The presence of these shawls is emphasized by d’Ohsson, who viewed them as the most luxurious among Indian fabrics.159 He mentions the time-proven custom of passing the finest shawls through a ring to demonstrate their quality.160 According to him, they were usually worn as girdles by males as well as females, at any time of the year. Since umbrellas were not used, men and women also used the shawls to cover their heads in cold weather.161 Other European travelers also note that the shawls were worn by both sexes.

Europeans used the term “Kashmir” referring both to the shawl and to the pashmina fabric itself, out of which shawls, coats or dresses could be made. Julia Pardoe uses the word in

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159 M. D’Ohsson, *Tableau Général*, IV, I, p.133: “Parmi les étoffes des Indes, il faut distinguer les schals qui sont d’une laine extrêmement fine et du plus grand prix. Ils ont la forme d’un carré long et sont brodés tout autour de fils de laine également fins, mais de couleurs différentes. [...] Les dames d’un certain rang les préfèrent aux mousselines les plus précieuses et aux étoffes les plus richement brodées.”
160 Idem., IV, I, p.133: “Les plus amples de ces schals, qui ont communément douze pieds de long sur quatre de large, pourrooit passer dans une bague.”
both senses as well. She had a strong romantic fancy for costly “cashaemire” twined around the waist and flowing, furred robes. While she called the reforms by Sultan Mahmud II admirable, she regretted the changes made in the “national costume”. Her language is unforgiving. They are “frightful”, “introducing a mere caricature of that worst of all originals – the stiff, starch, angular European dress.”\footnote{162} The Ottomans whom she saw had renounced Ottoman garb, wearing “the hideous and unmeaning fez”\footnote{163} instead of “the gorgeous turban of muslin and cachemire” which “bound the brow like a diadem and relieved by the richness of its tints the dark hue of the other garments”. The “flowing robe of silk or of woolen has been flung aside for the ill-made and awkward surtou of blue cloth; and the waist, which was once girdled with a shawl of cachemire, is now compressed by two brass buttons”.\footnote{164} The limitations of her own dress code become apparent as she deplores that the magnificently clad “officers” accompanying the Sultan do not wear gloves.\footnote{165} According to White, another contemporary British observer, many soldiers still wore Kashmiri and Kermani girdles underneath their uniforms. His explanation is somewhat fanciful: as he does not have a high opinion of Ottoman food, he thinks that they must preserve the abdomen warm, because they are subject to inflammatory and gastric complaints.\footnote{166}

Women remained fond of their shawls throughout the century, sometimes onto death. During her visit to Bursa, Pardoe noted that “many a deceased Sultana sleeps the last sleep at Constantinople, covered with shawls which, during the rage for cachemires in Paris, would have killed half the élégantes with envy.”\footnote{167} From her hosts, Pardoe learned that costly shawls were so

\footnote{162}{Pardoe, I, p.7.}
\footnote{163}{She describes the ungainly variations in II, p.224.}
\footnote{164}{Pardoe, I, p.7, in original with an exclamation.}
\footnote{165}{Idem., p.190.}
\footnote{166}{White, Three Years in Constantinople, II, p.165.}
\footnote{167}{Pardoe, II, p.26.}
highly valued that relatives sometimes disputed over them upon a person’s death.\textsuperscript{168} Most women whom Pardoe met at the quarters of Asme Sultan, the sister of the ruling Sultan, wore Kashmir girdles.\textsuperscript{169} Tobacco-bags were fashioned from gold-embroidered \textit{cachemire} fabric.\textsuperscript{170} Shawls were used to cover sofas and offer support, similar to pillows.\textsuperscript{171} In Bursa, the young wife of a \textit{kadi} created a temporary canopy, formed of some of her fifty shawls, “arranged in festoons and linked together with bathing scarves of gold and silver and head-dresses of colored gauze, upon which she hung fruits.” She also had a peacock fan, adding to Indian associations.\textsuperscript{172} A young girl, whom Pardoe saw at the pageant for the engagement of Princess Mihrimah, wore exceptionally luxurious clothes. The outer layer was composed of purple velvet, lined with ermine and laced with gold. The next layer, closer to the body, was mostly of Indian provenance: her \textit{antery (entari)} was made of pale pink muslin, tucked up within the \textit{cachemire} shawl around her waist, and her amply plaited trousers were made of green chintz.\textsuperscript{173} Pardoe also mentions a merchant’s wife, whose robes were made in one long piece, divided at the waist and girt about with a \textit{cachemire} shawl. In winter, a tight vest lined with fur, generally of light green or pink, was worn over it.\textsuperscript{174} The shawls were present even in the hammam. The owner of the bath wore a “straight dress of flowered cotton, girt around the waist with a \textit{cachemire} shawl.”\textsuperscript{175}

While Pardoe admired Kashmiri shawls as worn by Ottoman Muslim women, she criticized Greek and Armenian fashions. Greek women frequently wore the shawls wound about their heads. The daughter of one rich house wore a costly Persian scarf and she changed the

\textsuperscript{168} Idem., I, p.23. This was doubtlessly another of the formative factors in the production of inheritance inventories.  
\textsuperscript{169} Idem., I, p.313.  
\textsuperscript{170} Idem., I, p.27, also II, p.280.  
\textsuperscript{171} Idem., I, p.131.  
\textsuperscript{172} Idem., II, p.98.  
\textsuperscript{173} Idem., I, p.261.  
\textsuperscript{174} Idem., I, p.20.  
\textsuperscript{175} Idem., I, p.131; Idem., II, p.215.
cachemire in which she was enveloped three times in the course of the evening. Some of the males still wore pelisses and calpacs, but the younger men often sported “ill-cut frock coats”. Similarly with the ladies, among whom the youngest came closest to “the belles of a third rate country town in England: their petticoats too short, their heads too high, their sleeves too elaborate, and the whole person over-dressed.” However, many young women still followed older fashions. They were attached to their shawls, as Pardoe informs us: “[They think] she is a most fortunate person, to whom her husband has given six or seven cachemires [...] to such a height, indeed, do the Greek ladies carry their love for this article of dress, and their desire to display it, that they will suffocate in a cachemire during the hottest day in summer, and even wear it in a ball-room!”

Indeed, Pardoe once deplores that the costume of the bride would have been graceful “had she not been sinking under the heat and weight of the eternal cachemire.” She expressed similar sentiments about Armenian women, who “overload [themselves] with shawls and finery”, and are a “mass of [...] cachemire”, whereas she stressed that Muslim women carried themselves gracefully in the same clothes. Perhaps this passionate dismissal of Christian Kashmiri fashions was caused by Pardoe’s confusion about combinations in which the newly-found “Europeanness” of the wealthy Greeks could be reconciled with their Ottoman characteristics in seemingly discordant ways. She also noted love for turbans of colored muslin among the young and painted handkerchiefs among older women. Walsh, otherwise not the

176 Idem., I, p.73.
most astute observer, explained the luxurious nature of Greek ornaments and clothes by the insecurity of immovable property.\textsuperscript{181}

An American traveler observed the change in the availability of Kashmiri shawls. He entered a han on whose third floor “an endless variety of Cashmere shawls” was displayed. Yet, he also maintained that the demand for the shawls among Ottomans had decreased “for no one of any consideration could be seen in public without an expensive turban of Cashmere, and another to be used as a girdle.” He concluded that “the expensive fooleries are now generally laid aside by the good society, and of course their value is much diminished. We were shown superb shawls at the price of $300, which five years ago would have readily sold for $800 or $1000.” The most valuable shawls were twelve feet by four feet wide, and proverbially fine enough to pass through a ring. They were kept in special screw press, preserving their shine.\textsuperscript{182}

White is particularly interested in shawl-menders. While European imitations are used among “middling and lower classes” for turban-binders, girdles and entary\textsuperscript{183}, there are workers specialized in repairing damaged Persian, Kashmiri, or Indian shawls. The result is pleasing to White: “The dexterity of the Cashmere and Lahore workmen in uniting the different portions of shawls, when they first come from the loom, and thus giving to them the appearance of having been woven entire, is well imitated by the Turkish urgedjee.” White notes that Lahori, Kashmiri and Indian shawls are by a third more expensive than in London or Paris, with less variety. Those shawls, as well as Kerman shawls of best quality, are imported entire, whereas secondary quality shawls are brought in two pieces, which can be sold separately. Long Persian shawls are

\textsuperscript{181} R. Walsh, \textit{A Residence in Constantinople}, I, p.376.
\textsuperscript{182} J. De Kay, \textit{Sketches of Turkey in 1831 and 1832 by an American} (New York, 1833), p.212.
\textsuperscript{183} Imitations of Kashmiri shawls of high quality came for instance from Gürün between Sivas and Malatya and continued throughout the century. See D. Quataert, \textit{Ottoman Manufacturing in the Nineteenth Century in Manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1500-1950} (Albany, 1994).
in particular worn by Greek women “in European fashion”, while Armenian and Turkish women wear them as girdles or over the head in cold weather. Constantinople is not the place where the largest selection of shawls can be found, and White explicitly states that “the disuse of the old costume has diminished demand and importation.” He claims that most of the shawls reach Istanbul from the Persian market or the Russian frontier, having been rejected because of their lower quality.\(^\text{184}\)

However, we have seen that Ottoman and European fashions differed, and perhaps White was misreading the difference in taste as a lack of variety and supply. White describes seeing Kashmiri shawls in Ottoman homes. With gusto, he relates a tradition according to which there were no coverlets before the marriage of ‘Ali and Fatima, when one among the disciples of the prophet, who was “a native of Punjab [...] converted a noble Cashmere shawl into a coverlet.”\(^\text{185}\) The story is so meaningful to White that he mentions it twice, with various embellishments, among them stating that the “Hindoo” who invented the yorgan was highly venerated, although he was an apostate.\(^\text{186}\) In describing Ottoman houses, White remarks that the divans consist of wooden planks on which a mattress is placed. The mattress is then covered with printed cotton, chintz or cloth, bordered with a fringe and festooned. The sheet, made of coarse calico, tends to be sewed to the upper surface. In wealthy houses, the covers are of silk and velvet, embroidered with gold or silver.\(^\text{187}\) Many people prefer sitting on thin mattresses stuffed with cotton (shilty), also covered with “chintz or richer materials.” Figured chintz is laid over one side and neatly wadded, while a calico sheet is added to the reverse side, and the edges are sewed down. The

\(^{185}\) Idem., III, p.179.
\(^{186}\) Idem., II, p.106.
\(^{187}\) Idem., II, p.171. Similarly, Kitto describes small mattresses which are covered with chintz, silk, or cloth of gold; see *The People of Persia*, p.32.
coverlets serve as quilts and blankets, being light and warm. Among the wealthy, the coverlets are made of merino, angora, chaly or “Lahore stuff”, or with colored silk which is encrusted with gold and silver embroidery. Upon the death of the owner, the mattress may be sold to the bazaar yorgancı, although it was used. Many of those details are confirmed some seventy years later by ‘Abdülayîzî Bey.

Most likely, many of the changes witnessed by European travelers refer to changing preferences among young Christian women. According to White, Armenians were more likely to use the French and Italian silks for clothing, whereas “Turks” still preferred printed cottons, silk plaids and figured muslins. White repeats that the clothes worn by Ottoman women tend to become simpler, restricted to chintzes and calicoes, while Armenian women adorn themselves more lavishly with Italian and French silks. In many circumstances, conservative tendencies prevailed. Presents given to attendants and others assisting the ceremony of marriage to the bride include shawls, pieces of cloth, yemîny or kalemkar and tehevra (painted or embroidered handkerchiefs).

During the 1840s in Egypt, Ottoman women of high social standing still frequently displayed their shawls, of somewhat stronger colors than in Istanbul. When entering a harem, Lane removed her riding-clothes which were stored by a slave in an “exquisite pink kerchief of cashmere, richly embroidered with gold.” The sister of ‘Abbas Pasha, while wearing a simple dark shawl around her tarboosh, was dressed in a “long vest and trowsers [...] of a dark flowered

\[\text{\textsuperscript{188}}\text{White, Three Years in Constantinople, III, p.177.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{189}}\text{Idem., II, p.258, also mentions brocades from Lyon.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{190}}\text{Idem., III, p.194.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{191}}\text{Idem., III, p.202.}\]
Indian fabric; she wore around her waist a large and rich cashmere shawl.” Lane added that ladies of distinction always wore “Cashmere shawls round the waist, generally red” and sometimes with edges of gold. A woman at the harem of Nezle Hanım, the daughter of the Pasha of Egypt, wore “a long orange-colored Cashmere jubbeh, richly embroidered, and forming, as she walked, a glittering train of gold.” Wearing clothes entirely made of Kashmiri shawls and pashmina was common; in a wedding procession, Lane noticed that the bride “was entirely covered by a rich Cashmere shawl, as usual. Incidentally, she and her brother took an iron track-boat when leaving Alexandria, commenting that they were mostly used “for the conveyance of travelers on their way to India from Alexandria.”

The anthropological work by ‘Abdülażiz Bey is a rich source for Kashmiri shawls; it would require several pages to disentangle all the instances in which he mentions them. He confirms that they come from several sources, but the highest valued among them (en makhûl olanlari) are the Indian ones, followed by the ones from Syria, specifically Aleppo. They are worn by elites (kibâr). Their role is crucial during engagement and wedding ceremonies. A nişân boḥçası is sent to the bride, containing a precious shawl within the highly decorated boḥça. There is a bridal ceremony of “tying the shawl”, and many shawls are given to the bride by family and friends, specifically for tying them around the waist. The room in which the bride sits is adorned with a precious shawl on the wall behind her. Many shawls and furs

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192 Lane-Poole, The Englishwoman in Egypt, p.212ff.
194 Idem., II, p.83.
196 Idem., II, p.45.
197 Abdülażiz Bey, Arısan, Osmanlı Âdet, p.228.
198 Idem., p.110.
200 Idem., p.122.
are also displayed on a sofa.\textsuperscript{201} The bedding for the wedding night also involves Indian pashmina, preferably with many small flowers.\textsuperscript{202}

As we have seen, many elite Greek and Armenian families followed the same customs, teaching young women to value the shawls highly. The shawls were coded as entrance into adult life and sexuality. Indeed, the connection with active sexuality was so strong that there was one instance in which Kashmiri shawls were not welcome at all: childbirth. ‘Abdülaziz Bey comments that regardless of the value of the shawl, giving it to the woman who has just given birth is an unforgivable mistake and it gives rise to much gossip (\textit{bunların içinde nasılsa kübera sınıfına girmiş olduğu halde “ekâbir” âdetlerini bilmeyenlerden biri, lohusaya çocuk için şal hediye getirirse kabalık sayılır, hanımlar arasında pek dedikoduya sebep olur ve affolumaz bir hürmetsizlik addedilirdi}).\textsuperscript{203} Similarly, there was a taboo on the red color in the room of the new mother.\textsuperscript{204} Presumably, the presenting of a shawl was either viewed as a covert offense or, as ‘Abdülaziz Bey states, a proof that the family who sent such a gift consisted of \textit{parvenus}. Instead, the child was surrounded with muslins and chintzes. The very first shirt to be worn by the new-born was a fine Indian muslin (\textit{gâyet ince, sık Hind dülbendinden dikilmiş bir gömlek}), signifying the baby’s purity and importance. The muslin was additionally adorned by needlework done in yellow silk by a virginal girl.\textsuperscript{205}

‘Abdülaziz Bey’s information confirms our intuitive assumption that muslins were associated with purity, sanctity and protection, while Kashmiri shawls were codified to represent marriage, with its twin currents of fertility in women and sexual potency in men. While this

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{201} Idem., p.114. \\
\footnote{202} Idem., p.120. \\
\footnote{203} Idem., p.17. \\
\footnote{204} Idem., p.14. \\
\footnote{205} Idem., p.12f.
\end{footnotes}
dichotomy seems to describe the relation of the two items of clothing well, other Indian and Indianized garments still need to be decoded.

Among them were the chintzes. As we have seen, they enjoyed a much lower status in the Ottoman empire than among Europeans or Iranians. Pardoe observed in a Greek house that the sofa was covered with “a gay patterned chintz” and furnished with cushions of cut velvet. She added later that she found the Greek “coverlets less splendid and the pillows less costly” than those of Muslim families. To her surprise, it seemed that a “crimson shag” was valued more highly than “the ignoble chintz”, as a grandee would rather sit on the former than on the latter.

Pardoe also encountered the long-standing Ottoman tendency to adorn slaves and servants in a colorful way while reserving more sober garments for those of higher rank. Upon visiting the sister of the sultan, she encountered a group of women slaves, “dressed in the most gaudy furniture chintzes”. In contrast, the “mother of the slaves”, higher in the hierarchy, wore an antery and trousers of black cachemire. White also states that ladies of fashion and wealth purchase gaudy costumes or silk, velvets and brocades for children and slaves, contenting themselves with figured muslins. This is confirmed by ‘Abdülaziz Bey, who describes clothing for boys from wealthy houses: “eski âdetlere göre Hind çatarısından entari, kıymetli bel şal, altın baş Hind dülbendi sarık.” Pardoe adopted similar criteria while criticizing the example of a sultana whose araba is covered in crimson and gold, but who deigns to wear

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206 Pardoe, I, p.69.
210 Idem., I, p.310.
211 White, III, p.190.
212 Abdülaziz Bey, Arisan, Osmanlı Âdet, p.58.
“pantaloon of furniture chintz, and an antery of printed cotton.” This gives us yet another hint that in the conservative Ottoman world the flowery entari was supposed to be made of brocaded silks, ideally from India, and that a lady had to display Kashmiri shawls, not printed cottons. Chintzes were the provenance of children, servants and slaves. These social distinctions would have pleased Daniel Defoe.

Meanwhile, the Kashmiri aesthetic was given a new life through yet another adaptation of the original Shah Jahani patka, largely ignored by Europeans but adopted by many central Asians. As we recall, the early designs on the end-pieces of the patkas depicted single plants with thin undulating stems, large, distinct flowers and only a few groups of detailed buds and leaves rising from rocky mounds. The design subsequently became a denser cluster of many varieties of flowering plants emerging from a vase, and then a mixed group of small and large flowers which bore some resemblance to the tree of life, evolving from a single plant to a complex floral arrangement. This group came to be described as a buta (large cluster of flowers), tapering over to a slightly curved-over top, purportedly inspired by a windblown top of a cypress tree. By the mid-eighteenth century an elliptical cone-shaped outline was developed with a remnant curved point at the top, much less detailed and quite abstract. Finally, the cluster of flowers within the “belly” was often eliminated, with only the shape preserved, allowing it to be re-interpreted as a swaying cypress. In Kashmiri shawls, it is known as kalga or kairi. In Hindi, it was associated with a mango, because of its associations with fertility and abundance.

213 Pardoe, I, p.448.
214 R. Barnes, S. Cohen, R. Crill, Court, Temple and Trade, shawl fragment on p.48.
215 For comparison of those two shapes, see no.38 and 39 in Goswamy, Indian Costumes II. The first one (acc. no. 395) with cones filled with fitted-in flowers and the other simplified and reduced to the outline (acc. no. 409).
In English, the *kalga* was eventually given the local name of paisley, based off the Scottish Lowland town of Paisley, where the *kalga* imitations were mass-produced.

Once again, the *kalga* pattern was adopted by Ottomans and Europeans in different ways. Europeans preferred either shawls with many bouquet-like elements on a white background, or densely decorated Sikh period shawls with many large *kalga* shapes superimposed on vibrant red and orange patterns.217 The latter are practically never seen in Ottoman fashion, which remains highly conservative, with the blue and white Kashmiri shawls which we have encountered since the late eighteenth century. In contrast, *kalga* proper shows up on Ottoman *bindallı yeleks* or *cebkens* made with *sırma*.218 As in the case of Indian brocades, northern Indian fashions coincided with Ottoman ones, with the emphasis on silver and metallic threads, especially intricately woven in the corners and in the back.

This is perhaps one of the most surprising parallels with contemporaneous Indian styles, since in popular memory in Anatolia and the Balkans, the *yeleks* seem to be a fixed part of Ottoman clothing since the very beginning of the empire. However, it seems that the aesthetic as we know it emerged through a combination of Kashmiri, Afghani and Anatolian elements as recently as the early nineteenth century. Precious pashmina *yeleks* with *sırma* were probably imported directly from Kashmir, but the bulk of the population was content with those made from velvet in Ottoman lands. It is also likely that in many cases, uncut cloth was imported from India and subsequently fitted and embroidered in the Ottoman lands. The term “lâhurâki”, combining a reference to the city of Lahore with a modern Greek diminutive ending –aki, is often included in ‘Abdülaţiz Bey’s work and it fits this description. Unlike in India, in the

Ottoman lands, elite women were expected to sew and adorn their own clothes. However, the *kalga* remained as its Kashmiri signature, becoming a constituent part of an Ottoman aesthetic in the Balkans as well. In addition to their warmth and beauty, the *yeleks* were also an expression of a changing Ottoman physical sensibility, in which the previously bulky and layered outer clothing was replaced by a tighter, Europeanized silhouette. The *yelek*, with its *kalga*, would only go out of fashion in the early twentieth century.

The process of change was by no means uniform. While many Greek and Armenian women adopted European fashions in the 1840s, others remained attached to Indian fabrics. This was especially the case with Armenians, many of whom had business links to the communities in India, where the very first newspaper in Armenian, the *Aztarar*, had been established in 1794 in Madras. Particularly in the famous photographs sponsored by Osman Hamdi Bey, we encounter Armenian brides wearing Indian or Indianizing silk brocades and Ottoman women with *kalga*-adorned *yeleks*. Several relatively conservative places, such as the Ottoman Sarajevo, also still imitated that fashion; the “Bosnian woman” is praised for being able to acquire Kashmiri shawls cheaply, unlike her Istanbuli sister, probably implying that many shawls from Istanbul were still made in India. In Osman Hamdi Bey’s images, the Indianizing influence becomes stronger and more identifiable as the photographs progress east and south. In addition, the Black Sea women seems to have had a particular liking for *alacha* and *ikat* styles, which is reflected both in contemporaneous images and in Greek folklore museums which

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219 Abdülaziz Bey, *Arısan, Osmanlı Âdet*, p.104. Innumerable songs from former Yugoslav lands describe elite women, Muslim and Christian, as sewing gold or pearls onto their clothing (“*sitan vezak vezla*”).
220 See the red apron from central Greece, p.29 and from Epirus, p.53, in I. Papantoniou, *Ελληνικές Τοπικές Ενδυμασίες* (Nafplio, 1996).
221 At least some of the Armenian tombs in Surat, viewed by this researcher, were likely to belong to Anatolian Armenians. Most of them date to the late eighteenth century.
feature Black Sea clothing. We also realize that some Greek women wear *alachas* similar to those of contemporaneous Syrian men.  

In order to fully understand those trends, we would need to incorporate Caucasian evidence, which includes Indian elements until a very late point.

Transition to Europeanized dress among Ottoman women only started after the visit of the French empress Eugénie in the 1866s, and it was initially limited to non-essential elements such as gloves or stockings. Several sources mention that conservative Istanbul families adhered to the older patterns of clothing. Halide Edip still described her grandmother as wearing her transparent chemise, a muslin collar, a Persian shawl and a muslin print on her head. It seems that many women wore Europeanized clothing in public, but traditional styles at home, since they were more comfortable than the tight-laced corset dresses. Travelers in Persia were also aware that the Kashmiri and the Kermani shawl trade had not yet vanished. Sykes commented from direct experience in Iran, that as of 1900, some fifty years after conventional wisdom tells us the contrary, “[As for shawls], fir-cone [i.e. *kalga*] striped varieties are exported to Constantinople and used for wearing round the waist, or for ladies’ dress. The product of the Kashmir loom is, however, superior in the finer qualities, and has affected the [Persian] industry [...]”.

The transition to Parisian dress among the elites was gradual, and it enabled some traditional elements, such as the Kashmiri shawl or the *yaşmak*, to be incorporated. Fully Parisian fashions without discordant elements and viewed as elegant by Europeans completely

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took over as late as the 1890s, with particular stress on lace. After having followed northern Indian dress styles for so long, Ottoman elite taste now more or less coincided with the bourgeois European one. Indianized clothing, once an expensive, but universal trend in Ottoman lands for almost two centuries, became debased. Just as paisley and chintz in today’s English usage stand for inexpensive, mass-produced cottons and shawls, entari in Turkey came to refer to a cheap cotton dress. Unlike the famed chintamani, which retained its nimbus of power and nostalgia even today, Indian clothing met a different fate: ubiquitous, yet invisible.

Notably, no scholar has stressed yet that the apogee of Ottoman-Indian fashion postdates the demise of Surat, the most famous Mughal port. Indeed, our speculation, based primarily on impressive visual evidence, is that during the turmoil of the eighteenth century the main production area of brocades and woolens moved toward the north, initially to Rajasthan, contributing to the wealth of the hitherto minor desert cities. As Afghans and Sikhs fought for hegemony in northwest India and the Sikhs prevailed in 1815, production shifted once again to Panjab in the north, giving Ottoman shawls their popular name of lahraki. Panjabi and Kashmiri fashions were subsequently shaped not only by their heritage, but also by European, Iranian and Ottoman demand. In turn, this late flowering of high-end Indian garments and textiles greatly contributed to what we even today perceive as some core elements of Ottoman aesthetic. This assumption also involves a reassessment of the land route and its nodal points in Afghanistan.

If the triangle of power between the Islamic empires before the nineteenth century involved the Safavids, the Mughals and the Ottomans, the map of hegemonies and rivalries was substantially redrawn by the appearance of the British, who had come to dominate large portions of India since the victory at Plassey (Palashi) in Bengal in 1757. Most readings of Indian
presence in the Ottoman empire do not deny this fundamental process; instead, they stress it excessively by concluding that the British conquest of the subcontinent immediately brought a sheer trickle of Indian commodities to a complete halt. But as we have seen, many textiles from India, Kashmir and Iran still entered Ottoman territories throughout the nineteenth century.

Perhaps a substantially different analysis, substantiated by archival evidence, must be applied to the new dynamics of trace and politics. Not being aware of Ottoman geopolitical realities, southern Indian rulers miscalculated when they relied upon Ottoman support. During the period between Napoleon’s Egyptian expedition and the British reaction to “The Bulgarian Horrors”, Ottomans did not view British presence in the Indian Ocean as an impediment to trade and interactions with India. Indeed, in spite of their dominance in Bengal, British forces did not conquer northwestern India until the 1850s. They uneasily replaced the Sikhs in 1849, and it may be that the perennial conflicts between them and the Pashtuns, conditioned by the demands of the Great Game, led to the gradual diminishment of Kashmiri and Panjabi textile trade. \(^{227}\) It slowed down and disappeared in the early twentieth century, albeit not without leaving Ottomans with an increased awareness that British Indian affairs were highly relevant to them. Consequently, the last stage of our peripatetic journey will lead us into the British Raj, as seen by Ottoman archival sources.

Chapter 8

Ottomans and the Raj: Collapse or Rebirth

1. Tipu Sultan: promises and betrayals

At the end of the eighteenth century, the Indian political landscape had been completely transformed in comparison with a hundred years earlier. Remarkably, as before the rise of the Mughals, much of our evidence on contacts with Ottomans comes from the Deccan rather than north India. While European commercial presence across India was notable, British hegemony did not exist yet, and Indian international trade was still highly lucrative and significant. Consequently, Ottoman diplomatic interactions with the Indian Ocean span a wider gamut than we might expect.

If Ottoman elites had wanted to interfere in Indian Ocean trade, the moment would have been suitable. In 1777, Omani forces under the new Bu Sa‘id dynasty had helped the Ottoman Mustafa Paşa to fend off an attack on Basra by the Persians. Sultan ‘Abdülhamid I (1774-1789) sent an apologetic letter to the Omanis, expressing his belated gratitude, although the Omani ruler addressed him merely as Mâlik al-Rûm. As a reward, Omanis were treated as Ottoman subjects in Jiddah and Mecca, whereas formerly they had to pay taxes of the same amount as the Persians. In the same year, from the port of Cannanor in Malabar, the local sultan ‘Ali Raja sent an ambassador to Istanbul named Hadjdji ‘Ali with an Arabic letter. The Bibi, his successor, also sent a mission in 1779 to Sultan ‘Abdülhamid, asking for his assistance against

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the English East India Company. She was less fortunate than the Omanis. The Ottoman Sultan’s
evasive response was sent through the British ambassador in Istanbul.\(^{229}\)

The letters were composed in the context of the Anglo-Mysore wars, first of which
occurred 1766-1769. Although the ruler of Mysore, Tipu Sultan (r. 1782-99), claimed that his
father, Haydar ‘Ali, was a Sayyid, tracing his lineage through Transoxiana and Iraq, it seems
certain that he had been a local mercenary for the southern Indian Hindu rulers of the house of
Wodeyar who rose through the ranks because of his exceptional military skills. Haydar ‘Ali was
initially not opposed to the British. However, his claim to rule was contested by the Marathas
and the Nizam of Hyderabad (of the Asaf Jahi line which we encountered in correspondence
revolving around Nadir Shah), whose dominions were to the north of Mysore, and who
consistently assisted the British. In spite of initial British successes, Haydar ‘Ali’s forces were
able to inflict defeat on them, and the peace agreement stressed a return to a status ante quem.

The second Anglo-Mysore war, lasting from 1780-1784, marked the point of greatest
military success for Mysore rulers. They were able to regain the territories lost to the Marathas
and extend onto the Carnatic, close to the British possessions in Madras. Tipu defeated British
forces several times, strengthened by the presence of his French allies. After the French
settlement of Pondicherry was conquered by the British in 1783, a significant number of French
fled to Tipu’s domains. The treaty of Mangalore in 1784, which concluded the war, confirmed
pre-established boundaries, signalling to the British administrators that they could not conquer
south India without eliminating Tipu. However, the treaty of Paris, which ended the American
Revolutionary War in 1783, and the separate treaty of Versailles, which restored French holdings
and factories in Surat, Chandernagor (in Bengal) and Pondicherry, made the heavily indebted

French kingdom less likely to engage in south Indian matters. Article 19 of the latter treaty stipulated that France and Britain would inform their Indian allies within four months that the conflict was over. Yet in 1786, Tipu’s forces fought a two-front war against the Nizam and the Marathas.

Tipu was ambitious and highly capable. He and his father had attracted French mercenaries and soldiers from Shiraz, sending embassies to the rulers of Iran and Afghanistan. Commercial relations had also been established with Pegu (in Burma) through an embassy. Tipu was particularly interested in silk, and he imported silkworms from Bengal and a few Chinese experts, probably from southeast Asia. While there was some production of textiles (muslins and white cloth) in his realm, the bulk of the commodities consisted in spices and aromatics: pepper, cardamom and sandalwood. In addition, rice was a significant export item to the Persian Gulf area.

Therefore, an embassy was sent to the Ottomans with high hopes. Tipu’s instructions (hukmnâma) to his ambassadors were very precise. Jewelry, robes of honor, perfumes, four elephants and three elaborately crafted silver canopies and palanquins were loaded onto the ships. Only a portion of them was allotted to the Ottomans; the embassy was supposed to visit the British and the French courts as well, and possibly finance its expenses through the sale of an elephant and spices. Very little deviation from the original instructions in the hukmnâma was allowed. The ambassadors were advised to keep strict secrecy about their intentions, because Tipu knew that British wakîls would be present at the Ottoman court. The chief demands related

\[^{231}\text{M.H. Gopal, *Tipu Sultan’s Mysore, An Economic Study* (Bombay, 1971).}\]
to Basra and the canal in Najaf, and all decisions were to be written down and forwarded onto Tipu.\textsuperscript{232}

Tipu intended to lure 10,000 French soldiers and a large number of Ottoman subjects to his domain with advance payments, aiming especially at soldiers, mining specialists and astrologers, as well as their families. In addition to war materials, including guns, cannonballs and muskets, and Farangî prestige goods such as clocks, mirrors, glass and chinaware, the ambassadors were advised to acquire stone-coal (\textit{sang-i angisht}), which was believed to be plentiful in Rum. Any expenditure would be covered by Tipu. In addition, whenever possible, hospices should be built at tombs of saints which the embassy would pass on its way to Istanbul.\textsuperscript{233}

The embassy reached Basra in August 1786. While they were successful during their stay at Masqat, where a Hindu merchant was acting as Tipu’s factor, catastrophe befell them in their further sailing into the Gulf, when they lost two of their ships with all three elephants and numerous presents. The fragmentary report on the embassy details some of their travails and inner tensions. The ambassadors mistrusted each other, loathed local merchants and the Ottoman authorities, significantly delaying their travel to Baghdad. Eventually, only some 300 people from the entourage were given the permission to proceed onto Istanbul.\textsuperscript{234}

\textsuperscript{232} These demands will be discussed below.
\textsuperscript{233} For a translation of the instructions relevant to the Istanbul embassy, which had not been used by historians writing in English, see the excellent article by I. Husain, “The Diplomatic Vision of Tipu Sultan, Briefs for embassies in Turkey and France, 1785-86” in I. Habib, ed., \textit{State and Diplomacy under Tipu Sultan, Documents and Essays} (New Delhi, 2001).
According to Ottoman archival documents which do not seem to have been discussed hitherto by Turkish or Indian scholars, Tipu was not a complete stranger to the Ottoman court. After his father’s death, an ambassador had been dispatched to Baghdad with a letter and presents, informing the Porte of the change in rulers. The Ottoman record reflects the elevation of Tipu in relation to his father: the former is called ‘Ali Haydar Bahadir Khan, and the latter Tipu Sahib Sultan. The ambassadors of 1786 are explicitly named as Sayyid Ghulam ‘Ali Khan, Sayyid Nurallah Khan and Lutf ‘Ali Khan in a letter to the grand vizier. In another letter, instructions are given for their safe travel from Mardin, up to where they had been accompanied by the men of the governor of Baghdad, Sülayman Paşa. One Mustafa from among the gedikli kapucubasılar is appointed with conveying them safely and in a manner worthy of the glory of the state (şan-i saltanata lâyik bir surette). He is given 20,000 kurus for that purpose.

In addition to the hukmnâma which has been studied only recently, five documents were made available in an article by Bayur: the requests made by the ambassadors to ‘Abdülhamid I, a letter from Tipu to the Sultan, another to the grand vizier, a note by the British embassy in Istanbul giving information on Tipu and his kingdom, and the response by the Ottomans. While Bayur’s opinion on Tipu’s abilities is rather low, his article provides customary high-quality scholarship, with photocopies of the Persian originals and their translations into Ottoman and modern Turkish. Notably, as in the case of Durri Efendi and ‘Izzi, it seems that high-level

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235 C.HR. 14/673, 19.1255Z. The name of the southern Indian ambassador, Osman Khan, is specified along with his route through Baghdad.
236 C.HR 179/8936, 29.1201Z, also see C.HR 142/7077 1201Z19.
237 C.HR 62/3075, 02 1201Z.
238 Y. H. Bayur, “Tipu Sultan ile Osmanlı Pâdişâhîn I. Abdülhamid ile III. Selim Arasındaki Mektuplaşma”, Belleten, 12 (47), 1948. The original is in HAT 9/207-211. The text given by Bayur is not a summary as indicated by the otherwise very well informed A. Özcan, Panislamism (Leiden, 1997), but rather a contemporary Ottoman translation. We will quote the Ottoman translation since this was the version known and debated by the Ottoman statesmen.
competence in Persian had become relatively rare among Ottoman elites at this point; it is somewhat surprising that a translation into Ottoman would be necessary. Ultimately, this development reflects the hegemonic success of Ottoman as a language of high culture.

In the first letter sent by Tipu, he details the conditions of the Deccan and India in his time. There is no mention of Nadir Shah or Ahmad Shah. According to him, the weakness of Indian rulers since the fall of the Mughals was caused by the *Farang* who used to be engaged in selling and buying textiles and other commodities to grasp for power under the pretext of trade, so that, at current time, they have forced many Muslims to forego Islam and to embrace Christianity.\(^{239}\) Fortunately, the letter continues, the establisher of the dynasty, Haydar ‘Ali, has been able to defeat them, and his son, the ‘*adîm al-misâl zill-i Subhân Hazret-i Tipu Sultân*, has protected the Malabari ports with 5000 Christian and 15,000 Indian *tufekchis*. His endeavor is defined as “*ghazâ*” several times. Presents are specified at the end of the letter.\(^{240}\)

Here an interesting contrast between Tipu and Ahmad Durrani can be explored. While Ahmad Durrani’s elevation of the Indo-Timurid (Mughal) hegemony was similar to that of Tipu, the Afghani ruler pretended to be motivated by his affection for the Mughals, being appalled by the Hindu “infidels” and their love for cows and Brahmans. Tipu, in contrast, coming from a part of south India without a strong presence of Christians (except for Malabar) stressed the image of the detrimental spread of Christian worship without mentioning his own Hindu subjects.

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\(^{240}\) Idem., p.626: “*Inşaallahü teálâ bazi sefâyîn ve birkaç zincir fil gümüş takımlariyle ve sair bu diyârin hedâyasiyle bender-i Mısır’a ya Cidde’ye [in the Persian original, only Basra is mentioned!] vâsil oluruz.”
Evidently, one wonders whether he was informed about the high number of Christians in Ottoman lands, and whether a different wording of his letter would have had a stronger impact in Istanbul. Yet, it seems that Ottoman recipients of both letters were relatively indifferent to the specters of either Hindu or Christian supremacy in India.

In the second letter, Tipu presents his demands to the Sultan. The extensive list of his titles in Persian and the description of his imperial power were omitted in the Ottoman version. Tipu states that he views the prophet Muhammad as the caliph, citing the Qur’an 38:26, which we have already encountered in previous contestations\(^{241}\) (\textit{innanâ dja‘lnak khalîfatan fî al-‘ard}), to the extent that without him, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean would be impoverished.\(^{242}\)

Apart from theological details, the implication is evidently that Tipu does not regard the Ottomans as the sole caliphs, and that they are not the highest authority in his view.

He reiterates the explanation about the weakness of the Mughal sultanate (\textit{saltanat-i Timûriyyenin zařf}) in the last thirty-five years, which enabled the \textit{Farang} to occupy parts of the Deccan and Bengal and drew upon substantial revenue. The numbers are given once again in the units of \textit{lakh} and \textit{crore}, leading us to wonder whether Ottomans could handle these numbers with facility after centuries of commerce with India.\(^{243}\) Tipu’s first demand is relatively conventional,

\(^{241}\) See the correspondence between Shah Jahan and Ottomans, section two, chapter four.
as he asks for assistance to his ambassadors to reach France and Britain, detailing English perfidy and French willingness to assist the Deccanis.\textsuperscript{244}

However, his second demand is remarkable, even astonishing, as he suggests that the right to administer the port of Basra (defined more conventionally as tax-farming, i.e. \textit{idjâra}) be conceded to him! In the letter itself, the demand for \textit{idjâra} was merely alluded to, but the mutual benefits of trade were extensively described, especially concentrating on the spices. \textsuperscript{245} Years later, upon examining the documents, Cevdet Paşa commented in the third volume of his history that even if exchange of presents had been common among various peoples, such a demand was unheard of. According to Cevdet, in exchange for Basra, Tipu (through his ambassadors) offered any port on the coast, particularly emphasizing Mangalore (\textit{ol benderlerden dahi her kangisi manzûr ve matlâb ise hâzîrdir, i‘tasında kat’a tereddüd olunamaz}). Tipu justified his claim by stressing that many goods could be damaged during the long journey and that the military presence of the men from Mysore could effectively control the constant uprisings by Arab tribes and Persians, offering safety to merchants.\textsuperscript{246}

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\textsuperscript{244} Idem., p.633: “İngiltere keferesi kendi kırallarının ıtilâlaları olmaksızın mekr ü gadr ve hile ile eh-i İslâm hükkâmının memâliklerine mutasarî olup aksâm-ı fitne ve fişada mürtekîp olduklarına binânı bu keyfiyyeti i‘zan ve anların mahiyetlerini ayân etmek için zikrolunun serdârâna tekid olunmuştur ki İngiltere kiralının önüne gideler ve dahi Fransiz kiralının bir müddetten berü bu dâllerine irtibâtı derkâr ve kavm-i İngiliz ile mukâtele ve mürâdelede şirket ve refâkati aşikâr olmala binaenaleyh hayriyyyet ve intifaları istıtlac olunmaktan nâşi serdârân-i mezkür Fransiz kiralına dahe gitmek hâhişinde olmalaryla [...]”
\textsuperscript{245} Idem., p.634: “Bu manzûr-ı dergâhın serkânnda yâni dâr-ül-mülkünde sefayîn ziyade çoktur, eğer tüccarın ticaretleriyçün Bender-i Basra mukarrer olur ise ya‘nî ‘ıta buyrulu ise sefayinin âmed-ü-şüdü ve sandal ve fulful ve hil misili baharlarin irsali devam üzere amdel olacağı aşikârdır ve her ne ki bu diyârın tuhaflarından matûb olur ise emir buyruka ki câne minnet olarak irsâl olunur ve bu nevâhîn deryası sevâhilinde çok benâdır ve iskeleler vardir; ol benderlerden dahe her kangisi manzûr ve matlâb ise hâzîrdir, i‘tasında kat’a tereddüd olunamaz tâ ki ibâdullah tuhaf ve nefâyis-i her diyârdan mahzuz ve behrever olalar.”
\textsuperscript{246} Cevdet, \textit{Tarih}, III, (İstanbul, 1309), p.130-1: “Eğerchi beyn-ed-düvel hâdehyde irsâli mu’tâd olup ancak böyle memleket ihdâsi vuku‘ bulmamış bir keyfiyyet olduğundan bu merâk ile elçîlerin vürdûna intîzâr üzere bulunmuş idi [...] ikide birde Basra‘ya Acem ve Arap tasallutan hâlí olmuyor [...] Basra bizde olduğu vakit içinde asker ve top ve mühimmât vaz’ ederiz ve pek çok sefine ve gürâblar getûrup mühâfaza eyleriz, tüccâr enî ü aman üzere olur.” This intriguing description perhaps deserves separate study, as Cevdet reflects extensively upon other sources of his knowledge about India.
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A covert claim to other parts of Iraq was extended in the third demand. Tipu wished to dig a sweet-water canal from the Euphrates to Najaf for the sake of ‘Ali’s tomb and he sent men for that purpose, asking that the governor of Baghdad issue a command to assist them. Cevdet Paşa adds in his history that Tipu intended to build doors of silver in Mecca, Medina, Najaf, Kerbela, and at the doors of the tombs of the prophet ‘Ali and ‘Abd al-Qadir Gilani. In addition, he asked for assistance with cannons, guns, clocks and glasswork. Although Mysore had skillful men, he wanted to increase their number. Cevdet’s information is substantiated by the original hukmnâma, even if those points were expressed orally rather than in the letter itself.

A tekrîr from the British ambassador offered the Ottomans some additional information concerning Tipu. His father’s low origins, rooted in military service to legitimate kings, were alluded to. Ottomans were also told that the name of his capital was Saringapatnam, surrounded by the Marathas, the British and the Nizam of Hyderabad (referred to as a hâkim for the Mughals). Tipu barely possessed any ships, but he was able to mobilize thousands of men and his land possessed stores of precious stones, gold and silver, making him very rich.

‘Abdülhamid’s response was composed during the preparations for a war in Russia and must have been quite disappointing to Tipu. Lauding him as a ghâzi, it called him the protector

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250 Idem., p.637: “Müşârûnîleyh Tipu Sâbî Hân kemâl-i mertebe zengindir; zirâ meleketinde elmas ve altun ve gümüş maddedleri vardır [...] ancak üç dört sefineye mâlikîr.”
of Patna and India as a whole. Of course, Tipu’s domains were more than 1000 km removed from Patna in Bihar, but this mistake reveals the familiarity of Ottomans with northern rather than southern India.\textsuperscript{251} While the weakness of the Mughal family and the discord of Indian rulers among themselves had grievous consequences, the news of Tipu’s rule and his fight against (unspecified) infidels rejoiced the Ottoman sultan. Yet, he advised him to be peaceful, in accordance with the preference of the prophet Muhammad himself. Even though the actions of the infidel enemies were provocative, Tipu should remember it was a great sin to break a peace treaty. The digging of the canal was interpreted as a sign of Tipu’s piety, and promises were made that Süleyman Paşa would inform him on this matter. No mention was made of demands concerning Basra, or of trade. The rest of the letter was devoted to the Ottoman war against Russia, and a request for Tipu to gather holy men to pray for Ottoman victory.\textsuperscript{252}

Thus, the enormous expense incurred by Tipu’s embassy was almost fruitless. Gifts were destroyed in the shipwreck, and most members of the Deccani embassy died, some through the shock of Istanbul’s harsh winter.\textsuperscript{253} While in previous times the guidelines of the Ottomans consisted in not risking any material losses in their dealings with India, not even Tipu’s promise of paying the expenses of Ottoman soldiers could lure them to assist him. The embassy to France, sent in 1787-88, was also politely received, but no firm promises were given. Tipu was left to fight the British forces on his own.

The third Anglo-Mysore war started with Tipu’s attack on Travancore in Malabar in 1789, and ended in siege of his capital and defeat in 1792, when his state was reduced to a half of

\textsuperscript{251} An alternative explanation would be that since Ottomans were familiar with Patna in Bihar, abbreviating the name of Tipu’s capital to “Patna” as well seemed obvious to them.

\textsuperscript{252} See Bayur, “Tipu Sultan”, pp.637-640. For an unclear reason, only a translation into modern Turkish of this letter is given.

\textsuperscript{253} One of the ambassadors was buried in the Indian tekke in Fatih.
its previous size to the profit of Marathas, the Presidency of Madras and the Nizam of Hyderabad. In the summer of 1798, French forces entered Egypt, prompting the British to ask the Ottomans to send Tipu a warning letter not to assist them. Selim III (1789-1808) agreed, and in 1799, a letter was dispatched through Lord Wellesley, suitably recommending Tipu to beware any alliances with the French and to convert his enmity toward the British into friendship, because the latter are the allies of the Ottomans. In the letter, themes previously addressed by Tipu were echoed, but with the French instead of the British as villains. Their perfidy (hîle) enabled them to attack Egypt and seduce some Arabs into cooperation, while alluding that they were merely protecting their merchants from the Mamluks. They are planning to build a fleet from Suez to subsequently conquer all of India, and Tipu’s intelligence should not be deceived by them. Selim III stressed that the French were against all established order, not only as aggressors on Muslims, but also regicides and acting against the pope and, adding an insertion which is quite unexpected within the Ottoman context, against Brahmans as well! Their destruction of Venice, which surely must have mattered little to Tipu, was also mentioned.\footnote{HAT 9/360-62, in Persian. Modern Turkish translation is given in Bayur, 643ff. The English translation and Tipu’s response are given in the appendix to \textit{The History of Hyder Shah, alias Hyder Ali Khan Bahadur; and of his son, Tippoo Sultaun}, by M.M.D.L.T. General in the army of the Mogul Empire, Revised and Corrected by his highness Prince Gholam Mohammed, the only Surviving Son of Tippoo Sultaun (London, 1855), p.319ff. The letters are also available in W. Kirkpatrick, \textit{Selected Letters of Tippoo Sultan} (London, 1811), which is most commonly used by researchers; however, \textit{The History of Hyder Shah} has been reprinted and is more widely available.} No doubt, this Ottoman letter was a grave disappointment.

Another letter with much the same content was dispatched subsequently through an Ottoman ambassador, but Tipu was already defeated at that point. However, Ottoman warnings against the French would have amounted to little. Tipu had established contacts with the French republican representatives in Mauritius and established a Jacobin club, even calling himself...
citoyen in those circles. His intentions coincided with Napoleon’s, whose confessed aim was to re-establish the French domain in India, entering in contact with Mysore. A brief letter was sent to Tipu from Napoleon through the Sharif of Mecca, promising support against the British. Apparently, the letter was intercepted by the British in Mocha.255 Correspondingly, Tipu’s letter to the Sultan, only preserved in an English version, politely admitted that the Ottoman sultan was right in fighting against the French. However, in India, the French and the British were equally pernicious, and Tipu, as the only defender of Islam there, supposedly intended to fight them both. He also noted that he hoped to fight against the Wahhabis in Hijaz.256

The fourth Anglo-Mysore war took place 1798-99, ending in Tipu’s demise and the nominal restoration of the Hindu Wodeyar dynasty.257 Ottomans followed the course of the events, as evidenced by a detailed notice about Tipu’s death, the captivity of his two sons and the large amount of three million guineas seized by the British forces when they entered his fortress.258 Ottoman archival evidence also informs us about another embassy which was in Basra when the news about Tipu’s death arrived. The ambassador was sent back home, but the gifts which he brought for the Ottoman court were kept. The Iraqi governor Süleyman Paşa had them delivered to Istanbul through one of his Tatar soldiers.259

Since Arthur Wellesley defeated both Tipu in Mysore and Napoleon at Waterloo, British observers were tempted to make observations concerning the upstart character of the two rulers.

255 Copies and Extracts of Advices to and from India, Relative to the Cause, Progress and Successful Termination of the War with the late Tippoo Sultan, Chief of Mysore (n.p. 1800), letter no. 49, p.171f. Also see HAT 1344/52537, 1215R21, with an Ottoman translation of a Persian letter which Tipu wrote to a British general.
256 Idem. This letter must have been brought by the embassy mentioned in HAT 40/2040, 1214S.
257 The Wodeyars and other houses which allied with the English, including the Nizams of Hyderabad and the Nawabs of Arcot, were maintained in power throughout the nineteenth century and recognized by the state of India.
258 HAT 145/6119, 1214R 27. There is another later report confirming the events from Baghdad in HAT 167/6994, 1220Z29.
259 HAT 40/2040, 1214Ş.
and the intensity with which they opposed the British. Due to Tipu’s lowly origins, British sources tended to interpret his embassy to Istanbul as primarily motivated by a search for legitimacy. British influence at the Mughal court in Delhi ensured that no political support could reach Tipu from north India. In addition, his opposition to the Nizam as the Viceroy of Deccan, nominally by Mughal graces, purportedly weakened his claims. The arrival of an Ottoman ambassador to southern India, carrying the letter from the Ottoman Sultan ‘Abdülhamid I, was interpreted by British sources as primarily legitimizing Tipu as a real king, giving him the prerogatives of the sikka and the khutba. Until quite recently, this claim was accepted by most scholars on Tipu, including virtually all Ottomanists who mention his embassy.

Yet, we have seen that in the hukmnâma and his letters Tipu never addresses the Ottomans as caliphs, instead describing himself and his own reign in highest terms. While the French and the English kings were defined as Rajas, the Ottoman ruler was called the qaysar-i Rûm, khvandkâr, and, exceptionally, once the pâdishâh-i ahl-i Islâm. The Mysore ambassadors were even encouraged to address the Ottoman Sultan as “aqa” (with the implication of elder brother)! No mention was made of any request for official recognition. Indeed, without even having read the evidence from the Ottoman archives and relying mostly on Tipu’s instructions prior to the sending of the embassy, I. Habib eloquently suggests that:

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261 See for instance M. Hasan, History of Tipu Sultan, chap. 8 (Calcutta, 1971) and K. Brittlebank, Tipu Sultan’s Search for Legitimacy, Islam and Kingship in a Hindu Domain (New Delhi, 1997).
262 Bayur, “Tipu Sultan”, notes this as well, p.621, ft 1.
“Tipu does not even designate the Ottoman ruler as Khalifa (Caliph), or recognize his authority outside his dominions in any way whatsoever. Throughout his instructions to his ambassadors he treats the Ruler of Istanbul as an equal, not superior. He is so far from having in his mind any anxiety to get a title from the Sultan, that his own ambassadors are enjoined to refer to him, as to Haydar ‘Ali, simply as their aqa or master. Not once does he ask them to solicit the Porte for explicit recognition as Sultan. It should also not be forgotten that in the diplomatic environment of the eighteenth century no particular sanctity attached to any diploma by the Ottoman ruler, whom almost no one in India seriously thought as the Caliph. I have not been able to locate the 'letters patent' or farman of the Ottoman Caliph, which supposedly gave Tipu permission to assume the title of an independent king and the right to strike coins and to have the khutba [Friday sermon] read in his name.” Everyone seems to accept the existence of such a document (rather than of a diplomatic response by the Turkish ruler to Tipu's proposals), but no such document is extant; and when the trails are pursued, we find that the sole grounds for its existence is a news-report received by the British in June 1787 from a source remote from Constantinople and located apparently in Hyderabad.”

Habib is perhaps too severe in his judgment. Certainly the rulers of smaller Muslim states in India already admired the Ottomans, giving them a special status even during Tipu’s lifetime. We saw that the Malabari rulers were hoping for help from them, and the second half of the eighteenth century also witnessed some Ottoman-inspired architecture in Lucknow. However, Habib’s conclusion, which runs contrary to the majority of scholars who studied Ottoman-Indian relations, is amply supported by our evidence. It seems certain that the vast majority of Indian Muslims, including political and intellectual elites, viewed India as the center of their world and their hegemonies. Before the nineteenth century, very few Indians elevated the Ottomans as the exclusive caliphs with rights to claim their allegiance. That turnabout occurred very late, only with the crushing of the “Sepoy Mutiny” and the deposing of the Mughals in 1857.

The irony was of course that the Ottomans became more revered in the eyes of the Indian public when they were the least likely to involve themselves in Indian matters, and when

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Ottoman elites were inclined to side with the British. It is obvious from documentary evidence that Ottomans were aware of Napoleon’s justifications that he needed to conquer Egypt in order to block British trade with India. The French also claimed that they were merely passing through Egypt on their way to India. Yet neither Napoleon’s missives nor the Indian embassies provoked any protest against the British by the Ottomans.

Fundamentally, Ottoman elites did not need a close relation with Tipu or any other Indian ruler. In the late eighteenth century, they did not fear at all that trade with India would be endangered by the British dominance of the Indian Ocean, and their assessment was correct as far as their lands were concerned, at least in the near-term. At the court, the current mood tended toward restriction of Indian textile imports, although in fact the trade expanded as people from all walks of life bought these fabrics. Ottoman court chronicles certainly mention Indian clothing and its social significance more explicitly than ever before. Moreover, Tipu’s realm was rich in spices, not textiles, which constituted a different part of the Indian Ocean trade.

British merchants appeared on the Ottoman market as both sellers and buyers of Ottoman commodities, and they certainly never intended to interrupt the lucrative trade as much as reshape it to their advantage. However, significant possibilities for changing the conditions of the trade gradually emerged once large portions of India were ruled by the Company, and subsequently the Crown. We will see in the following sections that trade between India and Iraq

265 See for instance HAT 240/13462, 1214Ca06, HAT 240/13482, 1214S01, HAT 256/14682, 1220Z29, HAT 265/15397, 1212Z29.
266 HAT 138/5705B, 1219R21.
267 Z. Yılmazer, Vak’a n vîs Es’ad Efendi Tarihi (Istanbul, 2000).
268 For the selling, see the interesting instructions on how to communicate in the marketplace, with the English merchant buying muslins, calicoes and Persian carpets in Smyrna, in T. Vaughan, “Late of Smyrna, Merchant”, A Grammar of the Turkish Language (London, 1706).
was sponsored by the British authorities and that it persisted throughout the nineteenth century, although the nature of the commodities changed.

2. Real Indians in the Ottoman empire

The presence of Indians and Indian merchants in the Ottoman realm remains somewhat of a mystery. There are scattered notices of Indian Muslims in Ottoman lands before the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{269} We have noted that Evliya Çelebi encountered a surprising number of Indian saints and their tombs across the Ottoman territory. From other sources, we know of Sufis from India who arrived in Istanbul and mostly mingled with Uzbeks. Some of them were mendicants. The poor from India and Indian dervishes, among whom one Jamaladdin Sindi al-Qadiri, are mentioned in Istanbul sicills. It is stated that their tereke and property was not to be appropriated from their inheritors unjustly by the treasury through concealment or a command to restore them ignored. A second order was issued on this matter, so that disputes would not initiate litigation.\textsuperscript{270}

Other traces of Indian presence in Ottoman lands can be found in somewhat unexpected places. A village named Hindustan is attested in the Van region.\textsuperscript{271} At Mevlana Rumi’s mausoleum in Konya, a separate section highlights objects granted by the current claimant to the Hyderabadi throne, Mukarram Jah, the son of ‘Abdülmecid’s daughter Dûrr-i Şehvar Sultan and the Hyderabadi prince Nizam-i A‘zam Jah. Intriguingly, Dûrr-i Şehvar was given the title of the princess of Berar, one of the Deccani sultanates in which Rumis had been common in earlier

\textsuperscript{269} Ahmed Taşköprüzade, K. Bakri, ed., \textit{Miftâh al-Sa‘āda wa Mischâh al-Siyyâda} (Cairo, 1968).
\textsuperscript{271} MKT.UM 394/2, 1276B.
centuries. Less conspicuous than the precious objects, one may also note the shape of the Mevlevi begging bowl (keskül-i fukarâ) used by the dervishes. The bowl was commonly fashioned from narcil-i bahrî. “Called coco de mer in French and sea coconut in English [...] the substance of this bowl is the shell of a kind of coconut growing in the Indian islands.” It is thus not far-fetched to assume that the tomb of the great teacher was at least occasionally visited by his followers from India.

The study of Naqshbandi connections, vital not only for Istanbul and Anatolia, but also for the history of interactions between Wahhabis and India, has been neglected in scholarship as well, particularly for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. We do know that Uzbeks and Indians often resided together. A second founder of the Naqshbandiyya in the Ottoman realm was Maulana Khalid Baghdadi (d.1827) a Kurd who brought the Naqshbandi-Mudjaddidi teachings from Delhi and spread them through the empire. A dergâh which was located in the vicinity of the Süleymaniye mosque in Istanbul was associated with the name of Şeyh Ahmed el-Hindi el-Lahori. There were other tekkes attested in Istanbul.

The French researcher T. Zarcone traced the existence of at least two Indian tekkes whose remains still stand. Writing in 1988 and including their photographs, he was pessimistic about the future of the tekke in Fatih, which holds the tomb of an ambassador sent by Tipu Sultan in its

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272 Mukarram Jah, born in Nice in 1933, has been married five times. Three of his wives were Turkish, including a princess and a Miss Turkey.

273 Display at the Mevlana Rumi Shrine in Konya as of 2007, with the same text in English and Turkish.

274 For the earlier period, there is the study by D. Le Gall, A Culture of Sufism: Naqshbandis in the Ottoman World, 1450-1700 (New York, 2004).

275 This seems to be a very long-standing tradition, as it is mentioned in Evliya’s work and even before him.


277 MVL 319/74, 1274R.
While Zarcone focused on the state of the buildings in the 1980s, archival evidence reveals some of the damage to Indian tekkes dates even to the early 1920s, when a report is given about the destruction of Indian tombs attached to a tekke and the demolition and the theft of iron decoration. However, the Fatih tekke is being restored by the Turkish government, although it seems the remaining buildings will primarily serve as a station for dispensation of medications. It was still impossible to view the grounds of the tekke and its tombstones in 2009, but a curious mistake which predates the Latin script and the Turkish republic in its resonance across time slipped in on the informational plaque. On it, the tekke is called in Latin script “Hindular Tekkesi” (the tekke of Hindus), instead of the correct “Hindiler Tekkesi” (The tekke of Indians). Thus, it seems that in contemporary Turkey, India is once again imagined as a prevalently non-Muslim space, perhaps due to the rise of Bollywood.

No dedicated study outlines the lives of Indians in Arab lands, although they are more visible in chronicles, tezkeres and sicills than those of Anatolia. Certainly many of them arrived as pilgrims and decided to settle down for a period of time. Some of them were artisans, while others were members of Sufi orders. Yet others lived a more transitory existence as long-distance merchants, sometimes equipped with a large capital base. Evidence suggests that their practice of Islam was sometimes viewed with suspicion by Ottoman authorities, but we cannot assert whether these allegations were due to their foreign origin, which would manifest in appearance and language, or to truly different religious practices and customs. In Aleppo, there are scattered references to Indian Muslim merchants, who sometimes abandoned their local wives or had to

279 HR. IM, 114/90, August 1924.
281 Compare the wavering in Ottoman sources between Hindu and Hindi.
explicitly prove their belonging to the fold of Islam, but we also encounter established Indian apricot-sellers.\textsuperscript{282}

It remains mysterious why in the earlier Ottoman and even pre-Ottoman period there seemed to be a larger number of Muslim scholars coming to Anatolia from India. In Mughal times, we witness an Istanbul awash in Indian commodities, but religious men from India seemed to prefer Mecca and to a lesser extent Syria and Egypt as places to settle down. Perhaps the relative proximity to the Indian Ocean may have been the reason, but the closure of higher positions in Ottoman religious hierarchy to outsiders (including even Arabic-speakers) was probably another factor.\textsuperscript{283}

The presence of non-Muslim Indians in western Asia has received even less attention. Across the western Indian Ocean, there are many attestations for the activities of Baniyas (Vania), which is loosely applied term for several Hindu and Jain mercantile casts, most frequently encountered in European sources. Baniyas are well-known in Safavid Iran. They were almost universally resented by European travelers, who comment upon them extensively.\textsuperscript{284} Some of the more distasteful comments evoke anti-Jewish sentiment as well. Father du Mans (d. 1647) famously compared Persia to a caravanseraï with an open door on each side, through which money passed incessantly, ending up in India with the assistance of Indian merchants.\textsuperscript{285} Chardin

\textsuperscript{282} For brief mentions of Indians living in Ottoman Arab cities, see A. Raymond, Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIIIe siècle, 2 vols. (Damascus, 1973); J. Tate, Une waqfiyya du XVIIIe siècle à Alep (Damascus, 1990); B. Masters, “Aleppo: the Ottoman Empire’s caravan city” in E. Eldem, ed., The Ottoman city between East and West (Cambridge, 1999); C. Establet and J. Pascual, Familles et Fortunes à Damas (Damascus, 1994).

\textsuperscript{283} For the eighteenth century, there are several highly valuable sources, including al-Muhibbi, Khulâsat al-Athar fi A’yân al-Qarn al-Hâdî’Ashar (Cairo, 1284), Ibn Ma’sum, Kitâb sulâfat al-’Asr fi Mahâsin al-Shu’arâ bi Kull Misr (Cairo, 1324), and Abdulhayy, Nuzhat al-Khawâtîr wa Bahjat al-Masâmî’ wa al-Nawâdhir (Hyderabad, 1954-5). Particularly the Nuzhat al-Khawâtîr includes many bibliographies of Indian men.

\textsuperscript{284} Yet, so far there has been no study dedicated to them.

\textsuperscript{285} “La Perse est comme un grand caravanséraï qui n’a que deux portes, l’une du coste de la Turquie par laquelle entre l’argent qui vient d’Occident; ce sont piastres qui viennent du Nouveau Monde en Espagne, de là en France
(d. 1713) noted that in Iran Hindus were almost ubiquitous, and he blamed them for the financial crisis in the kingdom through usury and drainage of silver.\textsuperscript{286} The same observations were made by Tavernier (d.1689), who, along with Chardin, assumes that Shah ‘Abbas I did not allow Indian traders into Iran, and they were only able to permeate the kingdom because of the youth of Shah Sufi and Shah ‘Abbas II.\textsuperscript{287} Tavernier also contributed two violent stories which focus on murder or attempted murder of “Banians” because of their extortions and usury of up to eighteen percent.\textsuperscript{288} According to him, it was easy to recognize them because of the saffron paste on their faces and their particular clothes, which included flower-patterned stockings.\textsuperscript{289} The VOC embassy in 1651-2, headed by Joan Cunaeus, found it necessary to engage the mediation of

par la Bretagne [sic]; passant la France par Marseille, elles sortent pour entrer en Turquie, puis elles viennent icy [...] aucuns portent leurs piastres entières jusques aux Indes [...]. L’autre porte de sortie est le Bender Abbas ou Kommonor sur le Sinus Persicus pour aller aux Indes, a Surrat, où se va décharger tout l’argent de l’univers, et de là, comme tombé dans un gouffre, il n’en ressort plus [...] Le bon argent qui est neuf et sans alliage est choici et trié par ces Indiens [...] ils envoient tout le meilleur en leur pais; quant au havai, qui est vieille monnaie effacée, escorchee a moitié, rouge comme chair de pie, cela ne sort point de Perse [...] qui le prend plutôt par peur de ne rien avoir de tout.” See Le Père Rafael du Mans, C. Schefer, ed., \textit{Estat de la Perse en 1660} (Paris, 1890), p. 181, p.192f.

\textsuperscript{286} “Pour ce qui est des gentils qui sont établis dans la Perse, ce sont des Indiens natifs. Il y en a presque partout dans le royaume. L’on en compte, dans la seule ville d’Ispahan, environ vingt mille. On leur laisse pratiquer leur culte avec liberté [...] Ces Indiens sont attachés uniquement à la marchandise, à la banque et à l’usure, à laquelle ils s’appliquent avec tant d’activité, qu’en dix-huit ou vingt mois ils tirent le double de ce qu’ils ont prêté. C’est pour cela qu’Abas-le-Grand n’avoit jamais permis qu’ils s’habituassent dans le pays, les connaissant beaucoup plus fins et ruses que tous ses sujets, à la banque et au trafic; mais son successeur Cha Sephy, gagné et séduit par ses ministres [...] leur permit de s’établir dans le royaume, ce qui pourra être, avec le temps, une des causes principales de sa ruine; car ses Indiens, comme de vraies sangsues, tirent tout l’or et tout l’argent du pays, et l’envoient dans le leur; de manière que l’an 1677, que je partis en Perse, on n’y voyoit presque plus de bon argent: ces usuriers l’avoient fait entièrement disparaître.” See \textit{Voyages du Chevalier Chardin en Perse}, VI, (Amsterdam, 1711), p.164.


\textsuperscript{288} Idem., p.528, p.529, p.422.

\textsuperscript{289} “On les connoit d’abord à leur teint bazané, mais plus aisément a une marque jaune faite avec du safran sur le haut du front, laquelle ils portent par quelque principe de leur Religion. Leur turban est plus petit que les turbans ordinaires, & leurs souliers sont à peu près faits comme les nôtres avec des fleurs en broderie diffus.” Idem., pp.421-422.
an Indian merchant in order to obtain better tax conditions.\textsuperscript{290} Olearius, who witnessed the bloody battle between Holsteinians and Indians in 1637, is more favorable to Indian merchants, who rushed to assist their countrymen, and to Indians in general.\textsuperscript{291}

It is likely that the number of Indians in Iran increased after 1640. However, Della Valle in 1617 and Olearius and Mandelslo in 1637\textsuperscript{292} already noted the presence of Indian merchants. While Della Valle called them “Gujaratis”, the later travelers, Du Mans, Tavernier, Chardin, and Kaempfer\textsuperscript{293} all call them “Multanis.” According to a Safavid author, they included Shi‘ites, Sunnis and Hindus.\textsuperscript{294} K. Keyvani suggested that the designation “Banian” refers to


\textsuperscript{291} “As for the Indians in general, they are good Natur’d, Civil, Friendly, and their Conversation not unpleasant, provided they not be injur’d; but so apt to resent any thing of affront, that they are never satisfy’d without their Blood, by whom they are offended. We know it otherwise than by hear-say [...] the Merchants of that Nation, whereof there are about twelve thousand in Isfahan.” A. Olearius, J. Davies, tr., \textit{The Voyages and Travells of the Ambassadors sent by Frederick Duke of Holstein, to the Great Duke of Muscovy, and the King of Persia} (London, 1669), p.200.

\textsuperscript{292} “There is not any Nation in all Asia, not indeed almost of Europe, who sends not its Merchants to Ispahan, whereof some sell by Whole-sale, and others by Retail, by the Pound and the Ell. There are ordinarily above twelve thousand Indians in the City, who have, most of them, their shops near those of the Persians, in the Maidan, and their Merchandizes, in the Caravansaras, where they have their Habitations, and their Store Houses. Their Stuffs are incomparably fairer, and their Commodities of greater Value than those of Persia; inasmuch they bring thither great quantities of Pearls and Diamonds. I observ’d, that most of these Indosthans, had upon the Nose, a mark of Saffron, about a Breath of a Man’s finger, but I could never learn what that Mystery signify’d. They are all Mahometans or Pagans; they burn the bodies of their Deceas’d friends and kindred, and in that ceremony they use only the Wood of the Mesch-Mesch, or Apricock-Tree.” J.A. Mandelslo, \textit{Travels to the Indies} (printed together with Olearius). It is also reported that “besides these Indians, there is, at Ispahan, a great number of Tartars, from the Provinces of Chaurassan, Chattai and Buchar, Turks, Jews, Armenians, Georgians, English, Dutch, French, Italians and Spaniards.” See A. Olearius, J.Davies, tr., \textit{The Voyages and Travells of the Ambassadors sent by Frederick Duke of Holstein, to the Great Duke of Muscovy, and the King of Persia} (London, 1669), p.223.

\textsuperscript{293} In one brief sentence, he estimates their number at ten thousand. See E. Keampfer, \textit{Am Hofe des persischen Grosskönigs 1684-1685} (Tübingen / Basel, 1977).

moneychangers proper, whereas “Multanis” implies textile traders. Banias were also encountered by François Péris de la Croix (d. 1713).

We have cited the evidence above in order to illustrate the exceptional familiarity of European travelers with Indian merchants in Safavid Persia. In the early nineteenth century, there were still many Banias in Eritrea, Yemen, Oman and Basra, and some British travelers complained about their role as gate-keepers to local rulers and markets. Others, such as the viscount of Valentia, appreciated their mediation, also meticulously noting that the local Eritrean representatives of the Ottomans were wearing “Indian chintzes.”

Yet, we are not aware of any presence of Banias in central Ottoman lands, although we know through Evliya and other sources that there were many of them in Baghdad and Basra. Visitors commented upon their temples and religious rituals. Unfortunately, this topic must await further study.

While the presence of Indians before the nineteenth century in Istanbul and Anatolia was somewhat of a rarity, their numbers increased after the 1840s, with the decline of Persian as the administrative language of the British Raj. Some of them were ‘ulamâ’, such as Vecdi (d. 1830), born to an elite family in Bengal, who first went to Shiraz and then to Konya, where he was a religious instructor. As a sign of his special status, he was buried close to Mevlana’s niyâz

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295 M. Keyvani, *Artisans and Guild Life in the later Safavid Period, Contributions to the social-economic history of Persia* (Berlin, 1982). The reference is brief, p. 228-9. S.F. Dale has attempted to relate the seemingly ethnic denotation to categories of caste. He contends that most of the Indian merchants of Astrakhan were Panjabi Hindus involved in textile trade. See his *Indian merchants and Eurasian trade, 1600-1750* (Cambridge, 1994).
296 “Il y a aussi beaucoup de marchands indiens qu’on nomme banians ou multany, et ce sont eux qui y font le plus beau trafic. Ils ont au front une raye de peinture jaune. Ils surpassent beaucoup les Juifs en adresse, aussi ne se trouve-t-il point de Juifs où il y a des Banians, mais ils cachent si adroitement leur fourberie par leur manière obligante d’accueillir les étrangers qu’on se sent contraint par leur tromperie même à leur vouloir de bien; en quoi ils sont plus fins que les Juifs [...]. L’abord des vaisseaux a Bassrah est depuis juillet jusqu’en novembre; quant novembre est commencé on a le vent contraire pour arriver, et c’est le temps de la Moucoum pour aller aux Indes, elle dure jusqu’en mai; la plupart des vaisseaux se chargent de dates, parce qu’il y a un grand profit à faire aux Indes pour ceux qui en portent.” See Langlès, *Voyage du Sieur François Péris en Syrie et en Perse* (Paris, 1810), p.108ff.
297 G. Mountnorris (Valentia), *Voyages and Travels to India, Ceylon, The Red Sea, Abyssinia, and Egypt in the years 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, and 1806* (London, 1809).
Nusrat, born in 1848 in Delhi, published a journal and other works in Persian, Ottoman and English upon his arrival in Anatolia. There were other men from India in Istanbul who claimed to be Iranian rather than British subjects.

Indian ambassadors also still arrived in the Ottoman empire along with their subjects. About a decade after Tipu’s death, the ruler of Arcot sent a petition, demanding that the property of Indian pilgrims in Hijaz be respected and that it be sent to the inheritors in case of death instead of being appropriated by the local authorities. An appropriate hükümc was dispatched from the Porte to the Sharif of Mecca and the governor of Jiddah. This was not an isolated instance. Archival materials prove that even before all of India was subject to British power, Ottoman rulers were at pains to respect the claims of those Indian pilgrims and merchants who submitted petitions to the court.

Indeed, visiting the Ottoman realm seems to have become somewhat fashionable among Indian aristocracy (probably including some dubious claimants as well). At least some Indian women settled down in the Ottoman lands and were awarded assistance in the form of food or money. Presumably, they were pilgrims, possibly of advanced age or without other support. Dervishes, especially if they were of Sayyid origin, often obtained some money. Precise amounts are not always indicated, but we know that a group which included Şeyh Mehmed

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300 HR HMS ISO 218/54 1303.
301 C.HR. 179/8936, 1215C, 29, also see C.HR 8/376 1215C.
302 The princes proliferate in the Hamidian period, see below.
303 A. MKT DV 45/17, 1268M. Also, see BEO 1305/97819, 1316Z, BEO 1361/102056, 1317R, BEO 1373/102904, 1317Ca, BEO 1397/104759, 1317B for instances in which Indians from various social backgrounds received financial support from the Ottomans.
304 See A. MKT. NZD 13/57 1266L for one Dervish Nuri from India and A. MKT. NZD 76/55 1269B for Seyyid Fazıl Efendi, whose companions also received presents.
Efendizâde and Sayyid ‘Ali Efendi from Lahore was given twenty gurus a day for the duration of two months.\textsuperscript{305}

In some instances, particularly in southern Iraq, Indian presence was long-standing. In 1848, the Shaykh of the order of the Qalandarís in Baghdad was an Indian, and he appointed another Indian as his successor, in spite of the presence of a Musuli claimant.\textsuperscript{306} The Qalandari association is reinforced in another case, when complaints arise concerning some destitute Indians occupying a Qalandari tekke in Damascus to the detriment of other travelers.\textsuperscript{307} Incidentally, the claim of Indian “occupation” of other tekkes is fairly common. On at least one occasion, Uzbeks were expelled from their tekke in Mecca by Indians, thereupon lodging a complaint with the governor of Jiddah.\textsuperscript{308} Yet the presence of Indian dervishes was not always undesirable; a Qaderi dergâh obtained an increase in its monetary allowance because they were able to prove that many travelers from India, Balkh and Bukhara resided in it.\textsuperscript{309} Another man from India, ‘Ali Sherbeti, went to court claiming that his belongings had been stolen by the kahveci in whose house he was staying in Jiddah.\textsuperscript{310}

In other cases, we encounter individuals and even relatively large groups petitioning for the status of Ottoman subjects, as in the case of some Baluchís who alleged that they had to flee from India to the Ottoman lands to escape oppression.\textsuperscript{311} One Mirza Muhammad Muhsin petitioned for permission to reside in Kerbela because he had been sentenced to prison in

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\textsuperscript{305} MVL 410/61, 1279S.  
\textsuperscript{306} A. MKT. MHM, 18/45, 1265Z.  
\textsuperscript{307} C.EV, 217/10813, 1260R.  
\textsuperscript{308} A. MKT, 13/99, 1265C.  
\textsuperscript{309} MKT.UM 476/65, 1277Za.  
\textsuperscript{310} HR.MKT 47/15 1268N.  
\textsuperscript{311} DH. TMK. M, 150/56, 1321Ca.
\end{flushright}
India. Such petitions also came from Indonesian subjects, for whom the term “Hindustan” is also commonly used in Ottoman documents. Before they were allowed to become Ottoman subjects, investigations were carried out. An Indian Muslim who had graduated from the Mekteb-i Tibbiye in Istanbul petitioned for an Ottoman military rank (rütbe-i 'askeriyye) upon his return to his hometown of Lahore. His departure from Istanbul was due mostly to his father’s death. He was not the only Indian doctor in Ottoman lands; some of them arrived in Anatolia to give advice on the how to stop the spread of plague from India. More dramatically, one Haci Kutbeddin from India sent an ‘arzuhâl, describing the capture of his brother and his wife and children by the Abu Tanin tribe from the Jabal Rashid in Oman and pleading for Ottoman assistance. We do not know how his case was resolved.

Incidentally, for quarantine and other purposes, Malay, Acehnese and Javanese were also considered “Indian” although the Ottoman authorities were very aware that they were under Dutch jurisdiction rather than British. However, occasionally some uncertainty appears, for instance when Aceh is believed to be in Java. In later documents, Aceh is correctly situated in Sumatra. In another document, it is claimed that the entire population of eastern Indian islands is Muslim. Regrettably, almost no studies combining Ottoman and Dutch archives, Arabic

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312 BEO 1561/117048, 1318C.
313 A MTZ CL 7/290 1333B.
314 BEO 115/8575, 1310Ca. Also see BEO 46/3440 1310M and BEO 446/33415 1312M for other instances in which Indian Muslims received Ottoman decorations and ranks.
315 Y.EE, 149/44 1317C.
316 A. MKT.MHM, 597/41, 1319Ra.
317 BEO 5/359 1309L.
318 For more details on interactions with Aceh, see Y.A. HUS 297/35, 1311Za14, Y.A.HUS 352/151 1313Z29, Y.A. HUS 353/37 1314M09, Y.A. HUS 380/47, 1315S12, Y.A.HUS 385/2, 1316M01, Y.A. HUS 389/5 1316Ca02, Y.A.HUS 398/110 1317Ra22, HR.TO 188/71 1890, HR.SYS 2225/56 1917.
319 I.MMS. 37/1524, 1285M17.
321 Y.A. HUS 380/47 1315S12.
chronicles and Malay travelogues exist for this period, making it difficult to ascertain to what extent southeast Asians accepted their putative identity as “Indians” in Ottoman lands.

3. Cooperation and trade with the British empire

In the first part of this section, we addressed differences and similarities between the various markets for Indian textiles in the eighteenth century. One of the crucial factors in the popularity of those fabrics was certainly the ease of distribution. Western European ships maintained a constant presence in the Persian Gulf, facilitating trade between India on the one hand and Iran and the Ottoman lands on the other hand. Yet, although the Dutch power in west Asia was on the wane, there was still a strong competition between the English, the French and many other local and regional players, including Omani and Indian ships. Textile trade along the land route between India and west Asia retained its flexibility. In short, monopoly by any single one of the participants was almost unimaginable, and the region was far from being marginalized at this point. This was well-understood at the start of the nineteenth century by the French scientist and traveler, Guillaume-Antoine Olivier, who made the following observation at the conclusion of his six-year sojourn across the Islamic world:

“Si nous en exceptons quelques contrées des deux Indes, dans aucun pays de la Terre l'or n'est si commun qu'en Turquie; il circule partout [...] La Turquie cependant est tributaire de l'Inde, comme nous le sommes de la Turquie. L'or que les Européens portent en dernier résultat à cet Empire pour la solde de ses marchandises, s'écoule en grande partie par la Mer Rouge, par le golfe Persique et par la Perse, et va s'engloutir sur les côtes fertiles et industrieuses de l'Océan indien.”

If to our eyes, with the benefit of hindsight, Olivier’s claim seems completely implausible, to his contemporaries, it was but a slight exaggeration and it stressed the urgency of participating in the Indian and Ottoman trade. Ottoman archives offer rich glimpses of the trade conditions. In 1804, Russian merchants who were bringing jewels from India were detained in Van by the customs officials. Subsequently, they were released and given their property.\textsuperscript{323} As late as 1806, we encounter merchants from Aleppo, Basra and Baghdad who changed their allegiance from that of various western European nations to that of the Ottomans, demanding that they be given the right to trade in India and Iran.\textsuperscript{324} Armenian and Dutch merchants were selling Indian silk thread in Istanbul.\textsuperscript{325} In 1812, the Sharif of Mecca expressed concern that Indian and Yemeni ships were prevented from arriving in the Hijaz and in Suez because of the Wahhabis. Thereupon, it was decided by the governor of Egypt that additional ships would be built in Suez.\textsuperscript{326} During the struggles with the Sa‘udis over the control of the Arab peninsula, the Sherif of Mecca sent his property to India with French ships.\textsuperscript{327} At least in Arabic-speaking parts of the empire, there was a strong awareness that trade with India needed to be protected and even controlled to some extent. Conversely, as the British influence grew, there was more interest in events in Afghanistan on the Ottoman side.\textsuperscript{328}

In the Ottoman center, some ambiguity about Indian trade was present. Sultan Selim III had attempted to ban Indian textiles and replace them with Ottoman-produced imitations, but to

\textsuperscript{323} C. HR 120/5951, 1219Z.
\textsuperscript{324} HAT 1496/21, 1221Ra06.
\textsuperscript{325} C.IKTS, 26/1281, 1228S, C.IKTS 26/1281, 1236Z15.
\textsuperscript{326} HAT 343, 19605, 1227Z, 29, also see HAT 94/3825 1218B13.
\textsuperscript{327} HAT 344/19635J 1238Z.
\textsuperscript{328} HAT 379/20525B 1255Z29, HAT 379/20525F 1255S03.
no avail. The Sherifs of Mecca dispatched their letters to Istanbul accompanied by high-quality Indian textiles. The powerful governor of Baghdad also regularly sent an even larger quantity of Indian goods and pearls. Indian-made textiles were a mark of prestige, and even Selim III himself was not immune to their aesthetic which had become prevalent in the Ottoman empire in the course of the eighteenth century.

Strict legal regulations of Indian textiles by British and French lawmakers were more successful. The bans somewhat reduced the presence of painted calicoes on western European markets, but by adding the allure of the forbidden they also increased their desirability. However, neither Ottoman taste nor Ottoman distribution networks overlapped with those of western Europeans, as in Ottoman lands calicoes and chintzes were used for different purposes than in France, Britain, and the Netherlands, and they were not necessarily buying from the same producers and suppliers. Hence, we must be exceedingly careful in mapping out patterns of trade in the late eighteenth century. While there was considerable instability across the Indian Ocean for political reasons, the volatility of markets meant that it was possible for Gujarati producers and merchants to find themselves in a deep crisis at the same time as Bengal or Panjab trade in textiles was still thriving.

Ottomans had always favored the muslins and other cottons of Bengal and Bihar over southern Indian chintzes. Changes in fashion in the early nineteenth century still allowed for high

330 HAT 35/1751, 1220Z29.
331 HAT 37/1870, 1210Z29 and HAT 37/1859, 1214S09. There are numerous short notices of this type for this time period up to the 1820s, attesting that Indian textiles were sent from Baghdad and the Hijaz, but also from Aleppo.
332 Daniel Defoe was a famous detractor of Indian fabrics, as seen above. See B. Lemire, Fashion’s Favorite, Cotton Trade and the Consumer in Britain, 1660-1800 (Oxford, 1991); C. Mukerji, From Graven Images: Patterns of Modern Materialism (New York, 1983).
333 See the previous chapter.
consumption of muslins among the wealthy in Europe and America. White color was favored by post-revolutionary French elites. The shift toward thicker kinds of cotton and linen occurred gradually. In the Ottoman empire of the same period, muslin was not restricted to females alone. Certainly, the decision to ban the turban among the bulk of the Muslim male population in 1829 and replace it with the fez also contributed toward decreased demand of high-quality muslins. Nonetheless, contemporary images and the descriptions of Ottoman family life by ‘Abdülaziz Bey (d. 1918) demonstrate that muslins were still desirable among upper-class Ottomans and that their use in certain circumstances was defined by custom, not merely by personal predilections. J. Pardoe, who comments extensively on Ottoman textiles, was also familiar with high quality muslins, reflecting the general preference of the day.

What was the origin of those muslins? The Scottish author and statesman D. Urquhart claimed in 1833 that “free trade” had been established when the Ottoman empire was strong, a policy which he deeply admired, although he wrongly denied the existence of insurances and credit within Ottoman lands. He noticed that the demand for cotton goods and especially muslins was seemingly insatiable, amounting to 10 million British pounds annually. He claimed that, fortunately, “the preference [was] now transferred from Indian to Birmingham muslins, from Golconda to Glasgow chintzes, from Damascus to Sheffield steel, from Cashmere

335 “Ladies are, however, we believe, still perverse enough to prefer the soft transparent fabrics, and even the yellow tinge of the Indian muslins. The durability of the Indian muslin admits of no comparison with our flimsier products [...] a century has not elapsed since the manufacturers of Europe were universally demanding protection from their government against the influx of Indian clothes [...] though the people of India can no longer compete with us in price, the qualities of their finer fabrics, as stated above, maintain their original superiority.” Baines’ “History of the Cotton Manufacture” in Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine (January 1835), p.237.
337 Idem., p.133.
338 Idem., p.152.
shawls to English broad cloth.”339 Several pages later, he repeats: “it is established that our cottons and muslins, calicoes, chintzes, &c. are, if not better, infinitely cheaper than those of the East. Taste is gradually directing itself toward our manufactures [...].”340

Yet, Urquhart also contradicts his previous statements, as he admits that “we are still far from rivalling [sic] in finesses the muslins and the chintzes of the East; our red is generally inferior to theirs, and formerly they would look neither at our cottons nor our hardware [...]

turbans and belts are in part thrown aside, still the consumption of Eastern articles is immense, and the intricacy of their circulation throughout the country is quite surprising.”341

According to him, strict pricing control and restriction of sale to government agents cannot be implemented in the Ottoman empire, for “it had required all the material power, the matured organization and intellectual superiority of England, to inflict a similar [regime] on the Hindoo.”342 Urquhart hoped that the Ottoman government would invest in infrastructure, making it possible for the British to flood the countryside with their clothing articles, so that the Ottoman peasants would concentrate on tobacco production instead of textiles.343 Dreams of monopoly do not appear to have been matched by reality in the 1830s.

From Urquhart, as well as other evidence, we learn that best muslins could not be made with machines and that they required a very high degree of humidity and heat which was difficult to replicate away from Bengal.344 Even in the 1840s, thirty-six kinds of muslins were still

339 Idem., p.134. Some of it indicates a genuine shift, but also a measure of wishful thinking. His comment was not innocent, as he was advocating that an Ottoman subject would be more comfortable wearing British-made clothes than those of domestic make.
340 Idem., p.141.
341 Idem., p.151.
342 Idem., p.189.
produced in and around Dhaka, and exported to west Asia. While mentioning embroidery, J. Taylor emphasizes the embroidered *Khasseida* pieces, about 20,000 of which were still sent annually to “Persia, Egypt and Turkey”, where they were mostly used as turbans. They, as well as the flowered embroidered muslins, were sent “exclusively to Bussorah and Jidda, from which later place they are re-exported to Egypt and Turkey.” A large proportion of the Bengali cloth was also manufactured with English thread (regarded as coarser and more opaque), embroidered in Dhaka, and subsequently exported annually to the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Tasar silk specimens were sent to Egypt, where Muhammad ‘Ali attempted to cultivate them, but he was not successful.

It seems that Scottish and Ottoman imitations (mostly coming from Mosul, Aleppo and Istanbul itself) of muslins were vying for the favor of the less wealthy strata of the Ottoman population. Yet ‘Abdülaziz Bey and other sources stress the importance of Indian-origin textiles among the elites. Certainly Ottoman preference for Kashmiri shawls and coats remained robust. The areas where they were produced were not yet under British control in the 1840s, allowing for independent routes of trade through Iran and Afghanistan and into Panjab and Kashmir itself, where one could encounter Ottoman merchants.

Yet, while producers and merchants from the northwest of India were able to maintain themselves for longer periods of time, Bengal weavers suffered severely because of severe regulations and the import of British-manufactured textiles. Quite likely, as the number of qualified producers was reduced, some of the *jamdani* lore was carried over to other areas of

346 Idem., especially chapter VI.
India, such as the kingdom of Awadh, not dominated by the British for another decade. It is common knowledge today that there are no weaver families in Dhaka who are able to replicate the finest muslins from the nineteenth century.\(^{349}\) Precise dating of the disappearance of Indian fabrics from the Ottoman realm remains evasive, but evidence strongly suggests that cannot be attributed to any period before the 1870s.\(^{350}\) The impact of the treaty of Balta Liman in 1838 was certainly significant, but it did not lead to the instantaneous domination of British merchants.\(^{351}\)

The most important commodities to be exported from British India were opium, indigo and raw cotton. Unlike in the case of textiles, the Raj had an interest in promoting those commodities and not substituting them. While the opium trade was dealt a severe blow in the 1840s because of the opium war in China, the production of indigo was on the rise and raw cotton remained fairly steady as well, in spite of north American competition. In addition, the Crimean war in 1854 led to the substitution of Russian hemp by Indian jute. After the “Mutiny” of 1857, the following year was marked by the transfer of the mandate over India from the East India Company to the Crown itself, leading to an even firmer linkage of politics and economics. Notably, there are several attested instances of the Ottomans expressing sympathy with British families which fled from India at the time. The mâliye treasury even paid for their traveling expenses.\(^{352}\) This was not an isolated instance.\(^{353}\)


\(^{350}\) This claim has been substantiated in the previous chapter, but we expect to include additional visual and textual evidence, particularly concerning Iran and Panjab, in the future.

\(^{351}\) For the standard study on Ottoman-British commercial relations, see M. Kütükoglu, Osmanlı-İngiliz İktisâdi Müdâsebetleri (1580-1838) (Ankara, 1974) and M.Kütükoglu, Osmanlı-İngiliz İktisâdi Müdâsebetleri (1838-1850) (İstanbul, 1976). While the study remains an important work of reference, it barely mentions India either as a British colony or as an exporter to the Ottoman empire.

\(^{352}\) HAT 208/80, 1274 Ş.

\(^{353}\) I. HR, 147/7750, 1274 M, in which several British families are mentioned.
In 1869, the Suez canal was opened. Its main purpose was to facilitate communication between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. There had already been a long history of the port’s involvement in Indian trade under the Ottomans. In spite of the common assumption that Indian ships did not sail further than Jiddah in the Red Sea, we have archaeological and archival evidence that they often arrived at Suez.\textsuperscript{354} Certainly parts of the Indian economy suffered heavy losses because of the increase in quantity of British goods in local markets. Commodities imported from Britain included not only fabrics and yarn, but also coal and engines, although it had been proven several years earlier that it also would have been possible to build engines in India itself.\textsuperscript{355} As the British conquest of most parts of India came to its completion, much of Indian economy and trade became reduced to supplying the needs of the Raj. Instead of the finished textiles and the expensive spices of yore, India exported primary materials, especially including cotton thread and rice.\textsuperscript{356}

An interruption of trade between Iraq and India, however, was never intended by the British administration or by the merchants. Ottoman documents testify to the presence of Indian goods in Suez as of 1868, detailing their taxation rates.\textsuperscript{357} In the mid-nineteenth century, a letter with presents from India was dispatched to the Egyptian Khedive by the East India Company and Queen Victoria herself. Ottoman documents report that he received them with pleasure.\textsuperscript{358} Somewhat more idiosyncratically, an Englishman offered his services to the Ottoman navy,

\textsuperscript{356} The British opium trade with China has not yet surfaced in Ottoman archives, but there is no doubt that echoes of it must have reached the Ottomans, since they had trade representatives in Bengal.
\textsuperscript{357} A. MKT MHM, 414/17, 1285Ra.
\textsuperscript{358} I. HR, 32/1473, 1261Z.
bringing several ships from the Indian fleet to Istanbul, some of which were subsequently sold at an auction.\textsuperscript{359}

Not even the advent of steamships changed the ancient pattern of Indian trade, particularly in Iraq. Ottoman records inform us about British endeavors to establish a regular steamship connection through the Euphrates in Iraq in order to facilitate communication between Britain and India.\textsuperscript{360} Particular concern was expressed about the plunder of merchants by the tribes along the river.\textsuperscript{361} After several Indian ships had been assaulted in the Persian Gulf and in Yemen, the British had made suggestions as early as 1818 to organize a joint attack on the Wahhabis, combining the British naval force and Ottoman soldier units.\textsuperscript{362}

In 1821, Ottomans authorities and English consuls were concerned that the rebellion of Davud Paşa, the governor of Baghdad, would disrupt the trade with India. Instead of sending soldiers to capture him, Ottomans demanded a large tribute from him in exchange for an imperial pardon.\textsuperscript{363} Although the Paşa retained his power and was eventually deposed only in 1831, his rebellion caused such concern for Ottomans that they briefly considered attaching Baghdad to the governorship of Aleppo.\textsuperscript{364} It was also feared that the Paşa would flee to India. Ottoman and British authorities cooperated in informing each other about his transfer some of his property there, and the British \textit{bailo} played a significant part in preventing Davud Paşa from departing.

\textsuperscript{359} HAT 1178/46539, 1245Z29.  
\textsuperscript{360} HAT 1173/46420, 1250Z 29.  
\textsuperscript{361} A.DVN.DVE, 5B/30, 1260L.  
\textsuperscript{362} HAT 1315/51271B, 1234Z 13.  
\textsuperscript{363} HAT 389/20702A, 1248Z29.  
\textsuperscript{364} Idem.
Meanwhile, many Iraqi Jewish merchants went to British India, among them the illustrious Sassoon family. In 1900-1913, British products accounted for about a half of Iraq’s imports. The figure does not include Indian products, which still amounted to about a fourth of imports, with the remaining fourth divided between Belgium, Austria-Hungary and Germany. Of course, most of the Indian imports were transported by British vessels, but many of the merchants sailing on them were of Indian or Armenian origin. British ships carried wheat and barley and smaller quantities of wool and dates from Iraq to India, in spite of occasional strong resistance by Ottoman administrators in Basra and Baghdad, who were concerned with the provision of the general population and sought to limit the export of grains.

Highly prized commodities of southern Iraq also included horses. As we have seen, before the age of motorization, no military power in India could ignore the acquisition of horses, of which only small quantities could be groomed in India itself. The elevation of the pure-bred Arabian horse, while not absent in some form from Mughal chronicles, only occurs at this date in European sources. Iraqi horses were so significant to the Bombay horse fair that every measure was undertaken to reduce the mortality of those horses during transportation, so that steamships avoided sailing in rough weather. British officials endeavored to introduce Indian

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365 HAT 397/20900, 1246Z29.
366 It is puzzling that we do not have much evidence of Jewish participation in the Ottoman-Indian trade before the eighteenth century. Most likely, much of the niche was filled by Armenian and Muslim Indian merchants. However, there was a strong Jewish commercial presence in Iraqi cities and according to M. Rozen, there are reports and travelogues by Ottoman Jewish merchants, especially one from Balkh in modern Afghanistan (personal communication).
369 The reader may recall that Mughals, including Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, distinguished quite precisely between Anatolian and Iraqi horses.
merchants who would compete with Iraqi horse-traders into local markets; the Ottoman authorities resisted, imposing several bans, which led to smuggling (to whose benefits at least some Ottomans were not immune). Complaints about the large numbers of animals exported from Iraq to India emerged. Although Iraqi horses were still preferred, British officials resorted to substituting them with horses from Kuwait and Oman. As late as 1911, the struggle was still unresolved and smuggling continued.

While the textile trade was in its last gasps, primary commodities from India were still profitable in the Persian Gulf area. Iraqi rice was more expensive than Indian rice in Kuwait, leading British steamships to land there every few months with a new load of Indian rice. A telegraph was sent to Istanbul from Basra indicating the names of the ships, but it is not clear whether further action was taken to prevent the trade. The mutasarrif of Yemen, subsequently the governor of Van, tried to import Indian cotton seeds. A German national called Faster imported phosphorus from Bengal into Izmir. One ‘Abdulali and his brothers, who were British subjects from India, specialized in selling ice. Eventually, they were forced to sell their enterprise because of low prices. Raw materials from India fell in price for several key commodities.

Conversely, Ottoman salt was taken to India and Ceylon through Iraq, leading to attempts to ban the trade. This was not an isolated instance, since we find mentions of salt trade with

370 A. MKT. MHM, 495/73, 1305Ca.
371 This dynamic is well-described in H. Fattah, The Politics of Regional Trade in Iraq, Arabia and the Gulf, 1745-1900 (Albany, 1997). Horses were smuggled from Mosul to India as well. BEO 1663/124664, 1319Ş.
372 DH.MKT 2512, 73, 1319R 5.
373 A. MKT. MHM, 313/79, 1281Ca.
374 Y.A. HUS 397/117, 1317S. Of course, the existence of the set term “Bengal match” makes the provenance of the matches more ambivalent.
375 DH. ID. 77/10 1330Ca06.
376 MKT.MVL 136/95, 1278C.
India as far north as Foça in Anatolia, including mentions that it was financed through banks in France.  

Salt was also taken to India through Jiddah, in spite of confiscations. However, we also have indications that Ottoman authorities had been interested in increasing salt trade to the extent of sending an investigator (müfettiş) to India in order to determine how widespread and popular (revâc u rağbet) Ottoman salt would be there. Other merchants, including those of Indian birth, tried to obtain official permission to trade. Since in India there was a demand for pig lead (külçe kurşun) which was obtained in Jiddah by Indian merchants, they requested that they be given the right to send it to India.

While they often opposed the export of certain commodities, Ottomans never banned or curtailed Indian trade. Donations of Indian rice for the poor of Medina were also accepted and freed of import charges. When a brief interruption in the trade at Basra occurred because of the bad condition of several ships, deliberation took place whether those aging ships should be replaced by new ones and whether the ships should be built in Basra or in India, subsequently bringing them to Basra. This implies that Indian-made ships were still used for the local trade in the Persian Gulf. Conversely, at least some of the ships made in Basra were considered adequate for the journey to India by the merchants.

Ottoman authorities intervened in many instances to facilitate the trade with India. High prices demanded by the local boatsmen (kayıkçı) for the transport of Indian goods to Basra and
Baghdad were condemned. In addition, it was stated that the stamps used in Jiddah were damaging the quality of textiles and other goods from India. The people of Bahrain were explicitly permitted to trade along Indian shores and receive presents from Bombay (Mumbai). A group of Ottoman merchants explicitly petitioned that the governor of Jiddah appoint a şehbender in Bombay, who would assist the needs of Ottoman merchants in India as well as “ensure good relations.” For a period, the Ottoman official resided in the neighboring Konkani villages, seemingly out of health concerns. Upon an outbreak of the plague, his pay was delayed.

Subsequently, a second şehbender, Haci Mehmed, was appointed to reside in Calcutta, explicitly entrusted with facilitating the trade by Ottoman merchants who arrived in India through the Hijaz. The şehbenders occasionally performed unexpected services, such as capturing the wife of an Ottoman subject who had been arrested in Basra and sending her back to Ottoman territory with the connivance of the British authorities. Yüzbaşı Mehmed Ağa, whose money was stolen while he was traveling from Basra to India, received a loan of 220 rupees from the şehbender in Bombay when he arrived in Yemen. Those officials are also favorably mentioned by Ahmed Hamdi Şirvanlı in his travelogue to India.

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384 A. AMD. 39/71, 1268Z.
385 A. MKT 16/36, 1260Ş.
386 A. MKT. UM, 543/48, 1278Ş.
387 HR. MKT, 19/5, 1264M.
388 I. MSM, 29/830, 1269Ra.
389 BEO 1164/87276, 1316Ra.
390 BEO 1173/87905, 1316Ra.
391 I. MSM, 30/833, 1264Ca. Also see A. AMD 4/25, 1264Ca.
392 BEO 465/34809, 1312Ş.
393 BEO 312/23376, 1311Ca and BEO 326/24404 1311Ca.
Suggestions of supplementing Indian goods were still made by Ottoman authorities. In an echo from the past, complaints arose about the imbalance in trade in 1854 because of the large number of Indian textiles in Iraq. It was recommended that several persons be sent to Baghdad in order to improve their techniques of dyeing with indigo, probably in order to make Indian textiles less attractive.\textsuperscript{395} In a subsequent document, it is stated that it would be preferable to bring experts from India who could instruct people in Baghdad how to dye the textiles, rather than relying on Egyptians as originally planned.\textsuperscript{396} Significantly, even at a late date, there are cases in which Ottoman authorities preferred to import Indian cotton after an inspection rather than allow Bulgarian cotton.\textsuperscript{397} Raw Indian cotton continued to be imported for factories at Salonica although it was subject to import tax.\textsuperscript{398} In yet other instances, the authorities deliberated whether Indian cottons should be taxed if they were brought into the empire by Ottoman subjects.\textsuperscript{399} Some cottons, for instance those specifically imported for the factory just outside of Yedikule, were exempt from import taxes in 1897.\textsuperscript{400}

4. Glimpses from the Hamidian era

The nineteenth-century cultural exchanges certainly merit a separate study, as surprising details come to light. One of them is the presence of an Islamic cemetery in Malta from 1871, commissioned by the Ottoman Sultan ‘Abdülaziz, built by an Italian architect and explicitly deriving its inspiration from Ibrahim Rauza Mausoleum in Bijapur from 1626, the Moti (Pearl)
mosque of 1662 in Delhi and the tomb of Safdar Jung in Delhi from 1773. These are all the more important since their building took place at perhaps the last unfolding of a consciously Ottoman cultural identity.\footnote{See T.M.P. Duggan, “The Ottoman “Taj Mahal” – an architectural masterpiece in danger”, Turkish Daily News, January 26, 2002.} Sometimes those interactions were symbolic, at other times practical. We have abundant records of Indian financial help to the Ottomans during the Balkan wars, including assistance sent to Ottoman soldiers in Crete.\footnote{BEO 1095/82104, 1315L.} Greater attention than before was also paid to the developments in Afghanistan. British lines of communication with India ran through Basra and were occasionally intercepted.\footnote{HAT 379/20252C 1955Z, HAT 379/20525 F 1255$.}

The increased presence of Indians and their status as British subjects led to an unprecedented development. Unlike before, the Ottoman state felt obliged to assist them on a regular basis, even granting them special privileges as fellow Muslims, but Ottoman authorities also increasingly observed and controlled their interactions with the local population to prevent harm or conflict with the British authorities.

In cases of theft, Indian merchants were entitled to reconstitution of their goods or the equivalent.\footnote{In one instance, Indian merchants had lost a total of two hundred and sixty British pounds through theft while traveling to the Holy Cities. They were reimbursed by the Ottoman authorities, BEO 1410/105692, 1317B, 24. It is not clear whether BEO 1410/10593, 1317B 24, refers to the same or a different group of Indian merchants, as the amount is indicated as two hundred and forty pounds and the location of theft is Jiddah.} Astonishingly, there is at least one case in which the children of Indian pilgrims had been stolen from their parents in Mecca. The culprit was found and sent to jail.\footnote{HR.TO, 256/8, June 1876.} Sometimes British consular representatives assisted their Indian subjects, confirming the amounts stolen and the identities of the pilgrims.\footnote{In this instance, the amount was substantially larger, as the value of merchandise and goods which had been stolen from Indian pilgrims on the route between Jiddah and Mecca was assessed at two thousand pounds. BEO}
recorded. One Indian merchant who ventured into Anatolia was attacked and robbed by Circassians at Adapazari. They were subsequently captured and punished, and the British embassy was extensively informed about the case. When a British subject of Indian origin killed a man in Konya and was convicted to permanent rowing on Ottoman ships, the British consul demanded that he be retried. Complaints were also made by the consulate on the behalf of some merchants of Anglo-Indian origin, such as one Thomas Marlaki (?), who accused the governor of Jiddah of interfering with the trade.

Conversely, Ottoman merchants in Aleppo complained about the inappropriate behavior of one Indian merchant, and a Baghdadi merchant attempted to seize the house of an Indian couple who were British subjects as collateral for their debt. British and Ottoman authorities cooperated in the cases of smuggling of weapons and slaves through Yemen, when the British colonial authorities in India were alerted of the possibility of Indian merchants being involved in these activities. Arrival of British ships from India in Basra was also monitored, and in some cases additional protection was provided for them by the Ottomans.

In spite of the concern for the demands of Indian pilgrims, Ottoman authorities remained suspicious of them. Their arrival as well as their departure from the Hijaz was documented. Occasionally additional information was exchanged on suspicious individuals between Ottomans

2565/192323, 1323S 14. Presumably because of diplomatic activities, the Hariciye Nazareti was the instance in charge of this matter.
407 A. MKT.DV, 151/23, 1276C.
408 DH. MKT. 1731/2, 1307L, DH. MKT, 1816/99, 1308B.
409 HR. HMS. ISO. 90/47, 1330 Ni.
410 A. MKT.UM, 11/40, 1266Ca.
411 HR.TO, 252/57, 23.07. 1877.
412 A MKT.UM, 495/70, 1278.
413 BEO 695/52089, 1313Ca03.
414 BEO 705/52863, 1313C01.
415 A MKT. MHM, 578/13, 1317M, 02.
and local rulers, as in one instance when a telegraph was sent to the Sadaret by the reis of the Kuwaiti tribes concerning a man from India called Ibrahim. Copies of the Qur’an which were brought into the Ottoman domain from Iran and India were subject to a ban and regularly confiscated and examined. Subsequently, detailed inspection of the contents was extended to books coming to Mecca from India, Egypt and Tunis. Suggestions were made that various “heretical” Indians and Khorasanis who did not belong to the four madhhab be expelled from Mecca and sent back to their homelands. At least temporarily, a marriage ban was imposed on Indians who wanted to wed Ottoman subjects. We have records of Indians who were arrested in Iraq.

In addition to moral contagion, physical illness was also feared. Ottoman authorities carefully noted instances of the plague (vebâ) originating from India, and in some instances pilgrims from India were quarantined in the Kamaran island. Perhaps surprisingly, the converse was also the case, because pilgrims who were suspected of having contracted contagious diseases were not always allowed to depart from Mecca and Medina. Ottomans as well as the British tried to compile lists on the precise number of Indians in certain susceptible

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417 A. MKT. MHM. 408/49, 03 1285Ș, The Meşihat was informed of Indian and Iranian Qur’âns which were seized from Indian and Iranian pilgrims and merchants in Baghdad.
418 DH. MKT, 1422/71, 1304N.
419 A. MKT. MHM, 458/46, 1260Ca.
420 DH. MKT, 1750/70, 1307L.
421 BEO 2656/199148 1323C28.
422 British authorities tried to contest the very notion of contagion. See the excellent work by S. Mishra, Pilgrimage, Politics and Pestilence: The Haj from the Indian Subcontinent (New Delhi, 2011).
423 See D. Panzac, La peste dans l’empire ottoman 1700-1850 (Louvain, 1985), where he mentions India as a source of plague quite frequently. A MKT. MHM, 573, 14, 1314Ca 02, A. MKT. MHM, 573/14, 1314Ca, MKT.MHM 575/16, 1315L.
424 BEO 146/10878, 1310B.
425 A MKT.MHM S558/1, 1310L.
In an effort to investigate the spread and the precise natures of the disease, a few Ottoman doctors were even sent to India on state expense. In at least one instance, it is recorded that an Ottoman subject contracted the plague in India. His name is given as Ohannes Efendi, one of French teachers at the Medical School in Istanbul. The duties of the Ottoman şehbender in Bombay included reporting on outbreaks of plague.

Occasionally, Javanese and Indian pilgrims complained to the Dutch and British consulates because of the quarantines and special exit taxes imposed on them. However, Ottomans were trying to reach out to Muslims in east Dutch Indies; one document states that since so far the khutba for the sultan is only read in Aceh and nowhere else in the region, several thousand copies of a text containing the ideal wording of the khutba is to be sent to the region (Cezâ’ir-i Hindiyye).

Circulation of Indian money was also forbidden and samples were sent to the authorities. However, those bans were not always effective, as other sources complain about the presence of Indian and Iranian silver and their free circulation in Basra. Foreign silver led to the decrease of value of Ottoman money locally. In addition to money, documents and stamps (mühür) were also falsified by some Indians to support claims of high status.

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426 HR. IMS. ISO, 218/13, 1302Ke, HR. IMS. ISO, 218/54, 1303M.
427 A. MKT. MHM, 598/7, 1319R.
428 BEO 325/24318, 1311C.
429 MKT.MHM. 575/14 1315N.
430 BEO 888/66528, 1314B.
431 Y.A. HUS, 386/52 1316Ş10.
432 DH. MKT.2026, 102, 1310Ca 11. These coins were brought into Ottoman lands by Pir Sayyid Ibrahim Efendi from Kilarpoh.
433 A. MKT. MHM, 496/20, 1305C.
434 A. MKT. MHM, 497/80, 1305Za.
435 DH. MKT. 1516/87, 1305L.
Certainly, an inflation of Indian princes and princely titles seems to have occurred in the
Ottoman lands. One Iqbal al-Daula, defined as “one among Indian princes”, received Ottoman
documentation for a house which he acquired in Baghdad.\footnote{I. HR, 223/13010, 1283Ş.}
In another document which exempts him from several taxes, his identity is clarified as belonging to the house of Awadh.\footnote{A. MKT. MHM, 142/77, 1275Ra.}
Another prince, Akbar Bey, received the nişân-i mecidi.\footnote{I. HR 277/16891, 1295C.}
The ruler of Rampur, Kalb ‘Ali Khan, and one of his noblemen were also given a nişân each.\footnote{I.HR, 819/66057, 1297M. In another document, there are details about his reception in Mecca. A. MKT MHM, 452/23, 1290Ş.}
Several other persons identified as “Indian princes” received support from the Ottomans in the form of an ‘atiyye.\footnote{I. DH 590/41068, 1286M, I.DH. 591/41131, 1286M.}
Another prince arrived in Alexandria with the intention of embarking for Istanbul.\footnote{BEO 183/13658, 1310N. In this instance, he seems to have been Malay from Johor, but he is defined as being from one of the independent rulers in India (Hindûstân ümerâ-i müstakillesinden).}
We also have a petition by the Agha Khan when he desired to visit Istanbul.\footnote{Y.PRK.EŞA 37/4, 1318Ş16}

Of course, we cannot be certain whether in some of those instances the “princes”,
genuine or not, arrived in the Ottoman empire or whether their decorations were sent to India.
However, in many cases documents are explicit. The precautions taken for the safe journey of an
unnamed Indian prince in Baghdad are detailed in another document.\footnote{A. DVN, 76/73, 1268C.}
One Sayyid Fazil Efendi from southern India (Malbari ahâlisinden olup) resided in Mecca.\footnote{A. MKT MHM, 148/34, 1275Ca.}
The ruler of Bhopal brought presents on his pilgrimage, sending them to Istanbul. In return, he was allotted a monetary
sum.\footnote{A. MKT MHM, 282/39, 1280Ca.}
Yet another Malabari prince was not allowed to return to his homeland by the British, leading him to

\footnote{A. MKT. MHM, 460/61, 1290C.}
establish himself in Mecca.447 Conversely, one Mehmed Tahir Bey, who seems to be an Ottoman subject, was given an Ottoman nişân while serving in the British army in India.448

Even more intriguingly, we occasionally encounter mentions of Ottoman subjects, including religious scholars, who traveled to India.449 In certain instances, knowledge of Indian languages was called for. One priest named Fender engaged in religious disputation (mubâhasa) with an Indian ‘âlim. When a book concerning this disputation was submitted to be published, Ottoman authorities rejected it, but they added that the disputants could have it printed at their own expense. The book is described as being in an “Indian language” (Hindce), presumably Urdu.450 Another book which claimed that an Indian herb could cure almost all diseases was banned from publication.451 Several books which belonged to the wife of an Indian doctor, Akbar Bey, were seized by Ottoman customs. Instead of the books, they received monetary compensation.452 Incidentally, that same Indian doctor translated a book on health and marriage, entitled Sihhatnâme-i Izdivâc, from Ottoman into Urdu. The book was also confiscated, but he received five hundred British pounds, which seems to be implausibly high amount. Perhaps it was a scribal mistake and the correct amount is five British pounds.453 Along more political lines, a jurnal described the conversation between one Ahmad al-Hami and a Muslim Indian, Tayyib ‘Ali Sahib, which took place on a ship to Jiddah. The Indian man purportedly described his intention to publish a book which would be damaging (muzir) to Ottoman reputation. The

447 BEO 788/59035, 1313Z.
448 A. DVN. 156/56, 1277Ra and A.DVN.MHM, 31/6, 1277Ş.
449 A. MKT, 222/92. 1265L.
450 A. MKT MHM, 361/34, 1283Ra.
451 DH. MKT, 1983/41, 1310M. For another similar case see I. HUS, 1/1310M-049.
452 Y.A. HUS 429/96, 1320Ş24.
453 BEO 1926/144391, 1320C.
publication of that book was prohibited.\textsuperscript{454} It seems that Hamidian zeal to control information mostly extended to communication between Indians and the Ottomans.

However, there was probably no comprehensive ban on books in Urdu, since it seems that at least some students were given instruction in Urdu before going to India,\textsuperscript{455} although some of them were indeed accused of publishing materials contrary to the şeri‘at, which was a reason for them to be expelled from the Holy Cities.\textsuperscript{456} In their attempt to preserve good relations with the British, Ottoman authorities also occasionally reported on the reception of Ottoman newspapers in India. An article by a Catholic author named Riko purportedly caused moral corruption (fesât) among Indian Muslims.\textsuperscript{457} Yet other newspapers and their editors were mentioned in laudatory ways by the şehbender in Bombay.\textsuperscript{458}

The Hamidian period also witnessed the first attempts to build a railroad connection from the Mediterranean to Basra,\textsuperscript{459} or alternatively through the land route from Üsküdar to India.\textsuperscript{460} Not all transportation projects were sponsored by foreigners. A company called Ticaret-i ‘Osmaniyye was given the permission to operate ships in Basra with the aim of facilitating the trade with India.\textsuperscript{461} In the following years, the governor of Basra and the mutasarrif of Ammare were accused of mismanaging boat transportation between Baghdad and Basra, leading to a suggestion that the ships be protected by Indian soldiers.\textsuperscript{462}

\textsuperscript{454} Y.PRK.AZJ, 10/21, 1302R26.
\textsuperscript{455} I. MVL 154/4373 1265Z.
\textsuperscript{456} A AMD. 11/66 1265Z.
\textsuperscript{457} BEO 1054/79015 1315B.
\textsuperscript{458} BEO 1378/103300 1317Ca.
\textsuperscript{459} A. MKT MHM, 442/18, 1288Z.
\textsuperscript{460} A. MKT. MHM, 434/75, 1290Ra. Baron Reuter, who intended to implement this project, was caught with falsified documents.
\textsuperscript{461} BEO 2544/190765, 1323M.
\textsuperscript{462} I.DH 1274, 100/154 1309L.
There had been precedents for sending British troops to India through Egypt, for which the British expressed gratitude to the Ottomans. Yet, even while relations with the British were stable, Ottomans expressed concern over the presence of Indian soldiers on British ships. Those soldiers were often introduced into Iraq as the personal guard of the British consuls, intended to prevent tribal attacks on British and Indian merchants. Even when their presence was accepted, there was much concern that they would occupy Sawakin. In one instance, it was noted that there were two hundred Indian soldiers on an English war ship which initially docked at Basra for four days, but then departed. Several Indians who had been residents in the Ottoman lands were accused of spying for the British.

With the beginning of World War I, the coasts of Iraq also experienced an increase in the presence of British ships. Ottoman archives inform us that in the fall of 1914, five thousand Indian soldiers were sent to Bahrain and from there onto Basra. From other sources, we know that those men belonged to the 6th division of the British army, which after initial successes suffered heavy losses in the siege of Kut in 1916. Incidentally, many of those men were forced to march through Anatolia, where almost half of them perished. Several of them fled from Ankara and had to be captured. While many of those soldiers were Sikhs and Nepali Hindu Gurkhas rather than Muslims, the interpretation of their religious creed offered by one Ottoman document is amusing. It states that British forces withdrew from Egypt and were replaced by Indian

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463 A. MKT MHM, 121/79, 1274R.
464 I.DH. 1274/100156, 1309L. Also see I. HR. 377, 1320 M-11, 1320M.
465 I.HR.352, 1314 M-34, 1314M, I. MTZ (05) 30/1663, 1313Z. Another ship was sighted in the vicinity of the Bab al-Mandib, DH.MKT, 2549/116, 1319B.
466 A.MKT 209/7, 1265$.
467 DH. SFR, 75/133, 1335C.
468 DH. EUM.4 Sb, 1/24, 1333CaO5.
469 DH. EUM6 Sb, 25/28, 1336M and DH. EUM6 SB, 25/30, 1336M. For more details on Indian soldiers in Anatolia (Ayancık, Bursa and Batum respectively), see DH.SFR, 595/60, 1334Ts, DH.SFR, 604/58, 1334Su, DH.SFR, 636/118, 1335E.
Buddhist (!) soldiers.\textsuperscript{470} This kind of mistake reflects the distribution and formation of new kinds of knowledge which was propagated in Ottoman and French newspapers; prior to the nineteenth century, few Ottomans would have been aware of Buddhists as a separate category in India. A document states that the Indian soldiers insisted on eating goat meat while in captivity.\textsuperscript{471} Some of the Indians were eventually able to obtain assistance from the American consul or the Red Cross.\textsuperscript{472} At least a few of them converted to Islam while in captivity and were recruited into the Ottoman military.\textsuperscript{473}

Paradoxically, as we have seen, connections with India both expanded and contracted in the nineteenth century after the British conquest of the subcontinent. In the course of this transformation, Ottoman attempts to control the presence of Indians in their realm increased. The vestigial suspicion that they might be heretics or infidels constantly loomed. Yet, there is also evidence of greater generosity of the Ottoman state, offered in order to assist Muslim Indians in the spirit of Pan-Islamism.

The mercantile transformation is similarly polyvalent. British steamships increased the speed and the frequency of commercial contacts with India, especially in Iraq and Yemen. While large sections of the British state and society intended to replace the bulk of Indian textile trade by their imitations, in which they eventually succeeded, trade between Iraq and India was still lucrative and desirable, and we have clear evidence that Ottomans and Indians participated in it throughout the nineteenth century. It was also under British auspices that Indian soldiers,

\textsuperscript{470} DH. EUM. KLU, 1/17, 133N. Modern Buddhism in most of India (except for the Himalayan region) owes its propagation to the efforts of Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar in the 1950s, making it highly likely that those soldiers were Hindus.\textsuperscript{471} DH.SFR 648/61, 1335 Ke13.\textsuperscript{472} HR.SYS, 2223/46, July 1917.\textsuperscript{473} I.HB, 167/1333Ca.
previously merely invoked as an “exotic” trope by some Ottoman poets, entered Iraq on the eve of World War I. While a detailed history of these interactions remains to be written, there is no doubt that Ottoman archives have the potential of redefining the parameters of the conventional narrative.
Conclusions

1. Retracing our steps

*Eğer Diyâr-i Hind‘in garâyibin zikr idersek sadetden çıkalur. Eyle olsa.* ¹

The Lalbhai Dalpatbhai Museum in Ahmadabad (Gujarat) consists of several secluded rooms which are especially pleasant in the summer. In addition to statuary, there are manuscripts of Jain provenance from ca.1658, illustrating an edifying narrative whose main hero is a merchant traveling to Sri Lanka, Multan and Ethiopia. From a cursory examination, there seems to be no mention of Ottomans. But we have learned that an Ethiopian embassy to Aurangzeb from this period was led by two men who were either born in Ottoman lands or who traded there; thus, mentions of Ethiopia can be quite relevant to Ottomanists.

Yet, this afternoon, our focus is elsewhere. Facing the panels with the manuscript illustrations is a magnificent large painting of Jahangir and his court, executed by Salivahana in 1610. The painting has a technical name: Vijñaptipatra, a letter of solicitation from Jain laymen to their spiritual preceptors. In this instance, it is an invitation from Agra to a Gujarati Jain monk. While in Agra, the monks requested Jahangir to stop the killing of animals for twelve days, and Jahangir accepted their petition. The painting presents the moment in which Jahangir proclaimed his decree, in front of a court teeming with noblemen and petitioners.

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Surprisingly, the Vijñaptipatra reveals the disingenuous nature of Jahangir’s claim that there were no men from the Ottoman realm in India. As it is well-known, access to the emperor was regulated by two gates. Members of the imperial family and high noblemen are usually within the first enclosure, closer to the throne and the emperor. Within the second enclosure, we see several remarkable men. One of them is a western European with a hat in his hand. On the opposite side, there are three men with guns, among whom there is an Abyssinian (Habashi).

In the lower right corner, there is yet another group of three men. One of them sports a shaven head, contrary to the Mughal custom. His head covering is striking: it is blue, with a flap which folds to the back, resembling Janissary gear. Above his head is an inscription in clear Devanagari script, reading “Arabi.” We ponder whether he might have been a renegade Janissary from Syria, or one of the men described by the anonymous author of the Kitâb-i Müstetâb who engaged in trade with India while remaining on the Ottoman payroll. Yet the man directly next to him engages us even more intensely. He wears green clothing. There is a feather adorning his turban, which has a round base and a peaked top, vaguely resembling Safavid caps. The inscription above his head, also executed in clear Devanagari, says “Rumi.” The third man in the group, also of relatively pale complexion, sports a distinct turban and a shaven head as well.

Rumi men formed our entrance point to the complex maze of Ottoman-Indian relations.

As we have learned, they predated the Ottoman empire, first being attested in the Delhi sultanate of the thirteenth century. They were initially Christian Anatolians, but they later came to include

2 The language of the document is Marwari, better known outside of India as Rajasthani. Its relationship to Hindi can be roughly compared to the one between Azeri and Istanbuli Turkish.
3 Unfortunately, in spite of our research visa, we were not given the permission to photograph the middle section of the painting. However, we discovered later that the painting is extensively described in H. Sastri, Ancient Vijñaptipatras (Baroda, 1942), p.19ff.
Muslims and men from the Caucasus and the Balkans as well. Their presence was widespread across the Indian Ocean, ranging from Ethiopia and Yemen to the coasts of Gujarat and Konkan. They could be spotted in Muslim and Hindu Deccani states, often as specialists in guns and architecture. We even find them in the Malay world and the Thai kingdom. In the past, their presence was often simply subsumed under that of “Turks”, which could mean anything from denizens of Transoxiana to Ottomans. Furthermore, any notice of Rumis was immediately interpreted by the scholarship as a direct involvement of the Ottoman state. Yet, we have discovered that their allegiances were layered and that they often merely played the part of intermediaries; others, who fled to India in an attempt to avoid interactions with the authorities, even preferred to remain distant from Ottoman power. Many of them ascended to high positions at the courts of the Indian Ocean world; others disappeared without a trace. Their presence in the Indian Ocean has been primarily studied through Portuguese sources; yet, even richer materials in Persian and Arabic have been previously neglected. Particularly intriguing are their ventures in southern India, attested through the chronicles of the Deccani sultanates which we hope to integrate in a future incarnation of this study.

The importance of Rumis as political actors fades with the rise of the Mughal empire. While Mughals evidently included Rumis at their court, they favored many other groups above them, including Rajputs, Iranian-born men and Uzbeks. In the course of the seventeenth century, the Mughal empire was perhaps the wealthiest and the most stable state in the world. Fully conscious of their glory, Mughal emperors only reluctantly engaged in diplomatic

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4 See for instance H.G. Keene, *Turks in India* (New Delhi, 1972).
5 Of course, the accumulation of immense wealth in India did not translate into a comfortable life for the majority of early modern Indian population; this should not astonish us, since (in this respect at least), a parallel with contemporary China can be drawn. Nevertheless, it is established that the lot of most weavers was considerably better before the British Raj than during the nineteenth century.
correspondence with Ottomans. In spite of the often-evoked impediment of distances, those interactions were frequent whenever there was sufficient political will. At other times, they were completely absent. While the rhetorical flourishes often emphasized Sunni solidarity, many of their interchanges revolved around financial assistance or minutiae of titulature. Even in the eighteenth century, when Mughal power became reduced to mere symbolic reassurances, Mughal emperors and noblemen were reluctant to concede the presence of a caliphate in Ottoman lands. This pattern continued even among other Indian potentates. Neither Ahmad Shah nor Tipu Sultan addressed the Ottomans as caliphs; they reserve that title for the Mughals or for the prophet Muhammad.

In the fifteenth century, Ottoman literary evocations of India are playful. They are mostly variations of themes from the classical Persian heritage, featuring Indians as devious slaves, keepers of treasures, or occasionally seductive beloveds. Indian hegemonic claims could easily be ignored in most of the Ottoman empire, except perhaps in Iraq. Yet as the Mughals rose to power and as their wealth became proverbial, Ottoman depictions of India grew in complexity. Ottoman poetry includes extensive mentions of Indian trade and commodities. Sometimes Indian pâdishâhs and their armies are evoked; at other times, we hear of Mughal poets such as Fayzi or Bidil. Several important Ottoman prose writers from Mustafa ‘Ali to Katib Çelebi and Evliya included extensive mentions of India in their works, and Ottoman court historians kept track of Indian embassies. In spite of enormous difficulties faced by the Ottomans in the eighteenth century, the collapse of rival Safavid and Mughal empires reinforced a triumphalist rhetoric in Ottoman poetry, starting with Nedim. As the century progressed, negative connotations of India were once again replaced with positive ones. Particularly frequent are evocations of Kashmir and its beauty, continuing up until the 1820s.
The physical presence of India in the Ottoman empire is primarily attested through textiles. While Ottomans certainly partook in the general Eurasian craze for Indian textiles in the seventeenth century, most of those garments are difficult to trace through visual evidence. In the eighteenth century, an astonishing process unfolds as Indian imperial languages of flowers spread in the Safavid and Ottoman lands. A wide range of textiles, from the already traditionally favored muslins to mixed silk and cottons and brocades, entered Ottoman lands, perhaps even peaking in the late eighteenth century. At this point, Ottoman sultans issued futile bans against Indian clothing, but they were unable to implement them. Indian flowered textiles, worn initially by women and subordinates, became the marker of power and wealth even among men for a few decades. Additionally, Kashmiri shawls, striped and flowered, were ubiquitous among elites and upstarts alike. With the clothing reforms of the 1830s, Indian and Indianizing fabrics gradually receded into domestic spaces, but Indian muslins and Kashmiri shawls remained important for the self-understanding of traditional households. Even in the early twentieth century, some Ottomans, such as ‘Abdülaziz Bey, retained some sensitivity to their coded messages. Finally, it seems that Kashmiri and central Asian aesthetics still influenced layers of outermost gear within folk traditions of the former Ottoman empire, as we can find similar patterns on Greek and Kashmiri coats from the nineteenth century. Particularly this last phase of Indian textile trade is unknown and it requires elucidation through a combination of visual and textual sources. The history of Indian textiles in the Ottoman empire also needs to be combined with similar and disparate trends in the Iran and the Caucasus so that its specificities can be defined.

In our last chapter, we employed the Ottoman archival sources in order to uncover some of the tendencies of trade and political interactions during the British conquest of India. While large sections of textile trade, particularly those of Bengal, were affected in the 1850s, other
venues of trade opened up with the Suez canal. Primary materials, such as yarn or rice, grew in importance. Yet, British hegemony also facilitated the influx of Indians into the Ottoman empire. The spectrum of Indians entering Ottoman lands was wide, ranging from impoverished pilgrims to political dissidents and Muslim princes. The Ottomans became gradually aware of the importance of those connections, particularly during the Hamidian period, when Indians were often suspected of heresy and supervised, but also honored and given material support. These paradoxical tendencies are also visible in the Ottoman encouragement of trade with India through the institutions of şehbenders and the simultaneous endeavors to restrict the outflow of commodities from Iraq. Indian men make a last dramatic appearance during World War I, inverting the ancient narrative of Rumi's. They acted as mercenaries and conscripts in the British army. Many of them were captured and brought to Anatolia. Their memory is largely ignored in the subsequent political upheavals. Yet, the rise of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk encountered a largely positive response among Indian Muslims. Pakistan, in its official identity as a Sunni state, still highly values interactions with Turkey. With the recent Turkish involvement in Afghani matters, some of those ties may be reinforced, leading to new studies which could elucidate the finer dynamics of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

As stated in our introduction, our intention in this study was to display the wide palette of Ottoman interactions with India. In the course of almost five centuries, they were sometimes tangential and imaginary; at other times, they were concrete and vital to Ottoman concerns. We have touched upon many topics, sometimes revising and sometimes confirming older scholarship. Yet, before our caravan alights for a well-deserved rest, we would like to briefly address some practical and theoretical aspects of two crucial phenomena: trade and hegemony.
2. Totgesagte leben länger: the Oriental / Levantine trade

The second half of the nineteenth century was undoubtedly a key moment in human history. We have seen that most of the presuppositions concerning interactions between India and the Ottoman empire were shaped by the intellectual atmosphere of the 1860s-1880s, in which many global elites learned to read French, English or German. The concept of “Oriental trade” and its demise was shaped by the triumphant opening of the Suez route. In the conclusion to his influential study on the history of Levantine trade, entitled “Erschöpfung der Handelsnationen am Mittelmeer”, W. Heyd stated:

“Wenn irgend etwas dem Levantehandel der Mittelmeernationen wieder hätte auf die Beine helfen können, so wäre dies der Stich des Isthmus von Suez gewesen. In Venedig dachten um 1500 Manche an dieses Radicallmittel [...] Erst die Türken nahmen, als sie in den Besitz Aegyptens [sic] gekommen waren, das Project wieder auf [...] Das Werk wurde damals nicht zu Ende geführt. Es war unserer Zeit vorbehalten, eine noch grossartigere Wasserstrasse vom rothen Meer zum mittelländischen gezogen zu sehen.”

As we mentioned in our first section, Heyd’s work was translated into French and it became so influential that it is still easily available in Turkish.

In many ways, it encapsulated the spirit of the times. Similar to the contemporary Portuguese historiography, it was elegiac and melancholy, a paean to Italian cities. Simultaneously, it celebrated the achievements of the most recent period, merging the end of the crusades, the Portuguese discoveries and the British conquest of India into a solid, irresistible narrative of victory of West over East.

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In the course of the following decades, while “Oriental trade” was indeed disappearing, several curious debates unfolded. One of them concerned the demise of the “Oriental trade”. Did it occur after the collapse of the Abbasid power, as early as the tenth century? Was it destroyed by Crusaders and the Mongols, or by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century? Did it still linger on when English merchants arrived in India? What was the role of Islam? Who was blocking whom – did the “Turks” (including both Mamluks and Ottomans) obstruct European access to the Indian Ocean or vice versa?

Those debates were never fully settled. Except for a universal agreement on the decline of the Muslim empires, no other conclusions were made. Consequently, conventional historiography portrays the Indian Ocean trade with western Asia as somewhat as a zombie, continuously dying and coming back to life in the course of the last 1000 years. We encounter statements which claim that the Indian Ocean trade with Arabic-speaking lands was already superseded at some point between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries, after the Abbasids declined, and that it never again recovered. This thesis was resurrected with much success in the framework of world-systems theory. In the Mediterranean, a corresponding obstructionist argument was formulated by H. Pirenne.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, much of historical discourse was shaped by A. Toynbee, who was also a consultant on Middle East affairs. Toynbee had an explicit preference for Iran and Iranians and he viewed Ottomans and Turks in distinctly

unflattering terms.\textsuperscript{11} In his later years, he stated more benevolently that Ottomans found themselves “encircled in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans [...] and these sixteenth-century events \textbf{predestined} the Osmanlis to lose the prize of being the direct architects of a twentieth-century or twenty-first-century world-state.”\textsuperscript{12} A. Lybyer, who was more sympathetic to Ottomans, at least claimed that they did not deliver the \textit{coup de grâce} to the trade:

“They were not active agents in deliberately obstructing the [trade] routes. They did not by their notorious indifference and conservatism greatly [...] increase the difficulties of the oriental traffic [...] the greatest of Ottoman conquerors were powerless in their efforts to bring back the lucrative flow of Eastern wares [...] The desolation of Egypt and Syria, the decline of the Italian cities, \textbf{perhaps the very decay of the Ottoman empire itself}, are due, not to them, but to the great discoveries, in which, positively or negatively, they had no discernible part.” (emphasis mine)\textsuperscript{13}

According to this formulation, the Oriental trade died a spectacular death in Egypt when Albuquerque attacked Hormuz, Goa, Aden and east African ports in the sixteenth century. Ottomans, being an Asian power, were doomed to fail in spite of their best efforts. We have discussed some of the implications of this world-view in our first chapter; deplorably, this is still the most prevalent version of the events in popular history, and it occasionally resurfaces in specialist literature as well.

In European scholarship, the thesis about the decline of “Oriental trade” has been reformulated since the 1940s. It has been demonstrated that pepper trade was resuscitated in the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{11} M. Gold, “Toynbee on the Turks in the Near and Middle East”, JRAS, 3-4, 1961.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} A.H. Lybyer, “The Ottoman Turks and the Routes of Oriental Trade”, \textit{The English Historical Review}, 30 (120), 1915.
\end{itemize}
period 1530s-1570s, partially through the contacts between Ottomans and the Acehnese. After the 1540s, Portuguese colonial authorities consistently preferred to carry out trade with the Ottomans and the Safavids in spite of reservations in Lisbon. The new narrative was rounded off through the very influential work of N. Steensgaard, who claimed that direct Indian Ocean trade ended with the conquest of Hormuz in 1622, when superior northwest European companies took over. This early seventeenth-century periodization is still the most accepted hypothesis within the Europeanist field.

Within the Turkish context, both tendencies can be encountered. Notably, the “Oriental trade” is not a neutral idea. It evokes the ghost of ages past, symbolizing not only exotic spices and silk, but also camels and expensive Yemeni coffee, all of which were connected with an undesirable Oriental self. Consequently, it is coded as both alluring and destructive. According to M. Akdağ’s interpretation of early Ottoman trade, still frequently reprinted, it was under the Byzantines and the Abbasids that the west Asian region came to not merely consume Chinese silk and Indian cottons, but also to imitate them and produce their own, which in term harmed Chinese and Indian production. However, it was because of its traditional love for luxurious clothes, Russian furs and eastern jewels (geleneksel bir mücevher düşkünliğinden ötürü) that

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15 N. Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century: The East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Chicago, 1973). In Europe, the book was originally published under the title *Carracks, Caravans and Companies* (Copenhagen, 1973).
16 For the replacement of coffee with tea, see R. Matthee, “From Coffee to Tea: Shifting Patterns of Consumption in Qajar Iran”, *Journal of World History*, 7 (2), 1996. For camels, see H. Inalcik, “‘Arab’ Camel Drivers in Western Anatolia in the fifteenth century” in *Essays in Ottoman History* (Istanbul, 1998).
17 One of the basic flaws in this approach is the presupposition of coherent unities such as the Middle East, India and China, which are presented as hermetic and resembling nation-states and thus must compete on the same grounds. This is emphasized by the expressions such as uyruk and mills speaking of the Ottomans versus Iranian and European merchants.
Turkey became a poor and “Eastern” country even under Süleyman.\textsuperscript{18} Rather strangely, in the case of Europe, striving for Asian commerce somehow produced wealth, but for the Ottomans, it produced poverty. Deplorably, moralistic arguments about pleasure and shame replace evidence in such a discourse.

Only in recent years have Turkish scholars begun to integrate more recent historiographic developments.\textsuperscript{19} Ş. Pamuk’s influential study on Ottoman monetary history closely follows Steensgaard’s formulation:

“Yet another adverse development for both the economy and state finances was the impact of the discovery of the sea route to Asia upon the intercontinental trade routes which passed through the Ottoman Empire. After a setback at the beginning of the sixteenth century, these trade routes had regained their former importance, and by the end of the century, the transcontinental caravan routes reached dimensions which must be regarded as their historical peak. The shift of the intercontinental trade to the Indian Ocean did not come until the early decades of the seventeenth century when the Dutch and English trading companies wrested control away from the Portuguese.”\textsuperscript{20}

In spite of Pamuk’s impressive scholarship, it is not clear why he prefers the 1630s as the end-point of Indian trade. Other renowned Ottomanists, such as Inalcik, Islamoğlu, Zilfi and Quataeert have pointed out that Indian trade with Ottoman lands existed at least into the 1830s. The picture emerging in the course of the last few decades is even more complex, leading us to wonder whether remnants of the trade existed even in the early twentieth century.\textsuperscript{21} Notably, Steensgaard’s study, while path-breaking for its time, omitted many questions. It is not at all

\textsuperscript{19} See for instance A. M. Küçükkalay, \textit{Coğrafi keşifler ve ekonomiler, Avrupa ve Osmanlı Devleti} (Konya, 2001). The author is aware of the revival of spice trade in the second half of the sixteenth century and he concludes that Ottoman “Oriental trade” was only destroyed in the eighteenth century. Deplorably, several names of places in India are misspelled, thus producing “Cucarat” instead of “Gujarat”.
\textsuperscript{20} Ş. Pamuk, \textit{A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire} (Cambridge, 2000), p.138f.
obvious why a conquest of Hormuz, which was eventually dominated by Iranians, should signify the end of the “Oriental trade” *tout court*. The sudden rise and fall of individual ports was a common phenomenon in the Indian Ocean even in antiquity. Often it was due to the gradual silting up of harbors rather than to any political or commercial decisions.

Early modern merchants aimed at displacing each other in the Indian Ocean, not at destroying their markets. In England, a syndicate of merchants was granted monopoly in trade with the Ottoman empire in 1581, with a clear intention to keep the trade route from Basra to Aleppo open. Incidentally, the interest in this particular route never abated among British merchants; we have detailed travelogues particularly in the eighteenth century, but several are also composed until the 1930s.22 Opening up the Red Sea route remained one of the unfulfilled goals of most western European states, including even Austro-Hungarian projects. We also know from British, French and Dutch sources that the Cape route and the Levant route were always seen as complimentary. The conflict of interests between different groups of merchants within Britain persisted up until the nineteenth century. Groups affiliated with the East India Company wanted to sell Indian textiles within Britain and other countries; domestically-based producers demanded a greater market share for their own commodities. Yet, this was not a zero-sum game; there were many attempts to dominate and adjust the networks rather than destroy Indian textile trade.23 If trade in chintzes was not allowed in Britain itself, British merchants offered them in numerous markets abroad, bringing some of the profits back home.

In addition, we must not forget that the early modern period was a time of contestation between western European powers. They never acted as one clearly defined entity, jointly opposed to the “Arab / Muslim merchant.” Early English merchants certainly suffered more at the hands of Portuguese and Italians, who viewed them as competition, than through Ottomans and Mughals, who were largely benevolent to their commercial propositions. Portuguese Jesuits prevented the English in their first attempt to establish a factory in Surat in 1610, while in 1623 the “massacre of Amboyne” provided an overture to the numerous military conflicts between the Dutch and the English. It should also be recalled that British merchants originally resorted to selling Indian textiles in western Asian markets because they had been excluded from the spice trade by the Dutch. Consequently, there was a hiatus in Indian trade in the 1640s, when the English even considered completely abandoning it. Several vicious wars between the Dutch and the English (1652-1654, 1665-1667, 1672-1674) took place on multiple fronts.

In the seventeenth century, the Dutch clearly emerged as triumphant, dominating a large portion of southeast Asia and many of the spice networks.24 English merchants, having lost access to spices, acted from a position of weakness in concentrating upon the textile trade. They regularly made their ships available to Indian and Armenian merchants, consistently endeavoring to strengthen ties between the Arab peninsula and India rather than weaken them. However, both Dutch and English merchants enjoyed mixed success with Persian silk trade, in which unfavorable conditions were constantly imposed on them by the Iranian state.25 They were also forced to realize that it was almost impossible to maintain a foothold in Yemen or in the Red

Sea.\textsuperscript{26} While commerce regularly flourished in Basra, it was also often affected by political conflicts. The volatility led all European merchants to rely upon several ports in the Perso-Arab gulf rather than just one.\textsuperscript{27} Through the presence of so many actors, the overall volume of trade tended to increase over time, leading to periodical gluts and short-lived cycles of bust and boom. Because there were so many centers of production and distribution, it is impossible to tie the entire trade to the fate of one particular port, such as Hormuz.

In the course of the eighteenth century, while the Dutch weakened in India, they were replaced in some of their networks by the French, who profited from their close relations to the Ottoman empire. Yet, only recently has there been an increased awareness of the French involvement in eighteenth-century Ottoman ports.\textsuperscript{28} Franco-Ottoman trade has not yet been connected with French activities in India, or indeed with their strategies in the Americas.\textsuperscript{29} Particularly within Ottomanist scholarship, late eighteenth and nineteenth century France, England and Anatolia are analyzed as if they were competing nation-states rather than empires, and many studies of Ottoman ports completely concentrate on European interactions, with only a cursory mention of any Indian commodities. Additionally, there were many other players in the Indian Ocean arena, including pirates of all stripes and the Omanis, whose rise to power has not yet been adequately described in the scholarship.

\textsuperscript{26} C.G. Brouwer, “Willem de Milde, Kani Shalab and Fadil Basha: A Servant of the Dutch East Indian Company Received in Audience by the Beglerbegi of Yemen, 1622-1624” in G. van Gelder, E. de Moor, \textit{Eastward Bound: Dutch Ventures and Adventures in the Middle East} (Amsterdam, 1994).

\textsuperscript{27} W. Floor, \textit{The Persian Gulf: A Political and Economic History of Five Port Cities 1500-1730} (Washington, 2006).


\textsuperscript{29} There is the notable exception of S. Yılmaz, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun Doğu ile Ekonomik İlişkileri: XVIII. Yüzyıllın Ikinci Yarısında Osmanlı-Hind Ticareti ile İlgili bir Araştırma, Fransız Arşivlerden”. For part I, see \textit{Belleten}, 56 (215). For part II, see 56 (217), 1992.
Consequently, western European archives remain a crucial area of study, but their evidence must be combined with sources in Persian, Ottoman, Arabic and other languages in order to be comprehensive and relevant to the fields touched upon in this study. Crucially, we must integrate the contemporary perspective: Before the nineteenth century, western European merchants played the part of intermediaries for Eurasian empires. As such, they were welcome and well-integrated within the commercial networks of the period. Monopoly was practically impossible, except in very small geographic areas such as the Dutch-dominated Maluku islands. Even in those cases, there were significant contestations of power. Anachronistic retrojections of colonial power onto pre-nineteenth-century realities are not only disadvantageous to Eurasian empires; they also portray western Europeans in the Indian Ocean in an inadequate light, often depriving them of their individuality and agency.

Many scholars of Iran or India with an interest in the Indian Ocean have been able to demonstrate the vitality of “Oriental trade” throughout the early modern period; unfortunately, most Ottomanists have not yet integrated the results of their research. J. Aubin demonstrated the Indian Ocean trade was vibrant at the time of Portuguese arrival, and that there were many contestations which prevented the Portuguese from carrying out their ambitious plans of domination. Microstudies were popular in the 1970s and the 1980s, displaying the position of strength from which most Indian coastal ports operated up until the 1750s. In particular, A. Das Gupta’s study, initially doomed to obscurity but later elevated to the status of a classic, claimed that the Indian Ocean trade with west Asia disappeared only in the 1730s with the decline of

30 For an excellent analysis of European commercial presence in the Indian Ocean, see O. Prakash, European commercial enterprise in pre-colonial India, The New Cambridge History of India, II.5 (Cambridge, 1998).
31 Practically all of J. Aubin’s work elaborates the nexus between trade and politics in the Persian Gulf. For a brief statement, see Y a-t-il eu interruption du commerce par mer entre le Golfe Persique et l’Inde du XIe au XIVe siècle? (Lisbon, 1963).
The port of Surat also remained the focus for several other studies. Commercial networks of the Coromandel coast have also been investigated, although they are relatively less important for Ottomanist purposes; unfortunately, a perspective on regular interactions between Golconda and the Safavid realm is still missing. Several valuable studies have shifted the focus from the realm of distribution to the world of production, concentrating on weavers. However, areas which are of particular relevance for the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, including the inland provinces of Bihar, Panjab and Rajasthan, are still relatively understudied. In the case of Bengal, Panjab and Sind, the traumatic experience of the Partition in the twentieth century still impedes detailed and locally rooted studies.

The impact of contemporary politics has also shaped Ottomanist discussions. It is regrettable that there are no studies of Armenian merchants specifically dedicated to the Ottoman empire. Even the most cursory acquaintance with Armenian sources indicates that much is to be gained from an integration of this kind of evidence, but most researchers have preferred to focus on the center of New Julfa in Iran rather than on Anatolian or Arab connections. In addition, the lack of a sustained dialogue between Arab and Turkish historians has contributed to an absence of studies of Indian trade in the Arab provinces. Fortunately, the last two decades have witnessed

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33 B. Gokhale, *Surat in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1979); R. Maloni, *Surat, Port of the Mughal Empire* (Mumbai, 2003); P.K. Mitra, *Port Towns in Medieval India (1604 AD-1707 AD), A Case of Surat* (Calcutta, 1995). In addition, there is a sizable number of articles.
36 In the case of Bengal, there is a fair number of post-colonial studies, but very few concentrate on international trade under the Mughals. See O. Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal, 1630-1720* (Princeton, 1985); S. Chaudhury, *Trade and Commercial Organization in Bengal 1650-1720* (Calcutta, 1975); S. Chaudhury, *From Prosperity to Decline, Eighteenth Century Bengal* (New Delhi, 1995).
a few remarkable studies on Iraqi cities, with frequent mentions of India.\textsuperscript{37} Yet, it is almost unconceivable that there are no significant studies of Baghdad, in spite of its importance as a nodal point of Indian trade and a place where Ottomans, Indians, Persians and Europeans met. Ottoman archives, Arabic chronicles and biographical dictionaries and European travelogues surely offer rich potential for such a study; in addition, it is only in Iraq that we encounter a significant number of Jewish merchants engaged in Indian trade.

The land trade routes have also been neglected. Only recently have we learned that they were still vibrant in central Asia into the nineteenth century. Mughal chronicles have also offered a glimpse of their importance.\textsuperscript{38} The Rajasthani desert offers auspicious conditions for the preservation of archives which also contain materials relevant to eighteenth-century textile trade with western Asia. They are still waiting to be explored. Many other regions, such as Oman, Yemen, east Africa and the Makran coast, have not yet been sufficiently incorporated within the main narrative.

Moreover, the very concept of “Oriental trade” needs to be unpacked. Once upon a time, it was appropriate for commodities originating to the east of Italy. However, from an Ottoman, let alone an Indian perspective, it is revealed as a composite of widely disparate elements. First, there is the question of spices and condiments. Particularly the pepper trade connected western Asia, including Egypt and Yemen, to the Malay world and southern India. When we read of Portuguese interference in Indian Ocean trade, it usually refers to those networks. While the Dutch quite successfully disrupted Portuguese arrangements with local powers to acquire pepper,

\begin{itemize}
  \item D. Rizk Khoury, \textit{State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540-1834} (Cambridge, 2002).
  \item A. Satyal, \textit{The Mughal Empire, Overland Trade, and Merchants of Northern India, 1526-1707} (Doctoral dissertation, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, 2008).
\end{itemize}
they were also able to establish themselves in the “Spice Islands” east of Sulawesi, tapping nutmeg and mace at the source. Consequently, any study of spice trade in Ottoman lands must indeed engage with Portuguese and Dutch archival materials. It is indeed very likely that the Dutch came to dominate the supply side in the Istanbul spice markets, but there are very few studies on this question and they do not consider changes in taste or the connections between Anatolian cities and Egypt, Yemen or Iraq.³⁹ The role of Aceh, which was not conquered by the Dutch before the 1890s, has not yet been sufficiently clarified either. In terms of Istanbul market, we can only say with certainty that the rise and fall in spice consumption does not quite overlap with that of Indian textiles.

Second, there is the trade in Yemeni coffee. Ottoman sources often mention Yemen and India in the same breath, but it seems that coffee was more closely connected with the Red Sea and the pilgrimage cycle than textiles ever were. Most likely, much of the Jiddah textile trade was oriented toward Egyptian tastes and preferences rather than those of Istanbul. The intriguing studies by M. Tuchscherer indicate that Muslim traders, including those of Anatolian origin, were present in the Red Sea Indian trade.⁴⁰ Conversely, we have archaeological evidence of Indian-made ships in the area. Nevertheless, the Yemeni branch of trade was subject to different constraints and should be studied separately, with a strong emphasis on Arabic-language sources, in particular chronicles and sicills.

³⁹ M. Bulut, Ottoman-Dutch Economic Relations in the Early Modern Period, 1571-1699 (Hilversum, 2001). There is a large number of printed sources from the Dutch archives which have never been examined from a perspective of Ottoman-Indian trade. See for instance Heeringa, Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis van den Levantschen Handel (’s-Gravenhage, 1917) or the massive collections of Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-General en Raden Aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, 1610-1722, 7 vols. (’s-Gravenhage, 1919-1953), ed. by W. Coolhaas, and the 31 volumes of Dagb-Register gehouden in ’t Casteel Batavia, 1624-1682 (’s-Gravenhage, 1887-1931). Incidentally, even the well-known collection by W. Foster and C. Fawcett, eds., The English Factories in India 1610-1684 (Oxford, 1906-1955) has never been systematically examined for trade with the Ottoman lands either.

Third, there is the vast field of textiles. As we have seen in our discussion in chapter seven, many different kinds of Indian textiles were available in Ottoman lands. Depending upon their provenance and purpose, they were distributed through different networks. Hence, ideally, the study of Bengali and Bihari muslins should be quite separate from that of Rajasthani and Gujarati silk brocades or of Kashmiri shawls. The example of chintzes has taught us that textiles which were exceedingly popular in western Europe had a different significance among Ottomans or Iranians. Ottoman-made imitations, often produced in Iraq, Syria or Istanbul itself, add yet another layer of complexity. Most likely, they must be studied through a combination of Ottoman and Armenian sources, since many of those factories belonged to Armenians. In addition, those imitations were often exported to France, where they inspired a slightly different aesthetic, whose presence in Ottoman territory must be examined with a sharpened awareness of similarities and differences.

There is also the intricate question of Persian imitations, affecting especially cottons and Kermani shawls even into the twentieth century. Traditional historians have tended to merge the Indian or Indianizing textiles in the Ottoman empire with Persian silks, especially in the sixteenth century. Yet, Ottoman sources tend to be clear in their descriptions of provenance, separating Persian from Indian textiles, and there is no reason for us to do otherwise. On the supply side, we insufficiently understand Mughal versus post-Mughal production and distribution, with different points of origin and possibly different commercial networks. We also must always keep in mind that unlike coffee or even spices, Indian textiles were also a mark of status differentiation. Thus, many nuances which are unfamiliar to us were obvious to Ottomans. Consequently, in addition to combining archival, textual and visual evidence, we must also learn how to train our gaze in order to recognize some of those fine distinctions.
Fourth, there is the transformation of Indian trade which takes hold in the mid-nineteenth century. We addressed briefly some of its manifestations in our final chapter. Primary products, such as cotton (including yarn), rice and indigo are significant at this stage, especially in Iraq. They cannot be recognized from visual evidence, but they can be analyzed in greater detail because of the wealth of nineteenth-century Ottoman archives. Probably the vagaries of these commercial ties also offer some indications about the final stages of the Indian textile trade, but a closer investigation is necessary to understand these connections.

Finally, the cluster of questions concerning agency and locations must be addressed by a series of studies. Concretely, the rise and fall of many cities involved in Indian trade must be analyzed from a perspective which is both local and global, as it needs to be aware of how the forces of supply and demand, of production and distribution, reacted to each other. Once we have a series of studies on hitherto neglected production areas, in particular Bihar, Sind and Panjab, we will be able to discern a more global perspective. Recent studies have sought to integrate perspectives on different Persian Gulf cities, but the perspective has not yet been expanded to include their connections with Indian cities. From the Ottoman side, studies of Basra, Baghdad, Mosul, Diyarbakir, Aleppo, Jiddah, Suez and various parts of Istanbul would be particularly significant. In addition to locations, the question of actors remains crucial, as we have indicated throughout this section. We need studies which will address the presence of Anatolian Armenians or Iraqi Jews (and Muslims) in India; conversely, studies on Indians in Ottoman lands, particularly the Arabic-speaking areas, are necessary. In addition, we still lack a precise understanding of European involvement in Ottoman-Indian trade currents, particularly in Basra and Baghdad, but also in Aleppo, Alexandrette, Izmir and Istanbul proper.
We have offered the disentanglement of these matters in order to illustrate the vastness of the task ahead. It is impossible for any one person to tackle it, regardless of their range of languages and other resources, but it is to be hoped that the interconnectedness of those matters should encourage researchers to cooperate across the wide spectrum of concerns. Our personal predilection in the near future remains with two projects: the importance of Baghdad within Ottoman-Indian circuits, and a further analysis of Indian textiles in the Ottoman realm, particularly in terms of their social and cultural significance. As we have seen, they are subtly connected with hegemonic questions of power, as it was expressed in the pre-industrial world. Accordingly, these concerns lead us to our final stage of investigation.

3. Ghâzis, caesars and chakravartins: disputes of hegemony

Before we come to the end of our journey, we will attempt to answer the question of what remains from Ottoman-Indian relations after the demise of the two great Eurasian empires. While Ottoman and Mughal political institutions have disappeared, many of their cultural hegemonic strategies survived, albeit in fragmentary, dream-like form. In our chapter on textiles, we have discussed a more insidious, but perhaps most enduring aspect of any successful hegemony: aesthetics. Here, we will briefly analyze the political culture of the two empires, the structures which they inherited, and the narratives which were meaningful to their subjects.

Scholars of Ottoman-Indian relations have largely concurred that Indo-Muslim rulers have always accepted the Ottoman claim to the caliphate. The realities of 1460s, when the Bahmanids sent their first embassies to the Ottoman court, have been merged with those of
1510s, 1740s and 1780s. Since the time of the Bahmanids of the Deccan and the Muzaffarids of Gujarat through the rule of the Mughals and Tipu Sultan, Indian rulers have been presented in the scholarship as petitioners for help against Europeans and Shi’a heretics. Simultaneously, Ottomans are consistently depicted as benevolent and concerned, but unable to help their co-religionists except on a symbolic level. Obviously, this historiographic vision operates with synecdoches, regularly selecting only a few episodes from several centuries of interactions and transforming them into a general narrative of political and cultural relations. A false circularity arises with each incident, in which even the freshest evidence is bent toward a predetermined and familiar conclusion, typically reflecting late nineteenth-century viewpoints.

For instance, when Mahmud Gavan praised the Ottomans as pâdishâhs and worthy of being addressed as caliphs, scholars read into those words their own admiration of Ottomans as protectors of Islam. In reality, in the fifteenth century, the titles of caliph and pâdishâh were quite common. As the centrifugal tendencies which had been present in Islamic Eurasia for centuries became replaced by the establishment of three major empires only comparable in scope with the Abbasids, the titles of pâdishâh and caliph appreciated in value, and we can clearly detect an increased sensitivity to their connotations. Before the eighteenth century, when their large empire was reduced to the environs of Delhi, Mughal rulers never conceded the title of caliph to the Ottomans. Even at the time of Tipu Sultan’s embassies, Ottoman supremacy over all Muslims was not commonly accepted. In spite of contemporary British speculations which have not been critically examined, Tipu Sultan was more interested in material help from Ottomans than in prestige and titulature. As illustrated by the study of A. Özcan, Ottomans gained their undisputedly high status among Indian Muslims only after the dethronement of the Mughals and the exile of the unfortunate Bahadur Shah to the remote Burma.
The textual history of Ottoman-Indian relations can be traced to Hammer-Purgstall’s interpretations. Ignoring the animosity toward Ottomans under Akbar and Jahangir, he read the diplomatic letters as a continuous expression of friendship and solidarity. The presence of any Indians at the Ottoman court, including anti-Mughal Lodi princes and other pretenders, was adduced as additional evidence to support the view that all Muslim Indians have elevated the Ottomans for centuries.\footnote{41 J. Hammer, \textit{Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches}, V, 592ff., quoted above.} Our intention is not to dismiss Hammer altogether. His history has been of fundamental importance in the historiography of the Ottoman empire, as it remained more extensive and more based on primary sources than any other for a long time. Hammer’s own background as a subject of the Austro-Hungarian empire, with its own complex diplomatic and linguistic codes, greatly enriched his depiction of the Ottomans.

Yet, Hammer’s perspective on Ottomans and Mughals is problematic. The irritable tone persistent in almost all letters between Shah Jahan and the Ottomans was brushed away as coincidental and momentary, based upon an unfortunate wording or bad choice in ambassadors rather than extended rivalries between the two mighty empires.\footnote{42 J. Hammer, \textit{Geschichte}, V, 594.} While Hammer’s history was translated into French and Ottoman, it was not easily accessible in British India. Most scholars with an interest in this question were of Indian Muslim background, and most of them read Hammer’s article in English\footnote{43 J. Hammer’s “Memoir on the Diplomatic Relations between the Courts of Dehli and Constantinople in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries”, \textit{Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society}, II (London, 1830).} upon which all subsequent interpretations of Ottoman-Mughal relations rest even in our day. The only scholar who stressed the contentious nature of the relation was J. Rypka, but due to his Czech nationality and the unavailability of German-language journals in India and Pakistan, his writings have not been considered by Indian writers.

\footnote{41 J. Hammer, \textit{Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches}, V, 592ff., quoted above.}
on this matter, or indeed by Turkish Ottomanists. Rypka uncovered imprecisions in Hammer’s translation of Persian and Ottoman sources along with some tendentious interpretations. Yet, twentieth-century studies about Ottoman-Mughal relations have not contested Hammer’s conclusions, even when they noted tensions between the two empires. This is deeply puzzling, since Indo-Persian chronicles from Shah Jahan’s time, available in India and read by Rypka, mock Sultan Murad IV and Ottomans in general.

It is also significant that much of the scholarship on this topic has emerged through Turkish interactions with Pakistan and Pakistani scholars. Admiration for the modern Turkey can be traced to Iqbal’s poems to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who in Iqbal’s vision assumes the role of a potential protector or at the very least a powerful inspiration to Indian Muslims. In this context, he is wearing the cloak of ‘Abdülmııhamid II and Süleyman Kanuni, despite the probability that Atatürk would have disliked such comparisons. However, Iqbal’s relation with Atatürk’s revolution was tumultuous and it underwent several transformations. Ultimately, the prevalent political current in Pakistan, which stresses the Sunni heritage of the country, especially since the rule of Zia-ul-Haqq, has led to the perpetuation of ahistorical and idealizing scholarship concerning relations between Muslim India and the Ottomans.

Excessive emphasis has also been placed on the awareness of Mughals, Uzbeks and Ottomans as fellow Sunnis. We know that there were numerous occasions when those three powers could have joined up against the Safavids, yet they never did so. Instead, the repetition of allegiances to confront the Safavids should be read in the same way as the incessant western European plans of employing Iranian forces against the Ottomans from the time of papal contacts with the Mongols – those were often little more than a rhetorical expression of pious wishes and

good will, or bargaining chips. In the Cold War period, the tradition of animosity between Safavids and their neighbors was re-emphasized in scholarship, as an Iron Curtain was projected by scholars onto Sunnis and Shi‘is. In spite of real tensions, especially during the sixteenth century, recent studies have shown that Sunni scholars were almost always able to move within the Safavid realm.45

We will now turn our attention to various hegemonic practices in the large Islamic empires of the early modern period. In our analysis, the concept of hegemony has been crucial. While it is frequently used in a simple sense which focuses on military dominance, hegemony is a complex term in the human sciences, especially developed by the Italian scholar A. Gramsci. Hegemony, as opposed to the state’s capacity for the direct use of coercion, is understood to be a fluid set of strategies through which consent by society at large is created and negotiated. Gramsci is particularly interested in how hegemony is received by subaltern populations and transformed into something which is self-evident and “commonsensical.”46

We will discuss how Ottoman hegemony was received and propagated by their subjects below, but our main interest lies in defining how Ottoman hegemonic strategies were created and how they differed from those of other large Eurasian empires in their vicinity. As pointed out by J. Joseph, it is a mistake to assume that hegemony is a “Machiavellian [...] conscious project or cunning plan of different social groups.”47 Rather, hegemony is created not only by elite agents, but also by intermediaries and subalterns on the basis of widely different and even contradictory traditions and narratives. Hegemonic claims did not spread through contractual and firmly

formulated patterns of behavior. To the contrary, hegemony was particularly successful if it was defused and understood in terms of emotional attachment and patronage. Indeed, one of our key contentions is that a successful hegemony often persists even after the demise of the state which created it. Its medium is often nostalgia for better times.\(^{48}\)

At this point, we would like to suggest a way in which the concepts of legitimacy and hegemony can be reconciled, since we have not yet found an adequate formulation elsewhere. The acquisition or recognition of legitimacy might be seen as the initial act of assuming political authority, as the right to rule either through conquest and military coercion, or through lineage.\(^{49}\)

Once the claim of legitimacy was accepted by the urban elites in the core region of conquest and the settlements associated with them, hegemony in the widest sense could be built up, in particular its cultural and social aspects. If a naturalistic metaphor can be forgiven, the interaction between legitimacy and the subsequent accretions of hegemony could be viewed as analogous to that of the creation of a large snowball. In this analogy, the initial legitimizing moment is similar to the hard ice core. As more people accept the claim to power by the ruler, accretions form, similar to the subsequent layers of snow. A powerful hegemony, then, consists of many, somewhat uneven layers which do not necessarily have a direct relation to the original core. In our definition, it is even possible that many dynasties acquired a fair measure of legitimacy, but never quite built a hegemony.

Yet, without the complex set of justifications for the rule of one specific ruler or dynasty which constitutes a successful hegemony, any ruling house stood on fragile foundations. In that respect, Ottomans were exceptionally successful: even during periods of political and economic

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\(^{48}\) One obvious example of this phenomenon in western European and American history is the periodical resuscitation of Roman heritage.

\(^{49}\) In the case of Abbasids this happened through their propagandist, Abu Muslim.
instability, their hegemony, initially established and legitimized through local conquests and ghazâ rather than descent, was strengthened through time. Hegemonic layers were added throughout centuries, including Byzantine and Seljukid traditions, the absorption of the Mamluk claim to be the protectors of the Haramayn, and the incorporation of the Persianate ideology of the circle of justice, in which Ottomans acted as the protectors of the peasantry and tradition, in accordance with the amorphous but highly successful formulation of ‘âdet-i kadîme üzere. Ottoman hegemony lasted for centuries, reaching far beyond the empire’s physical boundaries.

However, hegemonies inevitably clash. While many studies have been devoted to Ottoman relations with western Europe, it seems that the strategies of legitimacy and hegemony employed by western European states such as England and France were largely irrelevant to the Ottomans. After the conquest of Egypt and the remainder of Byzantium and before the rise of the Russians as a world power in the late eighteenth century, there were only three rulers who mattered in the “competition” of hegemonies from the Ottoman perspective: the Safavids, the Habsburgs and the Mughals.

Ottoman extraordinary progress from a mid-size western Anatolian dynasty to a hegemon claiming universal sovereignty astonished their contemporaries not only in central Europe, but also in the neighboring regions. The wider Balkans and central and eastern Europe came to acquire a large significance for the Ottomans, both ideologically and as a source of income (which included plunder, taxation and the creation of new military labor through the institution of slavery). Especially in the Ottoman classical period, we see the elevation of the Balkans as a theater of war in which the dâr al-Islâm clashes with the dâr al-harb. Ideologically, these were regions new to Islam; consequently, Ottoman varieties of religious and political practice were the
only proper way to be a Muslim. There were different Sufi orders, but no tradition of older, pre-Ottoman Islamic practices. Similarly, those regions were far from eastern Anatolia and the Indian Ocean, which meant that contending Safavid or Mughal influence never arose in Ottoman Europe.

In north Africa, in spite of its long Islamic history which pre-dated the rise of a Muslim Anatolia, Ottomans also successfully claimed their place as the protectors of ghâzis. Thus, to the southwest of the Ottomans, state and society as embodied by the warrior classes and the religious hierarchy and their clients, cooperated without glaring contradictions, as their aims overlapped. Even in cases of rebellion, it was usually coded as opposing a specific Ottoman administrator rather than Ottomans as such. After the demise of the Ottomans, they were idealized in contrast to the French colonial rule. In Egypt, the rules of the game were slightly different. The Ottomans assumed the role held previously by the Mamluks, absorbing the claim to the caliphate, but not without difficulties. Whether the Ottomans indeed took up the title of caliph de facto is perhaps less important than it has been previously assumed; in the context of contemporary realities, the Abbasid claimants had ceased to exist. Nevertheless, while the title had little relevance in the imperial Istanbul of the sixteenth century, it still carried considerable weight in Egypt and north Africa.\textsuperscript{50} Hence, although Egypt was desacralized, protection over the Hijaz remained crucial to Ottoman appeal in many parts of the Muslim world.\textsuperscript{51}


\textsuperscript{51} A recent work on Mamluk history suggests some intriguing afterthoughts. The idea of the Guardianship had been elaborated by the Mamluks in order to provide counterclaims to the Chingisid Golden Horde and the Ilkhanids. After the conversion of the latter it suffered some attrition, but the Mamluks were respected by their Anatolian
Difficulties regularly emerged in central and eastern Anatolia, and in many regions of the Arabian peninsula with traditionally large Shi‘a populations. Anti-Safavid campaigns were important to the affirmation of Ottoman orthodoxy in the center of the empire, but they were always costly and difficult. We repeatedly read of soldiers and commanders making inroads into western Iran, even conquering Tabriz, and subsequently withdrawing. While purportedly strict adherence to Sunnism by the Ottomans gained many admirers across the Islamic oikoumene and bore many fruits in the nineteenth century, it was also a double-edged sword. In most parts of the empire, for instance wider Syria, the Balkans and north Africa, Ottoman mixed practices of leaving local customs as they were, and simultaneously claiming a ghâzi / Hanafi tradition, functioned well. However, in the areas of heterodox Islam, Ottoman legitimizing attachment to Sunni Hanafi Islam made hegemony more difficult to achieve.

Incorporation into the Ottoman empire also signified a marginalization of eastern Anatolia, and the weakening of its ties to the world to its east, even leading to a gradual renunciation of Persian as a high language. Yemen, al-Hasa, Iraq and eastern Anatolia became contested areas which were difficult to rule and control, at times because of Safavid competition, but even more frequently because of localism and centrifugal tendencies. In a few cases, mass migration is documented. The Isma‘ili Bohras, who played a significant part in the Indian Ocean trade, particularly in Gujarat and on the African coast, had occupied high positions in Yemen successors, who were also “twice handicapped,” since they could not claim Chinggisid or Qurayshi descent. See A.F. Broadbridge, Mamluk Ideological and Diplomatic Relations with the Turkic and Mongol Rulers of the Near East and Central Asia (658-807/1260-1405) (Doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, Chicago, 2001) and P.M. Holt, “Some Observations on the Abbasid Caliphate of Cairo”, BSOAS, 47 (3), 1984.

52 M.A. Riyahi, Zabân va Adabiyyât-i Fârsî dar Qalamrav-i ‘Usmâni (Tehran, 1369). The study is an expanded edition of the much shorter original edition and it has also been translated into Turkish by the lexicographer M. Kanar as Osmanlı Topraklarında Fars Dili ve Edebiyatı (Istanbul, 1995). Unfortunately, it does not cover the later Ottoman period.
before the Ottoman conquest. In order to escape Ottoman control as well as Zaydi interference, the Bohra Dâ’i headquarters were moved to Ahmadabad in 1567.  

While Mughal claim to power may have been abstract and harmless at the Ottoman center, it was fairly real in the parts of the empire adjoining the Indian Ocean or having an immediate access to Indian commodities. Iraq, Yemen and the Gulf at large were places of ambivalence which necessitated continuous effort by the Ottomans to maintain control. These were Indian Ocean lands, inclined to offer nominal allegiance to the Ottomans when they seemed to be able to protect them from the Portuguese, but also notoriously unreliable. Iraq was especially contested as an area where Ottomans, Safavids and local rulers were in power, but also a place where Indian potentates, whether Delhi sultans, Bahmanids, Mughals, or Tipu Sultan, often sent their representatives in the guise of merchants, pilgrims and occasional ambassadors. Iraq was still regarded as a place of sanctity, at least in India.

In spite of Portuguese interference, there was still a considerable amount of passengers moving between Iraq and India, facilitated through common cultural idioms. The Iraqi poet Fuzuli admitted his intention to go to India, and his ode to the Deccani sultanate of Golconda has been preserved. Some Iraqis served in Mughal administrative positions. We have seen that Ottoman governors of Basra could be lured into Mughal service. Indeed, it would be intriguing to analyze Iraq as an intellectual and physical meeting ground between the three empires, especially in terms of how and when their hegemonic claims were recognized or refuted. For instance, consider the analysis of local Mosuli chronicles by P. Kemp; he mentions that Timur

56 See section two, chapter four.
was viewed with great disapproval.\textsuperscript{57} In the context of Indian commodities and Indian merchants, who seem to have been ubiquitous in Mosul, the disavowal of Timur (and the concomitant embrace of the Ottomans) signified a rejection of the Mughals as well, and it served a similar ideological and political purpose as the ritual cursing of the first three righteous caliphs at certain moments of Safavid history.

Unfortunately, we are not sufficiently informed about the Deccani sultanates. As we have seen, those kingdoms were especially welcoming to western Asian and Anatolian Rumi men. The historian Firishta claimed that Yusuf ‘Adil Khan, a slave in the service of Mahmud Gavan who established a separate sultanate in 1489, was a son of Murad II. Upon his brother’s succession, he was hidden by his mother and sent to India with a merchant.\textsuperscript{58} ‘Adil Shahis who ruled over Bijapur adhered mostly to the Shi’a rite, but a few rulers acknowledged their allegiance to the Hanafi school, and they intermittently read the \textit{khutba} in the honor of the Ottoman sultans. Although no diplomatic relations have been uncovered by researchers, it seems certain that they employed the crescent, the “Turkish national symbol” on their public buildings.\textsuperscript{59} However, most Deccani sultanates were Shi’ite, establishing close diplomatic relations with the Safavids in order to obviate Mughal influence. They were eventually all conquered by Mughal forces in the course of the seventeenth century. Their contributions to Mughal political and intellectual culture have not yet been explored.

\textsuperscript{57} P. Kemp, “Mosuli Sketches of Ottoman History”, Middle Eastern Studies, 17 (3), 1981.
\textsuperscript{58} P. Hardy, “‘Adil-Shahis”, EP.
\textsuperscript{59} M.A. Nayeem, External Relations of the Bijapur Kingdom (1489-1686 AD) (Hyderabad, 1974).
Mughal embrace of heterodoxy, particularly since the time of Akbar, also led to a mass emigration of capable administrators and poets from the Safavid realm. In addition to religious tolerance, the Mughals built their hegemony upon several claims. Perhaps most significantly, they ruled over some of the wealthiest centers of production and distribution in the entire world, as recognized in the Ottoman proverb: *Mâl be-Hindûstân, ‘akil be-Frengistân, haşmet be-Âl-i Osmân.*

Whereas the Safavids and the Habsburgs could be discredited by emphasizing the *sunna* and the *djihâd* as the main constituents of the Ottoman rule, the Mughals were more problematic, being not only Hanafi, but also famed through their wealth when the Ottomans were struggling to retain precious metal coinage. In the course of the seventeenth century, Ottomans had stopped minting their coins, which signified both a political and a financial crisis, with the moral implication that they were not able to provide well for their subjects. Simultaneously, so much of the world’s silver was reaching the Mughal territories that they were able to increase the weight of their silver and gold coins to the point of becoming impracticable to carry. Especially heavy gold coins were made for their ambassadors. While Ottoman silver coins came to be imported from western Europe, being used primarily as a unit of account rather than a political statement, Shah Jahan’s coins carried the inscription of *Sâhib-i Qirân Thâni.*

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60 For poets, see A. Golchin-Ma’ani, *Kârvân-i Hind,* 2 vols. (Mashhad, 1369); F. Irshad, *Muhâdjarat-i târîkhî-i Irâniyân ba Hind* (Tehran, 1379).


of Tipu Sultan, specie abounded, as he was minting golden coins with inscriptions recalling the caliphs, and silver coins representing the twelve imams.

Since the appeal to the Sunna was made by both Ottomans and Mughals in parts of the Arab peninsula, yet the Mughals were more inclusive, allowing Shi‘i subjects to rise in the hierarchy as well, there was only one solution for the Ottomans to counter their hegemonic challenge in the region: emphasizing and exaggerating the distance between the two realms and the insecurity of traveling to India. On a good ship, at the right time of the year, it was possible to cross the distance between the two empires within three weeks from Basra to Gujarat, certainly less than it took to travel from Diyarbakir to Belgrade. Yet, we have seen that distance was repeatedly emphasized in diplomatic correspondence.

Recalling studies which explore space as a created, hegemonic notion instead of a neutrally existent one, 64 we must conclude that the distance was not only a curse and an impediment for the two empires to unite in their fight against Safavids or Europeans. Distance was also a blessing for both of them and they encouraged the perception of the other realm as remote and somewhat unreal. Evoking the distance in the letters also meant: we have our domain, and you have yours. Akbar purportedly declared the pilgrimage for unnecessary and dangerous, even as Shah ‘Abbas I tried to replace the holy sites with Mashhad. There were solid reasons for such attempts, ideologically as well as economically. 65 Given the strong presence of Iranians among the Mughal bureaucrats and intelligentsia, the Ottomans often are mentioned

64 H. Lefebvre, La production de l’espace (Paris, 1974).
disparagingly and *en passant* as a disturbance and a reason for delays in communication between Iran and the Mughals.

Throughout the twentieth century, many scholars have denied that Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal conflicts were fought to obtain control over nodal points of Indian Ocean trade. The conclusion that they were merely interested in war and territorial expansion for its own sake is deeply flawed; resources, including men, horses, victuals and military equipment, were precious and a military commander could lose his life if he was accused of wasting them. While not being colonialist in the same sense as the ocean-based smaller states of early modern western Europe (including England proper, Portugal and the Netherlands), all three major Islamic empires were aware of the geopolitical importance of commercial *entrepôts*, which brought income and prestige.⁶⁶

Qandahar, for instance, was a major city on the land route to India. It changed hands frequently and led to the final breakup in the hitherto largely friendly Safavid-Mughal relations. In 1595, it was conquered by Akbar, in 1622 retaken by Shah ‘Abbas I; in 1638 Shah Jahan gained it by diplomatic means, but in 1649 it was finally seized by Shah ‘Abbas II. Notably, every time when Qandahar changed obeisance, a political crisis ensued. In all three instances in the seventeenth century, connections between Ottomans and Mughals were (re)established around the conquest of the city, in spite of its seeming irrelevance to the Ottomans. Yet the correlation of Shah Jahan’s alienation from the Iranians, his establishment of querulous but frequent contacts with the Ottomans, and his increased interest in a commercial navy based in Gujarat and Bengal has never been clearly established by the scholars.

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⁶⁶ For the prestige of rulers who were able to acquire goods from a long distance, see M.V. Helms, *Craft and the Kingly Ideal: Art, Trade and Power* (Austin, 1993).
On the other side of the Safavid empire, Yerevan and Tabriz were sites where much of the Ottoman silver, taken into the Safavid realm by the Armenians, was recoined at the local Safavid mints. The Caucasus was of vital importance for the Safavids and barely less so for the Ottomans. Otherwise, the continuous wars and quarrels over fortresses in seemingly barren and forbidding territory would have been a rather senseless exercise. The conventions of court historiography obscure this importance; the chronicles were not written for, or by the merchants.

But the presence of Iran and Iranians was not merely an impediment between the Ottomans and the Mughals. From the praise that Nef‘i and al-Muradi directed toward India, it seems certain that at least some men had access to current information about India. This knowledge was shaped through various channels, including Indian and Persian scholars, pilgrims and merchants, as well as ascending Caucasian factions in both the Safavid and the Ottoman empires, including Georgian and Circassian slaves and Armenian merchants. It has become commonplace to assert that western Europeans broke the unity of the Indian Ocean world; however, before the nineteenth century, their commercial activities often constituted another binding force in the region and a conduit for the goods and the information, even when the empires were at loggerheads with each other.

Some of the contradictions of conventional scholarship become fully clear once we look at correspondence with Uzbeks, who were even more remote from the Ottomans than the Mughals, and who were also a Hanafi dynasty fighting against the Safavids. Interactions with Uzbeks were almost consistently cordial although alliances between them and the Ottomans could not be carried out. When the Uzbek Begs received an armed group of men from the


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Ottoman Empire in 1554, with some 300 janissaries, they used them for internecine fighting instead of employing them against Tahmasp or assisting the Ottomans against Russians who had conquered Astrakhan. Many of those men returned to the Ottoman lands, although some were later employed against the Qazaq confederacy.\footnote{M. Haidar, Central Asia in the Sixteenth Century (New Delhi, 2002).} Although the Ottomans had intended to regain Astrakhan and Kazan and to keep northern trade routes open for merchants and hadjdis from Khwarazm, Russian envoys were received with favors by the Shaybanid rulers of Khiva, Balkh and Bukhara, and attacks on the Persians were carried out only in the 1580s.

Diplomatic correspondence reveals that there was fairly constant movement between the Ottomans and Transoxiana, and that it was certainly underlined with a mercantile note. From the letters, we learn that ‘Abdullah Khan’s conquest of formerly Safavid Khwarazm enables travel overland whenever the sea route is impassable because of the monsoons. Good trade relations are explicitly mentioned and desired.\footnote{Feridun, Münse‘ät, II (1274), p.239: “Min ba‘d züvvär ü tüccår suhület ile tereddüd u refâhiyet ile âmed u şûd eyledikleri is‘ar buyurulmuş.”} This point is reiterated in the letter from Cerrah Mehmed Paşa, the Ottoman grand vizier, who stresses that “pilgrims and merchants of Samarqand and Bukhara will be able to come to the Ka‘ba and the protected domains of the Ottomans without struggle and with a quiet mind”, even more numerous then before, as customary before the Safavid interference.\footnote{Idem, p.241.} Writing to the hâkim of Transoxiana Imam Quli Khan in 1622, Ottomans emphasize that with the siege and eventual conquest of Baghdad, it will be possible for Ay Muhammad, and implicitly for other travelers as well, to travel to Mecca and back through the Rajasthani desert (Hindustan çöllünden). They again stress the importance of trade, which is never mentioned in any letters to the Mughals. Caravans and travelers are even mentioned in the

\footnote{69 M. Haidar, Central Asia in the Sixteenth Century (New Delhi, 2002).}
introductory portion of the letter as rhetorical flourish.\textsuperscript{72} Although the land route passing through Tabriz was still used, at least in times of peace,\textsuperscript{73} Ottoman letters clarify that many Uzbek envoys, merchants and pilgrims also took the sea route through India (although the word India is mostly avoided, creating the fiction that the Uzbek realm actually touched upon the ocean).\textsuperscript{74}

Mughals and the rulers of Transoxiana usually cultivated friendly relations, with the notable exception of Babur, who viewed them as his mortal enemies, and of Shah Jahan during the 1640s, who unsuccessfully attempted to exploit their internal divisions. Mughals prided themselves on being the descendants of Timur and Chinggis, which mattered greatly to some visitors and immigrants from Transoxiana, because they could rise at the court by discussing the state of Timur’s tomb or teaching Chaghatay. Indeed, at the Mughal court, on Nauruz, a qâdi enumerated the names of the emperors, starting with Timur himself. The emperors regularly paid for the upkeep of Timur tomb, which none of them except Babur ever saw.\textsuperscript{75}

Timurid myths of origin were relevant to Transoxanians, Mughals and Safavids. All of those states shared a Mongol past, which in Anatolia had come to be defined almost purely negatively. In the late fifteenth century, Ottoman elites emulated the Timurid court in Herat, but they also still remembered the defeat inflicted to them by Timurid armies. The western conquests healed some of those wounds, as they shifted the ideological and political concerns of the empire. The scurrilous Ottoman interpretation of the two rulers of the world who were cripples,

\textsuperscript{72} Feridun, \textit{Münše'ât}, II, p.236-237. Intriguingly, among the closing wishes for prosperity the word “cihângîr” stands out, perhaps as a barely veiled reference to the Mughal ruler. An alliance with India against the Safavids is otherwise not mentioned.
\textsuperscript{73} Idem, p.244.
\textsuperscript{74} See the mention of a \textit{kadırğa} for the travel of one Hadjdji Ishaq, who died in the Ottoman lands and whose son remained in Constantinople, Idem, p.242.
\textsuperscript{75} Manucci, \textit{Storia do Mogor}, II, pl.183.
with Sivas as the dividing line between the two of them, is not devoid of wry humor.\textsuperscript{76} Another chronicle, purportedly Timur’s own depiction, is more pious, involving a prophetic dream and the inevitable downfall of the Rum and its Qaysar through the white banners of ‘Ali.\textsuperscript{77} Yet, the ghost of Timur still had to be expurgated by the Ottomans in the late fifteenth century. Not only were Bosnian slaves purportedly “more beautiful” than Indian ones, at least according to Tursun Bey’s chronicle, but also it needed to be mentioned that the ghazâs which Timur had accomplished in India were inferior to the conquest of Bosnia, Morea and Albania, which were “vast countries”, offering a rich source of revenue.\textsuperscript{78} Chinggisid-Timurid heritage was not generally popular among Ottoman historians,\textsuperscript{79} with the notable exception of Mustafa ‘Ali, who lauded Timur and Chinggis Khan as sâhibân-i qirân, possibly even allotting a lower place for Ottoman rulers.\textsuperscript{80} While their vassals, the Crimean rulers, were rooted in the political discourses of the Golden Horde and Chinggisid origin was a source of pride, Ottoman historical consciousness in respect of Chinggisid legitimacy was largely defined in negative terms. The standard narrative was inherited from the Abbasids and reinforced by the Seldjuq struggles against the Ilkhanids and most significantly, Timur’s conquest of Anatolia.

Even in the seventeenth century, Timur’s reputation in Anatolia was questionable. When it comes to the encounter between Timur and Yıldırım, Evliya relies on popular history rather

\textsuperscript{76} Anonymous chronicle. The story is famously repeated by F. Bernier.
\textsuperscript{77} C. Stewart, \textit{The Malfüzat-i Timuri, Autobiographical memoirs of Timur} (London, 1830), chapter 4.
\textsuperscript{79} For instance, the passage about Khwarazm Shah and Chinggis in \textit{Khvâbnâma-i Veysi} in F.K. Timurtaş, \textit{Osmanlı Türkçesi Metinleri} (Istanbul, 1995).
\textsuperscript{80} C. Fleischer, \textit{Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa ‘Ali (1541-1600)}, especially chapter 11, “The Turkic and Mongol Heritage” (Princeton, 1986).
than Timurid sources, which assert that the Ottoman ruler was treated well by Timur. He repeats the story common among Europeans (and popularized by Marlowe’s theater play as well as later operatic versions by Handel and Vivaldi) that Bayazid Yıldırım was placed in a cage by Timur and that he died three days later. He adds that he was avenged by his son, who massacred “Tatars” and made umbrellas from their skin. 81 In Evliya’s travelogue, most mentions of Timur’s campaigns in eastern Anatolia are accompanied by the epithet “pur-zor” and “harâb”. 82 He is also named “Timur Hân-ı Gürkân”, implying clearly that he is connected with the Mughals of India. 83 In order “not to go back to India with empty hands”, since he was not able to conquer the fortress of Van, he loads the bones of a purported dragon onto ten camels and takes them to India, implying failure as well as theft. 84

Hence, although all Eurasian Islamic empires were inheritors to the post-Mongol Persianate world, dialects within the common language of power developed, modified by significant local substrata. Paradoxically, the linguistic question is also complex, as it reverses the patterns of Chinggisid and Timurid allegiances described above: Ottomans did not follow Turco-Mongolian political conventions, but they were the only ones to elevate a Turkic language to the gradual (albeit incomplete) exclusion of Persian. The early post-Abbasid Islamic world had been united by Persian cultural and political idiom, and this tradition was followed until the nineteenth century. Turkic languages were spoken, but not necessarily written, at each of the

81 Evliya Çelebi, I, p.27. Also see IV, p. 240: “Âhir Timur, Yıldırım Hân'ı demir kafes içre haps eder. Mahpûs iken hummâ-yi muhrikdan dâr-ı ahirete gider. Ol ân Çelebi Mehmemed ibn Yıldırım Hân Timur'a yetişüp Tatar askerine karşıp bir kılıç uru kim Timur Şâh ançak öz başıyla diyâr-ı Horasân'a düşüp merhum olur.”

82 Idem., IV, p.194, p.204, p.216, p.322, etc. On p.217, he is defined as sahib-i zor.

83 Idem., IV, p.343.

84 Idem., IV, p.99: “Ta ki sekiz yüz beş târîhinde Timur Hân Mâverâü'n-nehir'den huruç eyleyüp kal'a-i Van'i kâmil üç sene mubahâsara eyleyüp bâğ diküp meyvesin yeypû ahir fethî müyesser olmayup ha'ib ü hâsir gider oldukça Hindistân'e tehâ dest gitmeneck üçun mezûr eijderhânin kemiklerin aşaği kal'a divârîndan alup on qatar devele kemikleri tahmîl edüp Hindistân'a götüüp hâlî anda (—) râygândır, derler. Ammâ hakîr Hindistân'a varmamak ile görmem. Allahümme yessir bi'l-hayr ve'lâfiye.”
major courts of our period. Western European travelers often noted that in order to prosper at the Safavid Iran court one would be wise to study both Turkic and Persian. The last ruler of the Safavid house, Sultan Husain, was nicknamed “yaqishiqdir” because it was his favorite expression. Yet Turkic was never a major literary language in Iran, its usage being pragmatic. As for the Mughals, it seems that the rulers were taught Chaghatay until the end of the dynasty, and at least one of their princes considered it politically dangerous to neglect the study of Turki. Uzbek rulers adhered to the general principle of writing in Persian, although they still cultivated Chaghatay writing as well and spoke dialects closely related to it.

Yet, Turkic was generally viewed as inferior to Persian in all of those places. The astonishment of the Mughal ambassador Mir Zarif when Murad IV spoke to him in Ottoman was real: Mir Zarif expected the ruler to speak to him in fluent Persian. In spite of the veneration of Chaghatay as the heritage language, speech in Ottoman (regardless of its actual sophistication) was coded as uncouth at the Mughal court. This topos was seized upon by both Jahangir, who pretended that a letter in Turkish was unreadable, and in Shah Jahan’s letters to the Ottomans, in which they are bitterly criticized for lack of refinement. Particularly poignant is the episode of Zülfikar Ağa. His stubborn desire for cabbage rather than the riches of northern Indian cuisine marked him as boorish to the Mughal eye, but it was also an indication of the rootedness of the Ottomans in eastern and central European cultural and culinary world. Whereas eating Sauerkraut with a group of men of similar origin at the Ottoman court could provoke real or

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85 L. Lockhart, The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation (Cambridge, 1958). Also see a dictionary of Turkic (Azeri and Chaghatay) expressions compiled under Nadir Shah, Mirza Mahdi Astarabadi, Sanglax (Tehran, 1374).
feigned nostalgia for the native lands of the western Balkans, Hungary or the Ukraine and lead to alliances, those alliances were meaningless in the Mughal context. In the course of the eighteenth century, linguistic and cultural norms drifted even further apart in the Ottoman and the Mughal empires, as the former completely embraced Ottoman, and the later gradually turned to Urdu. Southern Indian rulers were often of Persian descent, but they also had a predilection for Urdu, and frequently their Persian was also marked by Telugu or Kannada.

In spite of some of the cultural differences mentioned above, Ottomans and Mughals both had to contend with an initial legitimacy deficit. Unlike the Safavids, the Uzbeks begs, and the ‘Alawi dynasties in Morocco, they were forced to modify their hegemonic claims in terms that would satisfy their Muslim and non-Muslim subjects alike. Notwithstanding ghâzi claims, both states often fought Muslims in the course of their existence. Many Ottoman hegemonic strategies had in a sense preceded them, as Byzantine traditions of Anatolia and the Balkans merged with Turco-Persian ones in the course of centuries, often through the mediation of folk culture. In that manner, the Ottoman pâdishâh could be portrayed as the legitimate czar (car) in southern Slav popular poetry up to the eve of war with Russia in 1875. Similarly, at least some Greek folk stories and other sources confer the venerable title of vasileus (βασιλεύς) upon the Ottoman sultan.

During the formative period of Ottoman court culture from Fatih to Süleyman Kanuni, the title of Caesar was openly used in certain contexts. Kanuni’s letters implied that the Habsburgs were merely kings of Spain and the Czechs, respectively, whereas he could claim the

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88 For instance, see the well-known folksong “Marko Kraljević poznaje očinu sablju” in I. Broz, S. Bosanac et alia, Hrvatske narodne pjesme: skupila i izdala Matica Hrvatska (Zagreb, 1897), vol. II, p.15.
imperial tradition of Rome. The title of Caesar was especially important when Ottomans were making inroads in Hungarian and Croatian territories. After the battle of Mohács in 1526, Ferdinand of Habsburg was elected king of Hungary and Ottoman attempts to subdue Vienna failed in 1529 and in 1532. Buda was taken in 1541, but after the failure of further military operations in the 1543-5, the division of Hungary into three parts was confirmed by a peace treaty. Yet, only with the setbacks in Moldavia and Hungary did the Ottomans concede formal equivalence with the Austrian Habsburgs in the peace of Zsitvatorok, when their annual tribute to Ottomans was canceled.

For the Europeans, designating the Ottoman ruler as a sultan, a khalîfa or a pâdishâh, or for that matter, as a kral, would not have implied much. However, conceding even to a slight degree that the ruler of Istanbul may claim the Roman title, in other words be addressed as Caesar, would have endangered their own worldview and hegemonic claims. Italians and other western Europeans were quite uncomfortable viewing the Ottoman ruler as a successor to the Byzantine emperors. In other words, a western Christian could not address the Ottoman ruler as a “Qaysar-i Rûm” as long as there was a pope in Rome and a holy Roman emperor.

Although universalist claims by Ottomans receded into the background, and their Islamic character became more pronounced in the course of further animosities between them and the Safavids, they never completely gave up the idea of being Caesars to their Christian subjects. Ottomans applied both claims to their realm, befitting their universalist vision. To the Muslim subjects, they were the protectors of the holy cities and at least implicitly the khulafâ’, just as they were the successors of eastern Roman qaysars in their incarnation as protectors of eastern

91 A similar occurrence happened in 1681 at Radzin, when the Russian czar obtained official Ottoman recognition.
Christianity. The titles do not reflect merely vanity and oriental verbosity; instead, they represented fairly delineated hegemonic claims. For a long stretch of the early modern period, Istanbul was indeed the largest city in the world west of China, drawing upon many resources between eastern Europe and Iraq; more than one discourse of power was always necessary.

The Ottoman empire, then, was Janus-faced. To the Christian west, the Ottomans were the most important, undoubtedly Islamic power, which gave them the appearance of representing all Muslims except perhaps the Persians; but to the east, their universalist claims were disputed by rival Islamic dynasties, which subtly emphasized that the Ottoman orthodoxy, which they claimed so intently, perhaps rested on shaky, Roman grounds. If western Europeans fashioned much of their Orientalist imagery based on the exoticism of the Gran Signior, we may say that the Safavids and the Mughals “Occidentalized” the Ottomans, stripping them of universal claims.

Some of those interpretations predated the Mughals. Granted, the Rumi designation still carried a vague aura of Roman power, consecrated by the Arabo-Persian tradition. Eastern Rome was Rome par excellence in northern India and Indonesia. Thus, it was easy to compare the Ottoman ruler to Alexander. But the Qaysar-i mamlakat-i Sikandar, which is a flattery in Mahmud Gavan’s letter, gradually become reduced in Perso-Indian parlance to a more modest title of qaysar-i Rûm, even when Ottoman conquests went far beyond Anatolia. The readers of a Gujarati chronicle were even warned that this Rome was “Rûm-i saqẖîr”, whereas Rûm-i kabîr would only be conquered on the doomsday, according to a hadîth.

If Qaysar-i Rûm was a glorious title for Mehmed II and a threat to Italians and Habsburgs, for the Iranians and the Indians it meant implicitly that the Ottomans could claim legitimacy only over Anatolia and not over Hijaz or Iraq. The title also alluded to their infidel heritage from the Byzantine times. Some readers of ‘Attar may even have had the association of
Rome with seduction and infidelity, viewing the Holy Cities as disconnected from the authority of Constantinople.\textsuperscript{92} Making the Ottomans seem more alien, Tahmasp accused both the Mughals and the Ottomans of practicing \textit{ilhād}, and according to him, the Ottoman dynasty was polluted because they mixed with the Romans and the western Europeans (\textit{ghulâm-i Rûm va farangi}).\textsuperscript{93} In Safavid practice, Ottoman sultans could also be subtly denigrated by addressing them not as the \textit{khalîfa} or the \textit{pâdishâh}, but rather as the \textit{vâlî} or the \textit{qaysar} of Rum. The avoidance of those latter titles marked a new beginning in Perso-Ottoman relations.

Conversely, Sa‘di’s India was one of idol-worshippers. Those were not always conscious and planned allusions, but they were always implicit and quickly grasped by those trained in the classical tradition. We have seen that Ottoman poets enjoyed many permutations of the cliché of the Indian, which emerged at the same time as ‘Attar’s and Sa‘di’s works were composed. Regardless of their actual wealth, appearance and Muslim practices, Indians could be depicted as infidel, dark, cowardly and naked. An average Ottoman subject, without much access to diplomatic correspondence or to historical chronicles, would know that India was remote and wealthy, although he may not be certain whether it was Muslim. From the depiction in the \textit{Sûrnâme} of Vehbi we learn that Indians were usually depicted as fire-worshippers, and some blurring of the words “Hindu” and “Hindi” persist to our day. In contrast, most Safavids would have had the concrete experience of Indian merchants, Muslims and Hindus, as well as occasional access to Indian slaves. They also would have considered emigrating to India, which was only a concrete possibility for Ottoman subjects in Iraq or Yemen. While a significant

\textsuperscript{92} We are referring here to the episode of Shaykh San‘an in \textit{Mantiq al-tayr}. The pious shaykh loses his belief and becomes a swine herd in order to win the love of a Christian girl. The “Rome” must refer to Byzantium, because the shaykh travels to it by land from Mecca. For a translation, see A. Darbandi and D. Davis, \textit{The Conference of the Birds} (London, 1984).

\textsuperscript{93} A. Nava‘i, \textit{Shâh Tahmasp Safavi, madjmû ‘a-i isnâd u makâtâbâ-i târîkhî} (Tehran, 1368), p.213.
number of cavalry horsemen left Iran for India, many Indian slaves were transferred to Iran and to Central Asia, often as punishment for participation in armed uprisings, as late as the nineteenth century.

To some extent, the strategy of exoticizing each other by appealing to the older, pre-Islamic appellations (*qaysar, Hindû*) must have happened unconsciously, through the imprint of the classical images from the classical Arabic and Persian literary period. However, to some authors at least, this strategy must have appeared as a welcome and expedient way to de-legitimize the other major powers in the Islamic world. For Ottomans and Mughals, the other state was at the outer edge of the Muslim world, ruling over a large non-Muslim population as well, thus creating a certain unavoidable symmetry. As expressed in the Ottoman proverb, political advantage was enjoyed by the Ottomans, but Mughals were inevitable because of their sheer wealth. Those hegemonic claims were erased and rewritten in an attempt to ignore them. On the popular level, many Mughal subjects were not certain whether Mecca belonged to the Ottomans, and Ottoman coins were reminted in Gujarat upon entering India. Especially under Akbar and Jahangir, the old tripartite definition of the Islamic world as Iran, Turan and Hind, was emphasized. Conversely, in the Ottoman empire, all Indians, including the Mughal ambassadors, were often seen as infidels, and the Safavids as heretics.

The paucity of narratives concerning India and Rum is remarkable, as in spite of frequent mentions of India in Ottoman sources there is a very small set of standard, universally known anecdotes concerning the other empire. In older studies, such tendencies had been ascribed to the purportedly circular and repetitive nature of the medieval mind. However, if we look at the narratives which were repeated most frequently, it becomes clear that they are instances of hegemonic metonymy and that they inevitably carry an implicit message which emphasizes the
legitimacy of the prevailing order. Especially in a time before mass media, and in a culture which preferred the medium of word to that of visual arts, such stories were vital in conveying lessons and truths about the universe.

Hence, the narratives which became proverbial among the Ottomans referred to Hadım Süleyman Paşa’s expedition of 1538, transformed from a failure into a victory over Indian and Portuguese küffâr. Secondarily, there were also Seydi ‘Ali Reis’ adventures, which could be read almost allegorically as a tale of loyalty to the Ottomans through tribulations and Indian temptations, but which became popularly reduced to a proverb about the difficulties which he survived. Throughout, India was seen as being at the other end of the world, and the Muslim nature of Indians was subtly contested. The message was one of warning Ottomans not to go to perilous and probably infidel India, in spite of its riches. The other empire was referential for the limits of the world.

Some of those echoes extend to 1923, when Mustafa Kemal, the future Atatürk, alluded to this episode of Diu, concluding that it was stretching the Ottoman forces too much. It continued to at least occasionally haunt romantic dreams of Turkish writers, as there is even a novel which imagines the Ottomans had succeeded in remaining in India.\(^\text{94}\) In the twentieth century, the episode was variously read as a warning from the dangers of internationalism, a wistful meditation about the failure of Ottomans to develop a larger colonialist vision, a noble attempt to preserve Muslim unity, or a romantic adventure in which Ottomans and Portuguese mimicked each other in remote lands. In every instance, the basic message was repeated: India and the Ottoman realm were two different worlds.

Conversely, Mughals often emphasized the successful conquest of eastern Anatolia by Timur and his defeat and imprisonment of Bayazid I. We encounter this narrative retold many times: in Humayun’s warnings to Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, in Akbar’s archaizing A’in-i Akbarî, in Jahangir’s and Shah Jahan’s veneration of Timur’s portraits and writings, and in Aurangzeb’s wistful recollections of Timur’s campaigns. European visitors were also familiar with this narrative and employed it to flatter the Mughal ruler. The Mughal lessons did not stress the distance, but rather the military and moral superiority of Timur: he had conquered Anatolia, but presumably he did not consider it worth keeping, and he returned to the Ottomans in a graceful act. Rumi slaves and Rumi earth were subsequently sent to Samarkand. In addition, Timur’s encounter with Shaykh Sadr al-Din was also often recalled in interactions with Safavids and Transoxanians, as a way to mitigate unpleasant memories of Babur’s and Humayun’s erstwhile inferiority.

Safavids had more than one central story about the Mughals. Often, they depicted Mughals as standing in their debt because of Humayun, while Mughals stressed that it was Timur who bestowed many favors upon the Safavid order. Indeed, Safavid chronicles often inspired themselves on the models offered by the Timurid historiography. Timur had given up his captives from Rum to the Safavid tekke of Sadr al-Din, which in popular lore magically expanded to provide space for thousands of them. Depending upon the needs of the time, Timur was portrayed by Safavids as a hero or a dupe, while Indians were either wealthy allies, Muslim albeit dark-skinned, or cowardly and infidel adversaries. In all of those instances, rival empires were portrayed as weak and incidental. Through temporal dissonance, they were also

97 See for instance the popular historian M. Bastani-Parizi, Siyāsat va iqtiṣād-i asr-i Safavi (Tehran, 1357), p.11.
relegated to the realm of stories. Popular tales were not just amusements; they encapsulated everything that needed to be known about the other empires.

The eventual outcome of the competition between Safavids, Ottomans and Mughals would have surprised their European contemporaries. While Ottomans were universally respected and feared for their military abilities, most Europeans admired the Mughal empire as larger, richer and more heterodox. Indeed, there are several factors which spoke for the permanence of the Mughal empire.

While Mughal ascent to power in India was much shorter than that of Ottomans in Anatolia, the construction of Mughal hegemony also rested on older Indo-Persian traditions, as the poet Amir Khusrau had self-assuredly claimed Indianness as specificity of his culture. Rather curiously, Ottomans emerged from a long period of contestation, during which they imbued not only Persianate cultural modes, but also diffuse and popular late Byzantine rule with Italianate undertones which become explicit under Fatih. Yet, the experiment with engaging Italian painters and Byzantine writers, such as Critoboulos was not continued, and Fatih’s love poems to an infidel from Galata remained relatively unique among Ottoman sultans.\textsuperscript{98} At the Ottoman court, conversion to Islam became a precondition for joining the highest levels of power. In contrast, Mughals intermarried with Rajput princesses and offered patronage to scholars of Sanskrit and Braj Bhasha, culminating in a flourishing of Vaishnavite cults across northern India and translations of the Upanishads and the Bhagavadgita from Sanskrit into Persian.\textsuperscript{99} Even the

\textsuperscript{98} D. R. Reinsch, P. Kolovou, ed., Κριηοβούλοσ τον Ιηθριον Ιστορια (Athens, 2005); M.N. Doğan, Fâtih (Avni) Divanı ve Şerhi (Istanbul, 2009), 62, p.27.

\textsuperscript{99} For Braj literature, as promoted by the Mughals, see A. Busch, The Courtly Vernacular: The Transformation of Brajbhasa Literary Culture (1590-1690). (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Chicago, 2003). Incidentally, several Ph.D. candidates in the US are currently working on topics related to Prince Dara Shukoh and the Sanskrit-Persian translation movement associated with him.
grandson of Aurangzeb, who is always viewed as opposed to the religious syncretism, was taught by one of the greatest Braj poets.100

Mughal hegemony rested upon those Indian traditions as well as the central Asian Timurid claims. Their merging was expressed through the ideology of *sulh-i kull*. If Ottomans wore the mantle of Caesars, Mughals had a similar tradition to rely upon; they were *chakravartins*, a title which refers to universal rulers as opposed to petty kings. It probably goes back to the times of the Mauryas and includes spiritual elements. Rulers following Akbar, particularly Jahangir and Shah Jahan, further refined cultural practices which included monumental buildings, luxurious textiles and paintings and the patronage of chronicles and poetry.101 They also could boast an extraordinary accumulation and display of wealth. All of this greatly contributed to their prestige, to the point that the courtly presence of the emperor partially merged with the concept of the *darshan* in the religious sphere. An extensive comparison between the figures of a ceasar and a *chakravartin* must be postponed, but we should note that this was a conscious ideal for the Mughals, evoked by Abu al-Fazl. Notably, it involved concepts of public display and imperial activity which were rather different than those of the Ottomans.

Akbar and Aurangzeb (but also Jahangir and Shah Jahan) still loom large in northern Indian collective memory as highly individuated figures. The film *Mughal-e Azam* is a landmark of Indian cinematography in which Prince Selim (the future Jahangir) loses his beloved Anarkali while struggling against the towering patriarch Akbar. Its screenplay is available in a luxurious edition in the original Urdu and English, published by Oxford University Press.102 Recently,

another film was released with Akbar as a romantic hero who wins the heart of a Rajput princess.103

Rather strikingly from the modern Turkish perspective, which emphasizes the unbridgeable gap between the dynasty and the commoners, some members of the Mughal court are remembered with fondness in contemporary India. Mughal hegemony entered northern Indian folklore. The word “Mughal” in India has transformed itself; from the name of the dynasty, it has become a name of a caste or even an ethnicity.104 Birbal, the Hindu confidant of Akbar, is well and alive until this day in Hindi stories. We encounter him in books for studying Hindi as well as in self-books published in India on “how to solve problems the Birbal way.”105 In those narratives, Akbar, as his counterpart, is both admired and mocked. Of course, the figure of Birbal addresses a deeper layer of Indian political culture: Birbal is a Vidushaka, the Jester, who may seem to be simpleton, but who in reality as a member of the Brahman caste has the moral and intellectual right to mock the non-Brahman king.106 While we can find an equivalent in Mashara Arap, the jester of Bayazid I,107 he is not universally known among Turkish-speakers today. The only equivalent to Birbal is indeed Nasruddin Hoca, who lived before the Ottomans, and who frequently interacts with a grim and destructive Timur. Karagöz and Hacivat, who also come to mind, are seen as largely atemporal expressions of folk wit, not directly associated with

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103 Although the screenplay of Jodhaa-Akbar (2008) is weak, the cinematography is memorable.
104 P. Gottschalk, Beyond Hindu and Muslim, Multiple Identity in Narratives from Village India (New Delhi, 2001).
106 J. Huizinga, De Vidusaka in het indisch Toneel (Groningen, 1897) and F. Cimmino, “Il Tipo comico del vidusaka nell’ antico dramma indiano”, Atti della reale academia di archeologia, lettere e belle arti di Napoli, 16, part II, 1893.
107 A.E. Dikici, “Imperfect Bodies, Perfect Companions? Dwarfs and Mutes at the Ottoman Court in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries” (Master’s Thesis, Sabanci University, Istanbul, 2006).
the Ottomans.\textsuperscript{108} In fact, the Ottoman court is conceived as remote, alien and not relevant to modern Turkish consciousness.

In Ottoman times, many a witty tale must have been whispered about the sultans in the contentious coffeehouses and Ottoman subjects must have compared different sultans, but these anecdotes do not survive in popular memory. In spite of nicknames born by the sultans, such as Yavuz, Mest, Genç or Deli, we have the curious optical illusion of an unchanging, stable order in which all sultans of the Osman house merge into one. Some, such as Murad IV or Selim I, are known to the educated audience, but in the popular mind, prevalent are only the symbolic figures of Mehmed Fatih, Süleyman Kanuni, and ‘Abdülhamid II. Yet, unlike Mughals, they are not individualized; they symbolize different phases in the history of the Empire: the beginning, the apogee, and the decay. We rarely hear of any humorous or romantic tales associated with them. Although Süleyman Kanuni’s private life was not devoid of dramatic moments, there is no popular cinematic version of his interactions with Hürrem and his sons. ‘Abdülhamid II also simply exists in his paranoid universe; there is no narrative attached to him.

Partially, the occultation is not simply the result of late Ottoman and Turkish Republican disillusionment with the Ottoman house, but also an inheritance of a specific hegemonic strategy. Since the time of Mehmed Fatih, seclusion of the ruler was encoded in the kanûnname, and the Topkapı palace was built to that effect, not to display the Sultan, but to conceal him.\textsuperscript{109} To some extent, this tradition, deplored by Mustafa ‘Ali, represented a merging of Byzantine and Arabo-

\textsuperscript{108} Compare the recent film, *Hacıvat-Karagöz neden öldürüldü?*, in which the two men are seen as opponents to Ottoman power. However, the two are usually contextualized in an early twentieth-century aesthetic.

Persian traditions from the Abbasid times. As the ruler acquired a religious significance, he became increasingly remote and seeing him was a distinct privilege. Obviously, Ottoman sultans still went on military campaigns and appeared in public on the day of prayer or during festivities; however, the mystique of the ruler who was difficult to access (and similar to the remote divine beloved of Persian poetry) remained prevalent. Ottoman depictions usually show the sultan as surrounded by a small, intimate circle of confidants even as he is publicly enjoying himself during a Sûr. While the position of the sultan is certainly distinguished, he is often depicted in a corner, and an uninformed viewer can only locate him through additional information.

In contrast, in India, the image of the chakravartin ruler was sensuous and personified, even to the point of saturation. Jahangir and Shah Jahan have highly developed iconographies and individual physical features. They cannot be confused with each other. In contemporary miniatures, they are usually depicted as radiating in the center of a bustling court, with family, members of the court and other subjects all being depicted as directing their gaze toward the sun-like pâdishâh as the center. His head is usually adorned with a large nimbus (farr). Some of the individuality is preserved in later depictions as well; for instance, there are miniatures of an idealized, but identifiable Muhammad Shah engaging in sexual intercourse.\textsuperscript{110} It would be difficult to imagine an Ottoman Sultan in a similar context – he may be the shadow of God on earth, but he is always coded as a hidden Beloved rather than an active Lover.

The personalizing tendency of the Mughal historiography is reinforced by the longevity of the rulers. Throughout the seventeenth century, the Mughal empire was ruled merely by three emperors: Jahangir (1605-1627), Shah Jahan (1628-1658) and Aurangzeb (1658-1707). All of them were adult men with military experience when they ascended the throne and active in

\textsuperscript{110} V. N.Desai, \textit{Life at Court: Art for India’s Rulers. 16\textsuperscript{th}-19\textsuperscript{th} Centuries} (Boston, 1986), p.89.
political life. In contrast, in the Ottoman empire during the same period, many sultans were teenagers or boys. Ahmed I (1603-17) was fourteen years old, his son Osman II (1618-22) fifteen, the other son Murad IV (1623-1640) eleven, his grandson Mehmed IV (1648-87) seven when they ascended the throne. Mustafa I (1617-18 and 1622-23) and Ibrahim (1640-48) had mental disorders. The period is accordingly described as that of Kadınlar Saltanatı and until recently described in purely negatively terms. Intriguingly, the presence of Safavid and Mughal women in political and cultural life is usually viewed by historians in a more positive light.

Different strategies of speech and silence were adopted. Seeing the sultan, who might be psychologically ill or a child, became a special privilege in the Ottoman empire, whereas the Mughals displayed themselves publicly at the jharokha. Ottoman rulers were silent and often spoke in whispers or signs. Mughals engaged in public religious debates. Since the rule of Murad III, most Ottoman rulers did not lead their armies in the battle, affecting hegemonial discourses, which had until then presupposed an active ruler. Instead, both the princes and the sultans often remained in the palace, not venturing much further than the hunting grounds of Edirne, notable exceptions notwithstanding. Ottoman princes were commonly kept in the kafes, whereas Mughal princes were actively engaged in political struggles. This alone should have conferred virility on the Mughals as it emasculated the Ottomans. Yet, the Ottomans survived for full two centuries after the collapse of the Mughals as powerful political actors. This contrast illustrates

111 N. Vatin, G. Veinstein, Le séraîl ébranlé, Essai sur les morts, dépositions et avènements des sultans (Paris, 2003). During that same period, Safavids were ruled by Shah ‘Abbas I (1587-1629), Shah Safi (1629-1642) and Shah ‘Abbās II (1642-1666).
113 For instance in the high praise accorded to princesses Gulbadan, the historian and Zib-un-Nisa, the poet.
that the old approach, which attributed Ottoman weakness and the decay to the lack of bellicose and active sultans and princes, is flawed. More problematic, especially for the social historian, is the reality that while the Mughals gathered much of the world’s wealth in their domains, the Ottomans sometimes could not even mint their own coins.

Clearly, something rather mysterious and worth exploring is at work. Comparatively, Ottomans should not have survived the contestations of the seventeenth century, while the Mughals should have persisted. Yet, the Ottoman dynasty survived the Mughals as a symbol and as a real political actor on the global stage, even extending their hegemonic claim into the Muslim world (including India and Africa) at the same time as their real power declined. We must conclude that Ottoman hegemonic practices and ideologies were more effective in creating and sustaining loyalty than those of the Safavids and the Mughals. Only a further comparative study of their courts, their political and social institutions, as well as their symbolic cultures and hegemonic strategies, can flesh out the respective advantages, disadvantages and particularities of each of those political orders.

This study has revolved around several myths which were formulated, explicitly or implicitly, during the heyday of European colonialism. “Rumis” were supposed to be somewhat inefficient Ottoman agents in India, but we have discovered that “Ottomans”, “Rumis” and “Turks” were three distinct categories, and that Rumi agendas often significantly differed from those of Istanbul. Ottomans and Mughals were nominally helpless Hanafi brethren, yet their correspondence demonstrates that they did not have any reason to fear west European merchants in the seventeenth century, and that the two dynasties seldom agreed. In fact, most Indian rulers did not view Ottomans as caliphs until the mid-nineteenth century. Purportedly, Ottoman fashions remained relatively static and any Indian influence was minor. Yet, evidence indicates
that Indian fabrics thoroughly transformed Ottoman fashions and remained present in Ottoman imagination even in the early twentieth century. Finally, while the British in India eventually destroyed the textile trade between western Asia and Bengal, they never intended to eliminate many other kinds of trade and interactions in the Indian Ocean. We find that under their rule, more Indians than ever flocked to Ottoman lands.

Our primary aim in this dissertation was to demonstrate that Ottoman-Indian relations consisted of many, perhaps innumerable facets, ranging from rough adventures to lofty poetic reveries, pragmatic policy notes and even to the echoes of cacophonous quarrels in the market. India was not at the margins of Ottoman consciousness; it was lurking as a threat and as a promise within a labyrinth of desires, fears and hegemonic contestations. Ultimately, our hope is that this study will be one among many to explore Eurasian and inter-Asian relations in the early modern period, so that we may gradually come to a better understanding of a common world which all of our ancestors have shared since the sixteenth century.
Appendix

Visual Evidence
1. Ottoman cannons in the fortress of Uparkot, Gujarat. They have been encased since 2008 in order to protect them from unruly researchers.

2. The plaque in front of the guns. The Gujarati word “top” (તોપ) is a loanword from Turkic. It appears at least three times in the text.
3. Eastern Anatolia in the fifteenth century, one of the main areas of origin for the Rumis.
4. Deccani sultanates and Gujarat, main Rumi destinations in India. In at least three of the sultanates, the ruling house claimed Anatolian ancestry. The Qutbshahis of Golconda were indeed of Qaraqoyunlu descent.
5. Friendship between Jahangir and Shah Abbas I. Note that the Shah is depicted as smaller and darker. He stands on a sheep whose body covers all of Anatolia, while Jahangir’s feet rest upon a lion.
6. The famous portrait of Jahangir preferring the Chishti Sufi over kings. Notably, Shah ‘Abbas is not depicted, but the Ottoman sultan and the English king James I are in attendance (dārand dar pîshesh qiyâm).
7. Shah Jahan and his closest entourage. Note the central position of the emperor and the attire of the noblemen. Many of them wear *patkas* and clothing with flowery sprigs.
8. A portrait of an Ottoman ambassador at the Mughal court in the 1650s. It seems that this is the infamous Zülfikar Aga of the cabbage incident. In the Mughal depiction, there is no trace of mockery; to the contrary, the ambassador appears dignified. Yet, his monochrome clothing style marks him as an outsider to the Mughal court.
9. Ottoman flowers in the sixteenth century. Note the very large traditional patterning of the tulip and the crescent.

10. Ottoman flowers in the early seventeenth century, as worn by Ahmed I. Smaller flowers appear within a large one. Traditional imperial aesthetic continues in the shape of large, serrated leaves.
11. Ottoman flowers in the mid-seventeenth century (velvet hatayi). Smaller flowers are more distinct, but they are still embedded within large carnations. Minor Indian influence cannot be excluded, but this style is usually connected with Bursa and it accords with previous Ottoman tendencies.
12. Ottoman female clothing in the mid-seventeenth century. The patterns are very similar to those of the previous century, with çintamani and large round and ogival patterns. Other women, probably servants, wear plain, monochrome dresses.
13. A typical Gujarati textile from Fustat from the high medieval period. Many Indonesians favored this aesthetic until the twentieth century, but it was never popular among Ottomans.
14. Jahangir as a young man, sporting Mughal muslin fashions. He is wearing an *alacha shalwar* with stripes, a diaphanous muslin skirt and a geometrically patterned *patka*. His shirt is probably also made of muslins. The contours of the body are emphasized.
15. French muslin fashions: Marie Antoinette as of 1783 in a simple muslin dress with many layers, criticized as perhaps too intimate for a queen. The painter was a woman, E. Vigée-Lebrun.
16. Ottoman muslin fashions: Similarly to other Ottoman women in the mid-seventeenth century, the Armenian lady wears a monochrome silk top. However, her undershirt and her skirt are made of fine muslin, probably of Indian origin. No flowers are to be seen anywhere except for the headdress, whose pattern is eastern Mediterranean.

The image originally stems from a series by Georges de la Chapelle (1645).
17. French flowers: Madame de Pompadour wears a white dress with hand-painted flowers. This is a high value chintz fabric favored by western Europeans. The flowers are large, emerging out of long, winding stems.
18. Ottomans preferred chintz for furniture. Tezcan and Okamura define this fabric as çatma kadife kumaş from the 17th or 18th century, of Mughal provenance. At first glance, the textile seems to be of southern Indian provenance. Yet, while these flowers are large as in southern India, they are symmetrically arranged in a style preferred by northern Indians and Ottomans alike.
19. A silk *entari*, probably worn by Fatma Sultan (1757-74). It is a relatively rare instance of French or southern Indian aesthetic in clothing. As in image 17, the flowers are large and the ground is cream or white.
20. A brocaded Mughal *patka* with several elements which would be attractive to the Ottomans. The main body features the birds-in-flight motif. Margins include winding stems and small flowers. The border highlights large, naturalistic carnation flowers leaning to one side.
21. The Hindustani language of flowers:
On this patka, less luxurious than the previous one,
many dainty flowers are arranged across the end panel.
22. A depiction of Radha, Krishna’s beloved. Her skirt, her patka and her veil are covered with small, symmetrically arranged flowers. This aesthetic would prove irresistible to Ottomans and northern Indians for more than a century.
23. A quilted cotton coat (*angarakha*) from northeastern India. The close-up shows the details of brocaded patterns which are not visible from most Ottoman depictions, but which would have been there in higher-end fabrics.
24. In the early eighteenth-century Ottoman empire, it seems that Indian flowers were associated with subordinate men, dancers and foreign-looking monsters displayed at a circumcision festival. Note that Ottoman adult men don sober, monochrome coats.
25. Ottoman woman, ca. 1730.

This dancer is wearing many layers of Indian or Indianizing clothing. Her entari is covered in small flowers with two different grounds, orange and blue. Her undershirt and a skirt covering her shalwar are made from muslin, as in the previous century. The shalwar itself is made from striped Indian-style kutnu. She is wearing a flowery waistband in addition to her metallic girdle, combining Indian and Ottoman preferences. In addition, even her head-cover may be inspired by southern Indian chintz.
26. Another Ottoman woman ca. 1730 as seen by Levni. The sleeping woman wears a similar combination of muslins, *kutnu* and an Indian-style flowered *entari*.
27. French perception of Ottoman women costume:
The countess is wearing clothing which is identified as specifically “Turkish”.
While the ground of the entari is uncharacteristically white, approaching French sensitivities, the flowers belong to the northern Indian and Ottoman style, quite unlike the large chintz patterns favored in “regular” French fashions.
28. Jane Baldwin is dressed in Ottoman clothing in a portrait by Joshua Reynolds (1782). This seems to be a striped cotton-and-silk *entari* of Indian provenance. Many similar brocades and *patkas* are attested from the nineteenth century in India. She is also displaying a Kashmiri shawl which continues the *patka* tradition.
29. Ottoman perception of Indian women: Fazil Enderuni’s “catalogue” of women around the world does not describe Indian women in flattering terms, but the image which accompanies the text is seductive.
30. Ottoman woman, ca. 1790. The lady from Istanbul is wearing a muslin undershirt and a flowered entari, but unlike women from the first half of the eighteenth century, she dons two conspicuous Kashmiri shawls. One of them is white-and-blue, which remained the favorite Ottoman combination for a century.
The Greek woman also wears the flowered entari and a Kashmiri shawl around her waist, ca. 1810. The lower edge of the shawl is adorned with naturalistic large clusters of flowers which originated in the Shah Jahani patka almost two hundred years earlier.
32. Charles Grevier, comte de Vergennes, is depicted in Ottoman garb. As the French consul in Istanbul, he would have been familiar with Ottoman men. In the second half of the eighteenth century, Indianizing flowers finally became worthy of adult males.
33. Selim III, wearing a red kürk and an Indianizing kutnu underneath. The kutnu is patterned with multicolored stripes and small flowers. A century earlier, an Ottoman sultan would not have worn such patterns in public.
34. The *ari-jhari* diagonally striped pattern was exceedingly popular in the Ottoman empire. Correspondingly, this Indian brocade has many modest “cousins” made of cotton.
35. An Ottoman brocade, probably of Indian origin, with winding stripes in the Ganga-Yamuna style (silver and gold, or two-colored metallic thread) and scattered flowers. Attributed to Mahmud I (1730-54).
36. A Gujarati *alacha* with the characteristic “dagger” motif.
37. A Greek coat with alacha patterns. Unlike other Indian motifs, alachas never made inroads in western Europe, but they were exceedingly popular among Greek, Armenian and Arab men.

38. Detail of sleeve with arrow patterns and sprig flowers.
39. A Syrian *mamluk*, wearing a Kashmiri shawl on his head and another one (in the *khatt-rast* style) around his waist. His coat is made of red brocade very similar to those attested in India.
40. A brocaded red coat from Istanbul.
41. A brocaded red coat (djama) from Rajasthan, silk and gold zari. The coat is strikingly similar to that in image 40. A close-up reveals small rosette-like flowers.
42. A white and blue Kashmiri shawl, similar to those seen in images 30 and 39.
43. Detail of a Kashmiri woolen coat (*choga*). Corners are adorned with a *kalga*, the descendant of Shah Jahani flower clusters.
The Greek woman is wearing a woolen apron which closely imitates the patterns common in Kashmiri woolen coats, including a stylized kalga in the corners.
Image citations

The images in the appendix represent a small selection of a much larger body of visual evidence. For the majority of the sources cited below, the author of this dissertation provided scans from secondary literature and edited the images.

Notwithstanding our general reluctance to use evidence from the internet, we have resorted to it in some cases. Occasionally, images (3, 4) found through public sources on the internet were superior to those found in the literature, or they illustrate our point better than images taken by the present author (1). In yet other instances, the images are exceedingly familiar and can be found in many versions (5, 25, 26, 33). For the latter, the internet has been quoted for reasons of immediate accessibility to a high quality image.

In any monograph published on the basis of this section of the dissertation, additional sources and higher-quality images will be provided.

Sections I and II: Rumis and Mughals


Section IV. Indian(izing) flower languages and fabrics in Eurasia


29. Istanbul University Manuscript, İÜK no. T5502. Many images from the manuscript are accessible: http://www.turkishculture.org/dia/index.php?lang=&page=list&page_no=263


34. Y. Agrawal, *Silk Brocades* (New Delhi, 2008), p.46.


38. Detail from 37.


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Note:

The bibliography given here is selective, not comprehensive, as a glance at the footnotes and image sources will confirm. Although several times more works than those indicated here have been consulted, only the most important ones are listed below.

In primary sources, usually the name of the author is listed in full or in its most familiar form before that of the editors. Names of authors and / or editors are separated by semi-colon. Manuscripts are marked with an astérisque. Errors and inconsistencies are perhaps inevitable; may the kind reader place the blame on our greenhorn experiments with EndNote.
Archival abbreviations

Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivi
A_AMD Sadâret Mektubî Âmedî Kalemi
A. DVN.DVE Sadâret Mektubî Düvel-i Ecnebiye Kalemi
A. MKT. DV Sadâret Mektubî Kalemi Deavî
A. MKT.MHM Sadâret Mektubî Kalemi Mühimme Kalemi
A. MKT. MVL Sadâret Mektubî Kalemi Meclis-i Vâlâ
A. MKT. NDZ Sadâret Mektubî Kalemi Nezâret ve Devâir Defteri
A. MKT. UM Sadâret Mektubî Kalemi Vilâyât Giden Defteri
A. MTZ CL Sadâret Eyâlât-ı Mümtâze Cebel-i Lubnân
BEO Bâb-ı Âlî Evrâk Odası
C.EV Cevdet Evkaf Tasnîfi
C.HR Cevdet Hâriciye Tasnîfi
C. İKTS Cevdet İktisat Tasnîfi
C.ML Cevdet Mâliye Tasnîfi
DH.EUM.KLU Dahiliye Nezâreti Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdürüyeti. Kalem-i Umûmî
DH. İD Dâhiliye Nezâreti
DH. MKT Dâhiliye Nezâreti Mektubî Kalemi
DH.ŞFR Dâhiliye Nezâreti Şifre Kalemi
HAT Hatt-ı Hümâyûn
HR.HMS İSO Harâciye Hukûk Müsavirliği İstişâre Odası
HR. İM Harâciye Nezâreti İstanbul Murahhaslığı
HR. MKT Harâciye Nezâreti Mektubî Kalemi
HR. ŞFR Harâciye Nezâreti Şifre Kalemi
HR.SYS Harâciye Nezâreti Siyasî Kısım
HR.TO Harâciye Nezâreti Tercüme Odası
İ.DH İrade Dâhiliye
İ.HB İrade Harbiye
İ.HR İrade Hâriciye
İ.MMS İrade Meclis-i Mahsûs
İ.MSM İrade Mesâîl-i Mühimme
İ.MVL İrade Meclis-i Vâlâ
İ.MTZ İrade Mûmtâze
MVL Meclis-i Vâlâ
MTZ Mûmtâze
Y.A.HUS Yıldız- Sadâret, Husûsî Marûzât
Y.EE Yıldız Esas Evrâkı
Y.PRK.AZJ Yıldız Perâkende Arzûhâl ve Jurnaller
Y.PRK.EŞA Yıldız Perâkende Elçilik ve Şehbenderlik Tahrirâtı
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خالل پذیر بود هر یک که می‌بینی
به جز بنای محبت که خالی از خال است